



City of  
**Peterborough**

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**To:** **Members of the Committee of the Whole**

**From:** **Ken Doherty, Director of Community Services**

**Meeting Date:** **June 22, 2015**

**Subject:** **Report CSSS15-004**  
**Homelessness Programs and Services Update**

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## **Purpose**

A report to provide an update on homelessness programs and recommend operators for the Lighthouse Community Drop In Centre and Warming Room programs.

## **Recommendations**

That Council approve the recommendations outlined in Report CSSS15-004 dated June 22, 2015, of the Director of Community Services, as follows:

- a) That CMHA-HKPR operate the Lighthouse Community Drop In Centre program from August 1, 2015 to March 31, 2018 at a cost of \$469,877 with a possible two year extension;
- b) That St. John's Anglican Church provide space to operate the Lighthouse Community Drop In Centre program from September 2015 to March 31, 2018 at a cost of \$171,100 with a possible two-year extension; and
- c) That St. John's Anglican Church operate the Warming Room from November to April in 2015-2016, 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 at a cost of \$180,000 with a possible two-year extension;
- d) That a presentation from Dorothy Olver, Social Services; Jim Russell, United Way; Donna Rogers, Four Counties Addiction Services; and Christian Harvey, St. John's Anglican Church/ Warming Room, be received.

## Budget and Financial Implications

Recommended increases to program costs for the Lighthouse Community Drop In Centre and the Warming Room programs will not require additional municipal funding in 2015.

Proposed terms and budgets are outlined in Chart 1 below:

**Chart 1**

Year end March 31st	Lighthouse – CMHA	Lighthouse- St. John’s rental	Warming Room	Total
2015-2016	\$148,137	\$47,900	\$60,000	\$256,037
2016-2017	\$159,220	\$59,200	\$60,000	\$278,420
2017-2018	\$162,520	\$64,000	\$60,000	\$286,520
Total	\$469,877	\$171,100	\$180,000	\$820,977

This requires a pre-commitment of future budget years. The increased costs can be managed within the overall Homelessness budget. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing has confirmed the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative funding allocation at approximately \$3.3 million for the next two years. See Appendix A.

## Background

The City of Peterborough Ten Year Housing and Homelessness Plan and Needs Assessment stressed the need for collaboration and community partnerships for more positive outcomes for vulnerable people. Homelessness programs and services continue to evolve and improve through community planning sessions and collaboration.

Changes to existing programs and information on new initiatives are outlined below.

### **A. Lighthouse Community Drop In Centre**

The Lighthouse Community Drop In Centre has been in operation since August 2012. The program has continued to provide a safe space for social inclusion and several programs and activities have been offered to visitors at the Centre. Service agreements with St. John’s Anglican Church (for facility) and CMHA-HKPR (for day-to-day operations) expire August 31, 2015 and July 31, 2015 respectively.

#### **i) Lighthouse Drop In Centre – Program Operation – CMHA-HKPR**

CMHA-HKPR has been the organization responsible for operating the program at the Lighthouse Drop In Centre on a daily basis, 7 days a week, 365 days a year since August 2012.

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In 2013, the Drop In Centre had a total of 15,871 visits and served 27,733 lunch meals. In 2014, the Drop In Centre had a total of 19,583 visits and served 33,630 lunch meals.

Since the beginning of operation in 2012, CMHA-HKPR has succeeded in arranging for various on-site programs and activities be provided to visitors at the Drop In. These include:

- Literacy group
- Naloxone overdose prevention training
- Euchre tournaments
- Movie days
- Weekly pet food bank
- Crafts
- Volunteer appreciation
- Safe food handling course
- Tax clinics

City of Peterborough Social Services, PARN and Housing Resource Centre staff are on-site at the Lighthouse Community Drop in Centre once a week.

As part of the service agreement renewal negotiations, CMHA-HKPR identified costs associated with additional hours of work staff are currently doing in order to effectively prepare for each days program. There was no funding provided in the initial service agreement to cover this activity. In recent months, CMHA-HKPR has also undergone organizational changes including staff unionization and reorganization with a priority to hiring full time positions where possible and as a result, salary costs for this program have increased.

Program statistics over the last two years show:

- No increase in the number of people or different people that access the Drop In program when there is a cold or heat alerts,
- An underutilization of the Drop In program on Sundays,
- A significant reduction in visitors after 3:00 pm.

For these reasons, the following changes to the service agreement are proposed:

- Effective July 2015, the hours of the Drop In Centre will be adjusted from 11:00am-4:00pm Monday to Saturday to 11:00am-3:00pm Mondays to Saturdays.
- Effective August 2015, the Sunday Drop In service at Murray St. Baptist Church will end.
- Effective August 2015, extended hours during heat and cold alerts will no longer be provided through the Lighthouse Drop In Centre program.

**ii) Lighthouse Drop In Centre – Rental contract at St. John's Anglican Church**

St. John's Anglican Church has rented the lower level of 99 Brock St to the City since August 2012 for the operation of the Drop In program. Over the past three years the program has expanded and the number of people accessing the Drop In Centre programs and services has continued to increase. The lunch program provides anywhere between 80-150 lunches in a day. The expansion of the program has also resulted in more physical space at St. John's being used. Currently the entire lower level is taken up by the Drop In Centre for food storage, meal preparation in the kitchen, the lounge for programming and a staff office.

The costs associated with the rental agreement were underestimated in 2012 when the lease agreement was established for a three year period. Upon review of the facility costs associated with running the program, there is an increased cost to utilities, janitorial costs, waste removal and increased amount of space being used. Given these increased costs, staff recommended an incremental increase in rent provided over the period of the next agreement.

**B. The Warming Room**

Based on the experiences of the 2013-14 program and a report to Council June 23, 2014 (CSSS14-007), changes were made, including an increase to the 2015 budget to \$50,000 in order for the program to make key program changes, including the addition of paid staff. The addition of paid staff in conjunction with volunteers resulted in a very successful program. Based on feedback from both guests and volunteers, people felt that people were non-judgemental, supportive and they felt safe in the Warming Room. The Executive Summary and budget information from the Warming Room report for the 2014-15 winter is attached as Appendix B.

The partnership between St. John's Anglican Church and Murray St Baptist Church is very strong and both are supportive of continuing to work with this client group with high physical and mental health issues, substance use issues and challenges associated with finding and keeping housing.

The Warming Room further strengthened connections with community partners including Brock Mission, YES Shelter for Youth and Families, Four Counties Addiction Services and VON 360 Clinic. These connections are critical for supporting guests accessing the Warming Room program. Support provided by various organizations has been greatly appreciated by Warming Room staff and volunteers.

The Warming Room continues to be successful at engaging volunteers in the operation of the program. In 2014-15, 92 volunteers worked overnight shifts. An additional 75 volunteers made and delivered meals each night. Other volunteers assisted with things like training, laundry and were involved in the Warming Room Steering Group. In total 174 volunteers were involved in the program this past winter.

The program was able to be operated from one consistent location at Murray Street Baptist Church for this entire winter and hours of operation were from 8:30 pm to 8:00 am 7 nights a week. Warming Room staff and volunteers did their best to collect accurate data and recorded 189 unique individuals that accessed the program over the winter. About 74 people access the program regularly and approximately 12 people lived at the Warming Room for most of the winter. The average number of guests was 21 per night.

The Warming Room also maintained a web site, blog, Facebook and Twitter accounts over the winter. The blog had feeds from staff, volunteers and guests to the program and provided great insight to the experiences of people living on the street, their experience with the Warming Room and staff experience in working in the Warming Room. The experience sharing demonstrates the value of hearing directly from people on their experiences and perspectives on the services they are accessing or not accessing, and their experiences with interactions with people in the community. The Warming Room web site is: <https://warmingroom.wordpress.com/>

The Warming Room is not seeking increased funding for operational costs in 2015-16. However, utility and maintenance costs have increased and therefore staff recommended a funding increase of \$10,000 bringing the total program cost to \$60,000 a year for the next three years.

### **C. Community Collaboration and Case Planning**

#### **i) Homelessness Coordinated Response Team (HCRT)**

The Homelessness Coordinated Response Team continues to provide clinical outreach to emergency shelters and bi-weekly case conferencing and case coordination amongst several community partners. As of April 1, 2015, the Federal Homelessness Partnering Strategy funding is being used to provide additional staff resources to enhance the work of the HCRT team including outreach and supports available during the day and evenings.

#### **ii) Housing First**

The Central East Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) has provided enhanced funding to support a Housing First program in Peterborough. The program includes intensive case management, trustee services and housing support workers (days and evenings) for eight Housing First units targeted for persons with mental health and addictions. Rent supplements and homemaker services funded through the existing Social Services Homelessness budget will be in-kind contributions to the program.

Housing First requires multiple community partners to work together for the housing success of some of the most vulnerable individuals in the community. As part of implementing the Housing First program, community partners are exploring the use of a common assessment tool to prioritize program and service placement.

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Four Counties Addiction Services Team and CMHA-HKPR also received funding from the CE LHIN for eight more Addiction Supportive Housing Units, which provides intensive case management support and rent supplements to this target group. This is in addition to the eight units that currently exist.

### **Service System Planning**

On March 18, 2015, fourteen community partners participated in a planning session on homelessness programs and services. The session provided an overview of current programs and services as well as information on changes to existing programs and the introduction of new programs and initiatives. Recommendations were received regarding client priority setting, referral mechanism and shared system principles. This community collaboration continues and is imperative for the homelessness programs and services to have positive outcomes for people.

Out of this session, the Housing First Working Group has endorsed the use of a common assessment tool by community partners working with people who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness. The common assessment tool will provide an ability to assess need and determine service priorities. The group is also working on a “Client Service Path” graphic to illustrate the flow within the system of homelessness services. The draft Client Service Path is attached as Appendix C.

Report CSSS15-004 was presented to the Joint Services Steering Committee on June 11, 2015. The Committee endorsed the report.

## **Summary**

Community collaboration in the homeless system continues to evolve and improve. Collaboration is evident through the numerous services provided through Lighthouse Community Drop In, Warming Room, HCRT and Housing First.

The Lighthouse House Drop In Centre and the winter warming room programs serve different but important functions to low income vulnerable people. The Lighthouse generally serves people who are housed, though many are precariously housed. The Warming Room serves people that are not housed and may otherwise fall through system gaps. These programs are recommended to continue and some incremental increases to the funding to address increasing costs in staffing, utilities and maintenance have been approved.

Submitted by,

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Attachments:

Appendix A – MMAH CHPI Funding allocation letter

Appendix B – The Warming Room Report Executive Summary

Appendix C – Draft Client Service Path