



City of
Peterborough

TO: Members of the Joint Services Steering Committee

FROM: Ken Doherty, Director of Community Services

MEETING DATE: January 14, 2010

**SUBJECT: Report CSSSJSSC10-002
"Strengthening the Foundation: A Review of the Peterborough
Hostel System"**

PURPOSE

A report to inform the Joint Services Steering Committee of the review of the Peterborough hostel system and the resulting report "Strengthening the Foundation" and to request endorsement of the policy and funding related recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Joint Services endorse the recommendations outlined in Report CSSSJSSC10-002 dated January 14, 2010, of the Director of Community Services, as follows:

- a) That Report CSSSJSSC010-002 dated January 14, 2010 and the attachment "Strengthening the Foundation: A Review of the Peterborough Hostel System" be received for information.
- b) That the current hostel funding model which is based solely on a per diem rate be changed to a combination of base funding and per diem funding.
- c) That the Brock Mission and Youth Emergency Shelter hostel agreements be extended from August 3, 2010 to August 2, 2013, subject to 90 day termination clauses and a bi-annual funding review in conjunction with the City budget process.

- d) That the Brock Mission hostel agreement for the operation of a 40 bed men's emergency hostel and a 10 bed women's emergency hostel, reflect a funding formula based on the Provincial per diem rate plus base funding, retroactive to August 3, 2009.
- e) That the Youth Emergency Shelter hostel agreement for the operation of a 15 bed youth emergency hostel and a 15 bed family emergency hostel, reflect a funding formula based on the Provincial per diem rate plus base funding, retroactive to August 3, 2009.

BUDGET AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The recommendations can be accommodated within the approved 2010 Budget Provisions for the hostel program.

BACKGROUND

A Request for Proposal (RFP) process took place in 2007 for the provision of emergency shelter services in the City of Peterborough. The RFP process resulted in service agreements with Brock Mission (to provide emergency shelter services to adult males) and Youth Emergency Shelter (to provide emergency shelter services to youth and families). At that time no one came forward to provide services to women over 24 years and eventually Brock Mission agreed to operate that service at Cameron House. Although an RFP process was used in 2007 to select hostel operators, Section 32 (3) vi) of the purchasing policy indicates that a Bid Solicitation Process is not required for Hostel Operators. This report recommends the existing agreements with the operators be amended and extended without undertaking an RFP process.

Prior to formulating the recommendations to renew the existing agreements, the Social Services Division undertook an intensive evaluation of hostel programs and services. The review took place from June to August 2009. The tasks and timeframes of the review are summarized below:

- Consultation with the Homelessness Coordinating Committee in early June
- Renewal of existing service agreements (June) pending the outcome of the hostel review
- Review of background reports and literature through the month of July
- Feedback from hostel operators through July and August

- Feedback from clients and community in June and July, including consultation with the Housing Workers Network, community consultations on July 14th and 15th and client survey conducted in July
- Feedback from Ontario Works staff including a staff survey and consultations with the Hostel Liaison Workers
- Financial review including a review of funding sources and assessing the cost of delivery of service
- Review the occupancy rates of the emergency shelters
- Review of demographics and client composition of those accessing shelter programs and services
- Review of compliance with the Ontario Works Act and Regulations, corporate purchasing bylaw and municipal financial requirements

This process resulted in the report, "Strengthening the Foundation: A review of the Peterborough Hostel System" (attached as Appendix A), which provides the background and rationale for the following service recommendations contained in this report. Many of these recommendations are operational in nature and within the responsibility of the Social Services Division as Service Manager to implement. The report contains a total of 11 recommendations organized into the following four areas:

- Service, Safety and Security
- Staffing
- Funding
- Accountability

The funding components contained in the Hostel Review Appendix A (Items 6 and 7) are brought forward for consideration by Council through the recommendations in this report. The remaining recommendations from the Hostel Review are considered administrative in nature and can be implemented by staff as time and resources permit.

This report recommends a fundamental shift in the funding model from a strictly per diem model to a combination of base and per diem funding. The funding model change is recommended to assist the operators with some of the overhead costs that exist no matter how many people are staying in the hostel. Based on the 2010 projections for days of stay, staff expect the proposed funding model can be implemented within the approved 2010 budget allocation for the hostel program.

The proposed funding model recommends eliminating the daily top up of \$6.35 per day which is a 100% Municipal cost, and replacing it with 100% Municipal base funding of \$125,322 per year for Brock Mission and \$50,140 for Youth Emergency Shelter. This provides guaranteed funding that is not affected by volume shifts in days and will reduce the financial instability that results from variation in occupancy rates. The Hostel Worker program has been reduced by 1 FTE (with staffing reallocated to Ontario Works), consistent with a recommendation from the review related to the role of these staff. A

change in the definition of stay to provide a per diem for the first day of admission has been recommended. This acknowledges the work associated with the initial intake process. In 2010 as the upload of Ontario Works begins, the Province will be responsible for 80.6% of the per diem portion of the emergency hostel costs, reducing the Municipalities share from 20% to 19.4%. This will help financially support the increase in days paid due to the definition of stay.

Occupancy patterns within the emergency hostel system are quite variable. If the 2010 actual bed stays are less than estimated, the amount paid to the operators will also be less than budget, and the surplus could be used to implement additional hostel or transitional housing initiatives. Recommendation 8 of the Review proposes such an investment of hostel dollars in programs and services to support longer term solutions to homelessness such as transitional housing.

The eleven Recommendations from the review are listed below as a summary. Further detail on each of these recommendations is contained in the Report, Appendix A. These Recommendations are as of the date of the report being October 2009.

Service, Safety and Security

Recommendation #1

That the municipality provide support to the hostel operators to assist with security enhancements at the hostels by investing unspent 2009 hostel allocation up to \$10,000/ hostel for security camera systems at Brock Mission and YES.

Recommendation #2

That the Hostel Liaison Workers and hostel staff strengthen links to other homelessness and housing agencies to provide a more integrated service for clients.

Recommendation #3

That a transparent and accountable protocol be developed by the Homelessness Support Services Coordinating Committee related to the case management of people who are unable to reside at the hostels.

Staffing

Recommendation #4

That the Hostel Liaison Workers (HLW) role shifts to provide intensive case management support to clients before and after a hostel stay. Residential care workers employed by hostels will continue to provide primary intensive case management while a resident stays at the hostel. Ontario Works eligibility remains a key function of the HLW role even while a client is in the hostel.

Recommendation #5

That joint training be established for Social Services and hostel staff that focuses on client service and non-violent crisis intervention. Unspent 2009 municipal hostel allocations up to \$7,000 could be reinvested to provide for salary costs for hostel staff to

attend training in 2009 and 2010. In future years the hostel operators will need to budget accordingly for necessary staff coverage for training.

Funding

Recommendation #6

That the municipality establishes a local funding formula for hostel transfer payments based on the provincial per diem model and stabilized with base funding to be negotiated on a biannual basis. That service contracts governing the funding formula be established retroactively to August 3, 2009 and that they be extended to 2013 with the expectation that hostel operators will continue to diversify their programs and funding to remain stable as the demand for homelessness services diminishes over time.

Recommendation #7

That the service agreements with the hostel operators be amended retroactively to August 3, 2009 to clarify the definition of a hostel stay from "bed nights" to "days of service", providing recognition and payment for the work associated with the first day of residency and the hostel intake process.

Recommendation #8

That the municipality commit to investing municipal surplus due to reduction in hostel demand into Hostel/transitional housing and other longer term solutions to homelessness.

Accountability

Recommendation #9

That the Social Services staff complete regular hostel service agreement reviews, including inspections. Staff will complete financial reviews quarterly and agreement reviews on an annual basis.

Recommendation #10

That the recommendations and actions of this report be monitored by the Homelessness Support Services Coordinating Committee on a semi annual basis, with a one year follow up report to be provided to Joint Service Steering Committee.

Recommendation #11

That future integrated community planning be undertaken to strengthen the networks of service providers serving those who are homeless or at risk of being homeless (mental health, counselling, medical, addictions, youth supports).

Those recommendations that could be implemented by the division are complete or underway as listed below:

- Security cameras upgraded at Youth Emergency Shelter and installed at Brock Mission
- Hostel Supervisor and Workers have met with Brock Mission staff on key hard to serve cases.

- Consents will be completed and a meeting in January 2010 with CMHA on the same hard to serve cases to determine appropriate coordination of services
- Protocol regarding people unable to reside at hostels to be developed by and endorsed by members of the Homelessness Coordinating Committee has been signed
- Brock Mission and YES staff participated in training along with Social Services Division staff in Coaching Skills during November/December 2009. Hostel Staff will be invited to participate in the Problem-Solving Module in January/February 2010.

SUMMARY

The program and service recommendations from the Hostel Review allow for improvements to strengthen the foundation of services that currently exist. Social Services staff and community partners will continue to work together to implement those recommendations that will result in improved service and accountability of the emergency hostel program. The proposed changes to the funding model if approved would provide operators with a combination of base and per diem funding adding stability to a system that is critical to ensure the safety of some of Peterborough's most vulnerable citizens.

Submitted by,

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Attachment:

Appendix A: "Strengthening the Foundation: A Review of the Peterborough Hostel System"