City of Peterborough

To:	**Members of the Joint Services Steering Committee**
From:	**Allan Seabrooke, Commissioner of Community Services**
Meeting Date:	**June 14, 2018**
Subject:	**Report CSSSJSSC18-003** **Homelessness System Update**

Purpose

A report to provide an update on homelessness activities, including the 2018 ICountPtbo homeless enumeration.

Recommendation

That the Joint Services Steering Committee endorse Report CSSSJSSC18-003 dated June 14, 2018 of the Commissioner of Community Services, as follows:

That the report on homelessness activities be received for information.

Budget and Financial Implication

There are no budget or financial implications to the City or County resulting from the endorsement of the recommendation in the report.

As stated in Report CSSS17-010 Homelessness Service System Update, the Social Services Division will be initiating a review of existing homelessness programs, funding, and services. That report also provided temporary financial measures to deal with volume and environmental pressures. The review will take place the first quarter of 2019 with a report to Council in late 2019. The future operational and capital costs related to homelessness initiatives that derive from the review of the current system will be considered during future budget deliberations.

Background

In line with the Province's Long Term Affordable Housing Strategy to end chronic homelessness by 2025 and the vision of the City's 10 Year Housing and Homelessness Plan (HHP) to eliminate long-term homelessness, the Social Services Division and community partners have been shifting focus from managing the homelessness system to attempting to end chronic homelessness.

Service Manager Authority

The City of Peterborough is the Service Manager responsible for integrated local planning to address housing affordability and the coordination of homelessness services. Evidence-based practices support the idea that strong multi-sectoral partnerships and community-wide collaboration are essential to the successful implementation of strategies to end chronic homelessness.

Initial Steps

The City has engaged community partners in the development of a coordinated homelessness response. Key activities that are ongoing and meet commitments in the 10 Year Housing and Homelessness Plan include:

- Collaborating with key stakeholders
- Determining local needs through homelessness enumerations
- Implementing a common assessment tool across the homelessness system that triages and streams clients to the appropriate services
- Introducing a shared database for emergency shelter operators
- Funding Intensive Case Managers through provincial programs including Housing Now and Home for Good
- Embedding clinical support at each of the emergency shelters
- Introducing case conferencing through the Homelessness Coordinated Response Team (HCRT)
- Increasing rent supplements
- Improving client coordination with justice and health providers

Impacts of Homelessness Enumeration

Since the completion of the Point in Time count in 2016, the province has mandated that Service Managers conduct an enumeration every 2 years starting in 2018. As per report CSSSJSSC17-005 Homelessness Enumeration and Delegation of Authority, Joint Services endorsed conducting the enumeration in March 2018.

The United Way and the City of Peterborough partnered to complete a combined Point in Time and 20,000 Homes count over the course of four days starting March 20, 2018.

The 20,000 Homes count model (a registry week) was used in the 2018 enumeration in conjunction with the Point in Time Count. This model invites people experiencing homelessness to provide their name and complete a more comprehensive survey. It is based on the following principles:

- Knowing every homeless person by name and understanding each person's needs and preferences
- Implementing Housing First in a way that makes sense for the community
- Using data to track progress and to make decisions to improve the community's homeless programs and the system as a whole
- Improving housing placements and working toward building a coordinated local system of care focused on ending homelessness
- Learning from other communities across Canada

The 20,000 Homes approach also acknowledges that complex social issues cannot be solved by a single sector. Mobilizing communities around ending chronic homelessness involves:

- Data
- Person-centered services
- Continuous quality improvement
- Creating conditions for groups to innovate collaboratively

The 20,000 Homes initiative is a national change movement focused on ending chronic homelessness in 20 communities and housing 20,000 of Canada's most vulnerable homeless people by July 1, 2020.

With the completion of the surveys, the analysis of the homelessness count will provide a better understanding of the nature and extent of homelessness and the characteristics of people experiencing homelessness. The data provides the foundation to support further housing, homelessness and service planning decisions. Joining the 20,000 Homes count will move the community toward a "functional zero" end to homelessness which is defined as a community that:

> "has a systematic response in place that ensures homelessness (unsheltered homeless, emergency sheltered homeless, provisionally accommodated or imminent risk of homelessness) is prevented whenever possible or is otherwise a rare, brief and non-recurring experience".

2018 ICountPtbo Highlights

Some key highlights from the enumeration include:

- 364 people were approached (compared to 255 in 2016);
- 200 surveys were completed (compared to 100 in 2016);
- 27% of respondents identified as Indigenous (compared to 23% in 2016);
- 9 respondents identified as Veterans (compared to 6 in 2016 that served in the military);
- 259 people identified as being homeless: 130 in emergency shelter beds, 12 living rough, 94 provisionally housed (couch surfing, hospital, etc) and 23 unknown;
- 60% reported their first experience of homelessness was before the age of 26 (compared to 64% in 2016);
- 94% of respondents reported having an income (compared to 98% in 2016);
- 30% of respondents were involved with the child welfare system; in 2016 34% of respondents indicated they had spent time in foster care/group home environment.

The top three reasons identified for being homeless:

- Family breakdown;
- Unsafe housing;
- Addiction/substance use.

Key enhancements in the completion of the 2018 ICountPtbo homelessness enumeration include:

- The count was conducted over 4 days, expanding on the 24 hour period
- The count included a more comprehensive survey/triage tool
- The Registry Week approach invited people experiencing homelessness to provide their name and location so that people experiencing homelessness can be contacted again and those with the highest level of need can be matched with the right resources as soon as possible
- The 2018 count included County locations

The 2018 count included all shelter locations, the Warming Room, the shelter for domestic violence, 9 street outreach routes, Peterborough Regional Health Centre, 12 service locations in the City and 11 service locations in the County. Additionally, a youth specific magnet event was held and attended by 30-40 individuals.

The success of the homelessness enumeration was due to the participation of over 80 volunteers and professional social service staff.

Work In Progress

Community partners have been working toward the creation of a Coordinated Entry System (CES) and By Name List (BNL) framework since the fall of 2017. This framework and the creation of a coordinated system means that all community entry points into the system understand and share intake processes. Other community organizations that come into contact with individuals experiencing homelessness will also be able to get them to the right place for service more simply. Both the CES and the BNL will result in a better understanding and tracking of people flowing in and out of homelessness.

Understanding local homelessness leads to an organized response and working toward a response based on need.

The Way Forward

Generally homelessness activities can be categorized in three ways:

- Prevention, Shelter Diversion and Support Services
- Emergency Shelters (including motels)
- Stabilization Supports such as permanent and/or supportive housing

The goal is to shift the focus from an emphasis on expensive, short-term, emergency responses to upfront prevention and diversion activities and Housing First activities that stabilize individuals with high acuity such as rent supplements, intensive case management, and trusteeships. This requires an examination of the current system and what is currently funded.

The following chart illustrates the shift in emphasis:
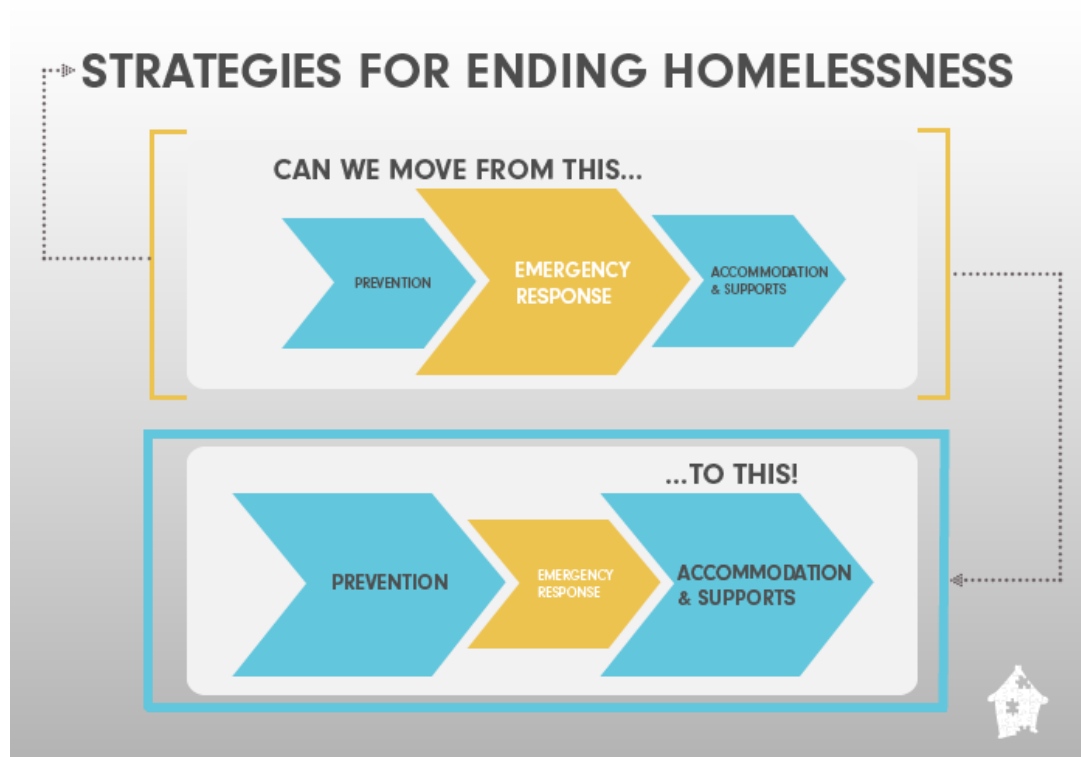
Next Steps

The integration of homelessness services requires a number of key elements:

- Clearly articulated goals around housing placement and housing retention with carefully selected and appropriate data elements and reports
- Examination of resource allocation aligning with the goal of ending chronic homelessness
- Engagement of decision-makers at the system level around strategic planning and the execution by their organizations
- Engagement of all community homelessness staff to work together as a unified collective
- Continuous evaluation of effectiveness of activities with an acknowledgement around the need to evolve and continuously improve

Therefore, the key next steps to review the current system are:

Objective	Rationale	Alignment with HHP	Time frame
5-year review of the 10-year HHP	The province has put into legislation the requirement for a 10-year HHP, including the requirement to review the HHP at least every 5 years.	Legislative requirement.	June 2018-June 2019
Review of homelessness service system using an expert third party	Examining the current system of services and what is currently funded to ensure maximum use of resources and ensure alignment with funding requirements and the goal to end chronic homelessness.		Winter 2018-2019 Report to Council late 2019
Conduct further examination of local Shelter Services Capacity	Identifying gaps and capacity issues in the emergency shelter system should be examined to determine potential improvements.	**Commitment 3:** Examine local committees and service provider partnerships to ensure best use of resources.	Fall 2018
Development of alignment among service partners who are part of Peterborough's Coordinated Entry System and By Name List	Ensuring that all providers within the system have access to the same level of professional development and operate using the same core principles is essential to an effective multi-sectoral response. Systems responses require collaboration and aligned core principles among multiple agencies.	**Commitment 2**: Facilitate alignment of policy and strategic plans, among City partners and within municipal departments, using a service system approach. **Outcome**: Families and individuals get assistance through a system of coordinated housing and homelessness services that provides appropriate	Summer to Fall 2018

		supports and promotes self-sufficiency.	
Build interventions and solutions for the most vulnerable	Using Housing First principles to set clear criteria for prioritization and work with individuals and service providers to match appropriate housing and support service to the most vulnerable individuals and families.	As above.	Summer 2018 (prioritization will be considered as part of the creation of the Coordinated Access System)
Develop and maintain "By Name List"	Knowing the names and unique needs of people experiencing homelessness allows for individualized planning and case management according to vulnerability/need.	**Commitment 14:** Expand mental health and addiction case planning and outreach. **Outcome:** People, whose mental health, addiction or behaviour compromises their housing, receive services that are coordinated through individualized, multi-agency case planning.	Summer 2018 develop the By Name List Monitoring will be ongoing using real-time data
Continue to educate the public about issues surrounding homelessness and housing	Building on momentum of the iCountPtbo will ensure that issues related to individuals who are experiencing homelessness are better understood.	HHP vision: Enhance community and partner involvement.	Ongoing
Develop robust evaluation and reporting mechanisms	Using the By Name List and common assessment tool data, service providers will be able to measure impact and progress with individuals.		December 2018
Engage	Enhancing collaboration	Not specifically identified	July-August

Indigenous service providers to expand and educate community about services	with representatives of local First Nations and organizations providing support to off-reserve Indigenous residents, to share information about services, housing and other related issues.	in the HHP, but has been acknowledged at the Provincial level as an emerging priority to be addressed in 5 Year Review. Homelessness count 2018: 27% of people surveyed self-identified as Indigenous.	2018 Cultural Competency training for all front line staff provided by Nogojiwanong Friendship Centre
Build stronger relationships with local landlords	Considering local landlords as key stakeholders in homelessness strategies by engaging and informing them about supports available to them. Applying for Ministry of Housing "Evidence, Innovation and Capacity Building Fund" to bring the RentSmart tenant and landlord education program to the community.	**Commitment 19:** Improve collaboration with private sector landlords. **Outcome:** Private landlords that offer lower-cost rental housing have the support and information they require to improve outcomes for tenants.	2019

Summary

Ending homelessness requires strong and aligned system-level leadership that ensures that there are efforts across systems and organizations to improve effectiveness and client outcomes. Ending chronic homelessness also requires reliable, real-time data and service providers who are committed to common and systematic approaches to:

- measuring the number of people experiencing homelessness, the level of acuity and the outcomes (simple measurements are: length of time homeless, housing people, maintaining housing, and inflow, outflow and return to homelessness)

- prioritizing individuals with the highest need for the most intensive interventions

- collaborating with partners to ensure that role definition is agreed upon within the system—for example, in Housing First-led systems, shelter activity is focused on getting people housed, while other access points such as drop ins, meal programs, faith community, etc. are the mechanism to identify people to be housed next.

The community has made significant progress in managing homelessness over the past several years. As progress is made and data becomes available, strategies need to become more responsive to deal with increased complexities.

Submitted by,

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Attachments:

Appendix A – PowerPoint Presentation
Appendix B – IcountPtbo Homelessness Enumeration Report