



# Committee Minutes

## Community Services Committee April 25, 2023 – 1:00 PM

The Community Services Committee met on the above date at the County Administration Building with the following members in attendance:

**Present:** Chair Nielsen; Councillors Matrosovs, Dobreen, Mackey, Dickert; and Warden Milne.

**Regrets:** Councillor Kentner.

### Staff

**Present:** Kim Wingrove, CAO; Randy Scherzer, Deputy CAO; Kevin McNab, Director of Paramedic Services; Anne Marie Shaw, Director of Community Services; Tara Cockerill, Manager of Early Learning and Child Care; Josh Gibson, Manager of Housing Programs; Sharon Irwin, Manager of Community Housing; Caitlin Currie, Homelessness Response Supervisor; Stephanie Stewart, Manager of Community Transportation; Sarah Goldrup, Deputy Clerk/Legislative Coordinator.

## Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm.

## Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

## Delegations

There were no delegations.

## Reports – Community Services

### CSR-CS-07-23 - Overnight Warming Centre Pilot

Anne Marie Shaw introduced the report and described that the project was for a one-year pilot with Safe n Sound to establish a warming centre in Owen Sound, funded

initially through the Safe Restart Funding Reserve. The Director explained that following significant increases in the number of people experiencing homelessness and the related costs of providing support, the County brought the Short-Term Shelter program in-house in 2022, which has offered improved access to services for clients and provided greater insight into community needs. The Director shared that while the County works to assist people in obtaining and maintaining housing, demand can exceed available resources during winter, and alternative options, such as warming centres, are needed to support increased volumes or individuals with complex needs. The Director spoke about program funding, how warming centres are typically established, the services offered through the pilot, and the data collected to inform future programs.

In response to questions from the Committee, Anne Marie Shaw confirmed the local need for the program and that while no other County surveyed directly operated a warming centre, some also contracted third-party providers through a mix of funding sources. Further, the Director discussed security concerns and considerations and possible partnerships with local service providers.

CS04-23      Moved by: Warden Milne                      Seconded by: Councillor Mackey

**That staff report CSR-CS-07-23, regarding an overnight warming centre in Owen Sound be received; and**

**That Grey County enter into a one-year agreement with Safe n Sound to establish a warming centre in Owen Sound as a pilot project; and**

**That the operating funding required in the amount of \$150,000 be provided from the Safe Restart Funding Reserve.**

Carried

## CSR-CS-08-23 - Early Learning and Childcare Overview

Tara Cockerill presented to the Committee regarding the County's early learning and childcare programs and services, including the role of the service system manager and team, funding allocations, fee subsidies, childcare licensing, wage enhancement grants, and initiatives to support the workforce, recruitment, and retention, such as mentorship opportunities and the Early Learning Hub offered by the County. Further, the presenter explained EarlyON Child and Family Centres and programs, the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care system, and efforts to support inclusion and access to childcare services within the community, including special needs resourcing.

In response to questions from the Committee, Tara Cockerill discussed the limitations of current provincial funding models, special needs resourcing funding, possible

improvements for equitable childcare subsidies, and childcare operator licensing, inspections, and incident reporting. Further, the presenter spoke about licensed and unlicensed providers, childcare provider recruitment and retention challenges, considerations for rural communities regarding access to childcare, and data-informed mapping of anticipated community demand.

CS05-23 Moved by: Councillor Mackey Seconded by: Councillor Dickert

**That report CSR-CS-08-23 Early Learning and Childcare Overview be received for information.**

Carried

### CSR-CS-09-23 - Winter Report Short-Term Shelter Program

Josh Gibson introduced Caitlin Currie and the report. The Manager of Housing Programs explained that the Grey County Short Term Shelter Program was launched in September 2022 and reviewed some of the challenges, positive outcomes, and opportunities for moving forward. The presenter reviewed the provincial funding supporting the program and the rising number of individuals experiencing homelessness with increasingly complex needs. The presenter highlighted that 52 participants had been housed off the By-Name List, of which 35 remained housed, and described the supporting program delivery and outreach. The presenter explained what staff anticipate as the next steps for the program moving into the summer months, including planning for the 2023-2024 winter season and additional staff to support intensive calls, outreach, and intakes.

In response to questions from the Committee, Josh Gibson spoke about decreases in provincial housing funding, access to programs or services, and the difference in supports received by individuals or family households. Further, the presenter discussed the need for additional outreach staff to support volumes and intensive intakes, efforts to reduce silos among service providers, and improvements to coordinate agency responses for better outcomes.

CS06-23 Moved by: Councillor Dobreen Seconded by: Councillor Dickert

**That report CSR-CS-09-23 on Winter Short Term Shelter Program be received for information.**

Carried

### CSR-CS-10-23 - Homelessness Prevention Program Investment Plan 2023-2024

Josh Gibson introduced the report and described the programs and services provided by the County through the provincially funded Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP).

In response to questions from the Committee, Josh Gibson discussed the increases in HPP funding, the needed support for increasing costs and community needs, and acknowledged the decrease in housing funding. The Housing Programs Manager further spoke about access to programs and services and the need to reduce silos and coordinate across agencies to provide deep, immediate, end-to-end support.

CS07-23      Moved by: Councillor Matrosovs      Seconded by: Councillor Dobreen

**That report CSR-CS-10-23 regarding a proposed Investment Plan for Homelessness Prevention Program for 2023-24 be received; and**

**That Grey County Council endorses the Investment Plan for the Homelessness Prevention Program and approves the 2023-24 funding to be expensed by March 31, 2024.**

Carried

## CAOR-CS-12-23 - Grey Transit Route Initiative

Stephanie Stewart presented to the Committee regarding offering fare-free transit on weekends from May 20 to September 4, 2023. The Community Transportation Manager described a similar program being offered by the Town of Orangeville and the opportunity to promote the use of the system to first-time riders or cost-conscious families and the potential to increase access to services or economic growth.

In response to questions from the Committee, Stephanie Stewart discussed collecting data to inform future advocacy or business cases, promoting potential destinations within walking distance of drop-off locations, the difficulty of developing the public's trust of engagement with the system when they are unsure of what the service might look like in the future, and the challenge of serving large, rural communities.

CS08-23      Moved by: Warden Milne      Seconded by: Councillor Matrosovs

**That report CAOR-CS-12-23, regarding the Grey Transit Route Initiative, be received for information.**

Carried

## Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

## Other Business

There was no other business.

## Next Meeting Dates

**May 18, 2023, at 1:00 p.m.**

On motion by Councillors Dobreen and Dickert, the meeting adjourned at 3:23 p.m.

Dane Nielsen, Chair