Recommendation(s)

WHEREAS in 2012 Grey County approved a motion to enter into agreements with neighbouring single and upper-tier municipalities for the purposes of annual financial reconciliation of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) cross-border service accounts;

AND WHEREAS the motion was passed on the understanding that all Western Ontario Wardens’ Caucus member municipalities would be participating in cross border billing agreements;

AND WHEREAS it has been determined that not all Western Ontario Wardens’ Caucus municipalities will be participating in cross border billing;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Report EMSR-TAPS-02-14 be received;

AND THAT Grey County postpones the signing of cross border billing agreements pending further discussion of this issue at an upcoming Western Ontario Wardens’ Caucus meeting.

Background

On May 1, 2012 County Council endorsed a resolution for the purposes of entering into agreements with municipalities relating to ambulance cross border billing (CBB). The premise for CBB is to allow municipalities to recover costs associated with providing land ambulance services within the boundaries of another municipality. Agreements of
this nature are enabled through legislation contained in the Ambulance Act and Regulations. Resolution TAPS44-12 is as follows:

“WHEREAS the Western Ontario Warden’s Caucus (WOWC) endorsed in principle municipalities entering into Cross Border Billing agreements for inter-municipal land ambulance services in January 2012;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Report EMSR-TAPS-04-12 be received;

AND THAT Grey County Council enter into the agreement with the neighbouring single and upper-tier municipalities for the purposes of annual financial reconciliation of EMS cross-border service accounts for the period January 1, 2012 to December 31, 2021 as endorsed by the WOWC;

AND THAT the Warden and Clerk be authorized to execute this agreement.”

The issue of CBB was discussed amongst the Western Ontario Wardens’ Caucus (WOWC) in late 2011 resulting in an agreement that all municipalities within the WOWC would be signatories to CBB agreements. Although the WOWC agreed in 2012 to participate in CBB, there has been little movement towards municipalities entering into agreements and in particular, Grey County has not entered into any CBB agreements to date. It has also come to staff’s attention that there are municipalities with CBB implications with Grey County that are not prepared to enter into CBB agreements.

Grey County received a CBB invoice from Bruce County in mid-2013. Discussions between Grey and Bruce staff regarding call reconciliation have occurred resulting in a final bill being produced. Grey is a net payer to Bruce County for the 2012 calendar year.

As a result of the Bruce County invoice, a review of all CBB activity between Grey County and outside municipalities was undertaken for the 2012 year. Call volumes with CBB implications and an environmental scan of participation in CBB by municipalities has been completed to provide a sampling of the overall position of Grey County should it enter into CBB agreements. The following chart identifies municipalities with CBB implications, municipal involvement in CBB agreements, call volumes and CBB Costs. It must be noted that only the Bruce County call volumes have been reconciled and that the accuracy of the remaining data should not be considered to be accurate.

2012 CBB Activity with cost per call of approximately $170/call.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>CBB Participation</th>
<th>Call Variance</th>
<th>CBB Revenue</th>
<th>CBB Expense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bruce County</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>(25)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$4,235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simcoe County</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>(210)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$35,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipality</td>
<td>CBB Participation</td>
<td>Call Variance</td>
<td>CBB Revenue</td>
<td>CBB Expense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dufferin County</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>10 (unconfirmed)</td>
<td>$1,700</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huron County</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>4 (unconfirmed)</td>
<td>$680</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middlesex</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>24 (unconfirmed)</td>
<td>$4,080</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellington</td>
<td>Unknown (50)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$8,500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>$6,460</strong></td>
<td><strong>$48,435</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Discussion**

Grey County is a net payer of CBB costs due to the number of outside municipal services with ambulance stations bordering on Grey County municipal boundaries. Based on current call volumes and projected future call volumes, it is anticipated that the costs for CBB will be reduced; however, Grey County will remain a net payer.

When Grey County agreed to support CBB reconciliation, it was on the understanding that all municipalities within the WOWC would be signatories to CBB agreements. This would provide the opportunity for municipalities in a position to bill others for CBB to use those funds to offset the payouts to other municipalities. Without full cooperation, there could be significant budget implications for net payer municipalities like Grey County where the inability to collect CBB costs places an added financial burden on its ratepayers.

Staff is recommending that Grey’s participation in CBB be delayed until the WOWC addresses this issue again and determines a position of full participation by all municipalities.

**Financial / Staffing / Legal / Information Technology Considerations**

There are currently no budgeted funds for CBB in the EMS Budget. Grey County is a net payer of CBB costs in the amount of approximately $40,000 to $50,000. In the event that approval to pay CBB costs becomes Grey County’s position on the issue, funding will need to be found through operating surpluses and/or reserves. Any CBB costs or recoveries are subject to Provincial 50/50 funding reconciliation and would reduce the annual cost to Grey County to approximately $20,000 to $25,000.
Link to Strategic Goals / Priorities

An equitable approach to inter-municipal ambulance cross border billing will ensure that Council's goals of ensuring financial sustainability and ongoing public accountability are maintained.

Respectfully submitted by,

Mike Muir
Director of Emergency Medical Services