

Report to Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee

To: Chair and Members, Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee
From: Kevin Dickins, Deputy City Manager, Social and Health Development
Subject: June Progress Update – Health & Homelessness Whole of Community System Response
Date: June 20, 2023

Recommendation

That, on the recommendation of the Deputy City Manager, Social and Health Development, that the June Progress Update – Health & Homelessness Whole of Community System Response Report **Be Received** for information.

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the progress made since the last report received at the May 9th, 2023, Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee and subsequently the May 16th, 2023, Municipal Council meeting related to the endorsed Health and Homelessness Whole of Community System Response. The efforts of the Whole of Community System Response has moved into the system implementation process. Since the last report to Council there have been multiple working sessions at the Strategy and Accountability Table, Hubs Implementation Table, and the Housing Implementation Table activated.

As efforts to develop the implementation plan for the System Response continue, detailed milestones and timelines for several aspects of the System Response have been identified, including a targeted date to bring forward an implementation plan for the first 5 (five) 24/7 Hubs to Council, a detailed community engagement strategy, including the establishment of the Business and Development Reference Tables, to inform the Hubs plan. As well, additional implementation tables, such as the Workforce Development Table, are being established.

This report also provides a brief update on the ongoing advocacy efforts with other levels of government in an effort to access financial supports to implement the Health and Homelessness Whole of Community System Response.

Linkage to the Corporate Strategic Plan

Housing and Homelessness

- Increased access to a range of quality, affordable, and supportive housing options that meet the unique needs of Londoners.
- Decreased number of Londoners at risk of or experiencing homelessness
- Improved safety in London's shelters system

Wellbeing and Safety

- Londoners have safe access to public spaces, services, and supports that increase wellbeing and quality of life
- Housing in London is affordable and attainable

Links to Community Recovery

The City of London is committed to working in partnership with the community to identify solutions that will drive a strong, deep, and inclusive community recovery for London as we move out of and beyond the global COVID-19 pandemic. This report, and the items within, are linked to supporting Londoners experiencing homelessness to attain and retain

permanent housing. This work supports recovery efforts through a coordinated response that will support the transition of individuals and families experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness who have a variety of support needs into permanent housing.

Analysis

1.0 Previous Reports Related to this Matter

- May Progress Update – Health & Homelessness Whole of Community System Response (SPPC; May 09, 2023)
- Update – Whole of Community System Response Implementation (SPPC: April 18, 2023)
- Health and Homelessness Summits – Proposed Whole of Community System Response (SPPC: February 28, 2023)

2.0 Background Information

2.1 Moving Forward with Implementation

As reported in the May progress update, the City of London is experiencing a crisis in the collective ability across many sectors to provide timely and appropriate supports for people experiencing the impacts associated with the health and homelessness crisis. On March 8, 2023, Council endorsed the Whole of Community System Response. On May 9, 2023, Council was updated on the implementation framework, shared again below as a reference, that is guiding the work of the system and the participating organizations. Since that time, leaders across various sectors have been meeting to move the implementation planning forward and begin advancing on the goals of creating highly supportive housing units and launching 24/7 Hubs in 2023.



Figure 1 Implementation Framework

Between the SPPC meetings held on May 9, 2023, and June 20, 2023, three tables have held working sessions. The following section provides an overview of their activities emerging from those meetings.

Strategy and Accountability Table:

The Strategy and Accountability table has responsibility for guiding the overall implementation of the whole of community system response and is populated by leaders from all organizations who are collaborating on system implementation. This table held meetings on May 11, 2023, May 31, 2023, and at time of report submission will be meeting on June 15, 2023. These sessions have been productive in setting the course for much of the work that needs to occur at the various implementation tables over the next few months.

The Strategy and Accountability table will be co-chaired by Scott Courtice, Executive Director from London InterCommunity Health Centre, and City Manager Lynne Livingstone.

In addition to identifying the leadership for the implementation tables, the Strategy and Accountability table has established foundational frameworks to support the implementation planning work. This includes establishing a Lived and Living Experience engagement and compensation framework to assist in the design of the 24/7 Hubs and other implementation work. As part of the critical commitment to a people centric system (focused on those the system serves as well as those working within the system), this framework will help make sure the voices of those with lived and living experience of homelessness are captured, but also compensated for the value it brings.

The Strategy and Accountability Table also established a framework for supporting the contributions of frontline workers and providing assistance to overcome barriers to that participation. The principle-based approach is that the system needs the voice of frontline staff to inform the work at the implementation tables. For some organizations this means when their staff participate in an implementation table meeting, they must hire relief or casual staff to fill in for them so that those they care for continue to receive service. The Strategy and Accountability table reached consensus that there may be some organizations where the hiring of relief staff is a financial barrier or strain on operations. To mitigate this, a framework has been endorsed for those organizations that self-identify as having a need to participate in this framework. Lead organizations are being identified to administer both of these frameworks.

The Strategy and Accountability table is also reviewing changes to the commitment to collaborate better to support a more inclusive and broad representation approach for business and economic partners.

The Strategy and Accountability Table also supported a comprehensive community engagement strategy to seek input in support of the Hub Implementation Table's planning work. That community engagement strategy is outlined in the Hubs Implementation Table section of this report.

The Strategy and Accountability Table will continue to meet beyond the scheduled June 15, 2023, meeting, including for the review and finalization of a 24/7 Hubs plan in July and through the end of September to oversee the transition to operationalizing Hubs which will include bringing forward recommendations to Council on the opening of Hubs later in the year. The work of the various implementation tables will feed back into the Strategy and Accountability table for consensus building and direction on progress efforts.

Hubs Implementation Table:

The Hubs Implementation Table has held meetings on May 25, 2023, and June 9, 2023, and has identified future meetings for June 19, 2023, June 29, 2023, and July 6, 2023, in order to design and finalize a Hubs plan in advance of the July SPPC meeting. The work of the Hubs table will be informed by the direct engagement with the community through in-person engagement sessions and online feedback. The work will also be informed by perspectives from those with Lived and Living Experience, those that participate in the Business Reference Table engagement sessions and the Development Reference Table sessions as well.

The Hubs table is focusing on clearly defining the core service functions that are to be provided in the Hubs, establishing defined standards of care for services inside the Hubs and outside the space, criteria for consideration on where Hubs can be best located, criteria for where Hubs should not be located, and the coordinated entry points into the Hub system through coordinated outreach and one-number to call. This work, and other Hub related priorities will form a comprehensive plan that will ultimately come to Council in July for review and direction to implement. The goal remains to open 5 Hubs in 2023 with the goal of expanding in the coming years.

A key piece of the work is the determination of the criteria for the location of Hubs, and this must be informed by community engagement. The intent of the robust community engagement is to provide an opportunity for the public to learn about the whole of community system response and to ensure the public is provided an opportunity to provide input on implementation including the very important criteria that will influence the Hubs plan that comes to Council in July. Through the launch of an online Get Involved Survey through the City of London website on June 9 the public can offer their thoughts on what they think is important criteria to consider when determining the location of Hubs, the important criteria for where Hubs should not be located, and how Hubs can be good neighbours and welcomed as good neighbours in their neighbourhood. On the Get Involved site, residents can find access to helpful information and receive some educational overview about the System Response in general.

Following the launch of the online tool, in-person neighbourhood-based events have or will occur to again provide a level of community education and awareness and to gather input on the design process for Hubs. The community engagement plan will see events held at the following dates, times, and locations:

June 14, 2023, 7:00-8:00pm

North – Canada Games Aquatic Centre

South – South London Community Centre

June 15, 2023, 7:00-8:00pm

West – Byron Community Centre

East – East Lions Community Centre

June 26, 2023, 7:00-8:00pm

Central – Kiwanis Seniors and Community Centre

While having an online participation option and in-person engagement sessions are critical to our process to implement Hubs this year, so too is ensuring the voices of the Business Community and the Developer sector is captured to inform the process as well. To do this, the following will also occur in June.

Business Reference Table:

This reference table which has been identified as part of the implementation framework will be launched and multiple sessions (targeting three before end of June) will be held to solicit input directly from various business members and in partnership with Business Improvement Associations and the Chamber of Commerce. The Table will be initially co-chaired by a member Chamber of Commerce and the Old East Village Business Improvement Association.

The Table will be supported by the System Response Backbone Team, the frequency and meeting method will be co-designed with the chairs.

Developers Reference Table:

The Developers Reference Table will also be launched in June to seek input on the same criteria as the community and businesses, noting for each subject matter expert group that is engaged, including the general public, the responses will vary and will be beneficial in ensuring the Hubs Implementation Table compiles a plan that is whole of community informed. This table will be chaired by the London Development Institute.

This reference table will also be supported by the System Response Backbone Team.

Highly Supportive Housing:

The Housing Implementation Table has been meeting to focus on the goal of creating 100 highly supportive housing units in 2023. This table has been meeting on June 1, June 14, and will be meeting on June 28th and again throughout July, August and into September.

The Housing Table has been working on three primary objectives in the early goings which include developing a definition around what highly supportive housing means for London and the standards of care required for it to meet the needs of the highest acuity individuals in our community; how highly supportive housing work will interface with the Hub system and what design functions are needed to provide optimal care; as well, what existing projects or partnerships are currently in the pipeline that will help achieve the housing goal and can be (re)aligned to the Whole of Community System Response.

Already the City has worked to realign housing projects to support the System Response through the partnership with Indwell at 403 Thompson Road which received Council approval on June 7, 2023.

2.2 Other Whole of Community System Components

While there are tables already operating at the time of writing this report, there are several other activities that are in the final preparation stages or happening in parallel to the system response which are moving quickly and working to address the successful advancement of the System Response. These efforts include the following:

Encampment Strategy:

Efforts continue to focus on tangible efforts that can be taken to address the health and safety concerns surrounding those living unsheltered in encampments. The effort of homeless serving agencies to collaborate on new and better ways to support the community has culminated in a series of responses phased out over the next 90 days. The first iteration of that planning is being presented at the June 13th Community and Protective Services Committee. Additional measures may be brought forward as plans continue to evolve and will begin to align directly with the overall system response,

meaning more linkages to the Strategy and Accountability Table, and regular updates through the monthly SPPC process.

Workforce Development Implementation Table:

The sustainability of a coordinated and multi-sectoral System Response will rely on having a clear workforce development strategy. The scoping of this table is happening, and a draft term of reference has been produced. The table will aim to address the acute and immediate pressures and impacts facing the health and homelessness serving sectors, but also look to future state for the system at what competencies may be needed for collaborative, interprofessional, and multidisciplinary service delivery teams including the supports and structure needed for those teams to be successful.

The Workforce Development table is included in the implementation framework and recognized early in the summit process as a foundational component to a successful system. Efforts and experts are needed to formulate clear paths for defining elements from compensation including wage and benefits for varying system roles to identifying the staffing and caseload ratios required to maintain core functions of an operating Hub. Emotional supports, training, and access to best practices for establishing a coordinated process for debriefing the service delivery teams after critical incidents and traumatic loss will be items the table may explore as well, given the voices heard from frontline staff to date.

The Workforce Development table will explore and build out a number of pivotal elements like these through their work together. A Co-Chair has been selected and the table aims to launch in mid-June.

Indigenous Led Response

To ensure a culturally safe response that is appropriate for Indigenous community members, we will follow the lead of Indigenous colleagues and support an Indigenous-led system response, which is not designed in a colonial way and respects the deep knowledge and consultation already inherent in the Giwetashkad Strategy, and the intention to honour all relations in defining next steps.

There is a commitment to Indigenous representation in overall system governance and implementation co-design, and a commitment to recognizing that the definition of Indigenous homelessness is separate and distinct from the common colonialist definition of homelessness.

2.3 Next Steps

Civic Administration will bring forward a detailed Hubs Plan to the July 19th SPPC meeting. This plan will be informed by and directly encompass the feedback received throughout the engagement process in the community with residents both online and in-person, individuals with Lived and Living Experience, frontline and leadership staff from multiple sectors participating in the Hubs Implementation Table, and representatives from the Business and Development communities.

The Hubs Plan will also be presented alongside the thematic review and summary of the feedback received through the community engagement process.

As well, throughout 2023 and into 2024, Civic Administration will work to align existing Municipal plans and resources to the work of the new Health and Homelessness System. This will include the establishment of an internal enterprise-wide, across all departments, group of plan holders to lead this work.

2.4 Government Relations and Advocacy Efforts

Since the May Progress Report to Council, Civic Administration continues to engage decision-makers at other levels of government on the Whole of Community System Response. As the community continues efforts to move the implementation plan forward, the Government and External Relations Division focused on strengthening and enhancing relationships with key provincial decision-makers and influencers in the Ministries of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Health, Finance, and the Office of the Premier.

Significant efforts are also underway to explore the existing federal and provincial program and policy environment to explore and develop opportunities for in-year investments to support London's Whole of Community System Response. This work will inform the continued development effective community advocacy strategies based on the System Response implementation framework and to position requests to other governments for high-impact opportunities such as the upcoming Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) Annual Conference taking place in London in August 2023.

3.0 Financial Impact/Considerations

Funding Asks:

The Strategy and Accountability table has endorsed a recommendation to seek funding from the Fund For Change through the London Community Foundation for the purpose of implementing a participation and compensation framework for those with Lived and Living Experience in order to inform the Hubs design process. The Fund will also be asked to support the creation of a Frontline Staff participation framework for those agencies that self-identify a need for support. These two components are principle-based, and community led steps that uphold the values of the Whole of Community System Response and reflect the implementation framework.

Recommended by: Kevin Dickins, Deputy City Manager Social Health Development

Cc:
Lynne Livingstone, City Manager
Scott Mathers, Deputy City Manager, Planning and Economic Development
Kelly Scherr, Deputy City Manager, Environment, and Infrastructure
Anna Lisa Barbon, Deputy City Manager, Finance Supports
Barry Card, Deputy City Manager, Legal Services
Cheryl Smith, Deputy City Manager, Neighbourhood and Community-Wide Services

Appendix A

This appendix provides a more detailed outline of the functions of the Strategy and Accountability Table and the initial implementation tables.

Strategy and Accountability Table:

The purpose of the Strategy and Accountability Table is to guide the overall implementation of the System Response. Specifically, the Strategy and Accountability Table will:

- Establish the Lived and Living Experience Council and receive guidance on strategy and priorities to ensure they align with the needs of people accessing the services
- Prioritize funding requests to support implementation
- Problem solve and provide direction on implementation
- Establish an accountability framework and mechanisms
- Establish an evaluation framework
- Provide direction on emerging issues
- Coordinate communication and community engagement
- Support advocacy efforts with other levels of government

Hubs Implementation Table:

The Hubs Implementation Table will co-design a network of purpose-built Hubs providing a set of clearly defined service standards for a set of core functions with timely, direct pathways to housing with applicable supports. The Hubs table will develop the criteria for multi-agency service collaboration including outreach and access pathways.

The deliverables identified for the Hubs implementation table are based on initial understandings of scope at the outset of the System Response; they may be refined as the Implementation Table conducts its work. These early deliverables include:

- Develop the endorsed model for operating the first five Hubs
- Define each of the agreed upon core functions of an operating Hub
- Describe the operating model for collaborative, interprofessional, and multidisciplinary service delivery teams
- Identify criteria and processes used for selecting lead agencies
- Draft partnership agreements and applicable processes needed for implementation
- Establish defined service standards of care for the Hub delivery model based on each of the core functions and rooted in the guiding principles and values of the System Response
- Create a coordinated outreach process to best support people from encampments to Hubs
- Establish the criteria for identifying the geographic areas for the first five Hubs across the community
- Establish the criteria for identifying the highest acuity populations to be served in the first five Hubs

Housing Implementation Table:

The deliverables identified in this section are based on initial understandings of scope at the outset of the System Response; they may be refined as the Implementation Table conducts its work. These deliverables include:

- Develop endorsed Highly Supportive Housing standards and approach to care
 - Conduct partner search to ensure all needed partners are participating in the development of standards and approach

- Identify standards for highly supportive housing, drawing on existing practice locally and good practice from other communities
- Identify principles and approach for system-wide tenant placement processes
- Develop coordinated models of care for placed tenants that align with other System Response initiatives
- Implement standards and approach as part of building 100 highly supportive housing units by end of 2023 and full plan for 600 highly supportive housing units in London
 - Identify locations and opportunities for creation of highly supportive housing
 - Partner to build/convert suitable properties to highly supportive units as viable opportunities are identified
 - Place tenants according to endorsed processes and implement models of care
 - Monitor and refine approach as needed

An outcome measurement framework will be developed in coordination with the System Foundations Implementation Table, when established.

Encampment Implementation Table:

The Encampments Implementation Table will co-design a whole-of-community strategy for supporting encampments. Recognizing encampments may be part of a person's housing journey, the Implementation Table will recommend principles, strategies, and implementation approaches for coordinated outreach and supports to those in encampments, and how they interact with Hubs.

The deliverables identified in this section are based on initial understandings of scope at the outset of the System Response; they may be refined as the Implementation Table conducts its work. These deliverables include:

- Develop the endorsed encampment management strategy
 - Identify core principles and scope of encampment strategy
 - Engage people with lived and living experience in ways that work for them on their needs and perspectives related to encampments
 - Aggregate existing practices from organizations and individuals serving encampments to identify gaps, duplications, and opportunities
 - Conduct scan of good practices for encampments in other communities
 - Identify how encampment strategy aligns with Hub and Housing strategies developed through System Response
 - Develop coordinated outreach approach
 - Develop draft recommendations for coordinated, whole-of-community encampment strategy
- Develop an implementation plan
 - Identify training and resource needs for organizations and individuals serving encampments (i.e. organizations conducting coordinated outreach)
 - Create training resources and train organizations on coordinated encampment strategy
 - Monitor and adapt response as required