

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: December Progress Update – Health & Homelessness Whole of Community System Response
Date: December 12, 2023

Recommendation

That, on the recommendation of the Deputy City Manager, Social and Health Development, that the following Actions be taken regarding December Progress Update – Health & Homelessness Whole of Community System Response report;

- a) That, the December 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 November 21, 2023, Special Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee (SPPC) and subsequently at the November 28, 2023, Council meeting related to the endorsed Health and Homelessness Whole of Community System Response.

Key aspects of the Whole of Community System Response continue to move forward as Civic Administration supports the work of the system tables. Each table co-chairs have also met as a collective group as a way to chart out the next six months of deliverables associated with the system and to discuss alignment of each implementation table's key priorities. The System Response continues to make progress on various implementation aspects of the work associated with operating Hubs including the Strategy and Accountability Table endorsing the training priorities for the Hubs, working with Lead Agencies and service partners to ensure the core functions of the Hubs have operational delivery plans, collectively there is a process for determining criteria for the interim intake process while the formal One Number solution is developed.

Multiple tables met in November to continue advancing the work related to workforce wellness, bringing a highly supportive housing strategy to Council in early 2024, and moving on from Cold Weather Response into an Encampment Strategy in the new year.

Linkage to the Corporate Strategic Plan

This report aligns with the strategic areas of focus in the 2023-2027 [City of London Strategic Plan](#). The City of London Strategic Plan (2023-2027) identifies housing and homelessness as a key area of focus, and housing and homelessness work is identified throughout the Strategic Plan, impacting all areas of life for Londoners.

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:

- November Progress Update – Health & Homelessness Whole of Community System Response (SPPC, November 21, 2023)
- October Progress Update – Health & Homelessness Whole of Community System Response (SPPC, October 31, 2023)
- September Progress Update – Health & Homelessness Whole of Community System Response (SPPC, September 25, 2023)
- August Progress Update – Health & Homelessness Whole of Community System Response (SPPC, August 16, 2023)
- July Progress Update – Health & Homelessness Whole of Community System Response (SPPC; July 24, 2023)
- June Progress Update – Health & Homelessness Whole of Community System Response (SPPC; June 20, 2023)
- 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 Implementation Tables' Progress Updates:

To date, the Strategy and Accountability Table, Workforce Development, Encampment Implementation Table, Highly Supportive Housing, Hubs Implementation Table, and System Foundations Tables have all been meeting. The work of these tables has been guided by the Strategy and Accountability Table that continues to provide support and direction to the work of the various implementation tables.

Below in **Figure 1** is an overview of where the system development efforts currently are, in relation to where it started with the Health and Homelessness Summits.



Figure 1 System Development Overview

The following details provide a monthly update on activities and recommendations that have moved forward between the Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee (SPPC) meeting held on November 21, 2023, and the time of submission of this report.

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. At the Municipal Council, meeting held on July 25th, 2023, it was resolved that the Mayor and the Budget Chair BE APPOINTED to represent the Municipal Council at the Strategy and Accountability table, for the Whole of Community System response, with the Deputy Mayor to serve as an alternate for either, if required.

Following the Council endorsement of the Hubs Implementation Plan in July 2023, the October 11th Strategy and Accountability meetings continued the critical conversation on how we are continuing to support the stability of the sector while the system begins to transition to the delivery of Hubs and Highly Supportive Housing. The Table's November meetings resulted in the endorsement of the Hubs training topics, an update on lead agencies' progress, a review of the Highly Supportive Housing strategy and workforce wellness recommendations. The table spent a major portion of the November 30th meeting reviewing the draft sections of the Highly Supportive Housing plan. These sections of the plan were discussed in small groups and edits captured by note takers. The plan will now be updated to reflect the review conducted by the Strategy and Accountability Table before a review by the Housing Table and Strategy and Accountability Table and final circulation for endorsement with the Strategy and Accountability Table before submission to Council.

Sustaining the Sector:

Civic Administration is committed to supporting the existing sector of funded agencies in through the transition process as the new system is stood up. Funded agencies have been working to identify ways in which they need support while the system transitions. What was shared and endorsed at the Strategy and Accountability table included identifying short-term tasks that could support staffing impacts, the easing of funding and service pressures and ways in which organizations and their direct service delivery staff could be a support for each other in the sector.

While transition funding supports for up to a 24-month period were identified, the specifics of each City funded organization will continue to be finalized between the organizations and Civic Administration. These funds will be administered through existing contract and purchasing processes and will come to committee for approval at a future date. Additional sector wide matters were identified that range from how the current workforce can be coordinated and utilized more effectively, workplace wellness initiatives, and pathways for organizations to mutually support one another in a more seamless manner.

Hubs Implementation Table:

The Hubs Implementation Table met in November. They continue to support service providers and the lead agencies in preparation for their respective openings. The Hub Implementation Table received feedback from their members and Strategy and Accountability Table regarding Interim Intake Process, and table members have provided input about Hub Intake data collection and referral processes, alongside lead agencies. The Integrated Lead Agencies and Partners' Table, which is under the umbrella of the Hubs Implementation Table, is currently establishing a Hubs Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and discussing how each Hub is achieving each Hub function.

Table continues to receive support from Strategy and Accountability Table as Hub Training Program proposal was endorsed on Nov. 16. Future group discussions will be focused on Referral Scenario Mapping.

Highly Supportive Housing:

The Housing Implementation Table has been meeting to focus on the goal of creating 100 highly supportive housing units in 2023 and plan for 600 units in the next three years. This table met in November to update a draft Highly Supportive Housing Strategy Plan that will be going to committee and Council in the new year. The strategy outlines what Highly Supportive Housing is defined as and how it aligns with the Hubs Implementation plan, the key functions and the minimum standards of those functions, what types of spaces are needed for highly supportive housing, and the development and operational costs.

The Housing Implementation Table continues to identify projects in the housing pipeline to find opportunities to meet the 100 units by the end of 2023. Currently a number of projects have been identified and tabled as prospective projects, recognizing some are in differing stages of development and more costing and financing work needs to occur respectively for most of those identified.

The Housing Implementation Table has benefitted from input and participation from nearly 40 individuals representing multiple industries including the development community, healthcare, housing service providers, architects, frontline staff, mental health and addictions, youth services, developmental services sector, and Civic Administration.

Encampment Response:

The Encampment Implementation Table continues to focus on the delivery of basic needs to vulnerable individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness.

The encampment response group continues to focus on maintaining the existing services to support individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness and winding down these services down as they stand up the Cold Weather Response alongside the initial Hubs. The Encampment Table's Cold Weather Response Phase 1 was approved by Council on November 7, 2023, with Phase 2 approved by Council on November 28, 2023.

The Encampment Table will be transitioning away from Cold Weather Response and will be focusing on what needs exist and what resources are required for any type of self-sheltering strategy for this winter to support those who are for whatever reason it may, remaining outdoors. The table will now also refocus to build out a community Encampment Strategy for 2024 including the charting of proposed timelines and engagement plans for community consultation.

Workforce Development Implementation Table:

The Workforce Development Table brought forward the prioritized training topics for Hubs, and eventually the broader sector, to Strategy and Accountability. Those topics received endorsement in September from that table. The Workforce Development Table also brought forward recommendations around workforce wellbeing to the Strategy and Accountability Table, seeking support from the sector around coordinating events for frontline staff, and discussing resources the sector can share amongst itself in initiating operational and cultural shifts within their organizations around workforce wellbeing.

The Workforce Development table is a valuable resource to support the many aspects of curating a sustainable and highly functioning workforce at the Hubs and the rest of the system. Throughout the summit process frontline workers across sectors shared their lived experience of losing those they had been trying to support to this healthcare and

housing crisis. The moral distress, burnout, and inequity in pay are focal points that the table continues to hold as matters to address.

System Foundation Table:

The System Foundation Table is taking a three-pronged approach to the evaluation frameworks of the Whole of Community System Response using the following: (1) Quintuple Aim (population outcomes, population experience, provider experience, total cost of care, health equity); (2) Structure, Process, Outcomes: We will consider each of these domains in order to provide a comprehensive understanding of the system; (3) Now, Next, Later: evaluation will be considered within each of these three timelines. A mixed methods approach will be used to honor different forms of data collection and expression.

Working with academic research experts, staff from local organizations and system partners, the table is looking at various framework components such as outcomes and experiences of people with complex needs experiencing homelessness; outcomes and experiences of others experiencing housing precarity; experiences of those providing care to these groups; outcomes and experiences at the business and community levels; health equity considerations; costs, processes and structures of care; and an overall review of the Whole of Community System Response project. On November 16, 2023, the Strategy and Accountability Table endorsed the Centre for Research on Health Equity and Social Inclusion (CRHESI) offer to hire a resource to pull together and facilitate the evaluation framework team that will consist of multiple community partners who are participating in evaluation/research development, implementation, and knowledge mobilization.

Business Reference Table:

The Hamilton Road BIA, Argyle BIA and Hyde Park BIA have been welcomed into the Whole of Community System Response and will be included within the existing Business Reference Table for future meetings in 2024.

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.

4.0 Conclusion

The many aspects of the Whole of Community System Response continue to advance, which includes the continued development of the Evaluation and Measurement framework by the System Foundations Table in partnership with the Centre for Research on Health Equity and Inclusion (CRHESI) and post-secondary institutional partners.

The work to land a comprehensive Supportive Housing Plan is advancing at a rapid pace to be able to bring back a plan for Council review in early 2024. Work to advance training components and solidifying Hubs operational plans also continue along with work to stand

up an encampment strategy, cold weather response, and supporting the delivery of basic needs to vulnerable individuals that are experiencing unsheltered homelessness.

Further updates on housing projects and detailed plans that outline the pathway for the work still to come as part of the Whole of Community System Response will be provided to Council as they become available.

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

Cc:
Lynne Livingstone, City Manager
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