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TO:	CHAIR AND MEMBERS COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 10, 2012
FROM:	LYNNE LIVINGSTONE MANAGING DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD, CHILDREN & FIRE SERVICES
SUBJECT:	COMMUNITY HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION INITIATIVE HOMELESSNESS SOCIAL ASSISTANCE REGULATION AMENDMENTS

RECOMMENDATION

That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director of Neighbourhood, Children & Fire Services, the following report **BE RECEIVED** for information purposes.

PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER
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- Housing Services Act (CSC: December 19, 2011)
- London Community Housing Strategy 2011 Community Update Report (CNC: May 17, 2011)
- London Community Plan on Homelessness (CPSC: November 8, 2010)
- City of London Community Housing Strategy (CPSC: June 21, 2010)

BACKGROUND

This report will outline the changes from the Province of Ontario regarding the policies and funding for homelessness programs and services. In addition, this report will highlight the implications and next steps for London in its role as Consolidated Municipal Services Manager (CMSM) to the City of London and the County of Middlesex.

In July 2012, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) announced the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI). This housing and homelessness program consolidation was one of the outcomes from the Provincial-Municipal Fiscal and Service Delivery Review. Consolidating housing and homelessness related programs is a key part of Ontario's Long Term Affordable Housing Strategy (LTAHS) to transform the housing system and put people first. Under LTAHS, the Province committed to consolidate the following housing and homelessness related programs:

- Consolidated Homelessness Prevention Program;
- Emergency Energy Fund;
- Emergency Hostel Services;
- Domiciliary Hostel Program; and
- Provincial Rent Bank.

The implementation of the Provincial housing strategy and funding model require regulation amendments for Ontario Works and changes to the services and contracts with funded agencies. Some of the changes include:

- the introduction of the Investment in Affordable Housing program (IAH) by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH);
- consequential impacts of the introduction of the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative, part of Ontario's Long Term Affordable Housing Strategy; and
- the removal of the Community Start-Up and Maintenance Benefit (CSUMB) from social assistance, as announced in the 2012 Budget.

The vision for the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative is a better coordinated and integrated service delivery system that is people-centered, outcome-focused and reflects a Housing First approach to prevent, reduce and address homelessness. Over time, this approach will shift the focus of services from reactive responses to homelessness to more

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proactive and permanent solutions focused on the following two key outcomes:

1. Individuals experiencing homelessness obtain and retain housing; and
2. Individuals at risk of homelessness remain housed.

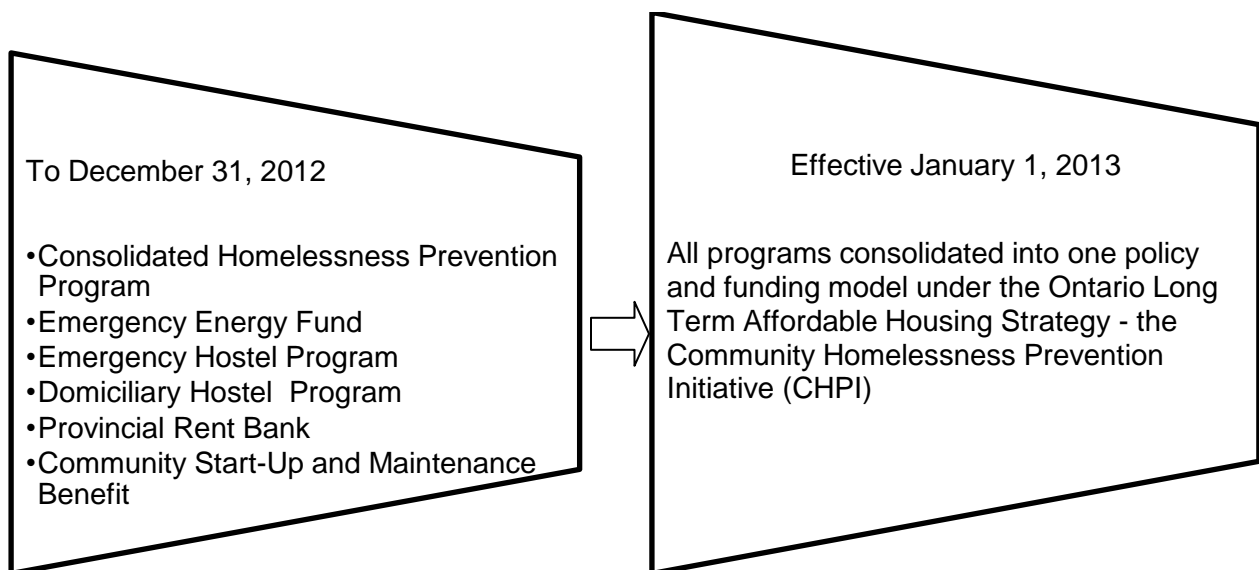
Under the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative, Service Managers will have increased flexibility to use the consolidated funding in any of the following service categories:

- Emergency Shelter Solutions (e.g. emergency shelter and/or safe bed);
- Housing and Related Supports (e.g. permanent housing, rental allowance);
- Services and Supports (e.g. street and housing outreach, food banks, housing search); and
- Homelessness Prevention (e.g. rent support/eviction prevention).

The new approach to provincial homelessness program funding will combine funding from the five existing homelessness related programs into a single funding envelope and will provide greater flexibility to use the funding to address local homelessness related priorities. In addition, a portion of the Provincial expenditure from the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative will be re-allocated to London.

All changes are scheduled to take place January 1, 2013. Over the next several months, City staff will be working closely with the London community and the County of Middlesex to determine both the need and expectations of services and programs, and the funding model. These efforts will be linked to the London Community Housing Strategy and Community Plan on Homelessness.

Ontario Policy and Funding of Homelessness Services - Current and New Model

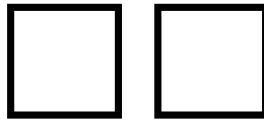


Implications and Next Steps for London

The Provincial announcement of the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative and the implementation date of January 1, 2013 requires that all current homelessness related agreements and contracts with funded agencies terminate on December 31, 2012. Formal notices will be issued to the agencies along with the County of Middlesex in the upcoming weeks. We recognize that the funding announcements will cause concern regarding the services and programs to individuals experiencing homelessness.

To prepare for the changes City staff are embarking on a rapid and extensive community engagement process to work with a wide group of stakeholders to develop service and program principles and new funding arrangements. We anticipate introducing transition plans to carry us over to the longer term outcome based solutions that work towards more permanent solutions to homelessness.

Listed below are some details regarding the current service delivery for our homelessness initiatives.



Emergency Hostel Services

Emergency hostel services will be removed from Ontario Works financial assistance for Consolidated Municipal Services Managers (CMSMs).

The City of London has funding agreements with three hostel operators who provide 360 emergency shelter beds funded under a current per diem agreement through Ontario Works. The hostel operators are:

- Salvation Army, Centre of Hope;
- Mission Services of London - Men's Mission, and Rotholme Women's and Family Shelter; and
- Unity Project for the Relief of Homelessness in London.

Domiciliary Hostel Services

Domiciliary hostels provide supportive housing for individuals who are not eligible for residency in a long term care facility.

The City of London has funding agreements with the following domiciliary hostel operators:

- Mission Services of London - Men's Mission;
- London Regional AIDS Hospice o/a John Gordon Home; and
- Mount Brydges Rest Home.

The County of Middlesex receives funding for one domiciliary hostel bed.

Consolidated Homelessness Prevention Program (CHPP)/Emergency Energy Fund (EEF)/Rent Bank

Up to December 31, 2012, the Province will provide funding to the City who in turn enters into agreements with agencies to provide services and programs for individuals experiencing homelessness, or at risk of becoming homeless.

The Emergency Energy Fund (EEF) provides financial assistance to individuals experiencing a utility crisis and complements The Heat and Warmth Program (THAW).

The Rent Bank program provides loans to individuals at risk of eviction for non-payment of rent. This service is operated under contract with the Salvation Army, Housing Support Services.

The following organizations currently receive funding for programs and services:

- Youth Opportunities Unlimited – Youth Action Group
- Mission Services of London - Crashbeds
- John Howard Society – Youth Leaving Shelter Program
- Street Connection – Youth Mentor/Support Services
- Salvation Army, Centre of Hope – Housing Support Services
- London Housing Registry – Housing Drop in Services
- London InterCommunity Health Centre – Health Access Group
- County of Middlesex

Community Start-Up and Maintenance Benefit (CSUMB)

Effective January 1, 2013, CSUMB will be removed from social assistance. The Province advises that fifty percent of the provincial expenditure from CSUMB will be re-allocated to the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative and will be allocated to the City based on a formula of the number of individuals who have a Deep Core Housing Need (households who spend 50 per cent of their gross income on housing).

Until December 31, 2012 and subject to approval, CSUMB can provide assistance up to a maximum of \$1,500 for a family (with dependents) or \$799 for an individual or couple (no dependents) in a 24 month period. Additional payments may be available under exceptional circumstances with the approval of the Administrator.

Some common uses of CSUMB include (but are not limited to):

- Payments of last month's rent deposits;
- Fuel and hydro deposits;

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- Rental, energy arrears;
- Moving and storage costs;
- Household furnishings such as beds, dressers, table and chairs, etc.;
- Settlement costs such as bedding, dishes, small appliances, clothing etc.; or
- Any other costs approved and related to stabilizing housing.

Community concerns are being advanced to the Province on the loss of the CSUMB program within social services and the loss of a portion of funding. These changes are expected to have an impact on individuals and families in housing crisis or experiencing homelessness.

Implementing Change in London

The vision, recommendations and directions outlined in the London Community Housing Strategy and Community Plan on Homelessness support the vision and policy direction of the Province. London is well positioned to work collaboratively with our community and the County of Middlesex to achieve change that supports permanent solutions to homelessness.

The City of London will be required to develop and submit an interim Investment Plan forecasting expenditures and will enter into a Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative Service Agreement with the Province. The details of the format of the plan, performance guidelines and performance indicators will be developed in the fall of 2012.

The recent transition of the homelessness portfolio to Neighbourhood, Children & Fire Services supports the focus of a vibrant, diverse and caring community. We will build on the strengths of our funded agencies and community in defining London’s programs and services for individuals experiencing homelessness. City staff and community representatives will be working together over the next several months to develop solution focused outcomes and funding models. Our community process will include individual and group meetings with current funded agencies and the County of Middlesex. A series of community forums and conversations will be scheduled and involve a range of interested individuals and parties. We will provide regular updates to Council on the progress of the change plan and bring forward any recommendations required for implementation.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The details of the financial impact continue to be determined. We have been advised that the final figures for these allocations will be provided by September 10, 2012. Additional information related to the funding formula, service outcomes and program details are still being developed.

The Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative is 100% provincially funded. There is no impact on the 2012 budget. Changes to the proposed 2013 budget will be provided as more details become available.

Acknowledgments

Louise Stevens, Director, Municipal Housing
 Anna Lisa Barbon, Manager, Financial and Business Services
 Stephen Giustizia, Manager, Housing Division
 Gail Devito, Manager, Accounting and Reporting

SUBMITTED BY:	RECOMMENDED BY:
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