

Report to Community and Protective Services Committee

To: Chair and Members
Community & Protective Services Committee
From: Scott Mathers, MPA, P. Eng., Deputy City Manager
Planning and Economic Development
Subject: Occupant Noise Enforcement - Pilot Project
Date: August 23, 2022

Recommendation

That, on the recommendation of the Deputy City Manager, Planning and Economic Development this report **BE RECEIVED** for information purposes.

Summary

This information report summarizes ongoing discussions between London Police Service (LPS) and Municipal Compliance (MC) on the issue of transferring occupant noise enforcement from LPS to MC. Civic Administration is proposing a pilot project for Q4 2022 for all occupant noise service requests to be handled by MC in partnership with LPS dispatching. This protocol is common in many Ontario municipalities. It relieves LPS from most occupant noise service calls. The pilot will be monitored, and a determination will be made for a permanent transfer of duties. Partnered enforcement will continue to occur during annual events such as St. Patrick's Day, Homecoming and Halloween.

Background Information

This report supports the Strategic Plan by increasing the efficiency of Council's regulatory processes in response to citizen concerns.

In December 2021, Civic Administration was advised that LPS was considering transferring occupant noise calls to MC due to the volume of service requests of a more serious nature. At that time, discussions began on a possible transfer of duties.

The following provides a historical context of noise enforcement in London:

- 2007 - all noise complaints responded to by LPS. A municipal scan and review resulted in a new protocol of joint enforcement by City Municipal Law Enforcement Officers (MLEOs) and LPS. MLEOs were responsible for addressing construction noise, barking dogs, air conditioners/pool equipment and auto repair related to zoning complaints and LPS Officers were responsible for occupant related noise (parties, loud music etc).
- 2015 - Council direction to review noise complaints with a focus of transferring occupant noise from LPS to MLEOs. Numerous options proposed and debated. After several committee debates, Council directed that MLEOs respond to occupant noise during peak hours (Friday and Saturday evenings 7:00 PM – 3:00 AM) leaving all other occupant noise for LPS response. MLEOs continue to respond to all other non-occupant noise related complaints.
- 2021 - LPS recommend transferring all occupant noise to MC.

As part of this review, LPS provided noise related complaints data for a three-year period (2019-2021). The data shows the following:

- On average, 2,700 noise complaints are received annually.
- 39% of the complaints were received on a Saturday and Sunday.
- 28% of all noise complaints were received between 11:00 PM and 1:00 AM
- 3% of noise complaints were received between 6:00 AM and 10:00 AM

- In addition to LPS calls for service, MC addressed 1,300 occupant noise complaints (Friday and Saturday nights) in 2021.

A municipal scan was undertaken:

- Waterloo - enforced by City, via police dispatch, police radios, work in teams.
- Kingston - enforced by City and some by Police, staff work 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM as well as 10:00 PM to 3:00 AM on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings, police dispatch, police radios.
- Guelph - enforced by City, police dispatch, police radios, work in teams.
- Hamilton – enforced by City during daytime, Wednesday to Saturday evening partner with police, police radios.
- Brantford - enforced by City, 8:30 AM to midnight, seven days a week, teams after 4:30 PM.

Based on discussions with the above municipalities, there is a definite trend to shift noise enforcement from Police Services to municipalities.

After numerous operational discussions with LPS, Civic Administration is proposing a noise enforcement pilot for a three-month period starting in Q4 2022. The pilot proposes a new team of Noise/Parking Enforcement Officers to respond to occupant noise calls for service 24/7. Operationally, all occupant noise complaints would be received by the Police Call Center, triaged to determine possible criminal activity (domestic assaults, known dangerous property, active unrelated police investigation, sound of gunfire) and dispatched to LPS and MC accordingly. The majority of calls (non-criminal related) would be dispatched to MC. The largest benefit, from a cost and efficiency perspective, is that both noise and parking calls for service have daily peaks and valleys that are offsetting. When noise complaints peak in the evenings, parking service requests are low; when parking enforcement demands are high, such as for morning school zones, noise complaints are low. Non-occupant related noise complaints (barking dogs, construction etc.) would still be addressed by MC.

From a staffing perspective, the pilot requires transferring 4 Parking Services Officers from the existing complement and hiring 4 new Noise/Parking Enforcement Officers. Given 24/7 coverage, a management Coordinator position will also be required. Based on existing budget, funding would be required for three new staff positions. Currently, Parking Services Officers have a Return On Investment (ROI) between 120-200% based on Administrative Monetary Penalties (AMPs) issued. In addition to the ROI, Civic Administration propose to increase parking related AMPs to limit the cost of the transfer of services on the tax base.

3.0 Conclusion

Civic Administration will monitor the pilot project and report out on the findings prior to implementing this transfer of services long term. The subsequent report will provide information for consideration in the next Strategic Plan and multi-year budget discussions.

This report was prepared in consultation with LPS as well as numerous City services including Service London, Dispatch, Finance, People Services, and the Union.

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