

MANAGEMENT REPORT

Date: January 10, 2023
To: Social Services Sub-committee
From: Kelly Stone, Supervisor of Social Services – Housing, Jeff Wilson, Manager of Housing, and Kim McElroy, Director of Social Services
Report #: SOC23-005
Attachments: None

Title: Housing Division Update – Year in Review 2022

Objective: To provide the Social Services Sub-committee with an update regarding the work of the Housing Division.

Background: As the Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM) for Stratford, Perth County and St. Marys, the housing division is responsible for managing the provision of housing to individuals and families with low-to-moderate incomes. This includes being responsible for the centralized waitlist for Rent-Geared-to-Income housing, managing the operation of the Perth & Stratford Housing Corporation and the Britannia Street affordable apartments and the administration of a rent supplement program for approximately 122 units in the private market.

The Perth & Stratford Housing Corporation is comprised of 663 adult and family units in the communities of Atwood, Listowel, Milverton, Mitchell, St. Marys, and Stratford while the Britannia Street apartments consist of a 35-unit affordable existing building along with a 27-unit building currently under construction.

Over the past year, the housing team has focused on rebuilding connections with tenants and working with community partners to promote the health, safety, and well-being in the social housing system. In 2022, Council approved an additional Public Housing Review Officer which, along with collaborative work with community partners, has allowed the opportunity to work together to prevent evictions when able, and instead connect tenants with the supports required to stabilize within their homes. Through the coordination of multiple case conferences, in-home meetings, increased inspections (as warranted), working diligently to try to determine the root cause of issues arising, and putting effective strategies in place, there has been a strong focus on helping individuals remain living in their homes, rather than pursuing evictions.

In addition to the work being completed to stabilize tenancies, the housing team has seen the benefits of proactive measures designed to meet the needs of the community. Public Housing Review Officers have been hosting drop-in sessions within community housing buildings, with a focus on relationship building, assisting with completing of paperwork, and at times are able to problem-solve concerns in real time. This will continue to be a strong focus in the upcoming year, with the addition of community partners being available at drop-in times as well.

Analysis: Through 2020 and 2021, in order to ensure the health and safety of tenants, staff and the community, there were periods of time where the housing team and community partners were limited in their ability to connect with residents in-person. Over the past months, the housing team has been engaging with tenants in a positive and supportive manner, to work proactively to prevent eviction.

Financial Implications:

Financial impact to current year operating budget:

Tenant engagement and collaboration with community partners is occurring within the proposed Draft 2023 operating budget and as such, there are no other financial implications as a result of this report.

Financial impact to current year operating budget:

There are no other identified financial implications for future year budgets as a result of this report.

Legal considerations:

A focus on eviction prevention should decrease future interactions with the Landlord Tenant Board, mitigating legal risks for the Corporation.

Alignment with Strategic Priorities:

Strengthening our Plans, Strategies and Partnerships

Collaboration with community partners allows the housing division to better serve tenants.

Alignment with One Planet Principles:

Health and Happiness

Positive interactions with tenants and the community will promote health, happiness and well-being.

Staff Recommendation: THAT the report titled, "Housing Division Update – Year in Review 2022" (SOC23-005), be received for information.

Prepared by: Kelly Stone, Supervisor of Social Services – Housing
Jeff Wilson, Manager of Housing

Recommended by: Kim McElroy, Director of Social Services
Joan Thomson, Chief Administrative Officer