

MANAGEMENT REPORT

Date: June 13, 2023
To: Social Services Sub-committee
From: Kim McElroy, Director of Social Services
Report#: SOC23-019
Attachments: None

Title: Transitioning the Supportive Housing of Perth Program (SHOPP)

Objective: To recommend a change to the Supported Housing of Perth Program (SHOPP) scattered site delivery model, and to request approval to hire two Outreach Workers in-house to ensure that the City is serving the needs of our highest acuity individuals experiencing homelessness on the By-Name List.

Background: The SHOPP program was launched in February 2018 as a collaborative Housing First intervention aimed at supporting individuals and families experiencing homelessness in Perth County, St Marys, and Stratford. There is a scattered site component to the program and a fixed site component. For this management report, and the review of the service delivery model, the scattered site component of the program is where the Social Services Department is recommending changes. The scattered site component supports housing for single adults, youth, or families with dependent aged children wherein participants receive intensive case management support, coupled with portable housing allowances to offset, or subsidize rent, to live in a unit of their choosing in the private market throughout Perth County.

The scattered site model has been a collaborative partnership between the City of Stratford Social Services Department, Optimism Place, Stratford/Perth Shelterlink, John Howard Society of London and District and CMHA Huron Perth Addiction and Mental Health Services. The program provides housing, coupled with intensive wraparound supports, to those most vulnerable in our community that are experiencing homelessness. The current memorandum of understandings with the four agencies are set to expire September 30, 2023. In the Winter/Spring 2022-2023 SHOPP leadership and direct service staff initiated a Five-Year Review of the Program.

Analysis: Within the last five years this program has had many successes, but there have also been some challenges in the current service delivery model for the City of Stratford as the Service System Manager. It is believed with the proposed model of

having two Outreach Workers internally and three external support agency workers, many of these challenges will be addressed. The Social Services Department will look at using the months of July, August, and September to transition the program.

By hiring two Outreach Workers in-house and streamlining operations within a revised service delivery model, more high acuity clients experiencing homelessness will be served. Social Services staff will investigate entering memorandums of understandings with two or three support agencies, whose mandates meet the needs of our most complex clients to help support this program. The memorandums of understanding will require the support agencies to hire Housing Stability Workers (three in total) who will carry an intensive needs caseload and draw their intake from the local By-Name List.

The duties of the Housing Stability Workers and the City's Outreach Workers will include supporting clients with document readiness, housing searches, and once permanent housing is secured, housing stability support will be provided. The team of five (three external and two internal) will be supported by the current coordinator, and caseworker positions within the Social Services Department. Clients will not lose their support because the team will be able to absorb the caseload when a staff position is vacant. If a client needs discretionary benefits, there is a direct path to requesting the benefits as these are issued within the Social Services Department, and the caseworker who is supporting the program and issuing the benefits has access to various discretionary funds through multiple funding sources to ensure that all avenues are looked at for the client.

Approximately 50% of the clients with high acuity needs on the By-Name List are being housed through the Perth & Stratford Housing Corporation (PSHC) in community housing. Furthermore, as of January 2023, 43% of households on the By-Name List were in receipt of Ontario Works support. By having in-house Outreach Workers on this team, they will be able to liaise with Housing and Ontario Works staff (Public Housing Review Officers, Maintenance Workers, Ontario Works Caseworkers, Intake staff) providing intensive wraparound and timely supports. At the time of this report there are currently 39 individuals being served by five workers within the SHOPP program. This would increase the complement to 60 clients being served by five workers in an intensive manner, as each worker would carry a minimum of 12 per caseload and if the complement of workers temporarily dips below 5 due to illness or attrition the caseload will be maintained through resources in Social Services or partner agencies. Clients who are currently being served in the SHOPP scattered site delivery model will transition into the new model and will continue to be supported on their path to housing stability.

Financial Implications:

Financial impact to current year operating budget:

The change in programming will not see any changes to the operational budget as the funding is currently 100% provincial. Should the provincial funding model change, the service would require reassessment at that time.

Financial impact on future year operating budget:

It is anticipated that by bringing this program in-house and streamlining operations, there will be a savings in discretionary dollars as it will minimize duplication of services.

Alignment with Strategic Priorities:**Strengthening our Plans, Strategies and Partnerships**

Partnering with the community to make plans for our collective priorities in arts, culture, heritage and more. Communicating clearly with the public around our plans and activities.

Alignment with One Planet Principles:**Health and Happiness**

Encouraging active, social, meaningful lives to promote good health and wellbeing.

Equity and Local Economy

Creating safe, equitable places to live and work which support local prosperity and international fair trade.

Culture and Community

Nurturing local identity and heritage, empowering communities and promoting a culture of sustainable living.

Staff Recommendation: THAT the Supported Housing of Perth Program (SHOPP) program operations be transitioned to an in-house model;

THAT authorization be given to enter into memorandums of understanding with support agencies, whose mandates meet the needs of the City's most complex clients to help support the Supported Housing of Perth Program (SHOPP) program;

THAT the Chief Administrative Officer or the Director of Social Services be authorized to enter into memorandums of understanding with support agencies that have been prepared by or reviewed by the City Solicitor;

AND THAT authorization be given to hire two full-time Outreach Workers to support the operations of the Supported Housing of Perth Program (SHOPP) program.

Prepared by:

Kim McElroy, Director of Social Services

Recommended by:

Joan Thomson, Chief Administrative Officer