



The Corporation of the City of Stratford Social Services Sub-committee MINUTES

Date: March 4, 2025
Time: 4:30 P.M.
Location: Council Chamber, City Hall

Sub-committee Present: Councillor Henderson - Chair Presiding, Councillor Biehn, Councillor Nijjar, Councillor Wordofa

Regrets: Councillor Briscoe - Vice Chair

Staff Present: Kim McElroy - Director of Social Services, Audrey Pascual - Deputy Clerk, Miranda Franken - Council Clerk Secretary

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the Meeting to Order.

Councillor Briscoe provided regrets for this meeting.

Land Acknowledgment

Moment of Silent Reflection

Respectful Workplace Policy Statement

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof

The *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* requires any member of Council declaring a pecuniary interest and the general nature thereof, where the interest of a member of Council has not been disclosed by reason of the member's absence from the meeting, to disclose the interest at the first open meeting attended by the member of Council and otherwise comply with the *Act*.

Name, Item and General Nature of Pecuniary Interest

No disclosures of pecuniary interest were made at the March 4, 2025, Social Services Sub-committee meeting.

3. Delegations

None scheduled.

4. Department Update

Councillor Wordofa joined the meeting at 4:32 P.M.

Sub-committee Discussion: The Director of Social Services provided the following highlights from the trends and variances recorded in the Department Updates over the last quarter beginning October 2024:

- childcare waitlist continuing to increase over time;
- unique children on the waitlist increased 10% and 31% since January 2024;
- 30% of total applications being for infant spaces, with the capacity for infants in Perth County being the lowest of the groups with only 70 licensed spaces;
- Junior Kindergarten and Senior Kindergarten spaces being the largest increase in total applications at 17%, with preschool being 70% in total applications;
- social housing seeing a rise in the waitlist numbers;
- the number of applications on the Centralized Waitlist increased 2%;
- priority population applications increased 30%;
- current numbers on the Centralized Waitlist being the highest recorded since tracking began in February 2019;
- 11 self support applicants and 8 chronological applicants housed into social housing;
- homelessness has decreased 6%;
- 24 households active on By-name list have found permanent housing;

- youth homelessness being at the lowest point recorded since the establishment of the By-name list in August 2019, with 9 individuals currently on the waitlist or 6% of total applications;
- Ontario Works (OW) total caseload increase of 6% from 804 to 852 with the highest case load recorded in Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM);
- temporary care assistance increased 54 to 57; and
- percentage of case loads with employment earning has remained steady at 12%.

Discussion took place on this matter between Sub-committee and staff.

Highlights of the discussion included:

- the child care waitlist being for licensed and municipally run day care centers with a high waitlist number being consistent through out Perth County;
- the issue being due to a shortage of capital spending to build spaces and shortage of trained Early Childhood Educators required;
- currently funded through Provincial and Federal funding;
- options for further funding being the City tax levy, to consider private companies providing funding to support their employees with childcare and staff looking at options to license home child care providers;
- since the centralization of the Ontario Works services, staff are continuing to help residents navigate for successful applications; and
- staff having reached out to community partners, the Library and Connection Centre, to help facilitate through public computer access.

4.1 Added - Adoption of the Addendum to the Agenda

Motion by Councillor Biehn

THAT the Addendum to the Agenda of the Social Services Sub-committee dated March, 4, 2025, be added to the Agenda as printed.

Carried

Motion by Councillor Biehn

THAT the Department Update Infographic titled " 202501_ Monthly Report Social Services Stratford" be received.

Carried

5. Next Sub-committee Meeting

The next Social Services Sub-committee meeting is April 15, 2025, at 4:30 p.m. in the Council Chamber, City Hall.

6. Adjournment

Motion by Councillor Nijjar

Sub-committee Decision: THAT the Social Services Sub-committee meeting adjourn.

Carried

Meeting Start Time: 4:30 P.M.

Meeting End Time: 4:45 P.M.