

Present:

Chair, Councillor Villeneuve
S. Dooley
E. Milavic
J. Parmar
J. Sturge
D. Toor
J. Liu (YR)
K. Dhesa (YR)

Absent:

J. Calbick
M. Shaw
K. Thiara
D. Chattha

Staff Present:

A. Murphy, Senior Social Planner
M. McCargar, Planning Technician
L. Luaifoa, Legislative Services

The Committee did a round table of introductions.

The agenda was varied.

B. DELEGATIONS

1. Youth Transitioning from Government Care

Melanie Mark, Associate Deputy Representative of Children and Youth for British Columbia, provided a presentation to the Committee on the needs of youth as they leave government care.

The following comments were made:

- The Representative for Children and Youth (RYC) is an independent office of the legislature. Its function is to improve outcomes for children, youth and their families in dealing with the provincial child and youth welfare system. The foundation of the work of the RYC is the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The rights of children and youth in government care are included in provincial legislation (*Child, Family and Community Service Act*).
- 51% of children in care are Aboriginal with 50% of those children utilizing services from Delegated Aboriginal Agencies. RYC is working towards establishing a protocol with the 23 Delegated Aboriginal Agencies to be able to carry out the work being done in an effective way.
- The mandate of the RYC is three-fold:
 1. **Research, Evaluation, Audit and Monitoring** – examining the child-serving system and making recommendations for improvement. An example of a recent report is “*On Their Own: Examining the Needs of BC Youth as They Leave Government Care* (April, 2014).
 2. **Critical Injury and Death Review and Investigations** –review of critical injuries and deaths of children. One of the higher profile cases RYC was involved with was the tasing of an 11 year old boy who had been in care for most of his life. Reports on this case are available

online. One report that references the case is “*Who Protected Him?*” (February, 2013).

3. **Advocacy** – information, support and advice, enhanced support and direct advocacy. Supporting children and youth to speak on their own behalf is part of the advocacy work. A guide for self-advocacy entitled *Champions for Change: A Guide to Effective Advocacy*, is available and intended to help youth and the adults who support them to build their skills.

- RYC’s mandate changed in September, 2013 to continue providing advocacy services to young adults aged 19 to the 24 who are eligible.
- RYC has received 12,500 cases to date and approximately 200 new calls per month.
- The role of the RYC includes some of the following; requesting reasons or reconsideration of a certain plan or decision, reviewing planning processes and decisions to ensure the views of children are heard and considered and, when needed, ensuring workers uphold the rights of children.
- RYC has implemented a new cell phone app called Rep4Rights.

The Committee made the following comments:

- Councillor Villeneuve was pleased to learn that services provided to youth in care would continue to be provided to some youth after their 19th birthday.
- It was questioned how many young people RYC connects with in Surrey and does RYC work with local agencies in Surrey that have a similar mandate to advocate for young people.
The delegation noted that Pacific Community Resources Society (PCRS) is a key stakeholder that the RYC refers to regularly. Most interfacing is with the Ministry of Children and Families. Youth agreements are a big concern in Surrey. Issues related to parental access to children in care are also an issue.
The delegation noted that a breakdown of information on the Surrey area will be forwarded to the Committee.
- It was questioned if RYC has anything to do with the Alouette Correctional Centre Reunification Unit which allows mothers to keep their children in prison. The delegation responded that RYC supports the rights of children to be with their parents.
- Staff noted that municipalities are not service providers and questioned the delegation on how the Committee or local government could support children and youth in care in Surrey. The delegation noted that an app for cell phones for Surrey could be explored as kids don’t always know where they can go for help. There are numerous famous people who have been in government care who are champions for this issue. Surrey could identify a famous person to take part in the app for kids in Surrey. The app could be designed to map out services for kids such as food banks, shelters, tuition waiver information etc.

Councillor Villeneuve thanked the delegation for their presentation.

2. SFU Aboriginal Bridge Programs

Judy Smith, Simon Fraser University provided a presentation on the Aboriginal Bridge Programs.

The following comments were provided:

- There are two Aboriginal Bridge Programs - Aboriginal Pre-Health and Aboriginal University Prep. Both programs are offered at the Surrey campus and have been running since 2011. Over 50 students have participated in the programs including adult learners and high school graduates. The completion rate is 76%.
- Although the Aboriginal population is growing rapidly, there is a real disproportionate number of Aboriginal vs. non Aboriginal people with university degrees.
- The long lasting and enduring impacts of colonization and the placement of Aboriginal children in residential schools have been detrimental to Aboriginal people. Evidence suggests that Aboriginal students are often treated differently in school. It was reported that in high school some Aboriginal students are encouraged to take courses such as non-academic Math and Communications. The implication is obvious and due to this type of treatment, students drop out of school or do not do as well in their studies.
- The Aboriginal Bridge Programs provides an opportunity for entry into university to students that might not be able to get in through the regular admissions program.
- Admissions to the Aboriginal Bridge Program are done on a conditional basis with each applicant assessed on criteria such as experience, cultural awareness etc.

The Committee made the following comments:

- It was questioned as to how many students are in a cohort and if recruitment of students was difficult. The delegation noted that the cohorts are made up of 12 students and recruitment is challenging. The SFU recruiter visits various communities and high schools and hosts a lot of information sessions.
- It was questioned if Grade 11 completion is required for entry into the program and what the tuition fees are. The delegation responded that assessments are done on an individual basis and tuition is \$2970 for two terms.
- It was suggested that another population to engage would be those in prison facilities. The Fraser Valley Institution for Women is for inmates serving 2 years plus and education is often a part of a person's release plan.

Councillor Villeneuve thanked the delegation for their presentation.

3. Delegation Requests

Christine Sheperd, Roots of Empathy, BC is requesting to appear before the Committee to present on the Roots of Empathy, a classroom program to reduce the levels of aggression and increase empathy among school-aged children.

It was Moved by E. Milavic
Seconded by J. Sturge
That Christine Sheperd be invited to present
on the Roots of Empathy program at the November, 2014 Social Policy Advisory
Committee meeting.

Carried

Kiran Dhesa, Young Women Civic Leaders is confirmed to appear as a delegation
before the Committee to present on the development of a Women's Advisory
Committee in the City of Surrey at the November SPAC meeting.

The agenda was varied.

A. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

1. Social Policy Advisory Committee Minutes of July 2, 2014 to be approved.

It was Moved by E. Milavic
Seconded by S. Dooley
That the Social Policy Advisory Committee
minutes of July 2, 2014 be adopted.

Carried

C. OUTSTANDING BUSINESS

1. **Heart in the City Award**

File No. 0290-20

Staff reported that the invitations for the event have been sent out and noted that
all of the nominees of the award will receive a trophy.

2. **Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan Update**

Alliance of Service Clubs

Staff reported that the Seeing is Believing tour is scheduled for October 8, 2014 at
7:30 am. The group of interested service club members will meet at City hall at
7:30 am for coffee then depart City hall at 7:50 am. Stephen Dooley and Councillor
Villeneuve of the Social Policy Advisory Committee will co-host the event.
Presentations will be provided at each of the 3 planned stops that include: an
inner-city school breakfast program; a youth housing facility; and a meeting with a
group of recent refugees.

The City of Surrey received a grant from Envision to cover the costs of the bus,
driver and coffee.

THIS Is The Change...” Community Forum – February 16, 2014

Staff reported that the forum is still in the early planning stages. Updates will be provided in the future.

2. Refugee Transportation Loan Petition

Staff reviewed the PowerPoint Presentation and Speaking Notes on the Refugee Transportation Loan Petition. The presentation was developed by staff to enable SPAC members to make presentations on the loan issue.

The Committee made the following comments:

- It was questioned when the petition would be presented to the Federal government. It was suggested that a target of 400 additional signatures be collected by January.
- It was suggested that the MP from all three major parties meet and receive the presentation and work together towards a solution.
- It was suggested that a You-Tube video clip be created with information about the Refugee Transportation Loan Petition as people are likely to share and view a YouTube clip. There are a number of people in Surrey that deal with technology that might be willing to volunteer to work on a video project.

The Committee was in support of a video clip idea and suggested that a celebrity voice over or narrator be used in the video. Esmir volunteered to work on creating a video-clip. The target is to complete the video and that each SPAC member do 2-3 presentations.

D. NEW BUSINESS**1. Plan for the Social Well-Being of Surrey Residents – 2012 – 2014 Report**

Staff provided a report on the implementation Plan for the Social Well-Being of Surrey Residents (Social Plan) and provided the following comments:

- The final recommendation in the Social Plan was that an annual report on the implementation of the plan be prepared. Staff is aiming to report every couple of years.
- Surrey was highlighted in a Plan Canada, Spring 2014, article on “*Lessons from Comprehensive Social Plan Development*”. Of the 11 municipal social plans reviewed, Surrey was the only municipality that had a formal reporting model and produced reports to track progress in a “publicly available and accessible format.”
- Other plans have been adopted that build on the recommendations of the Social Plan. An example is the Crime Reduction Strategy which was created in 2007 and provides direction for the City’s actions relative to crime reduction.

- This report focuses on highlighting work that has been done in 2012 to 2014 in Surrey:
 - **The Refugee Transportation Loan** initiative involves lobbying government to end the loan program for government assisted refugees.
 - **Poverty Reduction Plan** was adopted in 2012.
 - **Welcoming Communities Project**, which the City of Surrey was lead on, was undertaken in 2013-2014.
 - **Building Strong Neighborhoods** initiatives included strengthening the neighborhoods of Clayton and Bridgeview.
 - **Master Plan for Housing the Homeless** was adopted in 2013. The plan identified a need for 450 additional units of supportive housing over 5 years. It identifies priority populations as hard to house people with complex health issues, Aboriginal people, women, women with children, and youth. The City of Surrey signed an MOU with BC Housing in 2008 and 2012 which saw additional housing units opened and developed.
 - The section on the implementation of the **Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy** profiles the My Neighbourhood, My Future initiative which is intended to reduce childhood vulnerability and improve outcomes for children aged 0 to 6 in the Guildford West area. The City's Recreation Department developed My Zone, an afterschool program for middle years children aged 6-12. This program provides care and activities during critical afterschool hours (Monday to Friday 3:00 pm – 6:00 pm). Youth Engagement has been a strong focus for the City; each Committee of Council now has two youth representatives.
 - **Age Friendly Strategy for Seniors** was adopted in the past few months. The plan looks at: safety, health and wellness; transportation and mobility; housing; and buildings and outdoor spaces. Over the past few years, the City's Seniors and Accessibility Committee has organized Focus on Seniors forums. The forums have been very popular and well attended, and have been provided in different languages.

Overall, 89% of the Social Plan's recommendations have been acted upon. Of the 65 recommendations, 49 are "on-going", 8 are "completed", 2 are "in-progress" and 6 have "no action".

Councillor Villeneuve acknowledged the incredible work of staff.

E. ITEMS REFERRED BY COUNCIL

There were no items referred by Council.

F. CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence to receive.

G. INFORMATION ITEMS

1. 2014 Homeless Count
 - a) Key Findings
 - b) Full report – Results of the 2014 Homeless Count in the Metro Vancouver Region: A report of the Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness
2. On Their Own: Examining the Needs of BC Youth as They Leave Government Care, Representatives For Children And Youth, April 2014.
3. “Changing face of Surrey presents challenges” article, Vancouver Sun, August 8, 2014.

H. OTHER BUSINESS

1. **2014 SPAC Fun Schedule**
2. **Committee Member Updates**

J. Sturge reported that in September, the Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society arranged a tour of two Elizabeth Fry shelters for the Beedie Group. As a result of the tours, the Beedie group has made a \$50,000 donation to upgrade the shelters.

D. Toor reported that the Lions Club’s 100th anniversary is in 2017 and the Lions would like to help 100 million hungry people in particular, children. The North Surrey Lions currently supports 17 school breakfast programs. The goal is to be able to support each school that needs it in Surrey. Mr. Toor is requesting the Committee be involved in this initiative. The Chair noted that the Committee will think about the request and will work with staff on ideas how the Committee can participate.

I. NEXT MEETING

The next Social Policy Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, November 5, 2014.**

J. ADJOURNMENT

It was

Moved by E. Milavic
Seconded by J. Sturge
That the Social Policy Advisory Committee meeting do now adjourn.

Carried

The Social Policy Advisory Committee adjourned at 7:20 pm.

Jane Sullivan, City Clerk

Chairperson, Councillor J. Villeneuve
Social Policy Advisory Committee