

Present:

Councillor Elford – Chairperson
Councillor Annis
Councillor Guerra
A. Heinrich
K. Macdonald

Absent:

R. Prasad

Staff:

R. Costanzo, General Manager, Corporate Services
T. Waterhouse, General Manager, Policing Transition
A. Murphy, Senior Social Planner
L. Blake, Legislative Services

A. ADOPTIONS**1. Adoption of the Agenda**

It was Moved by Councillor Guerra
Seconded by Councillor Annis
That the Community Services Committee
meeting agenda of October 27, 2021, be adopted.
Carried

2. Adoption of the Minutes

It was Moved by Councillor Guerra
Seconded by Councillor Annis
That the Community Services Committee
meeting minutes of September 29, 2021, be adopted as presented.
Carried

B. NEW BUSINESS/PRESENTATIONS**1. Plans for Extreme Weather Response**

Aileen Murphy, Senior Social Planner, provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding plans for the Extreme Weather Response (EWR). The following information was highlighted:

- The EWR program started in 2006 in response to an incident of an unhoused resident in Vancouver being turned away from shelters during a period of cold weather. The individual subsequently died due to injuries from a fire they started for warmth. The EWR program has historically run annually from November 1 – March 31; however, BC Housing has announced that this year, it will start in October. An EWR shelter is a temporary shelter that opens overnight during extreme weather alerts and provides a mat, bedding and snack to guests. EWR shelters do not provide connections to services. The official EWR Plan identifies the criteria for when an EWR alert will be called. The alert may vary from area to area, as it is based on the local weather forecast.

- Funding for the EWR program is provided by BC Housing to communities where the number of unhoused residents exceeds the number of shelter spaces available. The Homelessness Services Association of British Columbia (HSABC) is contracted to manage EWR shelters in Vancouver and Surrey. The funding for the EWR program covers the program coordinator, overnight shelter staff, a snack for clients, cleaning, first aid supplies and transportation to the shelters, as needed. Funding is not provided for rent, so shelter spaces are sought for free from community organizations.
- There are four key roles in the EWR program:
 - **BC Housing:** sets the program guidelines, provides funding and compiles data on EWR shelters use.
 - **HSABAC EWR Coordinator:** prepares the EWR Plan, secures shelter locations, maintains contact list, and calls, communicates and coordinates EWR alerts.
 - **Non-Profit EWR shelter operators:** operates the shelter, develops a budget/signs a contract with BC Housing and develops a Memorandum of Understanding with churches or non-profit agency, as required.
 - **Local Government:** approves and inspects EWR shelters and suspends zoning enforcement during EWR alerts for approved EWR shelters.
- As of October 2021, there are five shelters located in City Centre, Fleetwood, Cloverdale and South Surrey/White Rock that provide 65 total mats. Staff continue to search for additional shelters, specifically in City Centre and Newton. Securing EWR shelter space is especially challenging due to COVID-19.

In response to questions from the Committee, Ms. Murphy provided the following information:

- COVID-19 restrictions in shelters have not been lifted at this time. For example, shelters remain at reduced capacities to facilitate physical distancing. BC Housing continues to rent hotel and motel rooms at specific locations to accommodate additional clients.
- Shelter residents' belongings can cause issues related to transportation, space and safety, such as the potential for bugs. People may not use an EWR shelter if it means leaving their belongings unattended outside.
- There is currently no shelter located in Fraser Heights as it has not been identified as a priority location.

2. Update on Supportive Housing Planning

Aileen Murphy, Senior Social Planner, provided a PowerPoint presentation update regarding supportive housing planning. The following information was highlighted:

- The housing continuum includes all types of housing from emergency shelters to home ownership. Emergency shelters and transitional, supportive housing are non-market housing units that support unhoused residents and those most at risk of homelessness.
- Surrey currently has 335 shelter beds and 216 supportive housing units for people who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness, not including safe houses for women, and children fleeing domestic violence, youth housing and/or recovery beds/units. These shelters are different from Emergency Weather Response (EWR) shelters, since they are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week year-round. Individuals are assigned a bed and receive meals and support services.
- Funding for the Supportive Housing Program is mainly provided by BC Housing. Supportive housing buildings generally include apartment units, a commercial kitchen and dining space and other amenity spaces. Supportive housing projects are operated by non-profit organizations who provide 24/7 staff support, meals, individual case plans to meet personal and housing goals, as well as other supports as necessary, such as health, accessing ID and income support, education, employment and reconnection to culture.
- There are a number of recently opened or soon to be opened supportive housing projects in Surrey:
 - **Peterson Place:** opened in Whalley in January 2021. It is on a property owned by BC Housing and features 38 studio units, a commercial kitchen, communal dining room and health rooms. Peterson Place is operated by Fraserside.
 - **The Nest:** opened in July 2021 in Newton. The property is owned by TransLink and leased to the City for temporary modular housing. The Nest provides a continuum of housing on one site, with total 40 units that includes 16 supportive recovery units. The project is operated by Phoenix Society.
 - **Baird Blackstone Building:** located on a City-owned site in Guildford, this project opened in September 2021 and provides 61 supportive housing units. Many residents of the former Steven Cobon site have been relocated to the Baird Blackstone Building. There is also a large main-floor unit that is part of the Hospital to Shelter Program.

- **Foxglove:** scheduled to be completed in December 2021 , with residents moving into the building in January 2022, this site is located on 140 Street and 98 Avenue. The project will accommodate 129 people in a variety of housing, including supportive housing units, single bedroom units and enhanced health units. Health professionals will work onsite with residents.
- **Atira Modular Housing:** this site located at 91 Avenue and King George Boulevard is owned by Atira Women's Resource Society. The former Hollywood Motel has been renovated and provides 23 supportive housing units for women. A modular housing project for the site is scheduled to open in January 2022 and will provide 44 units for women.
- **The Rosewood:** located on City-owned property at 96 Avenue and 137 Street, the Rosewood is scheduled to open in May 2022 and will be operated by Elizabeth Fry Society. The project will provide a total of 97 beds/units for women, children and Indigenous young women with 40 shelter beds, 42 permanent apartments and 15 apartments for young Indigenous females. The apartment units specifically for young Indigenous females will be operated by the Fraser Region Aboriginal Friendship Centre Association. The main floor will provide specialized health services for vulnerable women.
- BC Housing has purchased the former Travelodge Motel located on 104 Avenue and 139 Street. The building will provide 28 supportive housing. A Request for Proposal (RFP) has been issued seeking a non-profit operator.

The Committee noted that there needs to be more of a continuum of housing options so residents have less of a chance of falling into homelessness. It was also noted that Council is lobbying Metro Vancouver to review their housing sites in Surrey and encouraging them to improve and densify existing sites.

3. Policing Transition Planning Overview

Terry Waterhouse, General Manager, Policing Transition, provided a PowerPoint overview regarding the policing transition planning. The following information was highlighted:

- The City has specific responsibilities for both a municipal police force and RCMP services as outlined in the BC Police Act and Municipal Police Unit Agreement. The responsibilities are a bit different under each Act, but include:
 - Providing adequate accommodation, equipment and supplies, such as facilities and infrastructure;
 - Funding the provision of policing services for the municipality;

- Providing each police service its priorities, goals and objectives for policing services. For a municipal police force, these are provided to the Police Board and for RCMP services, they are provided to the Officer in Charge.

- At the November 5, 2018 Regular Council meeting, Council endorsed the transition to municipal police services. Staff worked on and provided background information to the Minister of Public Safety to approve the transition process, which occurred in February 2020. Staff continued to work on the transition and in June 2020, the Surrey Police Board was established with seven members appointed by the Province, one person appointed by Council and the Mayor acting as Chair.

- A key difference for a municipal police model is that all of its employees are employees of the Surrey Police Board. To allow for the transition of mostly union City staff to the employment of the Surrey Police Board, the City and the Board established a Succession Agreement with CUPE in March 2021. The Agreement includes the continued representation of union staff by CUPE 402.

- To begin the transition, all three levels of government created the Surrey Police Transition Trilateral Committee (SPTTC) with the mandate to establish the Surrey Police Service (SPS) through a phased, integrated approach from RCMP services. The deployment of the first 50 SPS officers by November 30, 2021 has been approved as part of Phase 1 of the transition process. The RCMP will continue to assume command during Phase 1, with the SPS working alongside RCMP officers in an integrated model. In later phases, the SPS will assume command as more SPS officers are implemented and become the police of jurisdiction.

- The transition governance occurs through a collaborative process with all three levels of government. Much of the work must occur in confidential settings due to the discussion of deployment strategies and legal agreements which ensures the transition can be completed in an efficient manner. The main goal of the transition process is to ensure that public safety or trust is never compromised.

In response to a question from the Committee, Mr. Waterhouse provided the following information:

- Applications for the vacancy on the Police Board are currently being processed and will be forwarded to Council for appointment and then forwarded to the province for final approval.

- All experienced police officers hired by SPS will be trained by the SPS. New recruits will be trained at the Justice Institute of BC.

4. New Amendments to Surrey Sign Bylaw

Rob Costanzo, General Manager, Corporate Services, provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding new amendments to the Surrey Sign Bylaw. The following information was highlighted:

- Surrey Sign By-law, 1999, No. 13656 was previously amended in 2019 to clarify that political signs may only be placed on private property with the consent of the property owner and must be removed 14 days following an election; however, it was not specified how far in advance of an election a sign may be displayed.
- At the October 18, 2021 Regular Council – Public Hearing meeting, Council approved Corporate Report R207 regarding proposed amendments to Surrey Sign By-law, 1999, No. 13656. The amendments provide clarification regarding:
 - A complete time period when a political sign may be displayed, including the time prior to an election. The time period is dependent on the type of election. For example, local government election signs may be displayed from the first day of the nomination period while a federal election sign may be displayed when the writ of election is issued.
 - A broader definition of political sign. The definition now includes signs related to referenda, plebiscites, and initiative and recall petitions, as well as signs supporting, opposing or disapproving of candidates or issues.
 - The definition of general voting day and establishment date.
- The proposed bylaw amendments do not infringe on residents' Charter of Freedom rights. Residents may post appropriate signs on private property at any time. For example, Keep the RCMP in Surrey signs will not be removed from private property.
- The proposed bylaw amendments are anticipated to receive final adoption at the November 8, 2021 Regular Council – Public Hearing meeting.

C. OUTSTANDING BUSINESS

This section had no items.

D. ITEMS REFERRED BY COUNCIL

This section had no items.

E. CORRESPONDENCE

This section had no items.

F. INFORMATION ITEMS

This section had no items.

G. OTHER BUSINESS

This section had no items.

H. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Community Services Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, November 24, 2021.

I. ADJOURNMENT

It was

meeting do now adjourn.

Moved by Councillor Guerra
Seconded by K. Macdonald
That the Community Services Committee

Carried

The Community Services Committee meeting adjourned at 6:32 p.m.

Jennifer Ficocelli, City Clerk

Councillor Elford, Chairperson