



Administrative Report

Office of the Chief Administrative Officer/Treasurer

To: Warden Tom Bain and Members of County Council

**From: Robert Maisonville
Chief Administrative Officer/Treasurer**

Date: December 6, 2017

Subject: 2018 Budget – Community Services / Housing with Supports

Report #: 2017-R10-ADM-1206-RM

Purpose

To provide Council with the 2018 budget estimates for Community Services / Housing with Supports as per the attached [Appendix A](#).

Discussion

The Community Services / Housing with Supports program provides assistance to County residents who require supervised care, are at risk of homelessness, and have need of financial assistance. Care is provided through purchase of service agreements.

As part of the Long Term Affordable Housing Strategy, the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiation (CHPI) consolidated a number of homelessness initiatives to provide a coordinated and integrated service delivery system that is people-centred, outcome-focused and reflects a Housing First approach to prevent, reduce and address homelessness in communities across the Province.

Program consolidation allows municipalities to use funding in a more flexible manner that is reflective of the region's local needs. County program staff are involved with regional committees tasked with developing the work plans that address regional affordable housing and homelessness.

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While municipal contributions towards the CHPI program are discretionary, Council's continued support for this key homelessness initiative is recommended.

Prior Year Performance

The Housing with Supports program is provided via purchase of service agreements with twelve service providers located throughout the County. All facilities are inspected at least once per year to ensure compliance with program standards set by the County of Essex. To address the need for improved oversight, consistency of practice and support for this department, Council approved the addition of a Community Services Coordinator in 2017, and recruitment is currently underway. In addition, as part of the reorganization of the Treasurer's role, oversight for this program is being transferred to the Director of Council and Community Services / Clerk.

Estimates for 2017 operations are projected to be under budget, despite an increase in the number of individuals served. Any unspent CHPI funds would normally be directed towards other CHPI programs and housing initiatives that have experienced increases in demand (such as utility support programs).

Proposed Budget

The 2018 budget includes the annualized cost of new supervisory staff, with a funding model that includes a modest increase in CHPI funds, a reduction in allocated administrative costs, and the elimination of long-term subsidized counselling. (Short term counselling services will continue to be made available throughout the region).

Service providers experience significant pressure from the health care system to admit clients with more complex needs. In response, the department has taken a greater role in determining suitability of placement for clients, as well as raising expectations for service levels provided by the Homes.

The per diem rate of \$51.19 has remained the same since April 1, 2016; no additional increase to the per diem rate is being brought forward at this time. Increased demands, coupled with pending changes to Employment Standards and minimum wage levels will create a financial environment in which it is difficult for service providers to operate.

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While the program is discretionary, a small increase to the County Contribution of \$15,620 (3.9%) has been recommended to preserve service levels despite inflationary pressures on services delivery, and to maintain the approximate 80/20 cost sharing for this program.

Recommendation

That Report Number 2017-R010-ADM-1206-RJM be received and further that the 2018 Departmental Budget Estimates for Community Services / Housing with Supports be approved.

Respectfully Submitted

Robert Maisonville

Originally Signed by

Robert Maisonville, Chief Administrative Officer/Treasurer

Appendix No.	Title of Appendix
Appendix A	2018 Budget – Community Services/Housing with Supports