



Committee of the Whole Report

Report Number: HS2021-006
Meeting Date: October 5, 2021
Title: **Community Pandemic Recovery Task Force Completion**
Author and Title: Rod Sutherland, Director of Human Services

Recommendation(s):

That Report HS2021-002, **Community Pandemic Recovery Task Force Completion**, be received; and

That the Community Pandemic Recovery Task Force be dissolved and the Task Force members be thanked for their contributions; and

That staff be directed to incorporate the Task Force recommendations for the City to continue to co-ordinate community agency workshops and a vital signs survey in operational work plans starting in 2022; and

That this recommendation be brought forward to Council for consideration at the next Regular Council Meeting.

Department Head: _____

Financial/Legal/HR/Other: _____

Chief Administrative Officer: _____

Background:

Council established the Community Pandemic Recovery Task Force (CPRTF) on May 26, 2020 to provide advice and recommendations to Council and Staff on resources and support required to ensure community recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic, including:

- Co-ordination and implementation of recovery and relief efforts to support non-profit and community service providers in the broader health and human services sector
- Compilation of a comprehensive list of community support services
- Identification of funding opportunities and mobilization of appropriate resources to obtain funding
- Recommendations for partnerships and working groups in order to best leverage existing programs and services
- Identification of gaps in service delivery and recommendations to address them
- Recommendations for the City's 2021 Operating Budget
- Task Force members were appointed for terms ending by December 31, 2021

The twelve appointed members of the Task Force were:

- Councillor Ron Ashmore
- Penny Barton Dyke, United Way of Kawartha Lakes
- Councillor Pat Dunn
- Councillor Doug Elmslie
- Marina Hodson, Kawartha North Family Health Team
- Heather Kirby, Kawartha Lakes Food Source (Co-chair)
- Lynda Nydam, Children's Services Council of Kawartha Lakes / Haliburton
- Mark Pankhurst, City of Kawartha Lakes
- Councillor Tracy Richardson
- Pam Stuckless, Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit
- Rod Sutherland, City of Kawartha Lakes
- Amy Terrill, Boys and Girls Clubs of Kawartha Lakes (Co-chair)

The Task Force was also supported by the following City staff who provided key inputs and assisted in the co-ordination of the various activities:

- Jamie Anderson, CEO Kawartha Lakes Public Library
- Barb Condie, Accessibility Co-ordinator
- Shelley Cooper, Community Partnership and Programs Supervisor
- Holly Russett, Executive Assistant, Human Services
- Brenda Stonehouse, Strategy and Innovation Specialist

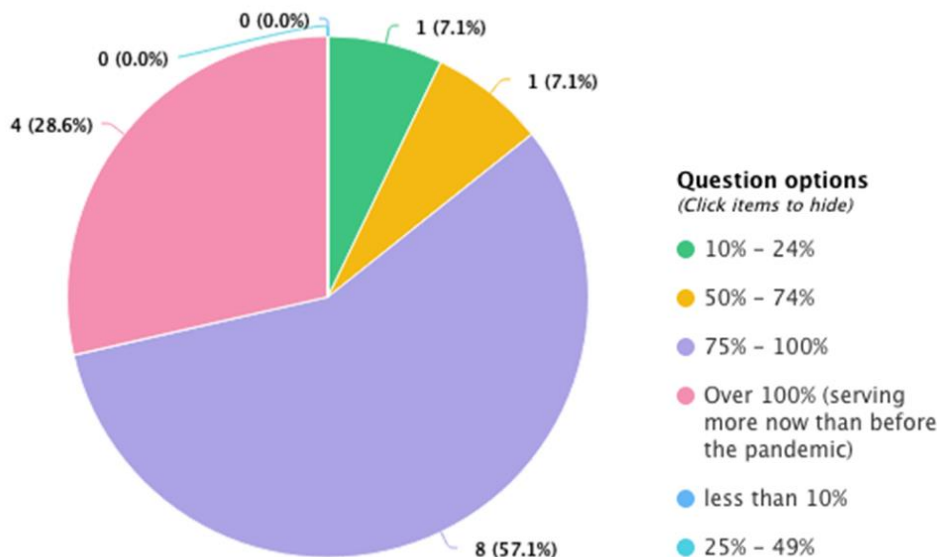
The Task Force first met in June 2020 and met regularly through to September 2021. Two working groups were established: a Gaps Working Group and a Funding Working Group to better understand the challenges and concerns of local agencies and community service providers and to identify potential funding opportunities, including how to support organizations in pursuing them.

The gaps assessment completed in July and August 2020 resulted in 48 responses. The primary pandemic impacts that were identified were:

- Human Resource challenges
- Increased costs eg: PPE, infrastructure
- Challenges meeting health guidelines
- Technology – both agency and client
- Mental Health and Wellness – clients, staff, volunteers – resulting from isolation

Additional targeted surveys were completed in October 2020 and July 2021 specific to financial issues and recovery, resulting in 13 and 14 responses respectively. As shown in the figures below, the impact on service provision varied, with some organizations serving a greater number of residents while many were not able to serve the same number as pre-pandemic.

1. Please estimate the percentage of clients you are currently able to serve.



2. How optimistic are you that your organization will be able to continue to provide services to our community over the following time periods:



Initial recommendations were presented to Council in November 2020, with the following resolution being passed on November 17, 2020:

That Report HS2020-005, **Community Pandemic Recovery Task Force Recommendations**, be received;

That staff be directed to develop a framework for a Kawartha Lakes Community Recovery Fund to support pandemic recovery and relief efforts for non-profit and community service providers in the broader health and human services sector, including the identification of the scope and criteria for the fund; funding levels and source for presentation to Council in the first quarter of 2021;

That the proposed Kawartha Lakes Community Recovery Fund incorporate the 2021 Lindsay Legacy CHEST Fund allocation for eligible proposals within Lindsay;

That staff be directed to proceed with modifying the 2021 and 2022 50/50 Community Project Capital Funding Program, Beautification Program and any other City Funding Program application process by waiving the requirement for a matching contribution from applicants; and

That staff be directed to identify internal resources and external supports that could be made available for workshops and information sessions to community organizations in support of pandemic response and recovery and develop a 2021 schedule for delivery.

Rationale:

The Community Pandemic Recovery Fund was established by Council on January 28, 2021 to support pandemic recovery and relief efforts for non-profit and community service providers in the broader health and human services sector. The fund was created with a total of up to \$500,000, comprised of up to \$120,000 from the Pandemic related portion of the City's Contingency Reserve as identified by Council on December 1, 2020, and up to \$380,000 from the 2021 Lindsay CHEST Fund.

Mr. Max Radiff was appointed to participate as a member of the fund evaluation committee to represent the Lindsay CHEST Fund.

The goals of the fund were to:

- Encourage the necessary collaboration and sharing of resources;
- Foster the essential innovation of operations and practices;
- Build capacity to foster long term stability; and
- Establish intentional progressive planning.

Applicants were expected to identify:

- Willingness to participate in capacity-building opportunities as arranged by the Community Pandemic Recovery Task Force
- Collaboration between organizations with similar requirements that are mutually beneficial is strongly recommended
- Priority consideration will be given to applications that supply local quotations

The two streams identified for the fund to provide the greatest impact for organizations were:

- Survive: addressing the immediate needs of the most fragile by keeping them operational
- Thrive: creating the opportunity to manage the changes necessary to continue to serve

A first call for applications for the fund took place in February 2021, with a total of 17 applications received. Nine applications were approved totaling \$245,169.30. Based on the first round, Council approved returning un-allocated funding of \$205,668.22 back to the Lindsay CHEST Fund, with the balance of \$49,162.48 allocated to a second call for applications.

The second call for applications was issued in April 2021 resulting six applications. All six were approved for a total of \$42,500. The remaining balance of \$6,662.48 was returned to City Reserve.

Funding approvals included support for operating costs, technology, personal protective equipment/sanitizing for operations, and program development in response to COVID.

The recommendation of the Task Force to waive the 50% matching contribution for the Community Project Capital Funding Program was also approved for 2021 and 2022.

The organization and delivery of workshops and information sessions was co-ordinated with the following capacity-building workshops delivered in 2020 and 2021:

- Grant Writing 101
- Innovation for Non-profits
- Mental Health Supporting Strategies
- Overview of Virtual Meeting Platforms
- Introduction to Social Media
- Digital Literacy and Online Safety
- Graphic Design with Canva

The planning of a number of the workshops was co-ordinated by staff of the City's Economic Development Division. The Task Force was thankful for this assistance and collaborative approach.

In addition to the workshops, a presentation was made by economist Tom Phillips of Fleming College on transformational change. As Dr. Phillips noted, the pandemic has necessitated that we "must find new ways to meet the needs now."

As organizations continue to look to the road to recovery and the need for community solutions, one commented in the survey that "We would love collaborations with other organizations so that we can make a bigger impact together."

At the last meeting of the Task Force on September 20, 2021 it was agreed that the following recommendations would be made to Council:

1. That the City continue to offer workshops to non-profit agencies based on needs identified. Topics identified in July 2021:
 - Strategic planning after COVID-19
 - Wellness Support for Employees and Volunteers
 - Legal and HR Implications for COVID-19
 - Online Fundraising
 - Event Planning Online

- Communications
- Volunteer Succession Planning
- Change Management
- Grant Writing

2. The municipality complete an annual “vital signs” survey of community services, reporting results to all participants and publishing results.

Staff have contacted Economic Development staff who are supportive of a co-ordinated approach to addressing these recommendations as they are expected to continue to align with departmental goals as well as continuing to align with the City’s Strategic Plan.

The Terms of Reference for the Task Force appointed members to terms ending by December 31, 2021. As the November 17th, 2020 Council-approved recommendations of the Task Force have now been completed and the terms of members ending, it is recommended that the Task Force be dissolved and that the members thanked for their contributions. Of particular note, the steady leadership and commitment of Co-chairs Heather Kirby and Amy Terrill formed a strong foundation for the success of the Task Force.

Other Alternatives Considered

The Task Force was created by resolution of Council. Council could decide to extend or change the mandate of the Task Force as it desires.

Alignment to Strategic Priorities

The Community Pandemic Recovery Task Force relates directly to the Exceptional Quality of Life priority through:

- Improving the health and well-being of residents
- Building social infrastructure
- Community Building

Consultations:

Heather Kirby, Community Pandemic Recovery Task Force Co-chair
Amy Terrill, Community Pandemic Recovery Task Force Co-chair

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Department Head: Rod Sutherland, Director