



## REPORT TO COUNCIL HOMELESSNESS TASK FORCE

File No.: 0360-20 (HTF)

**TO:** Mayor & Council  
**FROM:** Dale Blackburn, Chair  
**DATE:** June 25, 2010  
**SUBJECT:** Community Homelessness Coalition – Terms of Reference

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### **Recommendation:**

*THAT Council endorse the Community Homelessness Coalition Terms of Reference attached to this report;*

*THAT staff advertise for membership to form the Community Homelessness Coalition;*

*THAT \$5,000.00 be allocated from Council's contingency account to support the Community Homelessness Coalition's initiatives in 2010;*

*AND THAT in future years \$5,000.00 be budgeted annually to support the Coalition, and the Financial Plan be amended accordingly.*

### **Background:**

The City's Homelessness Task Force was created in February 2009 to examine the issue of homelessness and provide Council with recommendations on how to alleviate the problem. On October 6, 2009 the Task Force presented its report to Council and on January 12, 2010 Council adopted a number of the report's recommendations. One of the key recommendations was that the City of Campbell River "serve a leadership role in the creation of a committee which would draw on the community's resources and provide an opportunity to speak with a unified voice when supporting housing initiatives and all other endeavours to address homelessness. This committee would serve to help coordinate the efforts of the various community groups who are currently providing services for homeless people or may do so in the future. The committee would work towards ensuring that services are not duplicated and that gaps in services are addressed. The committee would also promote the coordination of support services, so that people can easily navigate the complex system of services that currently exist."

Based on the above recommendation Council requested that the Task Force recommend the structure, membership and mandate of a permanent Community Homelessness Coalition (CHC).

### **Discussion:**

The Homelessness Task Force spent considerable time researching various community based models to address homelessness. The attached terms of reference were prepared after reviewing a number of similar documents ranging from the very basic (Burnaby) to the very

complex (Victoria). Each of the documents had their strong points so the Task Force attempted to incorporate the best ideas. Along with Victoria and Burnaby the Task Force reviewed documents from Nanaimo, Comox Valley, London Ontario, Kelowna, Calgary and Ottawa.

**Operational Considerations:**

The establishment of a long-term Community Homelessness Coalition will require financial and staff resources if the City intends on playing a leadership role. The terms of reference recommend that the City establish a minimum annual operating budget of \$5,000.00 which will assist Coalition members with the costs of attending workshops & conferences; cover administrative/office expenses; food; advertizing; publishing of public notices; hosting public forums and other related expenses.

Based on discussions with staff it is recommended that the City's Land Use Department provide support to the Coalition.

The City has recently received a \$50,000.00 one time grant from VIHA via the Strathcona Regional District to increase community capacity to end homelessness. The City is very grateful to the Regional District Directors for making this funding available. It is suggested that the funds be held until the Coalition has been formed and is able to recommended uses for the money.

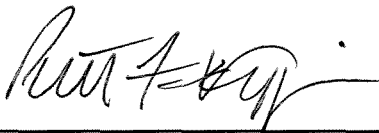
**Options:**

1. Endorse the attached terms of reference
2. Revise and endorse the attached terms of reference
3. Recommend further amendments and consultation

**Communications:**

The Homelessness Task Force and local stakeholder groups will be advised of Council's decision.

Respectfully submitted,



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Dale Blackburn, CHAIR,  
Homelessness Task Force

PW/tb



## **TERMS OF REFERENCE COMMUNITY HOMELESSNESS COALITION**

### **INTRODUCTION**

In the spring of 2009 the City of Campbell River formed a Homelessness Task Force to examine the issue of homelessness in Campbell River and provide City Council with recommendations on how to alleviate the problem. The Homelessness Task Force made several recommendations including the formation of an ongoing Community Homelessness Coalition. These terms of reference outline the purpose, membership and procedures for an ongoing Community Homelessness Coalition.

### **MISSION**

Facilitate and coordinate community responses to homelessness\*.

### **VALUES & OPERATING PRINCIPLES**

The Coalition will:

- a) incorporate the principle of “housing first\*\*\*”;
- b) maintain an inclusive, participatory and respectful process in the planning, development and implementation of activities related to homelessness;
- c) be action-oriented and result focused;
- d) use collaborative strategies to access funding for projects geared to reduce homelessness;
- e) liaise with all levels of government and encourage their active participation in meeting the goals of the Coalition.

### **PURPOSE**

1. To work with all levels of government and community partners to secure or develop affordable long-term housing for an additional 50 people who meet the Task Force’s definition of homelessness for each of the next five consecutive years.
2. To develop and implement a plan to work with community partners to enhance day-time services available for people who are homeless including showers, laundry, lockers, washrooms and telephone access.
3. To promote public awareness and understanding about homelessness.
4. To evaluate the effectiveness of activities and programs, identify gaps, support what works and make recommendations for improvements and the reduction of duplication.

\* The definition of “homelessness” is found in Appendix “A”

\* \*The definition of “housing first” is found in Appendix “B”

5. To encourage all levels of government including Federal, Provincial, Regional, Municipal and First Nations to partner with each other and non-government organizations to more effectively address homelessness issues by implementing those initiatives noted in the attached Appendix "C". The Coalition will accomplish this by:
  - a) preparing resolutions for City Council's consideration to be forwarded to the Association of Vancouver Island Coastal Communities (AVICC), the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) for consideration;
  - b) letter writing campaigns;
  - c) direct lobby efforts.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

Membership in the Coalition will be comprised of community stakeholders representing a diverse cross section of the community, including but not limited to:

### Voting members:

1. Community service providers (i.e. The Salvation Army, Island JADE Society, Campbell River Food Bank, North Island Transition Society, Laichwiltach Society)
2. Religious/spiritual community
3. Health/mental health/addiction services (VIHA)
4. First Nations
5. Ministry of Housing and Social Development
6. Individuals experiencing or who have experienced homelessness
7. BC Housing
8. Business community
9. Community members (i.e. service club representatives and individuals at large)

### Advisory members

It may be advisable to include other organizations in an advisory non-voting capacity, as required, such as:

1. RCMP
2. Correctional services

### Ex-officio members

Elected officials representing all three levels of government;  
Member of Parliament, MLA, representative from Campbell River City Council.

Ex-officio members would be invited to all meetings and would be updated on the work of the Coalition.

## **MEETING PROCEDURES**

1. The Coalition shall meet according to its determined schedule.
2. Special meetings shall be at the call of the Chair person or at the request of any three members of the Coalition.
3. Unless otherwise authorized pursuant to Division 3 of Part 4 of the *Community Charter*, all meetings will be held in open session and in a location accessible to the public.
4. Unless otherwise authorized by the Coalition, the public shall only address the Coalition when they are scheduled to do so, on the Coalition meeting agenda.

5. The majority of voting members of the Coalition shall represent a quorum.
6. The Coalition will strive to make all decisions by consensus through dialogue. Only when consensus cannot be reached, will a vote be taken.
7. The order of business is to be set out in an agenda package to be provided to the Coalition members in advance of the meeting date. Minutes of the meeting will be prepared by the staff of the Land Use Department and then adopted by the Coalition and signed by the Chair at the next regular meeting. Originals of the minutes will be retained by the Land Use Department.
8. Committee members must abide by the City's Conflict of Interest Guidelines and the provisions of Division 6 and 7 of the *Community Charter*. Members who have a direct or indirect pecuniary interest in a matter under discussion are not permitted to participate in the discussion or vote on a question in respect to the matter. They must declare their conflict, state the general nature of their conflict, and then leave that part of the meeting where the matter is under discussion. The members' declaration must be recorded in the minutes, and the Committee member must not attempt in any way, whether before, during or after the meeting, to influence the voting on any question in respect of the matter.

## **CHAIR/VICE CHAIR**

The Coalition will elect from among its membership, a Chair and Vice Chair at its first meeting each year. The Chair, or as delegated to the Vice Chair, will serve as the public spokesperson for the coalition, set the agenda, respond to administrative matters, including maintaining the liaison with the City of Campbell River.

## **REMUNERATION**

Coalition members will serve without remuneration.

## **BUDGET**

The City's Operations Department will initially provide a minimum annual budget of \$5,000.00 for the operation of the Coalition. The budget will assist Coalition members with the costs of attending workshops & conferences; cover the costs related to administrative/office expenses; food; advertizing; publishing of public notices; hosting public forums and other related expenses. The Coalition will present an annual budget for approval.

## **TECHNICAL AND ADMINSTRATIVE STAFF SUPPORT**

1. The Land Use Manager and Council Liaison shall attend the meetings in an advisory capacity;
2. The Land Use Department shall provide technical and administrative support for the Coalition including:
  - a) organizing, preparing and distributing the agenda to Coalition members;
  - b) receiving all correspondence and preparing correspondence on behalf of the Coalition;
  - c) maintaining a list of outstanding issues for Coalition action;
  - d) taking and preparing 'draft' minutes and providing the final minutes to the Legislative Services Department and Coalition members;
  - e) managing the files of the Coalition, as necessary.

Endorsed by Council: July 6, 2010

## APPENDIX “A”

### HOMELESSNESS DEFINITION

There are many definitions of homelessness which have been developed by various other communities and studies. The City of Campbell River Homelessness Task Force reviewed a wide range of definitions. For the purpose of these Terms of Reference, homelessness is defined as follows:

#### ***Absolute Homelessness***

Individuals and families who are living in:

- Public spaces without legal claim (e.g. living in the bush, on the streets, in abandoned buildings, in tents);
- A temporary or emergency shelter;
- A public facility or service (e.g. hospital, care facility, rehabilitation or treatment centre, correctional facility) and cannot return to a stable residence; or

Individuals and families who are:

- Financially, sexually, physically or emotionally exploited to maintain their shelter. (difficult to identify- drug houses, prostitution.)

#### ***Homelessness due to crisis***

Individuals and families who are:

- Homeless because their previous residence became uninhabitable due to a human caused or natural disaster (e.g. fire, earthquake).

#### ***Risk of Homelessness/Hidden Homelessness***

Individuals and families who are living in:

- Temporary accommodation where they do not have control over the length and conditions of tenure (e.g. staying in a guest room, name not on lease, couch surfing, two or more individuals who are double bunking in a single room because appropriate housing is not available);
- Time-limited housing designed to help them transition from being homeless to living in a permanent form of housing, e.g. transitional housing or second-stage housing; or
- Accommodation where tenancy will be terminated within three months (e.g. given notice by landlord for a variety of reasons which may include tenant behaviour).

## **APPENDIX “B”**

### **HOUSING FIRST DEFINITION**

Means the provision of permanent low-barrier, supportive housing with a focus on harm reduction.

The goal of “housing first” is to immediately house people who are homeless no matter what is going on in their life.

The “housing first” principle is based on the premise that people will be accepted with substance abuse and/or mental illnesses rather than turning those people away. Research indicates that by first providing housing, other issues are also more effectively addressed.

## APPENDIX “C”

Encourage all levels of Government including Federal, Provincial, Regional, Municipal and First Nations to work together and partner with each other and Non-Government Organizations to more effectively address homelessness issues by:

1. Lobbying the **Federal Government** (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Service Canada, Corrections Canada, Canada Health Act) to:
  - a) Re-establish the National Strategy for Housing;
  - b) Increase the support and housing capacity for people being discharged from Federal institutions;
  - c) Implement The Mental Health Commission of Canada’s homelessness initiatives;
  - d) Provide funding to alleviate homelessness for aboriginal people.
  
2. Lobbying the **Provincial Government** (Ministry of Housing and Social Development - BC Housing, Income Assistance, Housing Matters; Ministry of Attorney General, Ministry of Solicitor General, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Finance) to:
  - a) Secure or develop affordable long-term housing for an additional 50 people who meet the Task Force’s definition of homelessness for each of the next five consecutive years;
  - b) Direct the current allocation of Property Purchase Transfer Tax into a community reserve fund;
  - c) Increase the support and housing capacity for people being discharged from correctional and psychiatric facilities;
  - d) Enhance the rental assistance program including funding levels, eligibility criteria, public awareness and timely approval process. (BC Housing);
  - e) Continue support for housing projects presently underway (i.e. Habitat for Humanity, Campbell River Assoc for Community Living and North Island Transition Society);
  - f) Provide equitable funding in rural/remote communities such as Campbell River in concert with larger urban communities;
  - g) Provide urgently needed secondary housing for recovering addicts that is safe and requires accountability on behalf of the occupants;
  - h) Increase financial support to people receiving income assistance (Ministry of Housing & Social Development).
  
3. Encouraging the **Vancouver Island Health Authority** (VIHA) to:
  - a) Work in partnership with BC Housing and other stakeholders such as the City and non-profit societies to provide a range of housing resources. This includes supported housing, residential (staffed) housing and emergency housing;
  - b) Ensure that plans for the new Campbell River hospital and the proposed mental health and addiction beds provide housing and supports with assertive community treatment services for those who will be discharged back into the community;
  - c) Ensure that plans for our new Campbell River hospital provide a sobering and assessment centre and a medical detox centre;
  - d) Establish an assertive community treatment (ACT) team (VIHA “reducing homelessness,” January 2008 and BC’s Mental Health Reform Best Practices for Assertive Community Treatment) to work with people most at risk of homelessness;
  - e) Develop a comprehensive health strategy and ensure necessary health and dental services are accessible and available to those who are homeless.