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**PETERBOROUGH - LAKEFIELD
POLICE SERVICES BOARD**

STRATEGIC AGENDA

November 2012

INDEX

| | <i>page</i> |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Introduction | 3 |
| Basic Assumptions | 5 |
| Observations and Analysis | 6 |
| Police Priorities | 11 |
| List of Reference Documents | 13 |

Introduction

As part of its regular business planning process, the Peterborough Lakefield Police Services Board decided to create a corollary report that would focus on a period much longer than the three year timeframe for the Business Plan. This *Strategic Agenda* was developed simultaneously with the 2013-2015 Business Plan. Information gained through review of existing documentation as well as observations and opinions provided during the consultation phase of the business planning process, provided the basis for the recommendations contained in the Strategic Agenda. The Peterborough Lakefield Police Service is considered a leader in the provision of community based policing. By following the principles and priorities contained in the Strategic Agenda, the Board can continue this strong commitment to the communities it represents.

The Strategic Agenda depends on projections that have already been developed with respect to the long term changes identified for both communities. By studying these trends, the Board can develop general directions for the Peterborough Lakefield Community Police Service that will direct the planning process and provide guidance for changes that are planned for the operation and administration of the Police Service. Ultimately the Strategic Agenda should provide a basis for fundamental organizational improvements that will occur in the next few decades. It should also assist the Board in determining which financial, and human resource, investments best reflect the realities in these changing communities.

Under the provincial “places to grow” legislation¹, the Peterborough Central Area has been designated as a growth centre. In this legislation, the City of Peterborough is identified as an “urban growth zone” with the expectation that it will attract major office and government functions, resulting in a significant increase in the number of jobs and residents located in the municipality. Ultimately this will increase the workload pressures on all city services.

In 2012, the Peterborough Social Planning Council released its “Quality of Life” report². “Safe communities” was identified as one of the thirteen indicators that were considered imperative to a high standard of living and enhanced quality of life. Similarly, the City of Peterborough Downtown

¹ Places to Grow Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe – Government of Ontario, 2006

² Page 157 – Quality of Life Report, Peterborough Social Planning Council, 2012

Economic Analysis³, and the Central Area Master Plan⁴, both stress the need for public safety as a precursor to ensuring the downtown area is perceived as family friendly, and safe for even the most vulnerable members of the public. Public safety is the primary priority for the Peterborough Lakefield Community Police Service, and the future direction taken by the Police Service must be tightly integrated with the development plans for the City of Peterborough, the Ward of Lakefield (in The Township of Smith-Ennismore-Lakefield) and the Region.

³ Page 73 – City of Peterborough Downtown Economic Analysis, 2008

⁴ Chapter 5, page 6 – Central Area Master Plan City of Peterborough, 2009

Basic Assumptions

1. Both communities will continue to expect a superior level of police service.
2. Public safety, and the perception of community safety, is essential to civic improvements in both communities
3. Despite any changes that develop, the Police Service must maintain its commitment to community based policing.
4. Unless the Province implements significant changes to the manner in which salaries and benefits for members of police services are negotiated and arbitrated, policing will be a relatively expensive public service.
5. Major decisions faced by the Board must be made with consideration to the long term direction identified in the Strategic Agenda.
6. All Business Plan priorities must be consistent with the long term goals contained in the Strategic Agenda.
7. Staff increases can only be considered based on workload demands.

Observations and Analysis

Over the past few years, a number of studies have been completed which envision the changes that are expected to occur in Peterborough and Lakefield during the next ten to twenty years. A variety of factors influenced these projections, and a brief review of them provided the basis for recommendations with respect to the Police Service. The observations contained in this report are unique to Peterborough and Lakefield, and the Strategic Agenda is based on the specific priorities for these two municipalities.

a.) Population

Different sources identify slightly varied estimates with respect to the population increases that will occur. For Peterborough, the growth rate is expected to be between 500 and 600 per year which represents a slightly lower rate than the City has experienced in the past. The growth plan projects a population of 88,000 by 2031⁵. This does not reflect any projected rise in the significant transient population that increases workload for public services but is not captured in the population statistics. Peterborough is a regional centre and catchment area that draws in twice as many commuters as it loses on an average day. In addition, the post secondary institutions within its jurisdiction add a substantial number of young people for the academic period. Currently, there are over 12,000 full time and part time students attending the post secondary institutions located in the City⁶. Almost 8,000 of these come from other municipalities or foreign countries⁷.

This transient population represents a significant workload inasmuch as they increase traffic volumes and occurrences. While a major concern for police is the influx of criminals from other jurisdictions, unfortunately, visitors to Peterborough and, to a far lesser extent, Lakefield, can be victimized while in this jurisdiction.

⁵ Page 27 – Heading Down the Road to the Future, Peterborough Social Planning Council, 2009

⁶ Page 158 – Quality of Life Report, Peterborough Social Planning Council, 2012

⁷ Page 22 – Planning Peterborough to 2031, 2005

In 2012, Peterborough was identified as the Canadian city with the largest proportion of seniors. At present, 19.4% of the population is categorized as senior, compared to the provincial average of less than 14%⁸. By 2030, the actual number of seniors residing in the City is expected to double⁹. This demographic reality presents numerous challenges for the City with respect to issues such as accommodation, health care, and safety. Seniors have unique interests and vulnerabilities particularly as their health declines and their ability to care for themselves diminishes. They are more likely to be preyed upon by unscrupulous individuals trying to defraud them. Occurrences of a non criminal nature can be even more concerning for police as patients with dementia wander away from their residence and come to serious harm.

Smith-Ennismore-Lakefield contains one third of the County of Peterborough's population and is expected to maintain that ratio through the growth that will occur over the next twenty years¹⁰. The Township anticipates that Lakefield will develop as a growth centre because of the immediate availability of property that already has access to full municipal services. In Lakefield, planned development has the potential to add up to 2,000 new residences and 2.5 acres of commercial development during the next twenty-five years¹¹.

b.) Diversity

Peterborough County is not a particularly diverse community. 11.5 % of the population are first generation immigrants as compared to the provincial average of 34%¹². Less than 3% of its citizens self identify as visible minorities compared to a provincial average of 22.8%¹³. In all likelihood, the level of diversity within the City will accelerate as workers from outside the community relocate to fill

⁸ Page 23 – Planning Peterborough to 2031, 2005

⁹ Page 22 – Planning Peterborough TO 2031, 2005

¹⁰ Pages 1 – 5 County of Peterborough Strategic Plan 2012-2015

¹¹ Page 1 – Lakefield South – Development Lands Ready, 2012

¹² Page 85 – Quality of Life Report, Peterborough Social Planning Council , 2012

¹³ Page 11 – Heading Down the Road to the Future, Peterborough Social Planning Council, 2009

the positions required to care for an increasingly aged segment of the population. There will be an increased need for targeted health care and ancillary services as this age group grows. This will intensify the pressure to recruit staff from outside the County, most probably from the Greater Toronto Area.

c.) Criminality

The existing trends with respect to criminal activity will continue as the communities grow larger. Spill over from nearby, larger, municipalities will result in increased use of illegal drugs and the collateral, secondary criminality that normally arises from abuse of drugs. Unfortunately, this could result in enhanced gang activity as they try to increase their foothold in an area that represents potential profit.

The Peterborough Lakefield Community Police Service invested significantly to ensure its officers are capable of successfully investigating the more complex crimes that now confront them. Using enhanced investigative techniques, improved equipment, and more reliable intelligence, they have tried to stay abreast of the new challenges they face. This capability provides a preventative element as the criminal subculture is aware, and leery, of the increased prospect of arrest and prosecution that investigative improvements create.

Electronic crime will increase as electronically based or supported criminal activity grows. This can often represent a new threat to public safety as opposed to an intensification of an existing threat. For example, in the last few years the Police Service has had to develop policies and procedures on responding to threats made over the internet. This has been particularly problematic for educational institutions that come under threat. Preparing for emergencies in addition to actual threat assessment and on site response requires considerable officer time.

Preventative capabilities can be enhanced through the implementation of new technologies such as video surveillance cameras. As the innovations are introduced, the Police Service will need to upgrade the capability of staff members, both uniformed and civilian, to implement, utilize, and maintain these new technological tools.

Seniors can present a uniquely “at risk” component of society with specific types of criminals preying on elderly people who appear particularly vulnerable. The onset of dementia and Alzheimer’s disease can also create serious non criminal occurrences that must be attended as a priority by police. Enhanced involvement with vulnerable groups has complicated police interaction with social agencies. Because the policies of these agencies, coupled with new provincial legislation, compels care facilities to report all incidents to the police. They must then be fully investigated and resolved.

d.) Downtown Revitalization

For the City of Peterborough, a commitment to the long term objective of intensifying development in the downtown core areas has been identified as a key corporate priority contained in the Official Plan as well as the Central Area Master Plan. This represents a long term economic and demographic initiative that will revitalize the area by stabilizing existing business, attracting new business, and creating an environment that will attract new residents, tourists, and specifically targeted groups such as senior citizens. It will require coordinated efforts from numerous public and private organizations, but represents the most prominent long term civic initiative.

At the most basic level, public safety depends on the police. Before people will visit an area for shopping, entertainment or other activities that they perform on foot, they must be convinced that they can go about their activities in a safe environment. Police service is fundamental in ensuring that this occurs. Firstly, the area must actually be safe from hazards, including criminality, and, secondly, the public must be convinced that that is the case. The only effective way to attain this relies on a strong and consistent police visibility. For effective downtown revitalization, a commitment to safety must be a municipal priority as opposed to merely a Police Service initiative.

Similarly, the Official Plan for Smith-Ennismore-Lakefield supports downtown areas as primary focal points for retail and service sector development and redevelopment. In particular the Community Improvement Plan¹⁴, which was recently completed for Lakefield, emphasizes the need to attract more visitors and intensify

¹⁴ Page 15 – Smith-Ennismore-Lakefield Community Improvement Plan – Background Report, 2012

residential development in the village. One of the groups targeted as potential residents are seniors who prefer a safe, stable and attractive environment for their retirement years.

e.) Transportation Links

During the next few years it is expected that rail service will begin between Peterborough and municipalities in the GTA, including Toronto. At the same time, the eastern extension of Highway 407 will be completed with its terminus at Highway 35/115. The impact of the rail travel should be minimal, as current projections estimate an initial daily ridership of 1900 total boarding's both ways, with an increase to 4160 per day within the first fifteen years¹⁵. Forecasting the potential impact of the extension of Highway 407 is more problematic as its primary purpose is to divert traffic that is currently using Highway 401. At this point, it is uncertain what impact this highway improvement will create. One can surmise that there will be some level of increase in traffic volumes in and around both municipalities and a related rise in the transient population.

Another factor influencing the transient population is the influx of new retail and commercial businesses, particularly in Peterborough. As the City grows, it becomes attractive to a larger variety of businesses and, as the regional centre, these businesses attract more customers from the outlying areas who previously shopped in other locations.

In 2008, the City of Peterborough invested a significant amount of money to upgrade its airport. This transformed the facility from a locally significant enterprise to a regional one which will further improve the municipality as an economic hub attracting business and people from other areas of southern Ontario. For example, the closure of the Buttonville Airport in Toronto has resulted in Seneca College transferring its flight training program to the Peterborough Airport.

¹⁵ Page 5 – Metrolinx Peterborough Rail Study, 2010

Police Priorities

To effectively respond to the changes forecast for the communities, the Police Service will need to continue providing superior police service in the most cost effective manner. This can only be achieved by maximizing the ability of uniformed staff to focus on those duties for which they were recruited and trained. Management must also ensure that civilian members are provided with the necessary encouragement to assume all “non police” functions that are key to continuous public safety improvement. The Board and Police Service will need to:

1. Establish programs oriented to the unique problems presented by seniors and other at risk groups to minimize victimization and deal effectively with those who break the law. Police may need to partner with specialized caseworkers on a daily basis (as they currently do with the mental health caseworker) to attend to calls for service involving senior citizens.
2. Acknowledge that diversity will play an increasingly important role in both training and recruiting as integration of the aboriginal and visible minority citizens becomes a higher municipal priority.
3. Invest substantially in technology, and related training and support to maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of staff, keep abreast of new trends in criminality, and improve methods of preventing and solving crime. Any technology that can minimize the number of new staff members required by the Police Service, maximize the output of existing staff, or increase health and safety, should be acquired and fully supported.
4. Continue to regularly re-evaluate police workload and the types of responses being performed in order to identify alternate methods of providing service. The use of non uniformed members of the organization should be expanded wherever possible, conditional on them possessing the necessary skill set to perform the function adequately, as well as the qualifications to comply with established legislative standards and policies.

5. Intensify partnerships with other social agencies and community groups to ensure that police work collaboratively to address the increasing non-criminal social problems, such as domestic violence and family disputes, which will continue to grow.
6. Increase police presence and visibility in the downtown areas of both communities to improve the level of confidence the public has with respect to their safety particularly during the evening hours.
7. Identify additional revenue sources to offset police costs whenever possible. Traditional sources of income such as; user fees, cost recovery, provincial grants and funding through proceeds of crime should be maximized.
8. Market its communications and policing expertise so that it migrates towards a regional enterprise, and generates the economies of scale created by an increase in the organization's critical mass. This could include providing dispatch for other police services and public sector agencies, or 9.1.1. Service to the entire County. It could also be extended to contract policing of adjacent municipalities if the opportunity arises.
9. Explore opportunities to improve service delivery, streamline operations and/or create efficiencies with all other emergency services-
10. In 2012, the authorized uniformed strength of the Peterborough Lakefield Community Police Service was reduced from 136 to 134. This provides an officer to population ratio of roughly 1 to 600. If this ratio were to be maintained, growth projections for the two communities suggest the organization would require one additional officer every year. Using the existing ratio of civilian to uniformed members, an additional civilian member would also be required every three to four years. The Board must monitor the effect resident and transient population increases are having on police workload on a yearly basis to evaluate any requirement for additional resources.

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