

Clause No. 2 in Report No. 5 of the Community and Health Services Committee was adopted, without amendment, by the Council of The Regional Municipality of York at its meeting on May 17, 2012.

## **2**

### **HUMAN SERVICES PLANNING BOARD OF YORK REGION YEAR IN REVIEW 2011**

**The Community and Health Services Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report dated April 24, 2012, from the Commissioner of Community and Health Services.**

#### **1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that:

1. Council endorse the Human Services Planning Board of York Region *Year in Review 2011*, outlining the Board's accomplishments (see *Attachment 1*) and the accompanying *Making Ends Meet in York Region Baseline Measures: Turning the Curve* report (see *Attachment 2*).
2. Council amend the Human Services Planning Board Terms of Reference for quorum to fifty per cent of the membership, plus one, including one Co-chair as outlined in *Attachment 3*.
3. Council request that the Human Services Planning Board of York Region offer to present to local municipal Committee or Council meetings regarding the Making Ends Meet initiative to explore opportunities for local municipal involvement in the Collective Actions.
4. The Regional Clerk circulate this report to the local municipalities and the Community Partnership Council under the Local Immigration Partnership for information.

#### **2. PURPOSE**

The Human Services Planning Board of York Region (the Board) is seeking Council's endorsement of the *Year in Review 2011* and the *Making Ends Meet in York Region Baseline Measures: Turning the Curve* reports. This report also presents an amendment to the Board's Terms of Reference and highlights key findings from the Board Member evaluation. Both the annual year-end review of the Board's accomplishments and an evaluation of its effectiveness are required under the Board's Terms of Reference.

### **3. BACKGROUND**

#### **York Region champions collaborative human services planning**

In November 2009, through the adoption of Clause No. 4 of Report No. 3 of the Community and Health Services Committee, Council approved the establishment of the Human Services Planning Board of York Region. The Board was charged with finding collaborative solutions to the unique and challenging needs facing current and future residents. The Board is co-chaired by Regional Councillor John Taylor, Town of Newmarket and Susan LaRosa, Director of Education, York Catholic District School Board and is comprised of 24 leaders and decision makers from the Region's hospitals, school boards, and police department, as well as a cross-section of individuals from other human service organizations and networks, community leaders and government advisors and resource members.

**The backbone of a healthy community is a healthy population; as a result the Board has chosen to specifically focus on affordable housing and economic self-sufficiency to enhance the quality of community life of our residents**

All Board members came to the table with the intent of contributing to making a difference in York Region. The Board saw the trend of growing economic vulnerability as a threat to the long-term sustainability of the health and well-being of York's communities. It decided to specifically focus on affordable housing and economic self-sufficiency as a way of enhancing the overall quality of life.

#### **Board launches valuable tool to create momentum and community change**

Following Council approval of the Board's work plan in May 2011 through the adoption of Clause No. 3 of Report No. 5 of the Community and Health Services Committee, the Board launched the Making Ends Meet in York Region discussion paper. The paper represents the start of the Board members' work together and is a tangible outcome of collaborative actions to help families and individuals having difficulty making ends meet. The purpose of the discussion paper is two-fold:

- It provides detailed data on the social and economic characteristics of low and moderate income people and provides consistent information to track trends.
- It calls on community collaboration and action to advance the community results of affordable housing and economic self-sufficiency.

Guided by a community vision, the discussion paper helps partners align their work to community results and indicator areas. It highlights a turn the curve process for moving from talk to action.

## **Board defines tangible results for Making Ends Meet in York Region**

Over the past year, Board members have worked together to advance the Making Ends Meet initiative, as outlined in Table 1.

**Table 1**

Human Services Planning Board of York Region: Chronology of Events

| <b>At a Glance - May 2011 – February 2012</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| May 2011                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board accepts Making Ends Meet in York Region as their priority area of focus</li> <li>• Board agrees to actions identified in the 2011 Work plan</li> <li>• The 2011 Work Plan sets out the process to develop an action plan to advance Making Ends Meet in York Region</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                               |
| May 19, 2011                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council endorses the Making Ends Meet in York Region initiative and 2011 Work Plan</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| June 2011                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board hosts a public event to launch the Making Ends Meet in York Region Discussion Paper</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| June – November 2011                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board begins to implement 2011 Work Plan priorities:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Board Member organizations seek endorsement for the Making Ends Meet in York Region initiative from their governing bodies</li> <li>2. Board Member organizations engage in turn the curve discussions to identify individual commitments to advance the Making Ends Meet in York Region community results and indicator areas</li> </ol> </li> </ul> |
| February 2012                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board Members endorse the Making Ends Meet in York Region <i>Community Model for Change</i> that includes:</li> <li>• Making Ends Meet in York Region Member Organization Action Plan</li> <li>• Making Ends Meet in York Collective Action Plan</li> <li>• Making Ends Meet in York Region Indicators and Baseline Measures</li> </ul>                                                                                                                            |

## **4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS**

### **Year In Review 2011**

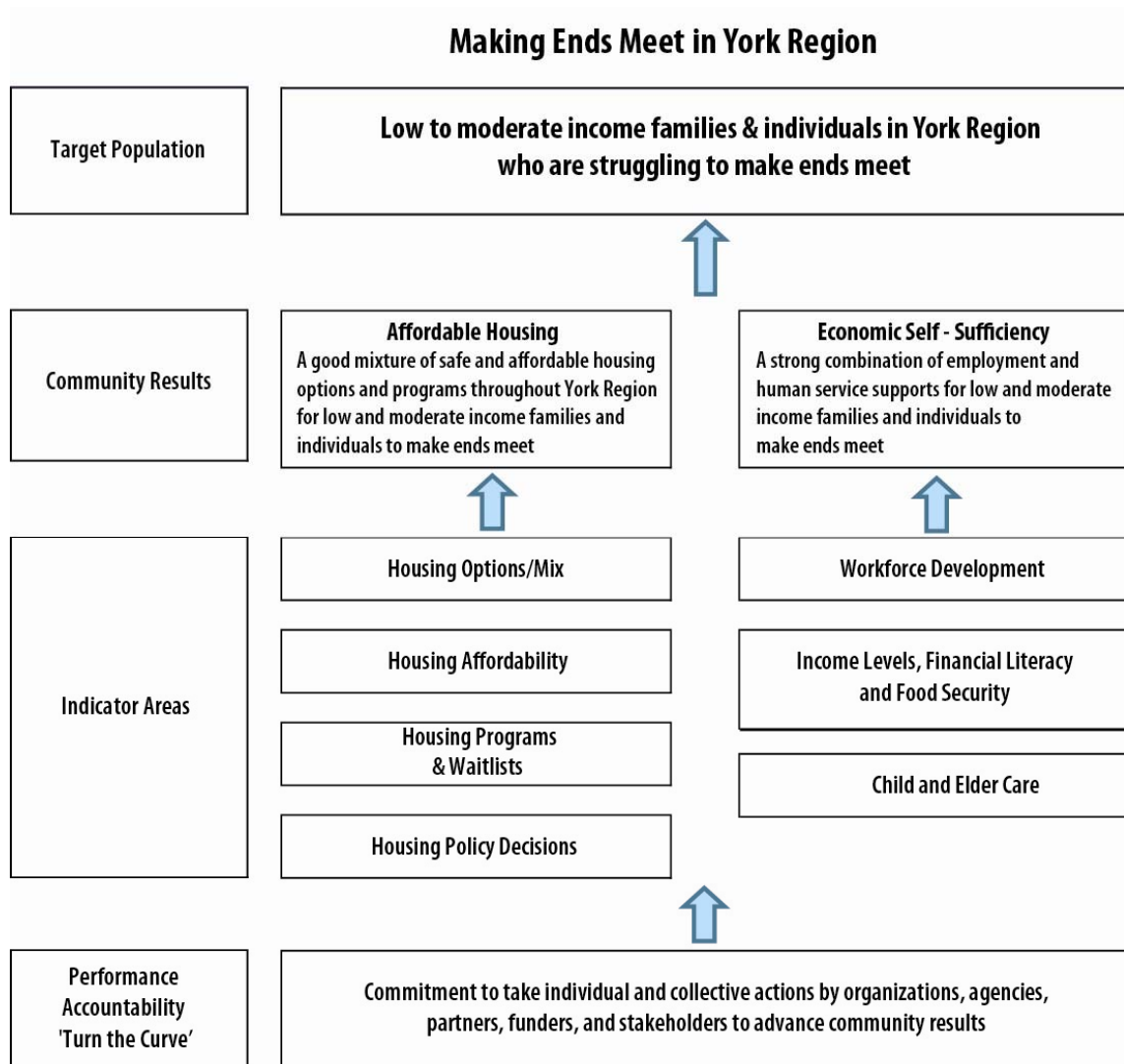
#### **Selected process moves talk to action across agencies and the community**

The Board selected a Results-Based Accountability model to outline actions and monitor progress. This disciplined process begins with identifying desired community results and working backwards on how to get there. Indicator baselines are set so progress can be measured and the explanation behind the baselines developed.

Organizations, funders, community partners and other stakeholders move the community closer to achieving the desired community results by committing to individual and collective actions.

Board members are using the model to identify actions within their own organizations and will use the model to show others how they too can make change. A diagram of the Making Ends Meet in York Region community model for change is outlined in Table 2.

**Table 2**  
Making Ends Meet in York Region Community Model for Change



### Twenty-six indicators will measure progress in moving towards the desired results

To better understand where to focus community efforts and investments, the Board selected 26 measureable indicators in seven indicator areas. In total, nine indicators were set for the affordable housing result and 17 indicators for the economic self-sufficiency result. Examples of indicators include the following:

Economic self-sufficiency:

- Percentage of population in York Region with low and moderate income
- Post secondary graduates in York Region working in low skilled occupations by income group, population aged 25-64
- Number of families on the waitlist for child care fee assistance in York Region

Affordable housing:

- Average rental vacancy rate in York Region
- Percentage of York Region social housing waiting list placed annually

These indicators were developed using research and data collected and published by other organizations, such as the Ontario Municipal CAO Benchmarking Initiative, Federation of Canadian Municipalities, and Statistics Canada. The indicators are aligned with strategic initiatives already underway, such as the *Housing Matters: A Review of the Housing Market in York Region* report and the York Region Housing and Homelessness Plan. The 2006 Census data was used to develop some of the baseline measures and is the most recent detailed data on a number of social and economic characteristics of low and moderate income people and will provide consistent information to track trends. The baseline measures presented in this document will be updated as new data becomes available. It is anticipated the new census data will be released in the Spring of 2013.

**Baseline measures will tell us how we are doing on these 26 indicators**

After setting the indicators, the Board identified baseline measures for each one and will use them to measure progress and decide on actions that will best address the current trend. Turning the curve on the baseline measures will require multiple efforts from many partners and at many levels.

The baseline measures for each indicator area are included in *Attachment 2*.

**All member organization governing bodies endorse Making Ends Meet and commit to taking 60 actions to turn the curve**

Board members engaged their governing bodies to better understand the role they would take to advance the Making Ends Meet initiative. Understanding where the member organization could have an impact on the community results was a critical step in solidifying buy-in and commitment.

Although the Region is leading the process and taking its own actions, 15 member organizations have participated with a strong sense of commitment and ownership. All of them are doing something to further the results or turn the indicators in a positive direction and have submitted 60 actions they will take. As a member organization, the Region identified 26 actions. Actions identified range from those the program areas can easily implement on their own, to actions that require championing by many partners as well as collaborative advocacy.

For example, the Women's Centre of York Region will develop a social enterprise concept to support low income women to access safe and sustainable employment and integrate child-minding into the delivery of the Enterprising Business Incubator Program. Four member organizations, including the Women's Centre of York Region; Canadian Mental Health Association; Vaughan Community Health Centre and the Vaughan Chamber of Commerce, submitted actions focused on developing tools to enhance financial literacy skills for staff and clients.

Seneca College has indicated they will implement a student retention pilot program to offer more direct supports and learning options to low and moderate income students. The York Regional Police will research developing an At-Risk Teen Mentoring Program to teach social responsibility to low and moderate income teens to develop interpersonal skills that will assist with securing future employment opportunities. The Region will increase participation for low and moderate income residents into the food handler training course to obtain Food Handler Certification at no cost to increase access to employment opportunities.

As a next step, member organizations will develop work plans to implement actions and regularly monitor progress to ensure the desired outcomes are achieved.

The Member Organization Action Plan is included as *Attachment 1, Appendix A* in the *Year in Review 2011*.

### **The Board also commits to eight collective actions**

In addition to individual member organization commitments, the Board identified eight collective actions to work on together. This will require facilitating and coordinating new partnerships and outreach efforts to build awareness in the community about the importance of helping low and moderate income families and individuals make ends meet.

The collective actions include:

#### **1. Host a Housing Affordability Discussion**

The Board will host a Housing Affordability Discussion in June 2012. The Board will engage community stakeholders, partners, housing sector and building industry leaders to think about, develop and expand housing affordability options in York Region. This first discussion will provide opportunity for dialogue that will set the local York Region context; share knowledge; identify potential areas of action and review housing case study models.

#### **2. Housing Hub Model**

This action focuses on providing housing support services through a collaborative housing hub model where multiple organizations work together to inform residents of their options and choices relating to housing supports and provide guidance in helping residents access or retain housing.

### **3. Host a Social Assistance Review Commission Options Paper Discussion**

The transformation of the social assistance system in Ontario aligns very closely with the Board's work of supporting low and moderate income families and individuals in York Region struggling to make ends meet. The Board hosted a session with community stakeholders on March 7, 2012 in partnership with the Social Planning Council of York Region and the York Region Food Network. A representative from the Commission also attended. The Region developed a submission incorporating the feedback from the community consultation and the Service Manager perspective which was forwarded to the Commission in March 2012. This submission is also being presented to Committee and Council in May 2012.

### **4. Mentoring Partnership Program**

The Mentoring Partnership Program creates opportunities for skilled immigrants in York Region to be mentored for improved employment outcomes. The Mentorship Partnership Program also directly supports the priorities of the York Region Immigration Settlement Strategy. The Board will look for new partnership and linkages with the Community Partnership Council to implement this collective action.

### **5. Convening Public Education and Awareness – Meeting House Series**

Public and key stakeholder consultations are being held throughout the year by United Way of York Region with the purpose of collecting input on both community results areas. Feedback gathered through the consultations will be used to inform social infrastructure improvement recommendations in York Region. The Board will review the recommendations to identify opportunities for collaborative advocacy.

### **6. Funder Discussions**

This action focuses on advocating for targeted investments to support the Making Ends Meet initiative. An investment strategy will be developed that will help identify and guide community investments and resource allocations. This action will be coordinated with existing collaborative funding tables and forums.

### **7. Financial Literacy Tools**

This action supports partnership work with Board member organizations to develop financial literacy tools for low and moderate income residents including seniors, newcomers, youth, families and single persons to improve financial literacy skills to make informed and budgeted decisions. These tools will be used to help build community capacity throughout York Region.

### **8. Fair Access**

The Fair Access collective action explores partnerships between the Region, the school boards and the local municipalities to increase access to recreational and cultural programs for low and moderate income families and individuals. Opportunities will be explored to find ways to make programs more affordable and to make better use of school board and municipal facilities.

The Board will develop project teams and work plans for each collective action. Progress will be monitored and regular reports will be provided to Council. Additionally, the Board will develop and implement a communications strategy that will serve to create and build momentum for community involvement and action.

An outline of the Collective Action Plan is included in the *Year in Review 2011*.

### **Best practice research informs amendments to the Board's Terms of Reference**

The Terms of Reference, Section 22: *Evaluation and Review* requires an evaluation of the Board to identify where changes can be made to enhance its effectiveness. Recently, best practice research was undertaken to examine quorum of various committees, public boards including Regional Committees of Council. The research findings revealed that most committees/public bodies retain a quorum of fifty per cent of the membership, plus one.

The Board is comprised of a total of 24 members which includes 21 voting members and three government advisors and resource members. When the Board was established, a quorum of 15 members, including one Co-chair, ensured the group was representative of a broad cross section of human service sectors as it set out to develop its work plan. In keeping with best practice research and current Regional practice, it is proposed that Council amend the Terms of Reference Section 16:2 *Quorum* to provide for quorum to fifty per cent of the membership, plus one, including one Co-chair as outlined in Attachment 3.

### **Survey evaluates Board's first term experience**

An on-line survey was distributed to Board members to evaluate their experience with the Board during their first term (2010-2011).

Overall, Board members are satisfied with the opportunity to participate and contribute in tackling critical human service issues. The process and the meetings are working well. Board members indicated the process includes good discussion, focussed priorities, concrete action plans and a high level of commitment from members.

In order to build on current successes, Board members identified several areas of focus including the need for maintaining consistent and on-going commitment from both members and the broader community. Moving forward the Board should continue its engagement and outreach activities, place emphasis on collaboration, and develop more partnerships. Additionally, it is necessary to develop a communication strategy that will serve to raise awareness and demonstrate successful outcomes throughout the community.



### **Link to key Council–approved plans**

The Making Ends Meet in York Region initiative is consistent with emerging human services issues identified in the Community and Health Services Multi-Year Plan and aligns with the 2011-2015 Strategic Plan priority area ‘to improve social and health supports’.

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Support to the Board is provided within the Community and Health Services Department’s existing operating budget.

## **6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT**

The positive impacts of the Board’s work will in large part accrue to local municipalities through the provision of more responsive human services, leading to healthier, stronger and more cohesive communities. The collective actions provide opportunities to strengthen relationships between local municipalities and other partners. The Board will seek opportunities to build collaborative partnerships with local municipalities to implement collective actions such as Fair Access and the Housing Affordability Discussion.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

In accordance with the Board’s Terms of Reference, the Board is seeking Council endorsement of the *Year in Review 2011* and the *Making Ends Meet in York Region Baseline Measures: Turning the Curve* reports. The Board is committed to a leadership role in creating awareness in the community about the importance of helping low and moderate income residents make ends meet. It is expected that the Board’s work will be of benefit to the broader community by nurturing innovative actions and collaborative solutions. All Board members have agreed to contribute to advance the community results. Moving forward, it is important that the Board create the right conditions for community change to occur. The Board values the ongoing leadership and support from Council and will continue to support the Region’s strategic priorities.

For more information on this report, please contact Lisa Gonsalves, Acting Managing Director, Strategic Service Integration and Policy at Ext. 2090.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.