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### HUMAN SERVICES PLANNING COALITION STATUS REPORT

**The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report, July 29, 2005, from the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services:**

#### 1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that this report be received for information.

#### 2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide an update of the Human Services Planning Coalition's *Inclusivity Action Plan* and its government relations activities.

#### 3. BACKGROUND

The Human Services Planning Coalition was established in 2001 by York Region as a response to rapid growth and recognition that the provision of human services is an important factor in maintaining and enhancing quality of life in York Region. The HSPC provides a forum for all human service providers to collaborate on actions that will increase funding and service delivery efficiencies.

York Region is growing rapidly in both population and diversity. With a total population of 903,596 (as of June 30, 2005) York Region is becoming home to an increasing number of immigrants. And yet federal and provincial government per capita funding for immigrant services in 2004/05 for York Region was \$179.26, substantially lower than Peel's \$557.97, Halton's \$417.83, Durham's \$502.85 and Toronto's \$872.92.

The HSPC recognized the importance of addressing the consequences of increasing rates of immigration. In its 2003-2004 work plan, the HSPC identified the issue of diversity as a priority for all human services, defining it as a question of inclusivity (i.e. generating the feeling and the reality of belonging).

In January 2004, the HSPC established a task group to explore options for developing an *Inclusivity Action Plan*. A discussion tool was developed and distributed to over 1,000 service providers between August and October 2004. Feedback from focus group discussions were compiled in a *Draft Inclusivity Action Plan and Workbook* and distributed as a second phase document to 1,500 stakeholders. On January 20, 2005, 180 people representing different organizations in York Region attended a summit to discuss the *Draft Inclusivity Action Plan*.

The *Inclusivity Action Plan* is an example of HSPC's success at bringing together partners from the human services community and government to work towards integrated service delivery of a priority area. The IAP also demonstrates a shift in focus of the HSPC's government relations strategy. In the past, HSPC's goals were to raise York Region's profile at Queen's Park, position HSPC as a new collaborative model and encourage multi-government response to growth. With success and its foundation in place, the HSPC has recognized the need to narrow its focus and to speak directly to all levels of government about specific policy and program priorities. As a result, the Policy and Priorities Action Group (PPAG), formerly the Government Relations Action Group revised its terms of reference in December 2004.

#### **4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS**

##### **4.1 Launch of Inclusivity Action Plan (IAP)**

On May 18, 2005 the HSPC launched its *Inclusivity Action Plan* with the support of about 100 participants representing human service agencies, regional governments, police, ethno-cultural organizations and York Region residents. Extensive multi-media coverage was garnered from local and GTA media. More than 2,000 *Inclusivity Action Plan* brochures have been broadly distributed to human service providers and interested stakeholders in the community.

##### **4.1.1 Steering Committee and Working Groups**

Chaired by Regional Councillor Frank Scarpitti, the IAP Steering Committee's primary function is managing the implementation of the IAP and coordinating and monitoring the Working Groups so that a coordinated, integrated effort is maintained. Currently, six Working Groups are developing activities in six action areas that include:

- developing a welcome/resource centre (**Action #1**)
- increasing English language development programs (**Action #2**)
- initiating an awareness campaign (**Action #3**)
- developing more learning opportunities for children (**Action #4**)
- increasing leadership and volunteer opportunities for immigrants (**Action #5**)
- increasing the inclusivity of the organizational structure of human service agencies/organizations in York Region (**Action #6**).

### **IAP Steering Committee members**

|                              |                                                         |                                                                                                             |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Chair                        | Frank Scarpitti                                         | Regional Councillor                                                                                         |
| Vice-Chair                   | Susan Taylor                                            | Director, Human Services<br>Planning Branch                                                                 |
| <b>Action # 1</b>            | Patricia Robertson                                      | Executive Director, York<br>Neighbourhood Services                                                          |
| <b>Action # 2</b>            | Robert Cazzola                                          | Director, Education & Info<br>Services, COSTI                                                               |
| <b>Action #3</b>             | Rajesh Khetarpal                                        | Community Development<br>Branch, Health Services                                                            |
| <b>Action # 4</b>            | Christine DeHaas                                        | Character Community<br>& YCDSB                                                                              |
|                              | Veronica St. Pierre                                     | Principal, YRDSB                                                                                            |
| <b>Action # 5</b>            | Alison Peck                                             | Executive Director, York<br>Region Abuse Program                                                            |
|                              | Janice Chu                                              | Community Resources<br>Manager, UWYR                                                                        |
| <b>Action #6</b>             | Simon Cheng                                             | Director of Community<br>Resources, UWYR                                                                    |
|                              | Ricky Veerappan                                         | York Regional Police,<br>Diversity and Cultural<br>Resources Unit                                           |
| HSPC<br>Community<br>Members | Faduma Awow<br>Mohamed<br>Ranjit Kumar                  | Executive Director, Labour<br>Community Services<br>Community Representative<br>of HSPC                     |
| HSPC                         | Stephen Lam                                             | Director, Immigrant<br>Services & Community<br>Programs, CCSYR                                              |
| Member                       | Don Eastwood                                            | Director, Economic<br>Development Branch                                                                    |
| Member                       | Jennifer Churchill                                      | Director, Community<br>Development Branch,<br>Health Services                                               |
| Member                       | Cordelia Abankwa-<br>Harris<br>Alternate: Joanne Fowler | Director, Policy & Program<br>Support Services, CS&H<br>Manager, Policy & Program<br>Support Services, CS&H |

#### **4.1.2 Next Steps & Status on Project Funding**

Initially the action plan is 18 months in duration with a review and evaluation after one year to assess progress and determine the next steps.

The Steering Committee will continue to meet on a monthly basis and will help to coordinate and manage Working Group Activities. Working Groups have been developing Terms of Reference and Work Plans over the summer. The Work Plans will provide an outline of the activities each Group is organizing to support the IAP. Groups will submit both documents to the Steering Committee by September of 2005 and a process of co-ordinating plans and preparing submissions to funders (such as HRSDC, the Trillium Foundation, Citizenship and Immigration, etc) will begin.

### **4.2 Government Relations Activities**

#### **4.2.1 Policy and Priorities Action Group (PPAG)**

In December 2004, the Government Relations Action Group changed its name to the Policy and Priorities Action Group (PPAG) and revised its Terms of Reference. This change represents a shift in HSPC's focus to coordinate a collective voice of York Region's human service providers and to engage in dialogue with senior levels of government about policies, programs and sustainable funding.

A Request for Quotation (RFQ) was issued in March 2005 for a consultant to provide and guide the PPAG through its 2005/06 workplan. The PPAG reviewed three submissions and selected Mr. Charles Beer of Counsel Public Affairs (CPA).

At a June 22, 2005 meeting, CPA proposed that in 2005/06 the PPAG continue with the under-funding message; continue efforts to repatriate GTA pooling; establish a relationship with the Local Health Integration Network (LHIN); and develop program-specific proposals. CPA presented several strategies to meet these objectives. The PPAG directed the consultants to prepare a results-driven strategy including:

1. A proposal for children's mental health which articulates the new funding models.
2. A LHIN strategy using the HSPC model as a way to assist the LHIN in developing its priorities and delivering on its mandate.
3. Repositioning and profiling the HSPC as an integrated model of human services delivery.

Elements of the strategy have already been implemented (e.g. draft children's mental health proposal, letter of introduction to Mr. Ken Morrison, Chair of Central LHIN). The strategy will be complemented by meetings with MPP's, Ministers and senior bureaucrats in late 2005 and early 2006.

#### **4.2.2 Social Services Funding Action Group**

The Social Services Funding Action Group (SSFAG) is a committee of the HSPC, comprised of representatives from social and community agencies. The SSFAG

documents the impact of social services under-funding and advocates for fair and equitable funding for York Region.

The HSPC approved the Social Services Funding Action Group's Communications Plan in November 2004. The key objective of this plan is to raise the level of awareness and support from stakeholders of HSPC's efforts to recommend new funding models for human services which meet the needs of all residents in the Region.

**i) Stakeholder Resolution of Support Campaign**

On March 23, 2005, the HSPC approved a resolution drafted by the Social Services Funding Action Group which asks stakeholders to support HSPC's efforts in:

- advocating for new funding models for human services
- encouraging all funders to address human service needs in the context of growth management
- repatriation of pooling dollars sent to Toronto

The resolution was launched on June 29 at a participating agency, Family Services York Region, and followed-up by a mailing to over 1,000 human service providers asking them to endorse the resolution of support. HSPC representatives have also been encouraged to present the resolution to their Boards, Advisory Forums/networks and Associations to garner support.

The Social Services Funding Action Group has set a target of receiving 500 resolutions of support by November 2005. The campaign will also support the efforts of the PPAG's government relations strategy by raising the level of awareness and support for HSPC's recommendations at the local grass-roots level. The Action Group is closely monitoring and tracking incoming resolutions and will report on the results of this campaign to the HSPC in September and November.

**ii) Corporate Sector Strategy**

The HSPC has representation from fifteen different sectors. The Corporate and Business sector, defined as a business or corporation that contributes to the healthy and sustainable economy of York Region, is represented by Pat Berne, Muzzo Group and Mary Mauti, Bell Canada. On April 29, 2005, the HSPC's Business and Corporate representatives distributed a letter to about 250 large businesses (ie. over 200 employees) in York Region informing them about human services available in the Region and how to access them. The next phase of this Corporate Sector Strategy involves these HSPC representatives meeting with Boards of Trade and Chambers of Commerce in the Region to discuss the under-funding of human services and HSPC's response to these challenges.

**4.2.3 905 Fair Funding Alliance**

When Peel Region released a report called *Portraits of Peel*, in May 2005, Peel United Way and the 905/GTA Healthcare Alliance proposed the formation of a coalition between Peel, Halton, York and Durham to collaboratively address under-funding and

rapid growth in the 905. In several exploratory meetings over the summer it was agreed that the United Ways would take a lead role for a 905 coalition.

The focus of the 905 coalition will be primarily on social services, but it will also recognize the inter-relatedness of all human services and healthcare. The coalition plans to highlight the disconnect between *Places to Grow/Greenbelt Act* and funding of the social infrastructure to support quality of life in those growth areas.

Participation with this coalition has positive implications for York Region and HSPC. First of all, the 905 coalition aligns with the HSPC government relations strategy which is designed to bring human services solutions to the provincial and federal government. And secondly, the development of 905-wide measures of under-funding and demand will be very beneficial in York Region's efforts to address under-funding and get a better deal from senior levels of government.

#### **4.3 Relationship to Vision 2026**

Vision 2026 addresses immigrant issues and inclusivity in a number of goal statements. Most significantly, in the goal of creating "quality communities for a diverse population: the action areas associated with celebrating our diversity will be met by these initiatives.

They will also help to ensure an "enhanced environment, heritage and culture" by supporting the action of embracing our evolving cultural and faith communities.

In creating a "vibrant economy" the action area of attracting and supporting business will be advanced by a strong, internationally trained labour force. Government relations activities specifically geared to engaging local businesses in supporting HSPC's new funding models will also advance this action area.

Meeting the needs of immigrants and newcomers to York Region will help achieve the goal of "responding to the needs of our residents". In addition, the government relations strategy of building a case for the under-funding of human services and focusing on specific program priorities is designed to meet the needs of the Region's residents.

In the goal of "managed and balanced growth", human service needs of all residents will be addressed in proactive ways. The government relations strategy will also support this goal.

And lastly, in the goal of "engaged communities and a responsive region", the action area of being a Region that involves its citizens will be enhanced by the IAP and government relations initiatives.

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications. All regional expenditures associated with these programs were approved in the 2005 budget.

## **6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT**

Local municipalities are important partners in the provision of human services in York Region. Programs and services provided by the Humans Services Planning Branch continually and consistently include representation of the interests of area municipalities.

The Inclusivity Action Plan will provide outcomes of significant value to residents of local area municipalities.

The collaborative efforts of the 905 GTA Funding Alliance will have a positive impact on the delivery of local human services, specifically social services and healthcare.

The government relations strategy of the PPAG pledges that HSPC will continue to work with area municipalities in York Region. This partnership is critical to ensure adequate and timely investment in human services so that the quality of life in York Region is maintained and enhanced.

The campaign to solicit resolutions of support from human service providers across the Region will raise the level of awareness and support for the under-funding of human services and new funding models at a local grass-roots level.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

Human services are those programs and services that support a safe, healthy community and maintain and promote its quality of life. The HSPC provides a forum for all human services providers to collaborate on actions that will increase funding and service delivery effectiveness and efficiency.

The *Inclusivity Action Plan* is a community plan to invest in York Region's capacity to welcome and integrate immigrants and, thereby, to create social capital for a vibrant economy, a highly skilled labour force and an enviable quality of life.

The HSPC, through its government relations strategy, will coordinate a collective voice of York Region's human service providers and engage in dialogue with senior levels of government about policies, programs and sustainable funding.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.