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Apr 12 · 49 tweets · [adamadonaldson/status/1646194179968495616](https://twitter.com/adamadonaldson/status/1646194179968495616)

Coming up at the top of the hour, what should be a brief Wellington County Social Services Committee meeting.



MEETING PREVIEW: County Social Services Meeting for April 12, 2023

April's meeting of the Wellington County Social Services Committee has three items on the agenda covering daycare, housing, and social spending. Not the biggest agenda, but one with a lot of ...

<https://guelphpolitico.ca/2023/04/07/meeting-preview-county-social-services-meeting-fo...>

Chair Anderson has called the meeting to order.

No Declaration of Pecuniary Interest. Anderson proposes to move the closed session to the beginning instead of the end.

Motion to go into closed session for litigation or potential litigation, and info from other levels of gov't passed unanimously.

Committee is in closed session now, Anderson promises about 15 minutes run time. Smoke 'em if you got 'em.

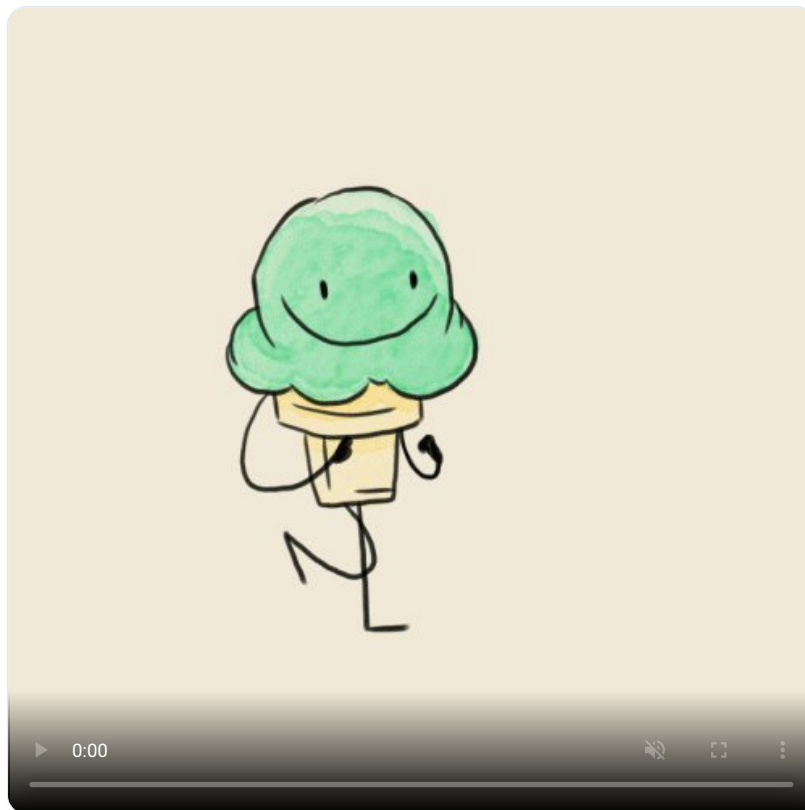


Still waiting for the closed session to wrap. It's been 16 minutes since I sent that last tweet.

Status update:



Coming up on 1 hour since the "15 minute" closed session began.



The press. Sad. Forgotten.

We sit outside the committee room now in hour 2 of a 10-minute in-camera meeting.

Spirits are low. Coffee is lower.

County staff room, mere steps away and filled with free snacks, but out of reach.

All we have left is bad poetry.

Pray for us.



An hour and 15 minutes later, in-camera session is over, and we dig into the first open agenda item: Social Services Financial Statements as of March 31, 2023. Ontario Works is tracking closer to budget so far this year.

For EarlyON, capacity is picking up again so the balance sheet is tracking ahead of budget. These costs are covered by the Province though, and not the County who merely administers.

In social assistance, some upfront costs have been incurred in the area of services for homelessness, but this is covered by Reaching Home grants, and this is a matter of time. Everything should come out quits by the end of the year.

Mayor Guthrie asks about moving expenses. Staff notes that these are when tenants move out, and when the county goes in to get it ready to receive the next tenant. Those expenses were up in 1st quarter, sometimes it depends on how long a previous tenant was in a unit when it

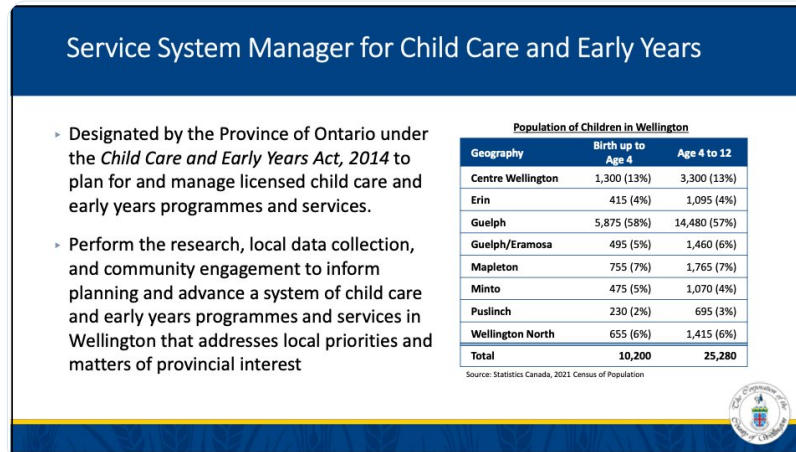
comes to how much it cost. Sometimes it's just a matter of a new coat of paint, sometimes more repairs need to be done.

Financial statements received unanimously.

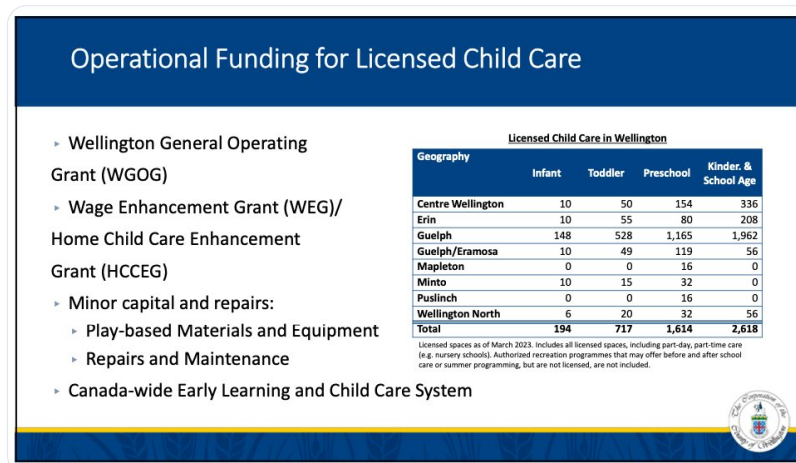
Chair Anderson apologises for the lengthy in-camera discussion, there was an additional item about labour relations.

Next, an overview of the Children's Early Years Division Presentation by Mandy Koroniak, Director of Children's Early Years Division.

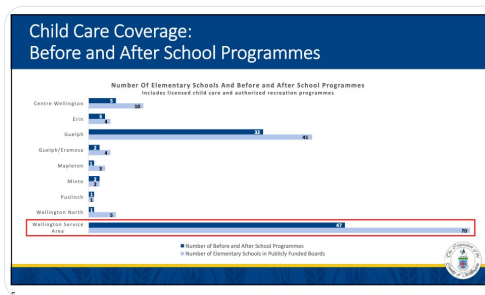
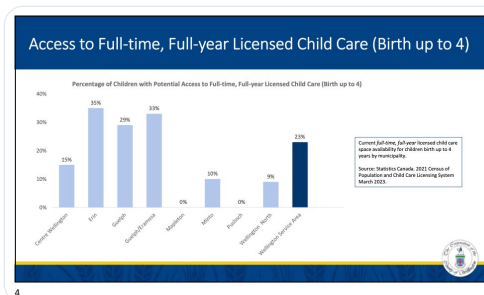
This slide shows how many kids are in the childcare system operated by the County in Guelph and Wellington.



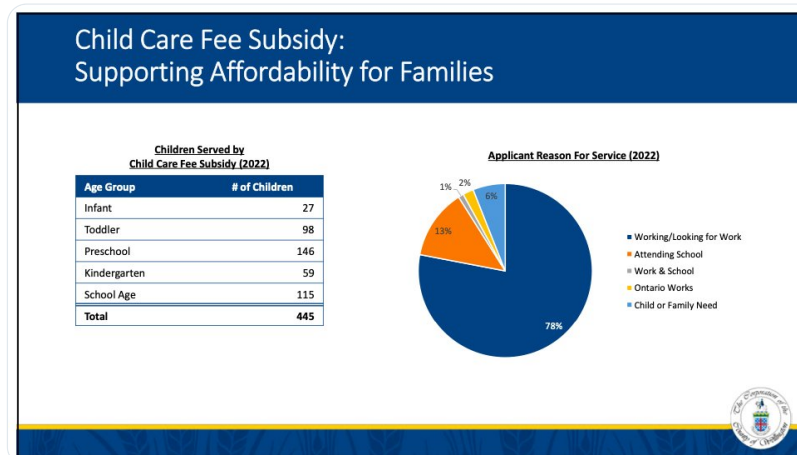
How operation funding works:



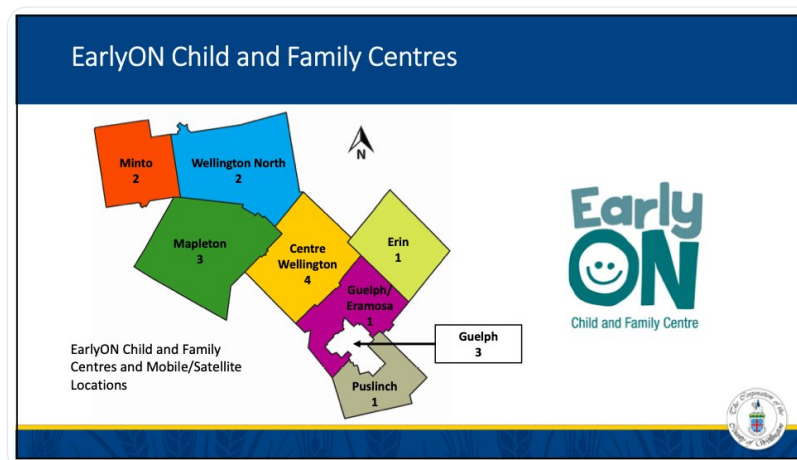
These slides show the overage area for kinds between birth and 4 years, and kids between 4 and 12 years:



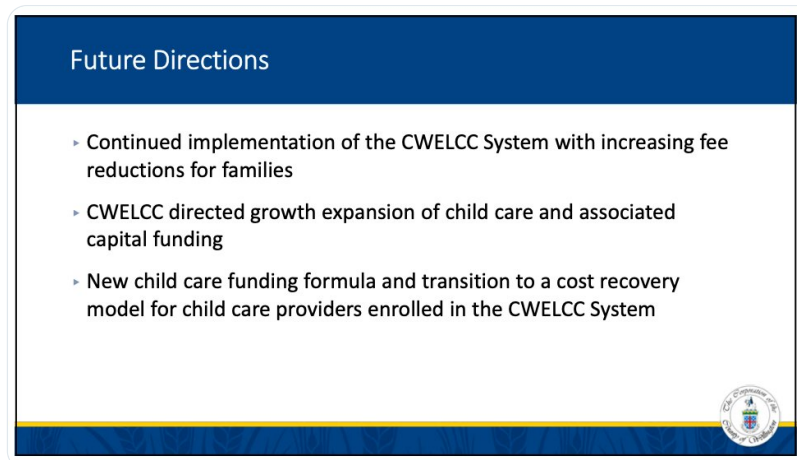
There is a fee subsidy program that helps people afford childcare depending on income. 445 children and 344 families were supported in 2022.



The spread of EarlyON childcare facilities around the county:



Coming Soon. (Note that Koroniak says that they don't know yet what the next phase of fee reductions is going to look like. They're waiting for direction from the Ministry.)



Cllr Bulmer asks about waiting lists, is there a centralised list? Koroniak says they could acquire software to collect information from all providers and create a dedicated, comprehensive list but...



Cllr Cork asks to clarify difference btw family centres and childcares. Koroniak says family centres are new, they're not intended to provide licensed care but are meant for parents and kids as a place to visit together.

Warden Lennox asks if there are regional differences in availability vs demand. Koroniak says across the system demand exceeds availability. She also adds that its difficult to ascertain without now info from all the waitlists for all services.

Lennox asks if the need is going to get worse, and how to close gap. Koroniak says the Province has set the goal of 37% of children to have accessed to licensed care, but the current funding stops at 2026. To be continued.

Cllr Davidson says that they don't want to run into a similar crisis as they're seeing with homelessness. They need to build the centres, but there's no provincial funding.

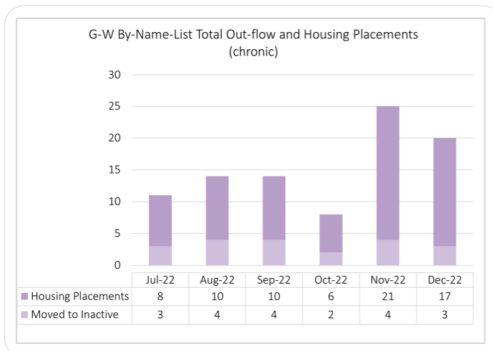
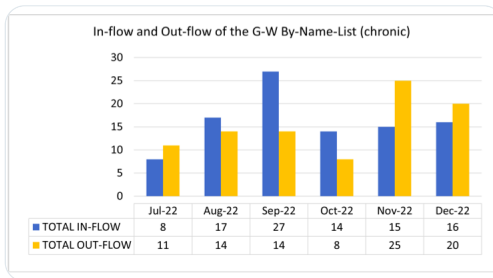
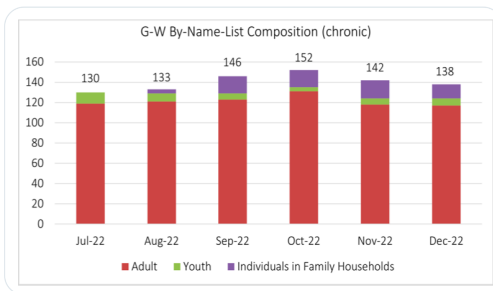
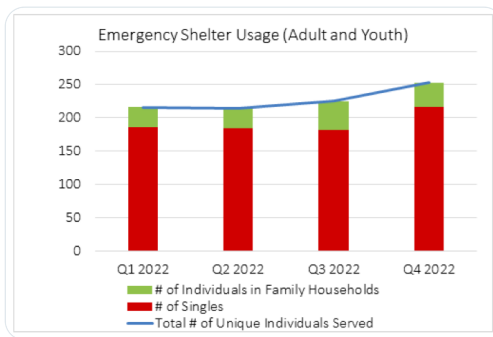
Bulmer asks if the province has to pay for the capital, or could the municipality take it on? Luisa Artuso, another director, notes that establishing new childcare is largely left up to the providers, and that includes the province and other non-profits. Just a matter of will.

Guthrie asks if childcare centres could be covered by DCs. Staff say that's something that needs to be looked into. Guthrie says it might be appealing of the municipality can build the space and then find provider to operate.

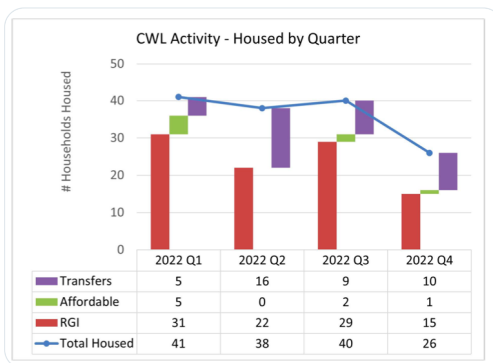
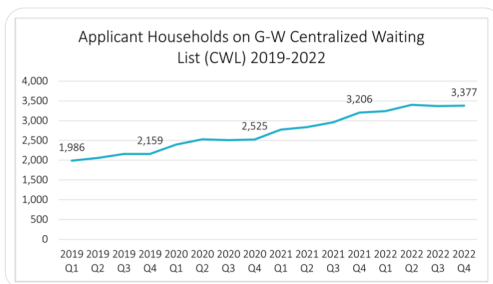
Report received unanimously.

Next, Housing Services Status and Activity Report - 2022 Q3 and Q4 with director of housing Mark Poste.

Here are some of the stats: 1/2



2/2



Guthrie asks about the overall capacity right now. There are 79 not including the Women in Crisis shelter for survivors of domestic violence. At capacity? Poste says it fluctuates, but it's mostly close and there are changes with the warmer weather.

Bulmer asks if spaces were used by those seeking shelter from Upper Wyndham fire. Poste says those people are staying at a hotel in the north end, and the County is always using hotel space at any given time.

Guthrie: So identified spaces are 79, but you can reach out to other facilities.
Poste says that's right.

Motion to receive the report approved.

Next, 100% Municipally Funded Discretionary Benefits – 2022 Annual Report. Stuart Beumer, Director of Ontario Works presents.

Spending in this area was up 34% (back to pandemic levels and close to 2017 spending). Over 1,300 requests were made through the program including requests for medical transportation caused by return to in-person service and growth.

Beumer says this program also highlight unique County program: Market Bucks vouchers, which were used to buy \$9,240 worth of farm goods and produce from county farmer's markets.

Davidson asks about Market Bucks distribution. Beumer says they go right from the case worker to the person using them. Depending on where they are, they might travel to a different market outside their home municipality.

Lennox praises Market Bucks as a valuable service that helps people in need and the vendors like it too. It's been a great partnership.

Guthrie asks if the discretionary payments are tracked to see if there's repeat asks, or if it's same house asking for different services. They may need more wraparound care. Beumer says they do have case management system that tracks amounts *and* services.

Beumer notes that they do try and divert people to available services if there's repeated need, something like an ongoing prescription someone has trouble buying.

Guthrie asks about monitoring for abuse. Beumer says that they don't monitor for Market Bucks appreciating that people with food insecurity issues often access multiple sources. They do monitor for medical matters though w/ doc's notes.

Beumer adds that they will also talk with service providers, with permission of the individual, to see if they can streamline services to make them more accessible though one provider.

Cllr Duncan says this is a good news story. These programs are funded by people in Wellington County to take care of people in Wellington County, and this is very helpful, mostly, in extraordinary circumstances. Encourages colleagues to put word out.

Motion to receive the report passed unanimously.

That's a wrap for this meeting!

