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Coming up: The first Joint Social Services and Land Ambulance Committee of 2025. Here's what is coming up:



**MEETING PREVIEW: Joint Social Services and Land Ambulance Com...**

Wellington County gets the early bird worm with the first meeting of 2025 (at least from a Guelph point of interest). After skipping December, the Joint Social Services and Land Ambulance Committee...

<https://guelphpolitico.ca/2025/01/03/meeting-preview-joint-social-services-and-land-am...>

Chair Busuttil has called the meeting to order. She acknowledges the first meeting for the Cllr Lloyd and the new Director of Housing Dave Purdy. .



**County hires new director of housing**

GUELPH – The County of Wellington has hired a new director of housing. As of Nov. 18, Dave Purdy will join the county's housing services team, the department responsible for the delivery and administ...

<https://www.wellingtonadvertiser.com/county-hires-new-director-of-housing/#:~:text=18...>

Declaration of Pecuniary Interest? None.

Regrets: Cllr Downer.

First, 65 Delhi St. Transitional Housing Construction Project - Status Report #10. Lloyd asks about potential changes in likely opening date. We're still on track for the 31st.

Report received unanimously.

Next, 2025 Budget: Social Services. Shauna Calder, Manager of Finance notes the 7.3% increase for the City's end, which is actually a decrease of 0.02%. In housing, there's a \$1.8 million decrease in revenue, \$1.1 mn was from one-time funding.

The County has received \$550k more for Reaching Home, which is one of the changes since Nov. No follow-up about homelessness funding from feds for 2024/25, so the municipalities will be carrying that solo.

New housing projects will begin in 2026 once a high level review is complete. Capital spending \$50.8 mn over 10 years on County-owned social housing units. Operating increases driven by supplies and insurance.

3.1% increase in Ontario Works costs for the City, but many of these costs are recovered from the province, including a bump in admin costs for the first time since 2018. Some programs moved to other departments.

Childcare budget has decreased for 2025 due to increase funding via the fed/Ongov move to \$10/day childcare. Funding models were received by the County in November.

Questions? Lloyd asks about one-time funds for RCM and Sanguen that have expired. Social Services Admin Artuso says the RCM was joint funding with City and County, based on contingency that City would continue funding. Sanguen got funds through other applications.

Or rather they filled out applications. Artuso says that they wanted to see what the fate is of those program applications before applying additional funds through the County.

O'Rourke asks about \$2 mn increase in capital costs. Calder says its partially an annualization of costs, the rest is winter response and Norfolk site development. O'Rourke asks if Norfolk is going to become a permanent site...

...Calder says they will review that this year and consider what additional changes are needed. O'Rourke asks if there's any targeting of projects to meet needs of other people, seniors, adults with developmental disabilities?...

...Artuso says that the plan will include those demos, and there's also plans to retrofit existing units to offer greater accessibility. They also have meetings with stakeholders lined up, but they're also looking at rent supplements as an answer too.

O'Rourke asks about \$50 mn investment, what about the units in Guelph? Calder says the units in question include Guelph, but this money will not support building new units.

O'Rourke asks about \$18 million announced for housing at County. That's the County's affordable housing program, Calder says. If there's a provincial allocation available there will be a competition for how best to use those funds.

O'Rourke notes that the City's conversation about affordable housing was based in the market. She wants to know when there might be a commensurate conversation with the County about building affordable housing, like the City did about paramedics. That's a take away.

Guthrie asks about winter response: We got \$600k-ish from the feds, and they announced more funds in 24/25 budget, but we're not getting anything? Calder says they did not get winter shelter response allocation, but there was increase to Reaching Home funding.

Calder adds that the Reaching Home funds as an advisory board that determines how that's spent, including a couple of reps from the County. No decision has been made about offsetting winter response plans at the last meeting, but that may change.

Purdy adds that no decision has been made yet, so the budget had to proceed this way with the burden on the operating budget. Guthrie asks if that can change? Calder says she's not sure they will know in the next 2 weeks.

Lloyd she's not sure what the County's units are or where, says there's a vacuum of information. Calder says the list in the agenda is units based in the County and City, they're all owned and managed by the County.

O'Rourke notes that Reaching Home is meant to address urban homeless which the City can't receive b/c its not a housing provider. How can the City track that spending? Calder says that there are mechanisms in the contracts and they can provide the City with that info.

Purdy says the community advisory board has a rep from the federal gov. He says that he would be happy to work with the board to give the city that information.

Bulmer says O'Rourke's comments about housing are fair, but what form could that proposal take? Artuso says the county is looking at a report about housing, it is in draft form right now, and it will look at each municipality, growth, income profiles, et al to assess the need.

Artuso adds that the report should be done sometime in the next couple of months and will account how much affordable housing is needed and where.

The caveat is that the report will use data from the 2021 census, which will be slightly out of date, but that will offer a baseline.

Lloyd asks about capital for childcare in the budget, is ONGov funding coming? Calder says at this time, they're not anticipating funding for new builds, but if there was a direction to plan for those builds, it could go into future budgets but all local funding.

Recommendation:

That the attached 2025 Operating and Capital Budget and 2025-2034 Ten-Year Plan for Social Services be approved and forwarded to the Administration, Finance and Human Resources Committee is approved.

On County portion of land ambulance, or what we call paramedics, the County share is \$6 million for 2025. Pressures on staff are one of the drivers of this budget, as you will see from the 3rd quarter actuals there's been much overtime and leave costs.

Recommendation:

That the attached 2025 Operating Budget and 2025-2034 Ten-Year Plan for Land Ambulance be approved and forwarded to the Administration, Finance and Human Resources Committee is approved.

Next, Land Ambulance Third Quarter Budget Monitoring Report. Shanna O'Dwyer, Acting GM Finance/City Treasurer will present.

Guelph Wellington Paramedic Services has a \$2.5 million operating deficit for 2024, mostly due to compensation. The \$2.1 million overrun in compensation is because of increased temp staff and overtime to cover sick time and other types of leave.

WC = \$901k.

Recommendation:

That the Land Ambulance Third Quarter Budget Monitoring Report be received by the Joint Social Services and Land Ambulance Committee for information is approved.

Next, 2024-25 Winter Response Update. According to this report, which covers till the end of Nov, 52 people were moved to temporary accommodation, and 46 per cent of emergency shelter beds were vacant each night.

Anderson asks about finding hotel placements when there's placements in shelters. Purdy says the hotels are for County-side, or is also used as a transitional measure as people gain more independence.

Recommendation:

That the Joint Social Services and Land Ambulance Committee recommend to County Council to receive the report, 2024-25 Winter Response Update, for information is approved.

Next, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing Encampment Funding Initiative. A letter from Paul Calandra, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, offers clear intent to not use these available funds for service delivery, but to clear encampments.

The County looked at programs with the City of Guelph and community partners that could be applicable to the goal of ending encampments. It was decided that they would focus on further developing the temporary accommodation at Norfolk Manor and encampment site restorations.

Purdy adds that they've sent the application but have only heard so far that they the application has been received.

O'Rourke asks if there was outreach to community partners to see if they could be applicable for the Last Mile funding. Purdy says they did, in the City and the County, but the challenge was finding projects a) near completion or b) could fit in the criteria.

O'Rourke: Do you know if there will be a second call?

Purdy: Given this was directed to encampments I imagine this is a "one and done."

Guthrie doesn't want to identify projects by name, so wonders if they can talk in-camera. Doesn't want to leave any stone unturned about potential funds for projects. Busuttil says they can do that in when committee meets in-camera at the end of the meeting.

Busuttil thanks staff b/c this was dropped at the last minute by the ONgov and they worked though the holidays to meet the Jan 3 deadline.

Recommendation:

That the Joint Social Services and Land Ambulance Committee recommend to County Council to receive the report, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing Encampment Funding Initiative, for information is approved.

Next, 2025 Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care System and Directed Growth Update. Mandy Koroniak, Director of Children's Early Years is presenting.

The final funding guidelines were released at the end of November, which replaces the current revenue replacement model under the national plan to get to \$10 per day childcare.

The Ontario government has also set a growth target of 1,721 licensed childcare spaces for Guelph and Wellington by December 2026. Presently, there are 952 and there's a plan to add another 448 in 2025 to get us to 1,400.

Recommendation:

That the Joint Social Services and Land Ambulance Committee recommend to County Council that the report, 2025 Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care System and Directed Growth Update, be received for information is approved.

No Ontario Works reports, so committee will go into closed for personal matters about an identifiable individual. This would include Guthrie's request to talk about other projects.

Committee is now in closed, so that's essentially the end of the meeting. Nothing will be coming out of closed session I've been told.



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