

HAMILTON POLICE SERVICES BOARD

- RECOMMENDATION -

DATE: October 15, 2020
REPORT TO: Chair and Members
Hamilton Police Services Board
FROM: Eric Girt
Chief of Police
SUBJECT: *Business Planning Process*
PSB 20-085

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Board extend the current Business Plan by one year.



Eric Girt
Chief of Police

FINANCIAL / STAFFING / LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

FINANCIAL - Costs for the 2022-2024 planning process were included in the 2021 Operating budget. Budgeting expenses were identified primarily for the independent facilitator, which is necessary to guide the HPS through the planning process, but would also be used for the community and internal surveys, resources, room rentals and food.

If the funds in the budget are not applied towards the Business Planning process in 2021, they will be deferred until the 2022 budget.

STAFFING – N/A

LEGAL - In accordance with the Provincial Adequacy Regulations, Police Services Boards are required to develop Business Plans at minimum every three years. While there is no specific provision in the Police Services Act that addresses an extension of a Business Plan, Mr. David Tilley at the Ministry of the Solicitor General was consulted and he advised that the “Ministry’s view is that the language contained within the Adequacy standards provides for sufficient flexibility for a Business Plan to be delayed or extended. As long as the Board is informed and is supportive, the Ministry’s position is that the Business Plan can be extended or delayed.”

BACKGROUND:

The Provincial Adequacy Standards Regulation (O Reg 3/99 Sec. 30) for Police Services requires every Board, in partnership with the Chief, to prepare a Business Plan for its police service at minimum every three years. Preparation for the current Business Plan began with extensive environmental scanning in the fall of 2017 and involved a number of processes to gather information such as; public consultations and surveys, three days of plenary sessions run by an independent facilitator, a review of the 2016-2018 Business Plan as well as National, Provincial and local trends, a workload study and environmental scanning reports from several areas within the Hamilton Police Service (HPS). Input for the vision and direction of the HPS was gathered from residents, businesses, school boards, diverse community partners and stakeholders, members of the HPS and Board members. Approved in the fall of 2018, the Hamilton Police Service 2019-2021 Business Plan was implemented to guide the HPS for the next 3 years and will expire at the end of 2021.

Due to significant restrictions created by the global pandemic, the ability of the Hamilton Police Service (HPS) to obtain crucial information for the next iteration of the Business Plan is severely limited. The inability to gather community input and important data such as crime statistics, would make it difficult to determine the direction of the Service for the next three years.

Extending the current Business Plan by one year (2019-2022) would allow the HPS to focus on the strategic objectives and priorities in the current Business Plan that were delayed/put on hold when the COVID-19 pandemic began. It would also be more likely that the second wave has passed, removing barriers created by the pandemic that will prohibit the participation of our community.

The Request for Quote process to hire an independent facilitator would need to begin immediately. This process is time consuming and if halted due to further restrictions placed on us by the Province it may result in lost revenue for the HPS and/or any organizations preparing quotes.

Additionally, a location to hold the plenary sessions needs to be identified and secured now, which will require a deposit. Due to indoor gathering sizes being limited, it is unlikely that finding a suitable location will be possible. If a facility is identified, there is a risk of losing the deposit if further shutdowns occur.

The planning process for the 2022-2024 Business Plan would need to begin in October 2020 and adhere to a strict timeline (see Appendix "A"). Ontario is now officially in the second wave of the global COVID-19 pandemic, and the uncertainty surrounding the pandemic and the subsequent restrictions imposed on the Province will have an impact on the planning process. These restrictions will create limitations on gathering data, and in turn, impact the outcome of the next Business Plan in a number of ways, namely;

- Extensive environmental scanning phase needs to begin this fall. The community and member surveys will be affected as the participation/response rates may be reduced. Outreach options will be limited by COVID restrictions, there may be an impact on representativeness and responses may be atypical given the heightened anxiety and changes in crime patterns due to the pandemic.
- Restrictions on indoor gatherings (currently a max of 10 people) will make plenary sessions extremely challenging and will significantly limit the number of community members who can participate. This will result in the inability to gather a wide range of input which is crucial to determine the future direction of the HPS.
- The messaging from Public Health is to stay home and limit social interaction. It is important that we heed this advice and encourage others to as well.
- Meetings held online are challenging and will negatively impact the level of input/engagement from the public, which is a critical element of the environmental scan, particularly input from marginalized communities. Not everyone will have access to a computer or the necessary software to participate.
- Given the uncertainty regarding how long the pandemic restrictions will continue, and with the pandemic being a priority for community members (worrying about income loss, illness, homeschooling children, child care etc.) - this will compromise the level of public engagement, inclusiveness and more importantly, diverse representation. This could cause and/or be viewed by some as a bias in the data collected.
- Statistics Canada publications (i.e. crime stats) which are necessary for comparison/trend analysis have been delayed due to the pandemic.

- Ontario is now in the second wave of the pandemic, reporting higher daily infections than in the first wave. This may result in a number of HPS members having to work from home adding to the challenge of facilitating much of the planning process.
- With the uncertainty of the pandemic, it may prove difficult to schedule an independent facilitator as many organizations have adopted new business practices and operating protocols.

The Ontario Declaration of Emergency was enacted early in 2020, allowing for governments to suspend or delay certain municipal planning decisions and timelines during the state of emergency. There are a number of Police Services in the Province who have similar business planning cycles and have chosen to extend their existing plans due to COVID-19 and related restrictions such as; the Ottawa Police Service, who received approval from their Board to extend their existing plan by one year, and London Police Service who was granted a two year extension by their board last month.

Ontario is in the early stages of its second wave of the global pandemic, and the future is uncertain. Most businesses have had to make significant changes to the way they do business in order to adapt, including police services. The Government has provided an opportunity for police services to extend their Business Plans, recognizing that there are significant barriers to the process and the ability to effectively and accurately gather the data needed to determine the direction of the service for the next Business Planning period.

An extension of the existing Hamilton Police Service 2019-2021 Business Plan would allow us to ensure we meet the strategic objectives determined to be a priority by our communities, and to have a more effective and accurate plan for the future.

EG/R. Abbott

cc: Ryan Diodati, Deputy Chief – Support
Nancy Goodes-Ritchie – Superintendent - Professional Development Division

Appendix "A"

2022-2024 Business Plan – Original Timelines

Action Plan

<u>Activities</u>	<u>Timeline</u>	<u>Accountability</u>
1. Initiate, define and delegate project	Sept. 1, 2020	Chief of Police
2. Activate Project Plan	Sept. 2, 2020	Professional Development
3. Determine Dates/Location of Refit	Oct 23, 2020	Professional Development
4. Survey Questions to Board	Nov 12, 2020	Professional Development
5. Implement Community Survey	Dec 2020 – Mar 2021	Professional Development
6. Board Approval of Proposal	Jan 2021	Police Services Board
7. Implement Member Survey	Jan 2021 – Mar 2021	Professional Development
8. Identify Bus Plan Refit participants	Mar 5, 2021	Board/Chief/Commanders
9. Publish Scanning Data	May 7, 2021	Professional Development
10. Evaluate 2019-2021 Business Plan	June 1, 2021	Lead Facilitator/PDD
11. Hold pre-planning conference	TBD	Refit Participants
12. Hold Business Plan Refit (2 days)	TBD	Lead Facilitator/Participants
13. Process Plenary Data	TBD	Professional Development
14. Review and approve Business Plan	Sept 30, 2021	Chief of Police
15. Board Approval of Business Plan	Oct, 2021	Police Services Board
16. Publish and distribute Business Plan	December 1, 2021	Professional Development
17. Implement 2022-2024 Business Plan	January 3, 2021	Chief/Commanders/Members