



STAFF REPORT

Title: Cold Lake - Mental Health Services

Meeting Date: June 25, 2019

Executive Summary:

Last year the RCMP, during its annual report to council, notified the City of Cold Lake that local officers were spending a significant amount of time transporting people in need of a mental health facility to designated facilities in either St. Paul or Fort McMurray.

The City of Cold Lake has since learned that there is a possibility that Alberta Health Services could bring mental health services to the Cold Lake Healthcare Centre. While the capital cost and service levels required of a designated facility would likely be out of reach at the initial outset, the availability of mental health services in the City of Cold Lake would not only be expected to provide a much needed service for the region, but it would also alleviate the pressures felt by local law enforcement, as well as pressure being put on the designated facilities.

Administration feels that there is some room to begin the conversation about mental health services in the City of Cold Lake with the ministry and the appropriate AHS staff.

Background:

The RCMP delegation informed council that when the Cold Lake RCMP encounter an individual who requires mental health care, they are required to transport them to a designated mental health facility.

The two (2) closest mental health facilities most frequently used by the Cold Lake RCMP members are located in St. Paul and in Fort McMurray. The time spent to transfer and process people to these facilities is a significant use of local RCMP resources, council heard. This information sparked a conversation about the possibility of obtaining AHS mental health services at the Cold Lake Healthcare Centre in an effort to achieve a number of community priorities.

Local access to AHS mental health services could have a preventative effect on the issue by providing increased access to mental health care to individuals in need. This could assist people with the care they require before they find themselves in crisis or in a situation in which the RCMP become involved. The service would also alleviate pressure for space that the Fort McMurray or St. Paul facilities may experience by



accommodating people who require the service but do not need to be transported to a designated mental health facility.

In short, adding AHS mental health services (space to that of community mental health that currently exists on the second floor of the Health Centre) to the Cold Lake Healthcare Center could assist with filling a gap in the regional health care needs while also alleviating the pressure on resources that the RCMP are experiencing.

Alternatives:

- Council may decide not to lobby the Minister of Health and Alberta Health Services in regards to mental health services at this time.
- Council may authorize a letter on behalf of the city to the Minister of Health, the Honourable Tyler Shandro, and Alberta Health Services, requesting a discussion in regards to establishing mental health services at the Cold Lake Healthcare Centre.

Recommended Action:

Administration recommends that Council authorize a letter on behalf of the City of Cold Lake to the Minister of Health, the Honourable Tyler Shandro, and Alberta Health Services, requesting a discussion in regards to establishing mental health services at the Cold Lake Healthcare Centre.

Budget Implications (Yes or No):

No

Submitted by:

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