



STAFF REPORT

Title: Government of Alberta - Proposed Police Costing Model Engagement

Meeting Date: September 10, 2019

Executive Summary:

The Government of Alberta recently commence an engagement process relating to a new “proposed” policing costing model. It is understood that that the proposal will have the most impact to rural municipalities (e.g. Municipal Districts, County’s, and Specialized municipality and municipalities under 5,000). At this time, the proposed model will have minimal impact to urban communities will populations greater than 5,000.

In pragmatic terms, essentially the proposed model aiming to municipal governments that currently don’t pay into policing costs (291 communities representing approximately 20% of the Alberta population), to start contributing to policing costs thru a formula that either uses equalized assessment and/or population as a weighing factor.

The proposed formula is a significant step to having a more equitable funding model however stops short to impacting communities over 5,000; such as the City of Cold Lake. We’ve attached a copy of the “Police Costing Model Engagement Report and Presentation” for reference purposes.

Background:

AUMA has identified the following key priorities for urban municipalities with respect to the Alberta Police Act:

1. The Police Act should specify a new, more equitable funding model for police services where all municipalities contribute directly to the costs of policing. The new funding model should consider both the demand for services in a municipality, as well as the municipality’s ability to pay.
2. Alberta must have a mechanism to enable municipalities to assist in establishing local policing priorities and to hold police services accountable for local service delivery and reporting on performance and outcomes. This is particularly important for municipalities that receive policing services from the RCMP.
3. Albertans need to feel safe and protected in their communities. High RCMP vacancy rates and long response times have contributed to the perception that some communities are not safe. The Alberta Police Act should ensure that all Albertans have equitable access to police services, regardless of who provides this service.



A copy of the AUMA's letter dated March 18, 2019 to Honourable Kathleen Ganley has been attached for reference purposes. The letter include some of AUMA's suggested principles for an equitable police funding model:

1. A fair, flexible, and equitable model should be developed that:
 - Ensures the level of provincial funding is sufficient to meet standard levels of service.
 - Requires services beyond the standard level to be funded by the jurisdiction wanting the additional services.
 - Recognizes the unique needs of each municipality.
 - Recognizes the ability of a municipality to pay for services.
2. The model should encourage efficiencies by:
 - Using other mechanisms to address municipal capacity issues.
 - Encouraging regional policing models.
3. The transition to a new model should:
 - Ensure an adequate impact assessment analysis is completed.
 - Ensure that effective education and consultation mechanisms are available to Alberta's municipalities.
 - Allow for an adequate notice period.
4. Revenues created from the new model should be reinvested in public safety.
 - Ensure any revenue collected from an "everyone pays" model is returned to the municipalities that generated the revenue for the protection of public safety.
 - Ensure fine revenues stay in the municipalities in which they are generated.
5. Paying directly for policing should enable municipalities to participate meaningfully in police oversight, e.g. setting local policing priorities.

More specifically (as related to the current policing costs), the following summarizes the current police costing in Alberta:

- Own/Regional Municipal police service Municipality is responsible for 100% of the costs;
- RCMP municipal policing contract:
 - Up to 15,000 population - municipality responsible for 70% of contract cost
 - Over 15,000 population - municipality responsible for 90% of contract cost
 - Further to the above several municipalities hire their own Community Peace Officers.
- Communities under rural communities and communities under 5,000 and under RCMP provincial policing contract Municipality are not responsible for any cost.



- Several hire their own Community Peace Officers and/or contract for RCMP enhanced policing.

Further to the above, the Government of Alberta, initiated an engagement process for their “proposed” police costing model. The proposed policing costing model will have the most impact to rural municipalities (e.g. Municipal Districts, County’s, and Specialized municipality and municipalities under 5,000).

Administration’s view of the proposed framework:

- The framework recognizes the need that all municipalities should be contributing to the costs associated with policing (which is a very positive shift);
- The framework stops short in directly financially benefiting any current urban municipalities that have been and are paying for policing costs (> 5,000);
- Enables an opportunity to for the Government of Alberta to enhance policing and perhaps the overall judicial system with the additional revenue; however there is equal opportunity for the Government of Alberta to reduce their overall costs of policing by simply downing costs to current municipalities that don’t pay for policing services (or a combination thereof).

Alternatives:

Council may consider following alternatives:

- Direct Administration to provide a letter to the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association articulating City of Cold Lake feedback in regards to the Government of Alberta proposed police costing model
- Accept the presentation relating to the Government of Alberta proposed police costing model as information.

Recommended Action:

That Council pass a motion directing Administration to provide a letter to the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association articulating the City of Cold Lake’s feedback in regards to the Government of Alberta’s proposed police costing model.

Budget Implications (Yes or No):

Yes

Submitted by:

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