



STAFF REPORT

Title: Cold Lake Parent Link Centre

Meeting Date: February 25, 2020

Executive Summary:

The Cold Lake Parent Link Centre (PLC) is uniquely designed to meet the needs of families and caregivers. The PLC works with parents, caregivers and other agencies to give children the best start in life. The Centre offers families comprehensive support in five core service areas: Early Childhood Development and Care; Parent Education; Family Support; Information and Referrals; and Developmental Screening.

In an announcement on November 4, 2019, effective March 31, 2020, the Alberta Children's Services Ministry is cancelling approximately 450 grants and contracts with 300 organizations that operate PLC's and other aligned programs.

At this time, effective April 1, 2020, the PLC will closed. As such, administration will need attune the resources associated with the program accordingly.

It is understood that City Council would like to consider a resolution to continue with the PLC, at least until the Government of Alberta make decisions in regards to the FRN's. It should be noted that this will come at a cost to the City of Cold Lake (as provincial funding will seize) of which will need to be funding from other sources of revenue (as a municipal property taxes).

The costs associated with the operations of the PLC is approximately \$25,000/month inclusive of the Government of Alberta grants that will be seizing and municipal top-up funding to provide enhanced programing.

Background:

The City of Cold Lake through its Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) and network service partners provides locally driven, preventative, social initiatives with the aim to promote healthy environments and positive experiences at critical stages in development offering the greatest benefit to individuals, families and communities.

Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) is a joint provincial-municipal funding program designed to establish, administer and operate preventive social services. FCSS emphasizes prevention, volunteerism and local autonomy



The provincial and municipal governments share the cost of the program. The Province contributes up to 80 per cent of the program cost and with the City covering a minimum of 20 percent.

The Cold Lake PLC is of the four (4) participating community partners which forms the Lakeland Parent Link Network. The Lakeland Parent Link Network is one of Alberta's network of 57 Parent Link Centres. The participating community partners in the Lakeland Parent Link Network are: the City of Cold Lake, Town of St. Paul, Town of Bonnyville and Lac La Biche County.

In response to Alberta Children's Services' announcement, administration submitted an Expression of Interest (EOI) to Children's Services, Family and Community Resiliency Division to be the Hub and Spoke service provider for the City of Cold Lake.

For the benefit of the reader, the Hub is described as a physical centre (brick and motor) and anchor organization that arranges the delivery of a full range of services, supports and programming. The Hub supports both direct service delivery of programs (in-house spoke services) and administers formal partnership services programs (contracted spoke services). The Spokes are the network of services, supports, and programming delivered to children, youth and families. These programs can be directly delivered by the Hub and/or coordinated by the Hub to be delivered by formal community partnerships.

The City's EOI has been presented in a manner which bids on being the Hub and Spoke for the City of Cold Lake yet remains open to providing Hub services for communities in the region i.e. Lac La Biche, MD District, Bonnyville and St. Paul without committing a bid price for these services. Council may recall, expressed in the tender document posted by Children's Services, the City of Cold Lake is positioned within the network area with Athabasca County, Lac La Biche and Plamondon.

Children's Services is using a multi-phased EOI approach for the development and implementation of the Family Resource Network (FRN) services. Phase six (6), commencing February 17 to March 14, 2020, assigns the Family and Community Resiliency Division, Regional personnel, Regional Contract Teams and qualified proponents to negotiate and formalize partnerships, funding, responsibilities and expectations within the defined network areas.

Administration has been in contact with the Manager, Contracts, Procurement and Youth Assessment Centre, Children's Services, North Central Region. This report has been prepared prior to anticipated conversations with Children's Services February 24, 2020.



As mentioned, Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) is a joint provincial-municipal funding program. FCSS Program receives its mandate from the Family and Community Support Services Act and Regulation. FCSS philosophy is based on a belief that self-help contributes to a sense of integrity, self-worth and independence. Programs developed are intended to help individuals in their community to adopt healthy lifestyles, thereby improving the quality of life and building the capacity to prevent and/or deal with crisis situations should they arise.

FCSS and its network of service providers is an intricate web of support service. Services provided by FCSS are identified to be delivered in the new Family Resource Network core service delivery domains. The continuation of duplicated services beyond the cancellation deadline of March 31, 2020 may have an impact to not only the City's EOI application but the FCSS funding agreement January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2022.

Due to the fact the City of Cold Lake has significant financial uncertainty with regard to I.D. 349 (both for 2019 and 2020), it is administrations recommendation to allow the provincial funded program to seize, of which subject to the direction of the provincially funded FRN's, the program can be rebranded and funded by the City of Cold Lake (and partners), if so desired.

It should be noted that the following statics provide a summary of attendance to PLC programing (inclusive of the enhanced programming provided by the City of Cold Lake):

- 2014 - 12,766
- 2015 - 26,889
- 2016 - 28,279
- 2017 - 28,343
- 2018 - **22,554**

Alternatives:

Council may consider the following options:

- That Council consider a resolution to have the City of Cold Lake continue the operations of the Cold Lake Parent Link Centre;
- That Council consider a resolution to have the City of Cold Lake continue the operations of the Cold Lake Parent Link Centre until May, 31, 2020 (giving a two (2) month extension).
- Council may pass a resolution referring the issue to its' Corporate Priorities Committee meeting on March 18, 2020 for recommendation.



Recommended Action:

That Council defeat the following motion:

That Council direct Administration to continue with the operations of the Cold Lake Parent Link Centre program until May, 31, 2020, giving a two (2) month extension from the Government of Alberta's announcement to seize funding effective March 31, 2020, in an effort to receive feedback from the Government of Alberta on their new Family Resource Network Program.

Budget Implications (Yes or No):

No

Submitted by:

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