



COMMITTEE REPORT TO COUNCIL

1100 Patricia Blvd. | Prince George, BC, Canada V2L 3V9 | www.princegeorge.ca

DATE: December 16, 2020

TO: MAYOR AND COUNCIL

NAME AND TITLE: Councillor Murry Krause, Chair of Select Committee on Poverty Reduction

SUBJECT: Select Committee on Poverty Reduction-Preliminary Recommendations and Community Engagement Plan

ATTACHMENT(S): 1.) Select Committee on Poverty Reduction Preliminary Recommendations
2.) PowerPoint - City of Prince George Select Committee on Poverty Reduction Presentation

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Council RECEIVES FOR INFORMATION the report dated December 16, 2020, from the Chair of the Select Committee on Poverty Reduction titled "Select Committee on Poverty Reduction-Preliminary Recommendations and Community Engagement Plan".

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with the opportunity to review and receive for information, the Select Committee on Poverty Reduction's preliminary recommendations that are the foundation of community engagement activities scheduled for February 2021.

BACKGROUND:

In October 2019, Prince George City Council approved the formation of a Select Committee on Poverty Reduction. The Committee is comprised of a variety of representatives from the community with a diverse range of perspectives and understanding of poverty reduction. The committee met monthly from November 2019 - October 2020, to develop 22 recommendations regarding the City's role in implementation of the Province's [TogetherBC](#) strategy. Due to COVID-19 restrictions the Committee did not meet from April - June, and opted to reconvene in workshop format from July-October 2020.

In order to manage the process efficiently, Committee members identified six theme areas that guided Committee deliberations. Priority themes such as the affordability and suitability of housing, enabling access to services and supports and food security were identified as being particularly relevant to the Prince George context, the role of local government. Themes also aligned with both the Province's [TogetherBC](#) Poverty Reduction Strategy and the Prince George Poverty Profile.

With the assistance of subject matter experts, the Committee utilized each of its meetings to examine the theme areas. Deliberations included consideration of the relationship of each theme to those potentially impacted (such as seniors and single parent families), as well as the mandate and jurisdiction of local government. Administration collated and synthesized Committee discussion points in the form of draft recommendations that were then reviewed, amended, and endorsed by the Committee.

The preliminary recommendations, which were rigorously examined by the Committee, were endorsed at the November 10, 2020 Committee meeting. The 22 preliminary recommendations will be the focal point of the community engagement process scheduled to begin in February 2021.

Planning and preparation for the community engagement process (funded by a UBCM Poverty Reduction Planning & Action Grant) is currently underway. The engagement is intended to bring together the community to review, provide feedback on, and prioritize the 22 preliminary recommendations, which will shape the final recommendations forwarded to Council for consideration. A key priority will be to engage those who are both directly and indirectly affected by poverty, with a specific focus on those with lived or living experience. A complementary goal of the engagement is to educate the public about the human experience of living in poverty, and challenge misconceptions about poverty. The engagement is comprised of various components such as a survey, focus groups with agency partners' support, and a community champion approach in order to gather a wide array of feedback on the recommendations. Following community engagement, the Committee will reconvene to consider feedback and amend recommendations as necessary. A final set of recommendations will be presented to Council later in 2021.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Council has identified supporting initiatives that provide access to safe housing, healthy food, and community services, as a Social Health and Well-being focus area. The Select Committee on Poverty Reduction will deliver its final recommendations to Council concerning the City of Prince George's role in the implementation of a provincial poverty reduction strategy, informed by those living in poverty or with lived experience, as one means to address this focus area.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

A UBCM Poverty Reduction Planning and Action 2020 Grant is supporting the design and implementation of engagement activities to ensure a diverse composition of community residents provide comment on recommendations for City action. The grant funding is covering costs associated with the acquisition of contracted resources to collect information (via a series of engagement activities) regarding the proposed poverty reduction recommendations. Existing staff resources support project management functions.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:

Administration requests that Council receive the preliminary recommendations for information. These preliminary recommendations will be the focal point of a community engagement process, scheduled to begin in February 2020. The engagement process places special emphasis on enabling those living in poverty and those with lived experience, to respond to actions proposed by the Select Committee on Poverty Reduction. This will ensure final recommendations for City actions to reduce poverty at the local level will have a positive impact.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Councillor Murry Krause, Select Committee on Poverty Reduction

APPROVED:

Walter Babicz, Acting City Manager
Meeting Date: [2021/01/11]