

Community Team Approach to Social Issues

November 17, 2020

11:00 a.m.

St. Thomas Police Service – Boardroom (ZOOM)

Present:

Name	Organization
Pam Hill	Addition Services Thames Valley (ADSTV)
Heather Stillitano	Central Community Health Centre (CCHC)
Judith Wiley	Central Community Health Centre (CCHC)
Danielle Neilson	City of St. Thomas – Social Services
Heather Sheridan	City of St. Thomas – Social Services
Joe Preston	City of St. Thomas – Mayor
Kim Dustun	St. Thomas Fire Department (STFD)
Wendell Graves	City of St. Thomas
Dan Logie	CMHA Elgin
Cherisse on behalf of Lori Fitzgerald	Inn Out of the Cold
Amber Alpaugh-Bishop	LHIN
Bob Davidson	St. Thomas Fire
Bill Todd	St. Thomas Fire
Chief Chris Herridge	St. Thomas Police Service
Deputy Chief Marc Roskamp	St. Thomas Police Service
Inspector Zehr	St. Thomas Police Service
Inspector Scott Barnes	St. Thomas Police Service
Inspector Steve Bogart	St. Thomas Police Service
Tiffany Terpstra	St. Thomas Police Service
Staff Sergeant Jeremy Lapadat	St. Thomas Police Service

Chief Herridge welcomed everyone to the meeting. Chief Herridge noted that this meeting was booked in follow up to the email he sent on October 28, 2020 re: the number of incidents occurring in the downtown. Chief Herridge noted that our community has had increased calls over the past 3-4 years.

Chief Herridge noted that it is important to bring together community partners as no one agency/service can deal with these issues alone. There needs to be a collective solution to deal with social issues that are being dealt within St. Thomas.

Chief Herridge noted that there has been some further discussions since his email re: how to address some of these issues. Chief Herridge called upon agencies/services to provide updates:

- CCHC has started a primary outreach program on Thursday's at the old police headquarters.
- Dan Logie and Chief Herridge have had conversations on how to deal with people with "rough living" that cannot attend In Out of the Cold.
- There are plans in the works for increased housing

Chief Herridge provided some stats to partners to update them on what the St. Thomas Police Service is seeing:

Number of Incidents;

INCIDENTS	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020 Projecting
TOTAL	14359	14289	15175	18846	20089	22,000 +

Number of Arrests;

ARRESTS	2017	2018	2019	2020 Projecting
TOTAL	1250	1761	1971	1600 (COVID?)
PRISONER TOTALS AT ECC		1555	1868	

Number of Criminal Charges;

CRIMINAL CHARGES	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020 Projecting
TOTAL	1021	1741	1529	2118	2148	1900 (COVID?)

Crimes against Property;

OFFENCES	2017	2018	2019	2020 Projecting
B/E	118	240	222	250?
Thefts Possession/Stolen Property	408	823	761	850?
Frauds	115	296	172	150?
Arsons	8	9	19*	
Mischiefs	163	211	245	300?

*4th Quarter arsons – Mental Health related

Bail Violations;

OFFENCES / INCIDENTS	2017	2018	2019	2020
Bail Violation Charges	111	227	237	240?

CRIMES OF VIOLENCE (2020)	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	2019	2018	2017	2016
Homicide/Attempt Murder	0	0	0		0	0	0	1
Robbery	2	1	3		3	5	4	8
Assaults	49	56	62		236	232	201	207
Weapons	3	1	3		12	16	9	14

*Added to show a lower level of violence in St. Thomas although there is a different perception based on the individuals citizens are seeing in the downtown.

The group discussed the need to ensure vulnerable people get the expertise that they need and when they need it. Discussion also included:

- The need to have experts in addictions and mental health
- The need to have the right services respond to appropriate calls to best serve the individual in need
- There are gaps in some areas that need to be filled to make services successful and streamlined
- It is important to continue to meet to discuss and deal with the issues that are occurring.

Judith Wiley provided the following update:

- Met yesterday with Lindsay Rice, Heather Stillitano and Heather Sheridan. There is funding available for mental health and wellness. Discussions are occurring to figure out what is possible. Currently looking at a 3-5 year pilot project.
 - This would include professional outreach workers 24-7
 - These workers would be attached to various services and organizations
 - These workers would assist with systems navigation including obtaining support, primary care, etc.
 - Hoping that there could be a “Housing Finder” position.
- The goal would be to work with individuals to get them to a healthier place and prepare them to be successful in finding housing (noting there are many steps to get to that point).
- Currently in the writing stages and hoping for a mid-December submission. MPP Jeff Yurek would champion this proposal. There is no known idea re: amount of funding at this point.

Dan Logie provided the following update:

- It will be important to think about what this looks like at the street level.
- This would include two positions with addictions and primary care background.
- These workers would engage people into services and assist individuals that have nowhere else to go. The workers would obtain an awareness of individuals, what their needs are and reach out to appropriate sources all while working on housing.

Judith Wiley noted:

- The Primary Care Outreach program has launched and will last until the end of March.
 - This only allows workers to be out on the street for a few hours a week.
 - There is a Physician, Nurse and Driver attached to the launch.

Amber Alpaugh-Bishop provided the following update:

- The LHIN currently has the proposal from the St. Thomas Police Service that is currently a couple of years old. It would be beneficial for this proposal to be updated as these are referenced when new funding is available.
- **Action Item: Chief to provide an updated proposal to the LHIN including current stats.**
- Chief Herridge noted that it would be helpful if permanent funding could be made available instead of submitting grants each year and hope for funding that is required.
- Chief Herridge noted that he would update the proposal as the work continues to increase. Chief Herridge would like to expand the MOST team and have someone cross-trained for mental health and addictions. The St. Thomas Police Service is having difficulty dealing with these issues with their current human resource capacity.

- The group discussed the need to layout how the new outreach program will weave into the MOST team so all can work together and be most effective.
- Chief Herridge noted that the St. Thomas Police Service could still triage the calls/request to track stats and then put out the request to the outreach team to respond.
- **Action Item: Mayor Preston to continue to advocate for this work (as it has proven to be successful in the past).**

Pam Hill provided the following update:

- **Action Item: Pam to provide updated information in terms of stats/information that addiction services is seeing in relation to residents of St. Thomas.**
 - # of people with no fixed addresses
 - Homeless receiving services right now
- Pam noted that their agency has managed to become involved (not to full extent) with the harm reduction program (three-way partnership) to get to know the substance using community.
- Pam agreed that cross-trained workers would be of most benefit.

The group discussed the timeframe/process for individuals to receive help. It was noted that “how you define help” is very important.

Inspector Barnes noted that the large majority of calls are a certain group of people living rough and displaced (from 423 Talbot Street or Inn Out of the Cold). Most of these individuals do not have homes. Some individuals cannot function at the Inn Out of the Cold and are propping up tents or stationing in vestibules. Chief noted that there is also an increase in property crime.

Wendell Graves provided the following update:

- Council gave a green light to move forward to tender 16 units to be built in the existing transit building. These should be available late fall 2021.
- There are other discussions occurring and will hopefully have information in a couple of weeks for this group re: supportive housing units that will come on stream in the City of St. Thomas.

Dan Logie provided the following update:

- More discussions need to occur re: how we can assist those people that have been banned from Inn Out of the COLD so that these individuals can get off the street, stay warm, etc.
- A process will need to be in place before bringing individuals to PSNE. Calls will need to be made to Inn Out of the Cold first to ensure they are not eligible to go there. The St. Thomas Police Service and PSNE will need to follow this same process.

The group discussed having increased coordination between CMHA, Inn out of the Cold and PSNE.

Action Item: Chief to forward Earl Taylor’s contact from the DDB to Dan Logie. COMPLETED

Cherisse provided the following update:

- Currently work with individuals who have been chronically homeless for so long and actually prefer to be outside and not indoors unless there is a cold weather alert.

- Open to looking at processes and evaluating approached with the most vulnerable to optimize services.

Mayor Joe Preston provided the following update:

- Security will be imperative/essential.
- PSNE will need to think about if services will be indoor, or come and go as needed.
- There are some partners missing at the table, will need to invite to future meetings.
- Services need to be out on the street, coordinated approach, all working together.

Action Item: Dan Logie to discuss security with Lori Fitzgerald and discuss having some services outside on certain days, level of activity, etc.

Heather:

- Danielle Nelson (Social Services)
 - Build on a couple of points
 - Housing focus – there could be a misunderstanding and building capacity and working with other services providers on critical needs. Including those choosing to sleep outside and to reduce those calls and working in collaboration.
 - See common themes in terms of needs – street outreach
 - We might not need to reinvent the wheel
 - Informed response – there is quite a bit about what we can learn about works
 - ACTION: Tracy from ORGCODE to have a conversation on a proposal that will touch on all of those points to be adapted to work on our community needs. We are facing the same challenges that London is dealing with.
 - Housing finding – look at one of our housing coordinators to reach out to the private market in order to move people into house opportunities. To assist with getting their ID replaced.

Heather Stillitano provided the following update:

- CCHC is prepping for innovating a primary care outreach service to bring service providers together as an information gathering session. This work has begun in terms of documenting who is offering what services. Ideally, this would be built into the professional service outreach pilot.

Action Item: Chief Herridge to share MOST schedule with Heather Stillitano. COMPLETED

Danielle Neilson provided the following update:

- There is a lot of great work being done and a lot of opportunity.
- It will be important to look at what others are doing (London) to not reinvent the wheel but build on what is being done to fit St. Thomas.
- There is a list that is reviewed on a weekly/bi-weekly bases at the coordinated access meeting, having a coordinated approach and ongoing communication would be beneficial.

Mayor Joe Preston noted that when asking for funding in terms of support to ask big. The sooner the request for funding is submitted the better.

Chief Herridge thanked the St. Thomas Fire Department for assisting with abandoned buildings, clearing building to ensure they are secured.

Action Item: Tiffany Terpstra to coordinate another partnership meeting before end of year.

Action Item: Deputy Chief Roskamp to provide Ryan Faucet's email to Tiffany Terpstra. COMPLETED

CONFIDENTIAL