

NO: **P004**

Committee DATE: **March 17 2014**

POLICE COMMITTEE

TO: **Mayor & Council (Police Committee)**

DATE: **2014-03-14**

FROM: **OIC Surrey RCMP**

FILE:

SUBJECT: **Community Safety Officer (CSO) program**

RECOMMENDATION

The Surrey RCMP recommends that the Police Committee:

1. Receive this report as information.

INTENT

The purpose of this report is to provide an update of the CSO program and outline steps forward for the integration of current CSO positions and future direction for an upgrade of this function with a viable option that will enhance service delivery and support the primacy of operations for core policing in the City of Surrey.

BACKGROUND

The RCMP's Client Service Enhancement Project (CSEP) was launched in February 2006 in efforts to identify critical success factors for the RCMP to refine its client focus. The CSO in "E" Division was one of three pilot programs that the RCMP CSEP launched to explore alternative options to service delivery. The CSO pilot program was approved for an 18 month period in "E" Division by the RCMP SEC in February 2008. "E" Division senior management was of the opinion that the CSO model would fit well into the Division's Crime Reduction Strategy and would provide an increased visible presence in their communities. As a result, four detachments were identified as pilot sites in "E" Division. The CSO program in Surrey was one of the pilot locations in "E" Division and 9 CSO's were recruited. The objective of the CSO pilot program was to contribute to safer homes and communities through visible, accessible, policing and crime prevention services.

DISCUSSION

Municipalities for the program were selected based on identified needs and on their willingness to fund the positions. The CSO pilot program was intended to result in the following immediate outcomes:

- Communities feel that Community Safety Officers understand, address and follow up on crime/safety issues in their area.
- Community/detachment awareness, understanding and utilization of Community Safety Officer services and crime prevention initiatives.

CSOs are unarmed RCMP members who complement and support General Duty (GD) members, providing visible and accessible uniformed presence to improve the quality of life in the community and to offer greater public reassurance. Their primary purpose is to provide increased police visibility and operational support, while assisting in the delivery of crime prevention and public reassurance programs. Their key duties include community policing, crime prevention, traffic support, investigative support and community safety.

In July of 2012, an evaluation report was completed on the CSO program by the RCMP National Program Evaluation services in accordance with the Treasury Board's policy on evaluation. The evaluation covered the programs activities from July 2008 to December 2009. The evaluation was based on the relevance and performance of the program and was a neutral assessment in determining the future of the program.

In January of 2013 RCMP outlined that the CSO program as it stands in "E" Division would transition into alternate roles that provide an enhanced service delivery option; namely the Community Constable (CC) or the Community Police Officer (CPO). CSO's would also be offered the options of a transition to being a Regular Member (RM) of the RCMP. The decision was communicated out in July of 2013.

In November of 2013, discussions with the Commanding Officer (CO) of "E" Division, Deputy Commissioner Craig Callens affirmed this position on the CSO program and the alternatives that would be available for members of the CSO program to transition to.

TRANSITION OF CURRENT CSO EMPLOYEES

On December 4th, 2013 an information session was held at E Division Headquarters at Green Timbers to provide those CSO members with the alternatives for their future. The options provided included transition to being a Regular Member (RM) in the RCMP or a CC.

Option 1: Community Constable Program

The CC program is a pilot program that was scheduled to commence in December of 2014. This program is derived out of the Aboriginal Community Constable (ACC) program that has been established throughout the force providing service delivery to First Nations communities. There has been limited numbers of applicants and the program has been held over at this time until the spring of 2015. There is a requirement of 12 candidates to form a "troop" for training at Depot Division in Regina.

CC training at Depot is 22 weeks; versus 24 weeks should they convert to RM. The CC program is focused on community and crime prevention programs and is culturally based. CC would be posted to a given Detachment, such as Surrey. The CC's are armed and have authorities such as powers to arrest, etc. keeping with those authorities that RM's have.

Option 2: Community Program Officers

The CPO program is an established program within the RCMP currently used extensively in "J" Division (New Brunswick). The program has not been standardized in the Province of British Columbia. Within New Brunswick CPO's are non-uniform and unarmed delivering programs

within the communities they serve such as Youth Diversion and DARE. The CPO program requires a 3 week training course.

This option was presented to CSO members as a service delivery model that could be employed should they elect to remain grandfathered in their substantive roles.

Option 3: Regular Member Conversion

CSO members were provided with the details on transitioning to become regular members (Constables) of the RCMP. The affected CSO's would be pre-posted to the Lower Mainland of British Columbia upon completion of training at "Depot". For those interested in this option an expedited processing would be employed to commence training as soon as possible. Salaries, pension contribution, and other benefits would remain the same during training at "Depot". Upon graduated salary would remain the same until RM increments surpass it. CSO's were advised that their current classification is frozen during this transition time and would remain frozen until graduation from depot.

NEW COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MODEL

The City and the RCMP are committed to providing an enhanced presence in the community and as a result the 9 current CSO positions will be redeployed in the City and the hiring of a further 20 independent, non-police personnel to fulfill the CSO function is currently being pursued. They will be focused on community engagement. Further detail will be brought forward at the next Police Committee meeting.

CONCLUSION

The City and the RCMP are demonstrating their commitment to providing an enhanced presence in the community through the reallocation of the current 9 CSO Officers within Surrey as well as the implementation of an independent body of 20 non-police personnel that will work in a duty function that is similar to that of the CSO. These personnel will be in uniform and keeping with the needs of the community.

Chief Superintendent Bill Fordy
Officer in Charge (OIC) Surrey RCMP