

DATE OF MEETING March 15, 2021
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SUBJECT SITUATION TABLE UPDATE

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report:

To provide Council with an update on the Situation Table.

BACKGROUND

At its meeting on 2021-FEB-01, Council directed Staff to report back to Council with an update for implementing a provincially-funded Situation Table in the City of Nanaimo.

Situation Tables are frontline, multi-sector collaborations that enable public safety, health, and social service agencies to proactively identify and rapidly mitigate the underlying risks associated with criminal offending, victimization, and personal crisis or trauma (e.g., overdose, eviction, etc.) by connecting vulnerable people to the services they need in a coordinated way.

Situation Tables focus on vulnerable people who, due to a clustering of risk factors that cross the mandates of multiple agencies, and the nature of their recent interactions with participating agencies, are considered to be living with acutely elevated risk. When properly implemented, Situation Tables have the ability to make real and tangible improvements in the wellbeing and safety of vulnerable people and the communities in which they reside.

On 2021-FEB-26, the Nanaimo RCMP detachment submitted an application to the Province's Office of Crime Reduction and Gang Outreach for \$30,000 in funding to support establishing a Situation Table in Nanaimo. The City of Nanaimo provided a letter of support for the application on 2021-FEB-02 (copy included as Attachment A).

A timeline of events with respect to the development of a Situation Table is included as Attachment B. |

DISCUSSION

RCMP Mental Health Response

In 2020, the Nanaimo RCMP Detachment experienced a significant increase in calls for service for "Check Well Being" and "Mental Health" files. These files share similar characteristics of an individual demonstrating signs of distress and involve a third party requesting that police assess the individual and connect them with an appropriate service/s. Check Well Being and Mental Health calls are deemed a high-risk call which requires a 2 police officer response.

Consequently, this further reduces police availability to respond to crime related calls for service.

The Nanaimo RCMP responded to 2,220 Check Well Being calls for service, and an additional 2,442 Mental Health related calls. The Detachment responded to 4,662 calls with an average of 13 calls per day for individuals whose primary issues are not centered on a criminal matter. This increase in Mental Health and Check Well Being calls is consistent with trends across the Province. In response, the Province is encouraging local communities, including police, local government, health departments and service providers, to establish local Situation Tables.

Integrated Coordinated Access (ICA)

The concept of Situation Tables aligns well with the work of Council's Health and Housing Task Force and the recommended actions of the Health and Housing Action Plan (HHAP) including supporting an Integrated Coordinated Access (ICA) model. A well-developed ICA system will create common languages, tools and processes across the health and social service sector in order to help individuals navigate the services they need. The Situation Tables should be closely integrated/aligned with related efforts to establish ICA and other related coordination efforts to help vulnerable community members.

Situation Table Progress

While the RCMP estimate it may take several months for the official Situation Table to be launched, they are currently working towards building relationships, training and processes to support the Situation Table.

On 2020-NOV-12, Cst. Joshua Waltman was appointed to the position of Medical Health Liaison Officer (MHLO), a first of its kind position for the Nanaimo RCMP detachment. Cst. Waltman has been tasked with supporting the detachments' work in establishing a Situation Table in Nanaimo. While COVID has altered the way the RCMP meet and train, the MHLO is convening meetings online with other police agencies that are participating in Situation tables and attending their sessions. Cst. Waltman is also working on building relationships with partner agencies and has met with Nanaimo Regional General Hospital Psychiatric Emergency Services (NRGH PEP), the Island Health Community Outreach (COR) team, and Probation Services. He has attended calls for service jointly with 150+ separate clients to help find responses that are more effective and reduce emergency call volume.

The RCMP will continue to work jointly with our Indigenous Policing Service. To meet the needs of youth and families they have been working cooperatively with the School District 68, Vancouver Island University, Snuneymuxw First Nation (SFN), Nanoose First Nation, and the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD). The Situation Table would expand upon this local success.

CONCLUSION

The RCMP and the City of Nanaimo will continue to work with our social support partners in establishing the relationships necessary to support the Situation Tables. The RCMP expect the Situation Tables to be launched within the next few months pending approval of Provincial funding.

SUMMARY POINTS

- The Situation Table process has commenced, an application for Provincial funding application submitted on 2021-FEB-26, the RCMP and City anticipate a positive response.
- The Nanaimo Situation Table is intended to be closely integrated/aligned with related efforts to establish Integrated Coordinated Access (ICA)
- The RCMP, in particular, the Mental Health Liaison Office, is continuing to build relationships with community health and social partners in anticipation of establishing a situation table.

ATTACHMENTS

- ATTACHMENT A: City of Nanaimo Letter of Support
ATTACHMENT B: Situation Table Timeline
ATTACHMENT C: Letter of Support Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General |

Submitted by:

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