



FEB 13 2012

CITY CLERK'S DEPARTMENT

February 8, 2012

File: 4810-01

BC Community Living Action Group
c/o BC Coalition of People With Disabilities (BCCPD)
204 – 456 West Broadway
Vancouver, BC V5Y 1R3

Dear Sir/Madam:

Re: BC Community Living Action Group Request

The City Council at its regular meeting of Monday, February 6, 2012, unanimously endorsed the following resolution:

"PURSUANT to the report of the Community Planner, dated February 1, 2012, entitled "BC Community Living Action Group Request":

THAT Premier Clerk and the Minister of Social Development be informed that the City of North Vancouver:

- acknowledges the recent positive steps which have been taken to address Community Living BC (CLBC) issues including funding;
- supports ongoing provincial commitment to improve CLBC and provide adequate funding so that persons with developmental disabilities of any age in the province and their families are provided with appropriate housing and support services;
- supports establishment of an independent advocate representing adults with developmental disabilities in BC;
- supports provincial legislation outlining the inclusion rights and support entitlements of British Columbians with developmental disabilities;
- supports the regulation of home sharing;
- supports alternative models such as Housing Young Adults with Disabilities;

AND THAT copies of this resolution be distributed to the BC Community Living Action Group, Lower Mainland Local Government Association and UBCM for their information;

AND THAT staff report to Council on the impacts to the City and group homes in the City of previous CLBC service cuts and on the extent to which recently announced changes have been able to remediate these impacts."

Yours truly,

Robyn G. Anderson
City Clerk

Encl. (Electronic version posted on www.cnv.org/cityhall/councilmeetings/councilmeetingagenda)

cc C. Kathler, Community Planner, Community Development

Document: 789538-v1



 Dept. Manager	 Director	 City Manager
--	--	--

The Corporation of **THE CITY OF NORTH VANCOUVER**
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

REPORT

To: Mayor Darrell R. Mussatto and Members of Council

From: Cheryl Kathler, Community Planner

SUBJECT: BC COMMUNITY LIVING ACTION GROUP REQUEST

Date: February 1, 2012

COPY

File No: 4810-01

The following is a suggested recommendation only. Please refer to Council Minutes for adopted resolution.

RECOMMENDATION:

PURSUANT to the report of the Community Planner, dated January 31, 2012, entitled "BC Community Living Action Group Request":

THAT Premier Clark and the Minister of Social Development be informed that the City of North Vancouver:

- acknowledges the recent positive steps which have been taken to address Community Living BC issues including funding;
- supports ongoing provincial commitment to improve CLBC and provide adequate funding so that persons with developmental disabilities of any age in the province and their families are provided with appropriate housing and support services;
- supports establishment of an independent advocate representing adults with developmental disabilities in BC;
- supports provincial legislation outlining the inclusion rights and support entitlements of British Columbians with developmental disabilities;
- supports the regulation of home sharing;
- supports alternative models such as Housing Young Adults with Disabilities;

AND THAT copies of this resolution be distributed to the BC Community Living Action Group, Lower Mainland Local Government Association and UBCM for their information.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Letter from BC Community Living Action Group dated December 23, 2011.

PURPOSE:

This report provides background to the request from the BC Community Living Action Group (BC-CLAG) for support for their lobby efforts, and recommends that the City notify the Premier and the Minister of Social Development of the City's support for resolution of the service cuts and funding issues related to Community Living BC.

BACKGROUND:

The number of persons with developmental disabilities in BC is approximately 27,000 (2006 Census), which is less than 1% of BC's total population, and 4% of people with disabilities. This group is primarily adults, mainly between the ages of 45 and 64 years old (38%).

Many people with disabilities live with their families in their home communities. Residential or group homes supported by staff and home-sharing or shared living where an adult with a developmental disability lives with another person who provides supports in their home are the two most common residential options for persons with developmental disabilities. The proportion of those living in each of these options has been changing in recent years as group homes have closed and home sharing has increased.

The Housing Young Adults with Disabilities (HYAD) model that has received a rezoning on the former Lonsdale school site is a new supported living approach where supports and services are provided on-site to 14 residents living in independent apartment units. Currently the future HYAD residents live with their families. In the City of North Vancouver there are eight staffed residential homes (group homes) for persons with developmental disabilities operated by Cascadia Society, NS Connexions, NS Disability Resources Society, and Howe Sound Rehab Services.

Current care costs for group home per person per year are approximately \$100,000, home share costs range from \$30,000 to \$40,000, and HYAD estimates are under \$11,000 per year. The appropriateness of each housing option varies with the person requiring residential support or care. A continuum of residential options is ideal so that the most appropriate choice can be made.

Staff contacted local agencies delivering supports and services to individuals with developmental disabilities and their families regarding Community Living BC concerns. Beyond the question of adequate funding to meet needs, appropriate housing choice was a noted concern. The safety and health of those in care was also mentioned. While group settings can provide for the most oversight and monitoring, contracting by a

qualified agency and adequate levels of accountability can address such concerns in residential options such as home share. Another concern is providing for the changing and increasing support and care needs as persons with disabilities and their families age.

Community Living BC

Community Living BC (CLBC) was created in 2005 in response to a grass-roots movement led by families of persons with developmental disabilities and self-advocates who wanted a system that would be better able to focus on their specific needs for supports and services. Prior to the creation of CLBC families and agencies received funding directly from provincial Ministries. CLBC is a crown corporation with a mission to 'respond to the needs and goals of individuals and families by recognizing their abilities and contributions, sharing leadership with communities, and funding supports that honour individual choice.' CLBC derives its authority from the Community Living Authority Act, and it reports to the Minister of Social Development.

CLBC provides funding directly to individuals or families so that they can contract for services, or to service providers or agencies who deliver supports and services. CLBC also builds inclusive communities by sharing information about the needs of people with developmental disabilities and how communities can be more welcoming of everyone. CLBC had a 2011 operating budget of \$700 million.

BC Community Living Action Group

The BC Community Living Action Group (BC-CLAG) is a network of self-advocates, families, support staff and agencies who support adults with disabilities. The BC-CLAG formed in 2010 in response to significant cuts and changes in the availability and delivery of Community Living supports and services. The membership includes various provincial coalitions and associations, community service agencies, and support staff unions. BC-CLAG meets regularly to exchange information, ideas, and collaborate on various actions. Their most recent advocacy activities include a letter campaign to enlist support from local governments, an on-line petition, media releases and news conferences, and monthly rallies to increase public awareness of the issues.

The BC-CLAG believes the community living model has systemic issues. The primary concerns of BC-CLAG, and families and organizations across the province include the cuts in 2011 to the Community Living budget which has delayed requests for services and resulted in service changes leading to long waitlists. Two other key concerns are the closure of over 60 group homes and limiting of residential choice to the home-share model.

DISCUSSION:

At the heart of the concerns regarding Community Living BC is inadequate funding to address current and future needs. A growing population and inflation have added 34% to the cost of maintaining adult community living services since 2002. In contrast the Community Living budget has increased by 15% over the same period. As a result the

average annual funding per CLBC client has fallen from an average of \$65,368 in 2001-2002, to an average of \$37,642 in 2011-2012. Consequently, services and supports are changed or reduced, waitlists grow, risks increase, and quality of life is reduced for CLBC clients and their families. These concerns are expected to deepen as the number of persons with disabilities requiring community living supports grows.

BC-CLAG Lobby Efforts

The issues surrounding the Community Living budget cuts and service redesigns have been received much publicity throughout 2011. As a result of the concerns raised by the BC-CLAG and others, there have been several developments:

- a new Minister of Social Development, Honorable Stephanie Cadieux, has been appointed;
- a Deputy Minister working group is reviewing how individuals with developmental disabilities are being supported by government ministries;
- CLBC senior management changed, and an internal audit of operations and finances is underway;
- an announcement of \$8.9 million in funding to address the most urgent health and safety cases;
- an interim report was released by CLBC, which includes an admission that the Crown agency had "lost sight of its core values" which resulted in stress and anxiety for CLBC clients, families and the system;
- recent reports that CLBC is responding to some of the most urgent family situations.

In a late November letter to CLBC Board in response to the November 2011 CLBC interim report, Minister Cadieux summarized her assessment of CLBC issues (and her recommended actions):

- closure of group homes (create consensus rather than force moves);
- responsiveness to service requests (increase timeliness and implement a tracking system);
- improved communications (listen and support the goals and needs of individuals and their families);
- youth in transition to CLBC supports and services (early planning for the transition and develop suitable responses for families' unique needs).
-

The Minister also stressed that current CLBC issues must be addressed openly, to rebuild confidence and trust, 'through swift but sensible action'.

While recognizing the 'potential for real change and reform that would return CLBC to being a sound, innovative and responsive agency', BC-CLAG continues to advocate for further changes to CLBC and for additional funding. They are currently calling for:

- an immediate stop to CLBC's budget-driven cuts and 'service redesign' plan;
- a comprehensive external review/public inquiry of CLBC's mandate and operations;
- both emergency and operational funding to meet existing and emerging needs;

- an independent advocate representing adults with developmental disabilities in BC;
- provincial legislation outlining the inclusion rights and support entitlements of British Columbians with developmental disabilities;
- regulation of home sharing.

Recent Developments

As part of an internal review initiated by the Minister of Social Development in November, an audit of CLBC by the Finance Ministry found that CLBC's assessment of current needs was not credible due to inaccuracies in assessment and record-keeping. The auditors recommended that CLBC improve its information system and business processes and its policies related to conflict of interest.

In making public the outcomes of the CLBC review, on January 19th Premier Christy Clark and Minister Stephanie Cadieux announced \$40million to improve the services to persons with developmental disabilities and their families. Half of the funding will go to CLBC caseload and backlogs and the remainder will be used for new programs (day and employment) offered under the Ministry of Social Development. In doing so the province has addressed at least in part some of issues noted by the BC-CLAG. While there may not be the degree of change that the BC-CLAG has advocated for, the Premier stated her commitment to stay engaged with people with disabilities and their families to create sustainable solutions.

Conclusions

For individuals and families unable to receive the types and amounts of supports and services they require, the Community Living service cuts and funding issues present a crisis, both currently and in terms of future planning. This is particularly challenging for parents or families who are aging as they care for someone with a developmental disability. The vulnerability of those being cared for in the community is also an ongoing concern, which has implications for local communities and local governments.

The publicity and lobby efforts of the BC Community Living Action Group have raised public awareness of persons with developmental disabilities and the issues related to CLBC supports and services. In response to a letter campaign, to date 26 municipalities have responded to the BC-CLAG's request, issuing resolutions of support or formally endorsing the campaign. Responses to the issues in recent months and over the past weeks from the Minister responsible and the Premier are positive steps towards addressing the funding and service request concerns.

Recommendations

Staff recommends that the City inform the province that while the City acknowledges the steps which have been taken to address Community Living BC issues, the City encourages ongoing provincial commitment to improve CLBC and provide adequate funding levels for the support and service needs of persons with developmental disabilities and their families.

Staff also recommends that the provincial government establish an independent advocate representing adults with developmental disabilities in BC by which will provide oversight and potential intervention related to the adequacy of services and supports, and legislation regarding the inclusion rights and support entitlements of those with developmental disabilities. Staff also recommends that the City support the regulation of home sharing to ensure health and safety of the persons in care. Staff suggests that copies of the City's resolution be forwarded to the BC Community Living Action Group, Lower Mainland Local Government Association and UBCM for their information.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

None.

INTER-DEPARTMENTAL IMPLICATIONS:

This report was reviewed by the Civic Projects Team on January 31, 2012.

SUSTAINABILITY COMMENTS:

Social sustainability is supported through appropriate and safe housing choices for all City residents, particularly for those who are the most vulnerable.

CORPORATE PLAN AND/OR POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

City support for resolution of the CLBC issues meets the Social Plan objective to raise community awareness about issues concerning people with disabilities. Support for housing options for persons with developmental disabilities meets the Social Plan objective of increasing housing options available to persons with specialized needs. The recommended action relates to the City's efforts under the OCP to evolve into a more complete community with adequate social and community services, and is also consistent with the Metro Vancouver Affordable Housing Strategy.

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS:

None.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:



Cheryl Kathler
Community Planner

Attachment

CK:eh