



**The Corporation of the City of Stratford  
Committee of the Whole In-camera Session  
Minutes**

A meeting of the Committee of the Whole was held in In-camera Session on Monday, June 22, 2020 electronically at 1:03 p.m.

**Present in  
Chambers:** Mayor Mathieson - Chair presiding

**Present** Councillors Beatty, Bunting, Burbach, Clifford, Gaffney, \*Henderson,  
**Electronically:** Ingram, Ritsma, Sebben and Vassilakos

**Regrets:**

**Staff Present** Joan Thomson - Chief Administrative Officer, Tatiana Dafoe -  
**in Chambers:** City Clerk

**Staff Present** Ed Dujlovic - Director of Infrastructure and Development Services,  
**Electronically:** David St. Louis - Director of Community Services, Kim McElroy -  
Director of Social Services, Janice Beirness - Acting Director of  
Corporate Services, Jacqueline Mockler - Director of Human  
Resources, \*Paula Lombardi - City Solicitor

Prior to going to In-camera session, Item 1.0 was dealt with in open session.

Call to Order by Mayor Mathieson

**1.0 Adjournment into In-camera Session**

Motion by Councillor Ritsma and Councillor Beatty

*"Strengthening Our Community: Attracting People and Investment"*

**THAT the meeting adjourn to an In-camera Session to discuss:**

**4.1** [REDACTED]

**5.1** [REDACTED]

**5.2** **CAO's Update – COVID-19**  
**[Security of municipal property of the municipality or local board (section 239.(2)(a)), AND**  
**Personal matters about an identifiable individual(s) including municipal employees or local board employees (section 239.(2)(b)),**  
**AND**  
**Labour relations or employee negotiations (section 239.(2)(d))];**

**5.3** [REDACTED]

**5.4** [REDACTED]

A request was made to add an additional item related to personal matters about an identifiable individual(s) including municipal employees or local board employees (section 239.(2)(b)).

**Carried**

The meeting then adjourned to an In-camera session.

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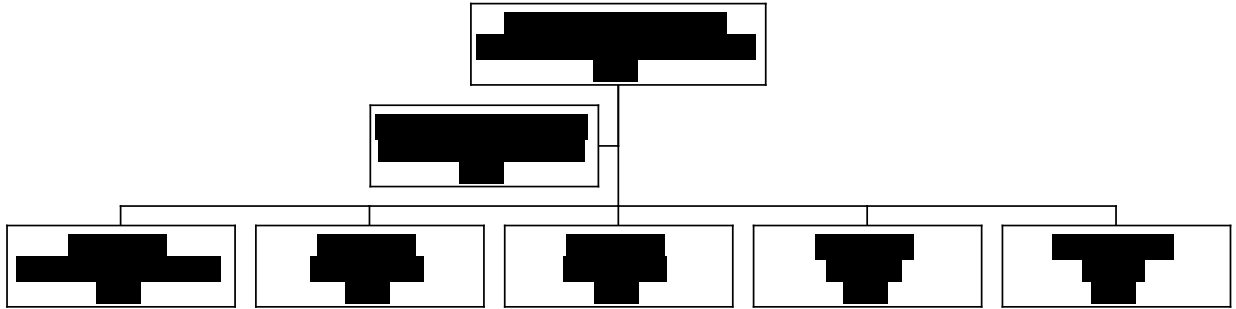
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- 5.2 CAO's Update – COVID-19  
[Security of municipal property of the municipality or local board (section 239.(2)(a)), AND  
Personal matters about an identifiable individual(s) including municipal employees or local board employees (section 239.(2)(b)), AND  
Labour relations or employee negotiations (section 239.(2)(d))];

**Objective:** To provide an update with respect to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

**Background and Analysis:** This update to Council provides the overall strategy being used by the City to guide decision-making during the pandemic emergency. As

*"Strengthening Our Community: Attracting People and Investment"*

the pandemic emergency continues, the City is planning for recovery and monitoring services and operations and making changes as the Province begins the phased reopening of the economy.

The Pandemic Plan is based on the following assumptions:

- Incremental Return to Municipal Services
- Possibility of a Second Wave and Future Pandemics
- Unknown timelines for implementation
- Reduced Revenue
- Low Attendance at Municipal Programs and Activities
- Increase Need for Support
- Customer Service and Safety
- Coordination with our Community Partners and Stakeholders
- Dealing with the unknown

The objectives of the Plan are to provide a series of guidelines to use to minimize service disruptions while maintaining a healthy and safe environment for employees and the public.

- Flexibility
- Financial
- Safety
- Staffing
- Communications
- Build Confidence
- Privacy
- Risk

This strategy is based on a staged approach:

- Continuing to follow recommendations from HPPH and Province of Ontario
- Responding to a rapidly changing environment as the Province reopens the economy on a regional basis (staged)
- Communicating with Council, employees, the public and our partners
- Implementing strategies to protect employees and the public while ensuring business continuity as possible

CLT has been working on the recovery part of the Pandemic Plan while ensuring that essential services, facilities and operations continue during the pandemic emergency. In addition, Working Teams were established early on in the emergency to develop new workplace policies and procedures, respond to initiatives from the Economic Response and Recovery Task Force, to develop enhanced employee well-being tools,

guide priority projects for the City and transform the way Council meetings are conducted.

### Financial Impact on the Path to Recovery

Recovery planning involves unknown variables and assumptions having to be made about the possible impact on how the City will deliver services. This planning is done as Provincial Orders change and restrictions ease, and without benefit of advance knowledge of the timing for easing of restrictions.

The City is working towards reopening on the appropriate timeline for the City and when it is in the best interests of employees and the public. This may mean that some services, facilities and operations will resume in a staged process and when the City is financially able to do so based on Council direction. The City's appropriate timeline may not necessarily be the date included in the Provincial Order. It can take a minimum of two weeks lead time for the City to put the protocols, resources and equipment in place to reopen even basic services. This time line can be longer depending on the workplace changes required.

As part of Recovery planning, attention is being paid to the costs involved. Factors to be considered when assessing the financial impact to the City, include:

- Review of inventory of services that have or may be affected by the pandemic
- Identify what health and safety standards are required and,
  - How to deliver the service when the Provincial Order is lifted?
  - Can social distancing be achieved in the delivery of the service? How?
  - What PPE is needed to be in place for employees and/or the public in order to deliver the service?
  - What signage needs to be in place at a reopened facility or service?
  - What change in service level is identified with the reopening?
  - What are the key steps to getting the service or facility operating?
  - What is the level of exposure risks to be considered and how to mitigate:
    - Social distancing
    - Workplace changes to assist with social distancing
    - Screening and protocols
    - Personal Protective Equipment
  - What is the time frame of these key steps?
- Costing of Future State Services and Operations
  - How much will it cost to deliver?
  - What is the cost of PPE?
  - What is the impact if there is reduced participation in services and programs?

- What is the impact of increased supports to program / service participants?
- Can the City afford this cost to deliver or are service delivery changes needed?

It may not be possible to reopen all services and facilities even with the lifting of Provincial Orders due to the City's financial situation. Council decisions will be required on many matters relating to the City recovery response.

As part of the decision making to reopen services and operations, the cost to do so will also be considered:

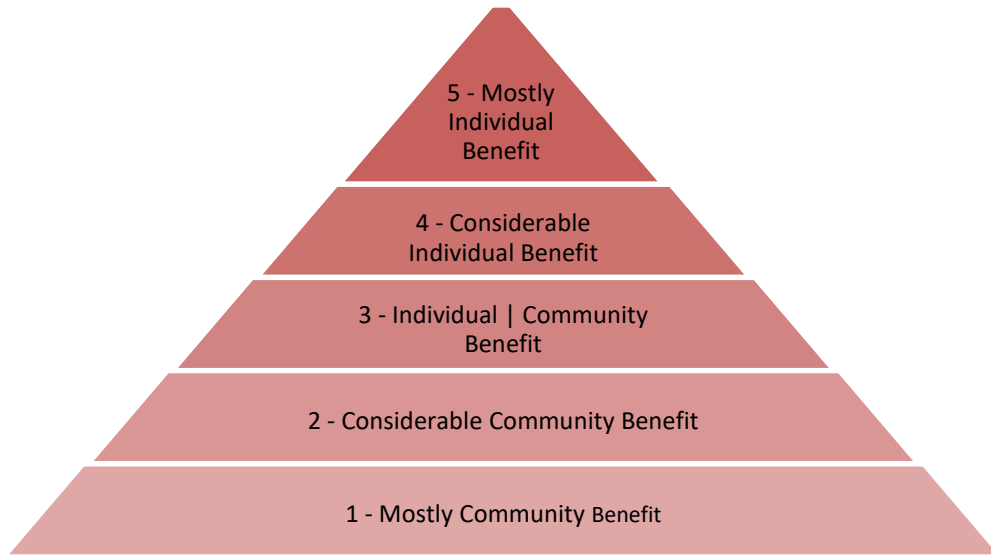
- Recommendations from CLT on service level changes
- Cost to deliver in the Post Peak and Peak Pandemic Stages
- Options to reduce or recover costs (reduced operating hours, fee increases, use at your own risk approach, etc)
- Options for alternate service delivery such as online or virtual services, etc

#### Priority of Reopening

It may be necessary to prioritize the reopening of some services and facilities over others. When making such decisions, the following priority order is to be considered:

- Mandatory Services – statutory requirement by another level of government and/or municipal by-law requirement. The service meets a legal or policy mandate;
- Community Services – benefits accrue to the community or general public and are considered a public investment. These services may have been offered for a length of time and the public expects these services to continue;
- Specialized Services – benefits accrue to a small group and services are offered to expand Community Services.

Services and operations that meet the tests of the lower end of the Benefits Pyramid noted below will have a higher priority for reopening over services and operations that only meet the tests of the upper levels of the Benefits Pyramid.



The City's Recovery approach will continue to be responsive and adjusted as the pandemic continues to evolve. The Recovery approach will also monitor exposure and risk factors.

There is a need for the community and the public to continue to follow Provincial Orders and Huron Perth Public Health guidance to staying home when ill, practising social distancing, frequent hand washing and avoid touching your face.

### Human Resources

The Pandemic Plan provides the framework for the health and safety of employees and the public. This investment in well-being is a priority and drives the decision-making process. Policies and protocols are needed for a range of matters including remote working, social distancing, cleaning common contact surfaces, working in the field, screening and safe building entry. These policies and procedures are based on Huron Perth Public Health input and Province of Ontario guidance and are subject to change.

Residents depend on City employees to deliver the municipal services they use in their daily lives. The City is implementing safety measures to protect employees in the workplace and the public accessing these services.

As part of the Pandemic Plan, work was completed early on to identify key employee skill sets, maintenance of essential services, impact of the virus on staffing levels, work from remote locations options and the infrastructure needed to support employees.

The following Policies, Procedures and Guidance form the basis of providing for the health and safety of employees in the workplace.

***"Strengthening Our Community: Attracting People and Investment"***



1. Remote Working Policy
2. Vehicle Cleaning and Disinfecting
3. Vehicle Distancing Safety
4. Cleaning Common Contact Surfaces
5. Working in the Field
6. Safe Building Entry
7. Customer Pre-screening Declaration Form
8. Building Attendance Sheet
9. Return to Work Decision Guide
10. COVID-19 Screening Guidance
11. COVID-19 Screening Results
12. Signs – Brady Canada
13. Putting on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
14. COVID-19 Reference Document for Symptoms

Early on in the emergency, decisions were made to provide for certain employees to work from remote locations. This has been well received and managers and supervisors are in regular contact to ensure productivity levels are maintained. CLT is monitoring the work from remote locations practice and planning for a longer term implementation of this emerging workplace practice. The transition to work from home for some employees was helped with the investment in IT infrastructure in recent months. New or enhanced services have been initiated also during the pandemic emergency to enable the public to access more services online or over the telephone. These have been well received.

A decision has not been made with respect to reopening of municipal offices to the public. There are a number of factors to be considered including the possibility of a second wave of the virus, a number of facilities still remain under Provincial Orders to close and the need to redeploy some employees to other areas of the municipal corporation. In addition, work continues to install plexi-glass in offices and work locations, provide for social distancing in the work place and to provide training for employees. The City continues to develop the policies and procedures within the reopening framework for consistent infection prevention strategies and to be responsive to operating requirements unique to each department.

The Provincial emergency declaration continues and has been extended since enacted in late March 2020. The City's declared emergency as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic also remains in place. Balancing public expectations for municipal services while planning for the health and safety of employees in the workplace are important considerations when there is no vaccine or other preventative treatment for the virus.

The reopening timeframe is being monitored and at the earliest, it is anticipated that certain municipal offices may be able to reopen in September, subject to the local

public health situation and Provincial Orders. Huron Perth Public Health guidance will help to govern the timing of the reopening and what precautions must remain in place as long as COVID-19 remains a threat. Throughout the reopening process, CLT will be taking into account controls to eliminate exposure and manage exposure.

The *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, s 25 provides for Duties of Employers:

**Duties of employers**

**25** (1) An employer shall ensure that,

- (a) the equipment, materials and protective devices as prescribed are provided;
- (b) the equipment, materials and protective devices provided by the employer are maintained in good condition;
- (c) the measures and procedures prescribed are carried out in the workplace;
- (d) the equipment, materials and protective devices provided by the employer are used as prescribed; and
- (e) a building, structure, or any part thereof, or any other part of a workplace, whether temporary or permanent, is capable of supporting any loads that may be applied to it,
  - (i) as determined by the applicable design requirements established under the version of the Building Code that was in force at the time of its construction,
  - (ii) in accordance with such other requirements as may be prescribed, or
  - (iii) in accordance with good engineering practice, if subclauses (i) and (ii) do not apply. R.S.O. 1990, c. O.1, s. 25 (1); 2011, c. 11, s. 9.

When it is appropriate for certain municipal offices to reopen, it will be done in stages. The first stage may involve by appointment only for services such as marriage licensing, civil ceremonies, commissioning of documents and certain applications. Subsequent stages could include re-integrating of employees on rotating schedules with work from remote locations still the basis.

After reviewing the available information and public health guidance, the City will be using passive screening tools to minimize risk for employees and the public when entering municipal offices. Employees and the public will also be encouraged to remain at home if not feeling well.

Passive screening measures involve prominent display of health questionnaire for visitors to the building at entrances. The Government of Ontario "Attention Visitors" Poster is displayed at public entry points. This poster provides instructions to refrain from entering the building should symptoms be present and follow up requirements

with Telehealth Ontario. Restrictions may be required for the number of visitors to municipal offices and directional lining and physical distancing decals be put in place throughout. Protocols will also be put in place for handling payments and drop offs.

For employees working in the field, a new guideline has been developed to establish processes to protect the employees and people they are in contact with when conducting inspections. Pre-screening will take place at the time the inspection time is booked and then confirmation when the employee arrives at the location. Working in the field is a site defined as the immediate work area but not a City building. This could include but is not limited to a person's home, a public housing unit, a client's property or a construction project.

The City has an inventory of personal protective equipment in place for employees and established supply chains. The inventory is monitored regularly and takes into account the possibility of waves of the virus for the rest of this year. This requirement for PPE is being built into our workplace practices as part of the transformation of what workplaces will now look like. Protective measures are expected to be required for the foreseeable future. The City continues to work to on policies, procedures and equipment requirements for the new way of operating municipal facilities and services.

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Update:

City Services/Operations	Posted to website and updated as necessary. Facility and Office retrofits are being undertaken.
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	<p>Recent announcements that the skate park, day care and splash pad and additional public washrooms are reopening with Protocols in place.</p> <p>Recovery Working Groups .</p>
City Departments	<p>Departments responding to service inquiries through telephone and email.</p> <p>New online services available such as building permit applications.</p> <p>Volume of inquiries in departments increasing as Provincial restrictions reduced in this area.</p> <p>Social Services continues to see higher need for support and services. Additional resources deployed and services put in place for vulnerable populations, emergency day care, food security, outreach, homelessness sheltering and collaboration with the social services sector.</p> <p>Work in departments continue with some employees on site, and others working from home. Some of the recalled employees have been redeployed; however, others continue to be laid off due to closed facilities or services.</p> <p>With staged reopening underway, staff working on specific issues related to day care, emergency assistance to individuals and services for vulnerable individuals, keeping services open while ensuring safety of employees and the public.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspections continue with new protocol</li> <li>• Applications continue to be accepted and processed</li> <li>• Closure of Agri-plex – virtual programming for SLAAA – well received</li> </ul> <p>Some services/buildings remain closed under Provincial Orders (rec centres, ice rinks, playgrounds)</p>
Human Resources	<p>Continue to meet with unions to discuss areas of concern, return of employees and redeployments.</p> <p>Protocols established for working at home, social distancing at work to maintain essential services in city buildings closed to the public.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Remote Working Policy – Business Continuity Protocol</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Social Distancing Policy</li> <li>- Daily Pre Screening Tool</li> <li>- Ministry of Health COVID-19 Patient Screening Guidance</li> <li>- Public Health Ontario – Putting on PPE</li> <li>- Safety Building Entry Guideline</li> <li>- Working in the Field Guideline</li> <li>- Cleaning Common Contact Surfaces</li> <li>- Return to Work Decision Guide</li> </ul> <p>Providing training for employees returning to the workplace and for employees being redeployed.</p>
Council and Meetings	<p>Electronic meetings being held.</p> <p>Working with IT to implement additional technology needed.</p> <p>Committee of Adjustment meeting electronically to deal with applications.</p>
Communications	<p>City communications to the public have been mainly through our website, Social Media. Also radio ads.</p> <p>Communicating with staff – Employee Updates, Recognition Page.</p> <p>Responding to media inquiries, requests for assistance from our agencies and partners.</p> <p>Part of working groups on specific projects for messaging.</p> <p>Links to reliable sources – Huron Perth Public Health, Province of Ontario, Government of Canada.</p>
Emergency Control Groups	<p>Meeting bi-weekly as needed. Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) meets twice weekly and updates provided to Stratford ECG.</p> <p>Regular updates with Perth County, Lower Tiers and St. Marys ECGs.</p>
Risks	<p>Updates from the City's insurer, monitoring of closed city buildings , sprinklers, fire alarms, security systems, public safety.</p> <p>Review of standard waiver for organized sports and amend to further address risks associated with COVID-19.</p>
Legal	<p>Significant increase in new legislation requiring review and communications.</p>

	New policies and procedures being developed especially in the area of employee health and safety.
Partners / Stakeholders	Library STA investStratford Stratford Police Services Economic Response and Recovery Task Force
Resources for residents	Help Do Good website launched 211 service
Resources for businesses	Resources and information posted to city website. Outreach to investStratford, BIA, Chamber, industry, business sectors. Economic Response and Recovery Task Force
Next Steps	Continuing to plan as situation changes, respond to areas of concern and plan for longer term.

**Financial impact:** The City is being proactive in mitigating the overall impact of the pandemic and planning for recovery. The assistance of our partners, investStratford, Stratford Public Library, Stratford Police Services and Stratford Tourism Alliance in contributing to the reduction of the impact is appreciated. Additional funding has been provided by the Province to assist with supports for emergency day care, homelessness, outreach and additional services for vulnerable populations. However, further assistance will be required from upper levels of government to reduce the overall financial burden.

The COVID-19 Financial Position Update Report deals with reduced revenue and increased expenditures of the City. In addition, the City is tracking preparation, response and recovery costs for reimbursement of any eligible costs if financial assistance becomes available to municipalities. Resources have been identified with our agencies and partners to work on protecting and promoting the local economy.

Financial updates are provided to Council and direction obtained. The City has implemented reviews to cut / reduce spending and non-essential services. Without upper level government support there may be service, program and project impact during recovery. The reopening of services and operations and enhancements to the workplace are impacting the bottom line and will increase the forecasted deficit for the year.

The length of the pandemic emergency will also impact the financial situation of the City, including lost revenues from closed recreation facilities, savings from lower hydro bills in closed facilities and increasing costs to maintain services.

### **Alignment with Strategic Priorities:**

#### **Strengthening our Plans, Strategies and Partnerships**

Partnering with the community to make plans for our collective priorities in arts, culture, heritage and more. Communicating clearly with the public around our plans and activities.

#### **Developing our Resources**

Optimizing Stratford's physical assets and digital resources. Planning a sustainable future for Stratford's resources and environment.

**Staff recommendation:** THAT the CAO's Update on COVID-19 dated June 22, 2020 be received;

AND THAT direction be provided.

**In-camera Discussion:** The CAO advised the purpose of the report is to provide an update on the City's pandemic and recovery plan. The City continues to move forward cautiously and strategically. The CAO advised the strategy is based on a staged approach and Huron Perth Public Health guidelines.

At this time, the re-opening of City facilities is not anticipated until September 2020. It was noted there will be a need to prioritize the reopening of some services and facilities over others. Discussion was held on how services and facilities will be prioritized.

The need for the community and members of the public to follow emergency orders and public health guidelines was stated. Once City facilities begin to re-open it will be by appointment only. The measures and policies being developed and implemented prior to re-opening were highlighted. A request was made to end the wage reduction starting July 1<sup>st</sup> due to the increasing workload of administrative staff.

A request was made to add a layer to the pyramid that looks at prioritizing services and facilities based on equity.

Concern was expressed with the timeline for re-opening City facilities and services in the fall. A request was made for facilities and services to be re-opened earlier.

It was questioned whether financial assistance from the province has been announced. Members were advised the Province has indicated it is a federal

responsibility and the Federal Government has indicated it will be a partner with the Province.

It was questioned whether the City has a sufficient PPE supply and budget. It was noted the Deputy Fire Chief is overseeing the City's PPE supply and will provided additional information on the City's reserve.

The ability to offer electronic services was questioned and information was provided.

**In-camera Direction:** Motion by Councillor Ritsma and Councillor Sebben  
**THAT the CAO's Update on COVID-19 dated June 22, 2020 be received.**  
**Carried**

\*The meeting moved to Item 5.3

\*Returning to this matter, discussion was held on

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[REDACTED]

It was questioned when the wage reduction for members of Council will end. The City Clerk advised the wage reduction will end July 20, 2020.

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