SASKATOON POLICE SERVICE

TO: **Shirley Greyeyes, Chairperson**
            Board of Police Commissioners

FROM: **David Haye**
            Chief of Police

DATE: **2024 March 08**

SUBJECT: **Current State to Future State:**
             Community Policing to Community Governance

FILE NO.: 2,001

ISSUE:

The Saskatoon Police Service (SPS) has been requested by the Saskatoon Board of Police Commissioners (BOPC) to report on existing programs for community policing and identify opportunities to achieve greater proactivity in neighbourhoods with disproportionate crime rates; in order to embrace opportunities for co-creating community safety.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the report be received for information.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY:

This report encompasses three of the five priorities from the SPS *2020-2024 Strategic Plan*:

Crime & Safety – develop effective strategies to combat the changing facets of crime and its causes; and address community concerns that affect public safety.

Partnerships – enrich the relationships between the SPS and communities; and work with all levels of government to develop solutions to address community safety, health and social challenges.

Communication – ensuring communication with the public to maintain transparency and public trust

BACKGROUND:

Prior to engaging in a discussion regarding community policing efforts, it is necessary to do two things: apply a definition to "community policing" and establish a common understanding of "crime rates".

Community Policing

 A philosophical approach, rather than a set of programs or tactics, which sees police services work in partnership with the community to address local safety programs. There are three elements to this philosophy: community partnerships, problem solving, and organizational transformation.[1]

Community Policing Framework

Community Partnerships	Organizational Transformation	Problem Solving
Collaborative partnerships between the police and the individuals and organizations they serve to develop solutions to problems and increase public trust. • Other government departments and agencies • Community members/groups • Community-based organizations/Service providers • Private businesses • Media	The alignment of organizational management, structure, personnel, and information systems to support community partnerships and proactive problem solving. • Agency management • Organizational structure • Personnel • Information systems	The process of engaging in the proactive and systematic examination of identified problems to develop effective responses that are evaluated rigorously. • Scanning: Identifying and prioritizing problems • Analysis: Analyzing • Response: Responding to problems • Assessment: Assessing problem solving initiatives

Crime Rates

 The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics (CCJS) is an office contained within Statistics Canada that is responsible for collecting all information pertaining to the extent and nature of crime in Canada. Police reported crime, "crime rates", *are based upon the public coming forward to report the occurrence of a crime*. Police reported crime includes cases that do not result in a charge being laid or lead to a conviction.[2]

Current State

Since 2017, the SPS has made a number of operational and organizational refinements which have brought the Service closer to the ideal model above. Increases to operational capacity through the formation of the Community Mobilization Unit and the Alternative Response Officers have been paired with internal re-organization initiatives aimed at greater community

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[1]   Drew Diamond and Deirdre Mead Weiss, *Advancing Community Policing Through Community Governance: A Framework Document* (Washington, D.C., Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, May 2009), last accessed February 24, 2024: https://portal.cops.usdoj.gov/resourcecenter/RIC/Publications/cops-p161-pub.pdf

[2]   Public Safety Canada, *Measuring Crime in Canada* (2010), last accessed February 24, 2024: https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/rsrcs/pblctns/msrng-cnd/index-en.aspx

policing efficacy: the shrinking of patrol geographic boundaries, realignment of the Community Liaison Officers and the inception of the Community Engagement Division, to name a few. These internal efforts have been bolstered by a number of externally facing initiatives that have increased our community footprint and avenues of access to our decision makers, such as the inception of the Indigenous Women and Two-Spirit Advisory Circle, our Pride Barbecue, and our constant operational support to Saweyihtotan Mobile Services.

In addition to the organizational changes we've made, as indicated by the model above community policing does not exist in a vacuum. The SPS plays a lead role, with varying degrees of organized collaboration amongst an array of community partners. These community partners are critical in accurately responding to identified issues, since not all issues the police may deal with are criminal in nature. In *Fear of Crime and the Neighbourhood Context in Canadian Cities*, non-criminal factors such as neighbourhood characteristics and individual perceptions were identified as creating downstream issues for police.[3] These findings were similar to those in *Exploring the Link Between Crime and Socio-Economic Status in Ottawa and Saskatoon: A Small Area Geographic Analysis*.[4] In that study, it was found that neighbourhoods with such factors as high unemployment, socio-economic disadvantage, population density, older and rundown (rental) property, elevated truancy rates, drug use, female single parents, and Indigenous ethnicity all contributed to higher levels of actual victimization by crime, disproportionate to other neighbourhoods without this aggregate of factors.[5] While there is an obvious and important public safety role that police must play, many of the factors identified in these studies are not ones that it is possible or appropriate for the SPS to address, hence the criticality of the current slate of community policing partnerships that we maintain.

At present, community policing partners are from all levels of government, community-based organizations (CBOs), businesses, primary, secondary and post-secondary education systems, and community organizations. A sample of SPS units and organizations involved in the community policing relationship and some areas of intersection are as follows:

SPS Patrol, Community Mobilization Unit, School Resource Officers, Community Liaison Officers, Equity and Cultural Engagement Unit, Alternative Response Officers, Bike Unit, Victim Services, Vice Unit, and Traffic Unit. Activities include uniform patrols, call response, school visits, CBO visits, bike rodeos, charity events, cultural and ceremonial attendance, victim support, neighbour disputes, shelter visits, transports, license checks, escorts, file investigation, Community Police Academy, COPS Cadets, community groups and steering committees. Citizens are proactively interacted with in person at ceremonial/cultural/remembrance and march events, on the Beat, at meetings, during presentations and town halls, and upon demand.

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[3] Robin Fitzgerald, *Fear of Crime and the Neighbourhood Context in Canadian Cities* (Ottawa: Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Statistics Canada, 2008), last accessed February 28, 2024: https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/lbrr/archives/cnmcs-plcng/statcan-cjrps-no13-eng.pdf

[4] Peter Kitchen, Exploring the Link Between Crime and Socio-Economic Status in Ottawa and Saskatoon: A Small-Area Geographic Analysis (Ottawa: Department of Justice, Research and Statistics Division, 2006), last accessed February 27, 2024: https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/csj-sjc/crime/rr06_6/rr06_6.pdf

[5] Ibid.

SFD   Overdose Outreach Team, Encampment Team, Fire Inspectors, Safe Housing Task Force, consistently conducting proactive public safety activities directly with the SPS.

CoS   Mayor and Council, City Manager, Planning, and Community Services. Occasionally support public safety activities for the SPS, largely on demand, such as Safety Audits, Local Area Plans, and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) reviews, information sharing of constituent concerns, and neighbourhood improvement.

Province   Saskatchewan Health Authority, Ministries of Social Services, Justice, Corrections, Policing and Public Safety. Provides funding for SPS and partner agency programming and informs proactive policing activities through committee work, facility visits, case plans.

Indigenous   Saskatoon Tribal Council, Central Urban Metis Federation Inc., Metis Nation Saskatchewan, Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations. Consistently conducting proactive public safety activities directly with the SPS through committee work, facility visits, case plans, and information sharing of constituent concerns.

CBOs   Salvation Army, Sanctum, Prairie Harm, Chokecherry Studios, Egadz, Quint, Friendship Inn, area churches, STR8UP. Proactive public safety activities conducted through shelter support, committee and program meetings, joint initiatives, facility support, and information sharing of client concerns.

Education   Saskatoon Public Schools, Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools, Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technology, Universities of Saskatchewan and Regina. Proactive and reactive public safety activities conducted through SPS attendance at school events and calls, community research, committee meetings, and practicum support.

Grassroots   Sage Clan, Community Associations, citizen issue groups. Proactive and reactive public safety activities conducted through operational material and personnel support by SPS members, committee work, board work, police statistics sharing and information sharing of citizen concerns.

DISCUSSION:

Future State

While community policing has been effective in developing collaborative solutions to a number of challenges facing public safety, the fact remains that this model is police-led and poorly equipped to address larger, systemic, and social issues. The co-creation of community safety becomes much more difficult for the police to facilitate as the scope and scale of the community issues increase. In that case, a new paradigm and leadership other than by the police is required.

Within the new paradigm the police still have a critical support role to play, but unlike the community policing model, leadership of community safety initiatives are not the sole responsibility of the police.

With the size of the community safety challenges increasing, so too must the mechanism to address them. The evolution from police-led community policing to city-led "community governance" is one such paradigm. Community governance takes the leadership position that the police play in community policing, and spreads that leadership effort across the entire municipal government.[6] Principles that community governance follow include:

- Sharing the responsibility for community safety and quality of life between local government and the community, rather than the sole purview of the police;
- Stressing community well-being outcomes (ie. health and safety), rather than mere outputs (ie. number of tickets);
- Recognizing that the activities of one city department affect other departments;
- Providing a holistic approach to local government service delivery that breaks down organizational barriers; and
- Encouraging community and municipal stakeholders to pool expertise and limited resources to address community problems.

These principles in turn inform four key functional elements that are required for community governance to work:
1. Partnerships among municipal departments
2. Partnerships with the community
3. City administration leading problem-solving efforts
4. Organizational change

Community Governance Framework

Partnerships among municipal departments	Partnerships with the community
Operationalizing partnerships Role of Leadership Challenges to implementation and sustainability • Poor relations amongst departments • Unsuccessful past collaborations • Lack of interest by employees/sub-leaders	Operationalizing partnerships Role of Leadership Challenges to implementation and sustainability • Building partnerships are hard work • Lack of community interest • Community concerns • Personnel concerns by community
City-led problem-solving efforts	Organizational change
Operationalizing partnerships Role of Leadership Challenges to implementation and sustainability • Lack of community interest • Technological challenges	Operationalizing partnership • Organizational management • Organizational structure • Personnel practices • Technology and information systems Role of Leadership Challenges to implementation and sustainability • Allocation of resources • Political support • Lack of consistent leadership

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[6] Diamond and Weiss, *Advancing Community Policing…*

The advantage enjoyed by the SPS and the City of Saskatoon in the implementation of an evolved public safety paradigm is that some of the intellectual infrastructure already exists. As the homeless population has grown and the intricacies of complex needs service delivery has been discussed, collaboration amongst some civic departments has necessarily increased. The advent of a coordinated safety committee following the establishment of the original Emergency Wellness Center on 1st Avenue, includes senior managers from the SPS, SFD, and the city with an established record of working together on public safety issues. What remains, however, is for the membership of the coordinated committee to follow the community governance model and become formally established, transfer leadership for community safety issues to the city administration and expand the group's membership to include all civic departments. This step would echo the research and community governance model design that substantiates how the co-production of public safety can be influenced as much by the development of a community gathering space or the removal of garbage and graffiti as it can by increased police patrols.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS:

Community policing relationships with external stakeholders will continue as before, with the only activity increase being the enhancement and formalization of management and operational relationships between the SPS and across the corporation. Staff time for meetings at the administrative level is already an expected performance cost. There is no budget impact associated with increased municipal collaboration associated to the removal of barriers between city departments and a more public safety-focused approach for civic services that are already being performed.

CONCLUSION:

While the SPS has been practicing community policing for some time, a number of challenges are on the near horizon. An ever-increasing number of homeless and actively addicted people whose needs outstrip the collective capacity to serve them, loss of low-income rental units following a commercial landlord collapse, and the closure of an educational gathering place in a core neighbourhood are but a few of the community pressures that impact public safety and drive police involvement in neighbourhoods. Community policing alone cannot bring enough appropriate resources to bear. The community policing model also leaves the SPS as the lead in addressing community safety issues that are in fact widespread and the purview of governments. What will provide greater efficacy going forward, is the evolution of community policing into a community governance approach. Thus, by continuing to support the fledgling whole-of-government approach that is already occurring in some capacity at the city, and leveraging existing community relationships to promote a new and more comprehensive paradigm, the SPS will continue to do its part as a co-contributor to public safety in Saskatoon.

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