

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

*HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR
AND COUNCILLORS*

**SUBJECT: UPDATE ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE BURNABY-NEW
WESTMINSTER TASKFORCE ON SEXUALLY EXPLOITED AND AT-
RISK YOUTH**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Council authorize the allocation of \$2,000 from the 2023 Boards, Committees and Commissions budget and the allocation of \$2,000 from the 2024 Boards, Committee and Commissions budget to the Burnaby-New Westminster Taskforce on Sexually Exploited and At-Risk Youth to support its two year plus workplan (remainder 2022 - 2024), as detailed in Section 4.0 of this report.
2. THAT Council forward a copy of this report to the Social Planning Committee for information.

REPORT

The Public Safety Committee, at its Open meeting held on 2022 June 15, received and adopted the attached report providing an update on activities of the Burnaby-New Westminster Taskforce on Sexually Exploited and At-Risk Youth.

Chief Administrative Officer GM Community Safety GM Corporate Services Acting Chief Financial Officer GM Planning and Development Officer in Charge – Burnaby RCMP

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor J. Wang
Chair

Councillor D. Johnston
Vice Chair

TO: CHAIR AND MEMBERS
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

DATE: 2022 June 7

FROM: GENERAL MANAGER
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

FILE: 1750 20

**SUBJECT: UPDATE ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE BURNABY-NEW
WESTMINSTER TASKFORCE ON SEXUALLY EXPLOITED AND AT-
RISK YOUTH**

PURPOSE: To provide an update on activities of the Burnaby-New Westminster Taskforce on Sexually Exploited and At-Risk Youth.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **THAT** the Committee request Council to authorize the allocation of \$2,000 from the 2023 Boards, Committees and Commissions budget and the allocation of \$2,000 from the 2024 Boards, Committee and Commissions budget to the Burnaby-New Westminster Taskforce on Sexually Exploited and At-Risk Youth to support its two-year plus workplan (remainder 2022 – 2024), as detailed in *Section 4.0* of this report.
2. **THAT** a copy of this report be forwarded to the Social Planning Committee for information.

REPORT**1.0 BACKGROUND**

The Burnaby-New Westminster Taskforce on Sexually Exploited and At-Risk Youth (the Taskforce) has been working since 1998 to address the sexual abuse of children and youth in the sex trade. The Taskforce is a multi-sectoral coalition, with staff representation from the City of Burnaby, the City of New Westminster, the Burnaby and New Westminster School Districts, the Burnaby RCMP, the New Westminster Police, the Fraser Health Authority, the Ministry of Children and Family Development, and a number of non-profit agencies who provide services to youth. The Taskforce operates as a sub-committee of the Public Safety Committee and is chaired by Councillor Jordan.

Over the years, the work of the Taskforce has focused on two priorities:

- to ensure provision of adequate support, services and treatment for sexually exploited children and youth; and
- to prevent the commercial sexual exploitation of children and youth.

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From: General Manager Planning and Development
Re: Update on the Activities of the Burnaby-New Westminster
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The Committee and Council were last updated on the overall work of the Taskforce in 2020 January. This report provides an overview of the Taskforce’s key activities since that time, and outlines the Taskforce’s priorities for its next two-year plus workplan (remainder 2022 – 2024). Since the inception of the Taskforce, the City of Burnaby (Social Planning) has provided administrative support for the Taskforce.

2.0 POLICY CONTEXT

The work of the Taskforce on Sexually Exploited and At-Risk Youth is aligned with the following Council-adopted policies and plans/strategies: *Burnaby Strategic Plan* (2022), *Social Sustainability Strategy* (2011), *Equity Policy* (1994, updated 2020), and the *Healthy Community Policy* (1991).

3.0 OVERVIEW OF RECENT TASKFORCE ACTIVITIES

The last two years have been a hiatus period for the Taskforce. With the initial onset of the pandemic in 2020 March the majority of Taskforce members had their work program fill up with emergency-related work. This continued over the duration of the pandemic and made it difficult for Taskforce members to regularly attend meetings. As such, the Taskforce took an official hiatus between May 2021 – January 2022 and no meetings occurred.

In February 2022, the Taskforce met for a focussed discussion on the future of the group. Members reaffirmed the importance of the Taskforce as the only local body which provides a focussed opportunity to discuss issues, themes, and local trends of sexual exploitation in relation to youth. The Taskforce also provides a valuable networking opportunity for staff working in this area. As such, the decision was made to reactivate the Taskforce with a focus on information sharing, networking, and curating related professional development opportunities.

This aligns with sections of the Taskforce’s Strategic Plan, specifically the priorities of ‘education and awareness’ and ‘service provider capacity building’. This Strategic Plan was developed prior to the pandemic. Due to ongoing capacity limits of Taskforce members, other aspects of the Strategic Plan will remain in hiatus until further notice. Staff will keep the Committee and Council apprised of any changes.

4.0 2022 – 2024 WORKPLAN

As mentioned above, the Taskforce is undertaking a streamlined operations model with focus on 1) information sharing and networking, and 2) professional development/service provider capacity building.

To support this work, staff are recommending an allocation of \$2,000 from the 2023 Boards, Committees and Commissions budget, and an allocation of the same amount in the 2024 Boards, Committees and Commissions budget, to the Taskforce. This funding will permit the engagement of subject matter experts in the area of sexual exploitation prevention (e.g. online safety, gang grooming prevention), to provide relevant, needed professional development training opportunities to Taskforce members. These opportunities will also be opened to the wider Burnaby

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social service community. For budgeting purposes, these requests are required to be separated between the two fiscal years.

It is noted that all Taskforce members contribute in-kind support to committee activities including members' staff time, provision of event venues (if in-person), and contributions towards the development of educational content and awareness activities.

4.1 Information Sharing and Networking

The sharing of information and trends (e.g. recruitment activities, age of recruitment, geographic instances of recruitment etc.), in a manner that continues to protect the privacy of impacted youth, is crucial to the prevention of sexual exploitation and the identification of intervention methods/activities to support at-risk youth. The Taskforce provides a unique, focussed opportunity for the sharing of this information across jurisdictions (Burnaby-New Westminster) with a range of social service providers, School Districts, police forces (New Westminister Police, Burnaby RCMP), and local government representatives all present.

The long-standing nature of the Taskforce has also nurtured the establishment of effective working relationships among these same bodies – which has increased the efficiency and timeliness of local response. The Taskforce remains an important vehicle for these relationships and for the transmissions of knowledge as new agency representatives/workers are welcomed into the community.

4.2 Service Provider Capacity Building/Professional Development Opportunities

In a continuation of similar efforts, the Taskforce will be renewing its efforts to curate related professional development opportunities in the coming months, including 'lunch and learns', and other educational sessions. These events will be scheduled both virtually and in-person, as public health measures permit. Topics of particular interest are online safety/recruitment and gang recruitment prevention. Educational opportunities for local parents, developed in partnership with the Burnaby and New Westminister School Districts, will also be pursued.

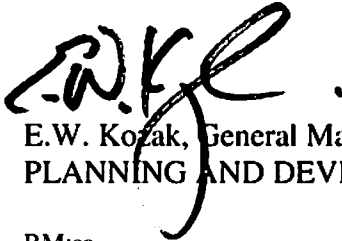
5.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Burnaby-New Westminister Taskforce on Sexually Exploited and At-Risk Youth has been working since 1998 to address the sexual exploitation of children and youth in the sex trade. Within the next two-year plus workplan (remainder 2022 – 2024), the Taskforce will focus on information sharing, networking, and service provider capacity building/professional development opportunities.

To support Taskforce priorities it is recommended that the Public Safety Committee request Council to authorize the allocation of \$2,000 from the 2023 Boards, Committees and Commissions budget and the allocation of \$2,000 from the 2024 Boards, Committee and Commissions budget to the Burnaby-New Westminister Taskforce on Sexually Exploited and At-Risk Youth to support its two-year plus workplan (remainder 2022 – 2024), as detailed in *Section 4.0* of this report.

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It is further recommended that a copy of this report be forwarded to the Social Planning Committee for information.



E.W. Kozak, General Manager
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

RM:sa

Copied to: Chief Administrative Officer
Deputy Chief Administrative Officer and Chief Financial Officer
OIC – RCMP
General Manager Community Safety

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