



**Canadian Union of
Public Employees**

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- Long-Term Care Homes
& Services Part-Time
- Recreation Workers
Part-Time
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*Toronto Community
Housing Corporation*

**SERVING OUR
MEMBERS
SINCE
1942**

EX11.1.6

December 11, 2019

Mayor Tory and Members of the Executive Committee
10th Floor, West Tower, City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

RE: EX11.1 Value-Based Outcomes Review: Findings

The Value Based Outcomes Review (VBOR) is essentially a reiteration of reports we've seen in the past. So called "opportunities and efficiencies" for managing finances and operations. Like many before it, it fails to address the problem of long-term predictable and sustainable funding.

In fact, the analysis completely leaves out consideration of core funding sources like "flow throughs" from other orders of government deeming them non-material because the City has no control over it. Yet funding from other orders of government directly impact service levels and staffing. This report itself was paid for by the Province which is pushing a service and cost cutting agenda. Provincial funding goes directly to services like childcare, which will be significantly impacted by recommendations in the report.

The City should be looking at all funding tools before cutting services. For example, for every dollar the City spends of its own money on certain services, it can receive up to four-times that much back from funding agreements. These funding sources should be considered as a key source of any value for dollar strategy. The report does acknowledge a historical reliance on "efficiencies" - which we know as cuts to programs and staff - to fund growth and budget holes. And Local 79 agrees that "efficiencies can no longer be used to balance budget holes" created by poor long-term growth and funding planning.

So once again, "how" we get there has significant implications.

The most disturbing recommendation in the report is perhaps the offloading of childcare. The premise of this recommendation is that paying less for what is typically "women's labour" is okay, and that this will somehow solve the City's waitlist problem. Peel Region is used as an example of success. But Peel just announced it will face a waitlist for the first time since offloading childcare because of recently announced provincial funding cuts. Clearly offloading childcare did not solve Peel's waitlist problem. Now Toronto wants to dump its provincial childcare funding problems on the sector. Offloading childcare to the sector to do more with less is unacceptable. City childcare centres represent a small % of the overall sector but have a huge percentage of impact across the sector - for wages for women, standards of work and quality. Does the City want to absolve themselves of that sort of standard? It is disturbing that childcare is what we look at every single time the City looks for service cuts.

The Auditor General's Report already made this recommendation and the City has a Childcare Growth Strategy it has committed to. No decisions should be made until the outstanding divisional report comes out this year. There are also huge labour implications for childcare workers and at no time was labour or the public consulted on such a proposal which could end up costing the City more money to implement.

Means testing of universal programs is another report recommendation. The City already tried versions of this years ago. They started charging program fees at some community centres and in priority neighbourhoods where the need was great. It didn't work. Families couldn't pay, enrollment went down, and the City ultimately reversed the fee increases. Means testing is a cut back proposed in the name of reducing budget deficits, but it is unfair and adds more bureaucratic costs to administer. It also creates a 'proof of poverty' scenario that the City should not support in principle as it goes against its own poverty reduction strategy. Toronto residents already pay for city services in their taxes and will pay more as the Mayor intends to implement an additional tax hike this year. Low cost access to parks and swim programs for families, seniors' discounts on transit should not be viewed as perks or subject to review.

The report also talks about "workforce optimization", "rostering of staff" and "automating work". The City wants us to believe that people are to blame for their budget problems. As long as we have public services, we will need people to deliver those services. In other reports we have seen similar catch phrases which boil down to one thing - less programs and services and fewer staff to deliver them. It is misleading to suggest we can get rid of people, reduce staffing and not affect services at community and childcare centres, shelters and in long-term care homes. Yet these Human Services that stand to be the most deeply impacted by proposals in the report were left out of the funding analysis.

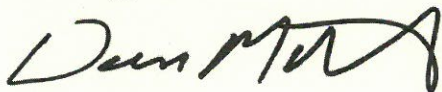
Finally, suggestions to implement staff pools, create a human resources committee and centralize shared service delivery processes all have major implications that need to be considered. There will be labour implications, service implications, and administrative costs resulting from these recommendations. Moreover, the City already has mechanisms such as the budget process to deal with staffing recommendations and ensure the appropriate oversight and approval for staffing levels. Setting up more bureaucracy through additional committees will cost the City money.

The City also needs to be clear on what roles and authorities are accountable to City divisions, staff and Council. Before implementing any recommendations, there needs to be clarity on what needs to go through budget and Council processes for consideration and approval. There also needs to be proper consultation with labour partners, residents and stakeholders. The public has been left out of decisions that include automating services they now receive in person, and the requirement for proof of service need.

This report moves towards a clear lack of public accountability by giving the City justification to make decisions using a pro-business, private sector approach.

The City is not private, it is a public entity, owned by the public and accountable to the public.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dave Mitchell", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dave Mitchell
President