 Committee Report

# Report SSR-CW-05-17

**To**: Warden Barfoot and Members of Grey County Council

**From**: Barb Fedy, Director of Social Services

**Meeting Date:** June 29, 2017

**Subject: 2017 Transfer Payment Agreement – Child Care and Child and Family Program**

**Status**: Recommendation adopted by Committee as presented per Resolution CW-125-17; Endorsed by County Council July 13, 2017 per Resolution

## Recommendation

1. **That SSR-CW-05-17 be received and that a By-law be prepared authorizing the Warden and Clerk to execute the 2017 Transfer Payment Agreement with the Ministry of Education for the Child Care and Child and Family Program; and**
2. **That staff prepare an additional report for Grey County Council when it is determined how the allocations for Expansion Plan funding will be spent.**

## Background

Grey County Social Services has received the 2017 Transfer Payment Agreement from the Ministry of Education for the Children’s Services Program. As in previous years, this agreement has three contractual service targets that must be established and met in the coming year for:

* Fee Subsidy,
* Special Needs Resourcing
* Ontario Works Formal and Informal Child Care.

New this year is an additional allocation for Service Managers for a Child Care Expansion Plan. This comes from the Speech from the Throne announcement for an additional 100,000 child care spaces and supports access to licensed child care for 100,000 more infants, toddlers and preschoolers over the next five years starting in 2017. This will be phased in across the province but in the first year the funding will support approximately 16,000 more children 0-4 years of age with child care subsidies, expanded access to licensed child care spaces and reduce fee subsidy waitlists to help parents’ access quality child care. This can be done through additional subsidies for children already in care, permitting more children to access care if there is space available, creating additional space in child care centres and at home child cares and through other means to expand access. Staff will work with families, community and stakeholders to best meet the needs based on local priorities and will bring a further report back to Council for support and direction.

The 2017 funding further includes a focus on data analysis services to ensure early years service system planning decisions are responsive to regularly reviewed community needs and priorities and that the early years programs are reflective of relevant, current research and are evidence based.

The provincial government remains committed to supporting Registered Early Childhood Educators and continues to invest in the Wage Enhancement Grant (WEG) program for the licensed child care sector. This program is intended to be an ongoing investment and it is hoped there can be further enhancements through additional announcements for this underpaid but much needed sector. The Service Manager continues to implement the WEG program as in 2016 through an application, reporting and accountability process.

Beginning in 2017, the Ministry is taking steps to further prioritize funding to the not-for-profit child care sector. A “For Profit Auspice Threshold” has been added in service agreements with the intention that Service Managers will maintain funding to for-profit entities at or below previous years expenditure levels. The For Profit threshold for the County is 11% which means that no more than 11% of the total funding allocation should be allocated to the For Profit sector. The Ministry does recognize that there are communities that are served by for-profit child care operators to support access to child care for children and families. The Ministry has indicated that it will work with Service Managers throughout this transition to ensure that local needs are supported.

## Financial/Staffing/Legal/Information Technology Considerations

The 2017 Service Agreement has a total funding allocation of $7,917,529, which is an increase of $642,576 over the 2016 funding. This increase includes the new Expansion Plan allocation of $628,621.00, as well as new Data Analysis Services funding in the amount of $73,153.

There has been a $26,689 decrease in Core Funding based on updated demographic data used in the funding formula and there has also been a $32,509 funding decrease in the Wage Enhancement allocation based on prior year needs.

The required municipal contribution for 2017 has decreased by $2,900 as a result of the decrease in Core Funding. The additional Expansion Plan and Data Analysis Services funding is 100% provincial funding with no municipal contribution required.

## Link to Strategic Goals/Priorities

The following strategic goals and priority outcomes of the County Corporation are met as set out in the Corporate Strategic Plan.

Goal Two – Support Healthy, Connected Communities: Improve the physical, operational, and virtual connections between Grey County’s municipalities and areas beyond to strengthen communities and improve the quality of life for residents.

(b) Improved sustainability of services and service delivery for Grey County communities.

Goal Three – Delivery Excellence in Governance and Service: Serve the needs of a large County spanning nine unique municipalities by fostering a culture of inclusive decision making and excellence in public service.

1. Governance model for the future
2. Greater operational efficiency

## Attachments

[2017 Ontario Transfer Payment Child Care and Child and Family Program Service Agreement](https://docs.grey.ca/share/s/3_j49yWkQ9G5s8O15Fm2Ng)

Respectfully submitted by,

Barb Fedy,
Director of Social Services