TO: Chair and Members  
Emergency & Community Services Committee  
WARD(S) AFFECTED: CITY WIDE

COMMITTEE DATE: September 22, 2010

SUBJECT/REPORT NO: Amendments to the Food, Shelter and Housing Advisory Committee (CS10088)  
(City Wide)

SUBMITTED BY: Joe-Anne Priel  
General Manager  
Community Services Department  
PREPARED BY: Molly Elliott (905) 546-2424 ext.1782  
Brian Kreps (905) 546-2424 ext. 4288  
Gillian Hendry (905) 546-2424 ext. 4818

SIGNATURE: ______________________________

RECOMMENDATION

(a) That the Food, Shelter and Housing Advisory Committee be renamed the Food and Shelter Advisory Committee.

(b) That revised Terms of Reference for the Food and Shelter Advisory Committee, formerly the Food, Shelter and Housing Advisory Committee (attached as Appendix A to Report CS10088), be approved.

(c) That the Food and Shelter Advisory Committee (formerly known as the Food, Shelter and Housing Committee) continue through the 2010-2014 term of Council.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Food, Shelter and Housing Advisory Committee advises the Emergency and Community Services (E&CS) Committee concerning income security, food security and access to safe, accessible and adequate shelter.
It is proposed that the name of the committee be changed to Food and Shelter Advisory Committee to better reflect their mandate, which has shifted from issues concerning permanent housing to a focus on emergency food and shelter issues. The change in focus was reflected in the Terms of Reference approved by E&CS Committee in January of 2009 (Report CS09013).

The proposed new Terms of Reference, attached as Appendix A to Report CS10088, expands the membership to ensure representation from the various emergency food and shelter service sectors in Hamilton.

*Alternatives for Consideration – Not Applicable*

**FINANCIAL / STAFFING / LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

*Financial:*
There are no financial implications to Report CS10088.

*Staffing:*
There are no staffing implications to Report CS10088.

*Legal:*
There are no legal implications to Report CS10088.

**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The Food, Shelter and Housing Advisory Committee (FSHAC) is a long standing volunteer citizen advisory committee. FSHAC and the staff liaison regularly review the Terms of Reference to ensure that the Committee’s mandate reflects the community’s needs. During a recent review, there was discussion concerning the role of FSHAC and where the work of the committee fits in relation to other community committees. Members of FSHAC discussed the value of their work and the membership of the committee.

During the past few years, new planning tables and advisory committees have been established concerning poverty and homelessness such as the Roundtable for Poverty Reduction, The Affordable Housing Flagship, Homelessness Partnership Initiative Community Advisory Board, Emergency Food Action Committee and Hamilton Emergency Shelters Integration and Coordination Committee.

Since the inception of the Affordable Housing Flagship in 2005, the Food, Shelter and Housing Advisory Committee began to change their focus from permanent affordable
housing to avoid duplication in efforts. The Terms of Reference was changed in January 2009 (Report CS09013) to formalize the change in focus to emergency food and shelter. The recommended name change to the Food and Shelter Advisory Committee further clarifies the mandate of the committee.

**POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no policy implications to Report CS10088.

**RELEVANT CONSULTATION**

FSHAC was consulted regarding possible changes to the Terms of Reference. The committee members feel that it is valuable to have an advisory committee to provide information to the Emergency and Community Services Committee regarding homelessness and hunger in Hamilton. They also expressed the importance of the committee as a venue for information sharing among agencies who do work in these areas.

**ANALYSIS / RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION**

It is proposed that the housing reference be removed from Food, Shelter and Housing Advisory Committee’s name to bring clarity to the mandate under which they have been operating since January 2009.

The newly named Food and Shelter Advisory Committee will focus on addressing emerging issues and crises affecting persons experiencing homelessness and those in need of emergency food services. This mandate fits well within the current landscape of other community groups. Other groups focus on long term poverty reduction efforts, increasing and improving the affordable housing stock in Hamilton or systems planning for emergency shelters or emergency food distribution respectively.

The proposed Terms of Reference (attached as Appendix A to Report CS10088) names specific sectors where membership is to be drawn. While the majority of seats were set aside for service providers in the past, this Terms of Reference names specific sectors to ensure that the membership represents the needs of those experiencing homelessness and hunger.
ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

There are no alternatives for consideration.

CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN (Linkage to Desired End Results)


Social Development
• Everyone has a home they can afford that is well maintained and safe
• Residents in need have access to adequate support services
• People participate in all aspects of community life without barriers or stigma

Healthy Community
• An engaged Citizenry
• Adequate access to food, water, shelter and income, safety, work, recreation and support for all (Human Services)

APPENDICES / SCHEDULES

Appendix A to Report CS10088 - Food and Shelter Advisory Committee Terms of Reference
FOOD and SHELTER ADVISORY COMMITTEE
TERMS OF REFERENCE

Mandate

1. To identify the urgent needs of citizens within the community for whom barriers exist to obtaining income security; sufficient nutritious food; and, access to safe, accessible and affordable shelter, with adequate supports.

2. To provide information regarding urgent community needs and recommendations toward their resolution to the Emergency & Community Services Committee.

3. Where appropriate, agency members will take immediate and specialized action to address these issues.

4. To provide an opportunity for Food and Shelter Advisory Committee members to liaise and collaborate with other levels of government, other committees, citizens, and agencies regarding responses and recommendations for emergency food supports and shelter needs.

Objectives:

1. To ensure that issues, specific to people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, are brought forward and recommendations are provided to the Emergency & Community Services Committee in a timely manner.

2. To ensure that issues, specific to people who are experiencing hunger, are brought forward and recommendations are provided to the Emergency & Community Services Committee in a timely manner.

3. To assist with the coordination and implementation of Council approved recommendations.

4. To collaborate and devise innovative, preventative measures to assist in addressing homelessness or hunger issues within the community and to provide those recommendations to the Emergency & Community Services Committee.

5. To identify emerging trends, potential gaps and best practices in food or emergency shelter service needs.

6. To educate the community about urgent food and shelter needs through regular reporting to the Emergency & Community Services Committee.

7. To respond in a timely manner to requests for advice from city staff and the Emergency & Community Services Committee.

8. Recognizing the significant relationship emergency food and shelter have with other components of the housing continuum, it is important for FSAC to liaise and
collaborate with other committees doing work in the areas of homelessness and affordable housing (such as the Affordable Housing Flagship) and to keep apprised of relevant programs and initiatives.

**Composition:**

The Food and Shelter Advisory Committee (FSAC) is comprised of service providers and citizens with an expertise in the field of emergency food and shelter, as follows:

- 10 - 12 Service Providers representing the following sectors:
  - Men experiencing homelessness;
  - Women experiencing homelessness;
  - Youth experiencing homelessness;
  - Families experiencing homelessness;
  - Newcomers experiencing homelessness;
  - Persons with disabilities experiencing homelessness;
  - Emergency food provision;
  - Day program provision;
  - Aboriginal community experiencing food and shelter emergencies;
  - Seniors;
  - Other related sectors; and,
  - Members of other homelessness and housing continuum related committees.

- 2 – 3 citizen representatives. These members should have an interest in and/or experience with the emergency food and shelter system in Hamilton.

- The committee term is for four-years and coincides with the term of City Council.

**Resources:**

- City of Hamilton Staff (staff liaison, technical support).

- Community partners and other levels of government (Ministry of Social and Community Services, Ministry of Community and Youth Services, Service Canada, Local Health Integration Network, Social Planning and Research Council, residents of Hamilton).

- The Committee may call on other experts in the fields of health, legal, housing, etc. to assist in formulating appropriate recommendations and/or action plans.

**General Information:**

- For the purposes of the work of the Food and Shelter Advisory Committee (FSAC), members who work for community organizations or agencies will sit on FSAC as representatives from a sector and not representatives of the organization or agency.
• An organization or agency may not have more than one representative on the Food and Shelter Advisory Committee.

• Emergency service providers, who are not members of Food and Shelter Advisory Committee, are encouraged to attend to participate in discussions that will identify the potential food and emergency shelter needs in the community, and responses to those needs.

• Quorum is defined as 50% plus one of the current Committee membership.

• Vacancies will be filled in one of the following ways:
  • Members are appointed through the selection process at the beginning of the new term of Council.
  • Should a vacancy become available during the term, the Selection Committee (of the Emergency & Community Services Committee) would review applicants who were previously interviewed, but not selected, to determine if a suitable candidate is available and interested in becoming a member.
  • The Food and Shelter Advisory Committee identifies a relevant service provider(s) and brings forward a recommendation, in the form of a report, to the Emergency & Community Services Committee recommending their appointment.

Sub-Committees and/or Working Groups, to the Food Shelter and Advisory Committee, will be established, as required.

**Chair:**

To be appointed by the Food and Shelter Advisory Committee at the first meeting of each year.

The Food and Shelter Advisory Committee will report to Emergency & Community Services Committee.

**Minutes:**

Compiled and circulated by support staff at least seven (7) days prior to next Food and Shelter Advisory Committee meeting.

Approved minutes are to be forwarded to the Legislative Assistant to the Emergency & Community Services Committee immediately upon approval for inclusion in the next agenda of the Standing Committee.

Recommendations from the Food and Shelter Advisory Committee need to be brought forward to the Emergency & Community Services Committee in the form of either a staff report (to be signed by the General Manager of the Community Services Department) or
a report from the Food and Shelter Advisory Committee (to be signed by the Chair). A report from the Advisory Committee will include the recommendation(s) put forward by the FSAC at their last meeting and the relevant background information.

**Frequency of Meetings:**

Meetings are held six to eight times per year, at the call of the Chair in consultation with committee members. Meetings are usually not held during the months of July, August and December.

Meetings are held at Hamilton City Hall, the second Tuesday of the month from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm.

Additional time, outside of the FSAC meetings, may be required to complete tasks associated with the Committee.

Work Group or Sub-committee meetings will be scheduled, as required.