**UBCM Meeting Notes Tuesday, September 7, 1030am**

**RCMP Service Levels and Resourcing for Gibsons and the Sunshine Coast**

**Attending:**

**For Gibsons:**

Mayor Beamish

Councillor Croal

Mark Brown, CAO

**For RCMP E-Division**

A/Commissioner Eric Stubbs, Criminal Operations Officer – E Division

Jannette Tyson – OIC Strategic Planning for BC

Insp. Alana Dunlop – Strategic Planning

Mayor Beamish opened the meeting by reviewing the issue paper that was forwarded to the RCMP for this meeting (Copy Attached) and which highlights the concerns of the Town of Gibsons with respect to the reduced service levels and lack of focus on crime prevention and youth issues as reported by the NCO i/c Sunshine Coast Detachment.

In addition, Councillor Croal brought up concerns about the lack of affordable housing for members and the need to consider subsidizing housing costs to encourage new members to transfer into the detachment. C/Stubbs commented that some support is currently being provided to members in Ft. Macleod and Whistler but that these are exceptions.

A/Commissioner Stubbs acknowledged the concerns that were raised and provided comments on the following:

Due to Covid19 the RCMP Training Depot in Regina was closed and although it is back in operation there are only 300 cadets vs 1,200 expected. BC only 25% of officers they should have received

AC/Stubbs asked if Gibsons has a Strategy for assisting RCMP?

Mayor Beamish reviewed the 2020 Business Watch program that was put in p0lace to assist the RCMP due to the lack of police presence in Gibsons and stated that when we reach 5000 population (2021) we expect that members will start and end their shifts in the community and that they will be more frequently seen in Gibsons..

AC/Stubbs commented that he is aware that there are significant costs when a community reaches 5,000 persons and the Province signs a policing contract with the community and the RCMP. However, he was not aware that Gibsons is approaching 5000 pop. Mayor Beamish referred him to the 2019 policing study completed and provided to the RCMP and Province that identified a need for 5-7 members and an increased cost to taxation of approximately $700,000 or 30%.

Gibsons to be talking with Province regarding policing contract this year during UBCM.

C/Stubbs referred to Armstrong as a good resource as they just crossed over 5,000

Auxiliary policing Province indemnity still an outstanding issue

C/Stubbs will follow up with Acting Staff Sgt Newman on the issues discussed today

Eric-letter to be provided to Town outlining discussions today

**Summary of 2021 UBCM Briefing Information provided to the RCMP for Meeting:**

Regarding the background for the Town of Gibsons Mayor and Council’s meeting request, Council received report from the Sechelt Detachment in early August that included the following information which Council plans to discuss with members of the RCMP at this meeting:

* For much of the past eight months the Sunshine Coast has functioned with only 4 of 9 supervisors working, which necessitated the redeployment of many support personal ( GIS and Community Policing Supervisors ) to Frontline Policing.  Since March, three new recruits arrived with a fourth planned for mid September.  These recruits have been a welcome addition; however, due to intensive supervision requirements during their first two months they initially place greater strains on internal frontline resourcing.
* In mid/late July the Sunshine Coast RCMP were requested to deploy one member per week to assist with Wildfire response across the Province.   This request is based on operational capacity and is being asked of all LMD RCMP detachments.   To put in context, although this request is challenging locally, it is in line with other Detachments given the LMD is providing 60 police officers weekly to support the Wildfires.      The Sunshine Coast have also been asked to release members to assist with the recent Fairy Creek Logging protest on Vancouver Island.
* In light of the above, resources had to be directed to ensuring Frontline service delivery remains un-impacted.  Some of these changes include:
  + GIS and Youth positions have all been seconded to uniformed Frontline policing duties;
  + Community Policing Corporal has assumed senior management position;
  + Civilian staffing shortages have necessitated temporary ( as needed ) reduction in hours for the Gibson’s Community Police office for the remainder of the summer. [ These changes have been posted and disseminated through social media ]   There have been no change to services provided at the Sechelt Office.   The one exception was civil fingerprinting ( for volunteers )  which due to Covid-19 was limited to urgent requests.  We are hoping these limitations will be removed in late August;
  + Indigenous Police Service ( IPS ) coverage for the shishalh Nation has remained unchanged.  IPS does not first respond to emergent calls for service as this falls within the frontline Policing mandate.  IPS works proactively with the shishalh Nation to build community partnerships while also providing support to the Nation for events such as the recent uncovering of historic Residential School tragedies.
  + Attendance at community meetings have continued but unavoidable absences have been commonplace.  These absences are not a reflection of our commitment to community partnerships but rather have resulted from responsible members being diverted to assist with urgent Frontline matters.  The Sunshine Coast RCMP remain committed to community partnerships and look forward to re-connecting with all community partners in a more traditional manner ( in person ) in the coming months.

Mayor and Council would also like to follow up regarding the following concerns expressed in their submission to the Special Committee on Reforming the BC Police Act dated March 2021.

* There are three significant areas of concern to our community in respect to the BC Police Act. These are:

1. The increased cost and resulting sudden tax increases to communities required to cover a majority of their policing costs as soon as they reach a population threshold of 5,000 people;
2. The impact of the opioid crisis on the community and the Sunshine Coast generally; and
3. The need for police to attend and assist in mental health and overdose cases, which draws heavily on their resources and their ability to effectively police the community.

Copy of the presentation to the **BC Police Act Review Committee** was provided to the RCMP as well for this meeting.