

REPORT NO. 240 of the
**SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT,
HEALTH & CULTURE STANDING COMMITTEE**
of its meeting held June 11, 2014

Present: Councillor Ed Sleiman, Chair
Councillor Jo-Anne Gignac
Councillor Alan Halberstadt
Councillor Fulvio Valentinis

Regrets: Councillor Al Maghnieh

That the following recommendation of the Social Development, Health and Culture Standing Committee **BE APPROVED** as follows:

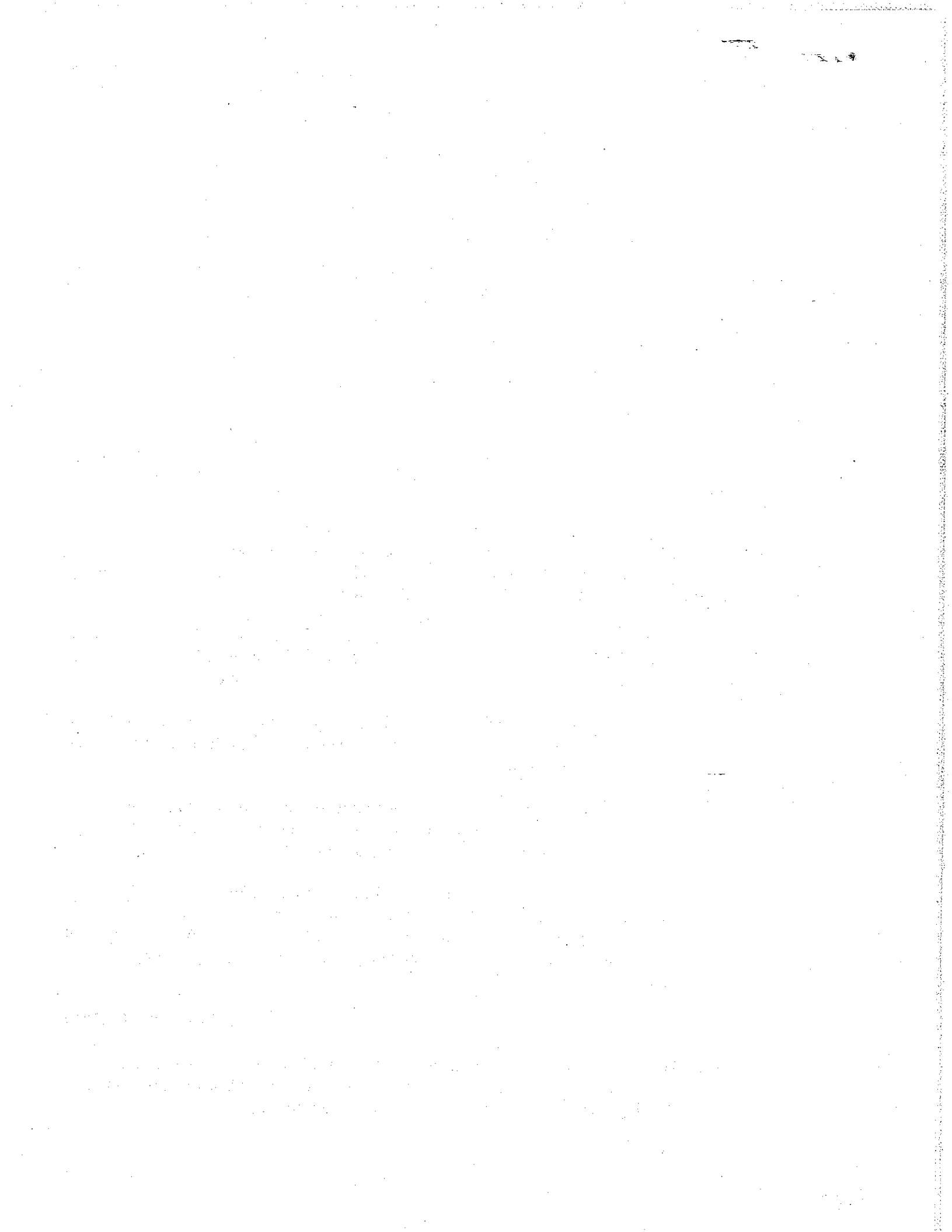
Moved by Councillor Gignac, seconded by Councillor Valentinis,

- a) **THAT** this report from the Executive Director of Housing and Children Services regarding Operational Review Report of Windsor Essex Community Housing Corporation (WECHC) **BE ACCEPTED**; and further
- b) **THAT** the Executive Director of Housing and Children Services **BE AUTHORIZED** to operationalize implementation of one or more of the Recommendations made in the report, if necessary, provided that the cost to fund such implementation:
- c)
 - i) is within the Council approved Housing and Children's Services budget in the respective Fiscal Year in which implementation of the Recommendation is to be funded and;
 - ii) funding the cost of the implementation of any given Recommendation(s) does not create or operate to establish an annualized cost to the City year over year without the prior approval of Council and;
 - iii) if such cost has not been included in an approved Housing and Children's Services budget in the respective Fiscal Year, the Executive Director of Housing and Children Services is required to seek City Council's approval prior to funding the implementation of one or more Recommendations.

Carried.

LiveLink 17190, GH2014

Clerk's Note: The report authored by the Executive Director of Housing & Children's Services dated May 14, 2014 entitled "Operational Review of Windsor Essex Community Housing Corporation is **attached** as background information.



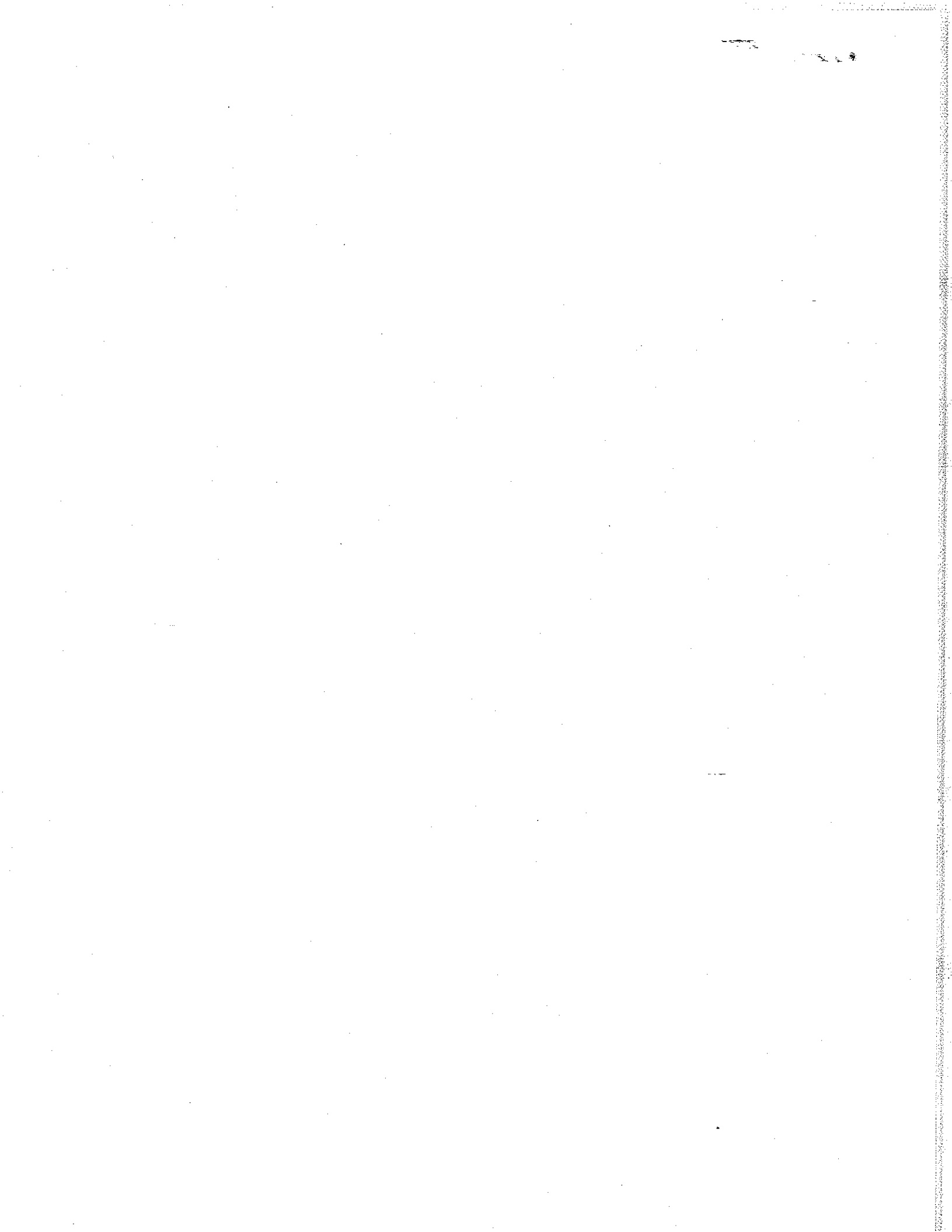
Ed. Glenn

CHAIRPERSON

J. Whittal

SUPERVISOR OF COUNCIL SERVICES (A)

NOTIFICATION :				
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THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF WINDSOR
Social Development, Health and Culture Standing Committee-
Administrative Report

**MISSION STATEMENT:**

"The City of Windsor, with the involvement of its citizens, will deliver effective and responsive municipal services, and will mobilize innovative community partnerships"

LiveLink REPORT #: 17190 GH2014	Report Date: May 14, 2014
Author's Name: Rob Oleynik	Date to Standing Committee: June 11, 2014
Author's Phone: 519 255-5200 ext. 6278	Classification #:
Author's E-mail: roleynik@city.windsor.on.ca	

To: Social Development, Health and Culture Standing Committee

Subject: Operational Review of Windsor Essex Community Housing Corporation

1. RECOMMENDATION: City Wide: X

- a) **THAT** this report from the Executive Director of Housing and Children Services regarding Operational Review Report of Windsor Essex Community Housing Corporation (WEHC) **BE ACCEPTED**; and further
- b) **THAT** the Executive Director of Housing and Children Services **BE AUTHORIZED** to operationalize implementation of one or more of the Recommendations made in the report, if necessary, provided that the cost to fund such implementation:
 - c)
 - i) is within the Council approved Housing and Children's Services budget in the respective Fiscal Year in which implementation of the Recommendation is to be funded and;
 - ii) funding the cost of the implementation of any given Recommendation(s) does not create or operate to establish an annualized cost to the City year over year without the prior approval of Council and;
 - iii) if such cost has not been included in an approved Housing and Children's Services budget in the respective Fiscal Year, the Executive Director of Housing and Children Services is required to seek City Council's approval prior to funding the implementation of one or more Recommendations.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: N/A

2. BACKGROUND:

The purpose of this report is to provide the Standing Committee and Council with the completed Operational Review Report of the Windsor Essex Community Housing Corporation (WECHC).

The City has a dual role with respect to the social housing portfolio and the delivery of social housing programs. The City is the legislated designated Service Manager and is required to administer, deliver and in some cases fund housing programs in the Windsor Essex region. In addition, the City is the sole shareholder of the Windsor Essex Community Housing Corporation.

To provide overall context, there are thirty-nine (39) social housing providers that own and manage some 8700 units in Windsor Essex. The Windsor Essex Community Housing Corporation is one of the thirty-nine (39) providers and owns and manages a portfolio of approximately 4700 units representing approximately 54% of the total Windsor Essex social housing stock. The Windsor Essex Community Housing Corporation is also responsible for the operation and management of the Central Housing Registry Windsor Essex.

In 2010, housing consultant Social Housing Strategists Inc., completed a report referred to as the Housing and Recommended Strategies Report – Windsor Essex (also known as the HARS 2010 Report). In 2011 City Council “endorsed in principle the HARS 2011 report (Council Report No. 15197). One of the recommendations of the HARS 2010 Report was to “conduct an Operational Review of Windsor Essex Community Housing Corporation (WECHC).”

In 2013 City Council authorized the Executive Director of Housing and Children’s Services to issue a Request for Proposals and hire a qualified consultant to complete an Operational Review report of the Windsor Essex Community Housing Corporation (Council Report No. 16348 Approved M97-2013). The consultant selected to conduct the Operational Review was Social Housing Strategists Inc. (SHS Inc.). SHS Inc. has extensive experience in conducting operational reviews of social housing providers and related assignments throughout the province. Among other operational reviews conducted in the past, SHS Inc. has completed operational reviews of social housing providers in Hamilton, York Region, Peel Region, Durham Region and Toronto.

The consultant began the WECHC review in the summer of 2013 and submitted the final report in April 2014.

The intended outcome of the Operational Review was to provide a comprehensive report that:

1. reviews and analyzes information relevant to the operational activities of the Windsor Essex Community Housing Corporation;
2. describes policies, functions, processes and operational activities;
3. identifies areas where the consultant is of the opinion the organization performs effectively;
4. identifies areas where the consultant is of the opinion improvements are required, and;
5. makes specific actionable recommendations to achieve the improvements required.

3. DISCUSSION:

Given the size and nature of the business of the Windsor Essex Community Housing Corporation, an operational review of the organization is a significant undertaking. The final

report is extensive, and provides a review, analysis, data and comment in virtually all major operating areas of the organization. The report is organized into 13 sections and makes 90 recommendations. The number of recommendations is not considered excessive given the report's size, terms of reference and the number of areas of the operation that were reviewed. The report sections are as follows: Unit Breakdown Data, Financial Review, Corporate Management, Human Resources, Customer Services, Policy Review, Organization and Property Management, Social Housing Material and Information, Management of Target Plan/Vacancies/Arrears Management, Central Housing Registry, RGI Administration, Maintenance Administration and concludes with General Reviewer Comments.

There are 3 appendices attached to this Council report to assist in assessing the Operational Review results as follows:

Appendix 1 – General Reviewer Comments: This appendix is Section 13 of the Operational Review Report and provides the consultant's summary view of the areas in which WECHC performs well and indentifies the areas that require improvement.

Appendix 2 – Recommendations: This appendix assembles all report recommendations made under each of the 13 sections.

Appendix 3 – Operational Review Report: This appendix is a copy of the complete Operational Review Report.

The Operational Review Report provides information to confirm that WECHC performs well in many areas of the operation and improvements are required in other areas of the operation.

In a related matter, the Central Housing Registry is operated by WECHC at a location separate from its main office. The final report makes a "suggestion" to the service manager to give consideration to making the Central Housing Registry "...an independent operation with its own Board reporting to the service manager."

Housing Services has identified that the 90 recommendations made in the report can be organized into the following 5 primary action themes: policy/procedures, arrears management, vacancy management, customer service, and internal/external communications.

Housing Services has scheduled a series of meetings with WECHC to:

1. discuss the findings made in the Operational Review Report;
2. prioritize the recommendations for completion;
3. establish a work plan to complete the recommendations with associated timelines.

Discussions will also include an initiative to recruit a tenant Board member from WECHC's County portfolio to enable balanced input as WECHC moves forward with implementing the recommendations made in the Operational Review Report.

4. RISK ANALYSIS:

Resource Risks – there will be an impact on resources at WECHC and within Housing Services to adopt the recommendations which are within budget limits. However it is believed the impact is manageable. Resource risks are considered low impact and of possible likelihood.

Timing Risks – by dividing the recommendations into two categories - within budgetary limits and above budgetary limits - Housing Services and WECHC will be able to phase in the recommendations over time, allowing an opportunity to assess the more costly recommendations on a case-by-case basis. Timing risks are considered low impact and of possible likelihood.

Cross-Corporate Impact Risks: There are no impacts on other departments. It is considered low impact and unlikely to occur.

Community Impact Risks: The adoption of the low to no cost recommendations is an adoption of best practices and should provide benefit WECHC and to the community. Community risks are considered low impact and of possible likelihood.

Political Risks: There is always potential for criticism however, this is low impact and unlikely to occur if the recommendations made in the operational review and in this Council report are adopted. In the alternative, to not proceed creates the potential criticism that the City or WECHC is not following best practices or responding to the operational review. Adoption of the recommendations mitigates this risk and it is considered low impact and unlikely to occur.

Other Risks: None identified.

5. FINANCIAL MATTERS:

Social housing costs are shared by the County based on an approved weighted assessment rate which in 2013 is approximately 66% City and 34% County.

In March 2013 City Council authorized access to the Social Housing Reserve Fund to fund the services of a qualified consultant to complete an Operational Review of the Windsor Essex Community Housing Corporation. (Council Report No. 16348 Approved M97-2013)

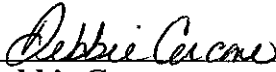
In July 2013 the Executive Director of Housing and Children's Services informed City Council that a Request for proposal was issued and the firm Social Housing Strategists Inc. (SHS Inc.) was selected to complete the review at a cost of \$66,675.00 plus taxes. The review was completed within budget.

There is no unapproved cost to the City budget in approving the Recommendations made in this Council Report.

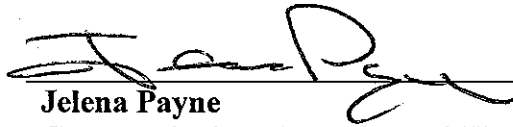
6. **CONSULTATIONS:** None

7. **CONCLUSION:**

The WECHC Operational Review provides the basis of a plan and direction for the organization to continue to move forward and remain relevant in a complex and changing environment. The introduction of provincial changes to social housing and homelessness programs will present some challenges and opportunities to explore and adopt new approaches to delivering social housing programs. The Recommendations made in the Operational Review Report can form a foundation to strengthen the organization and enable WECHC to successfully address the challenges and explore new opportunities and approaches.



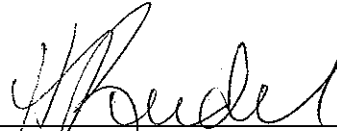
Debbie Cercone
Executive Director of Housing and
Children Services



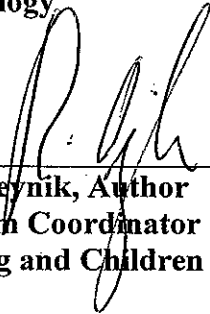
Jelena Payne
Community Development and Health
Commissioner



Onorio Colucci
Chief Financial Officer/City
Treasurers/Corporate Leader Finance and
Technology



Helga Reidel
Chief Administrator Officer



Rob Oleynik, Author
Program Coordinator
Housing and Children Services

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 – General Operational Reviewer Comments

Appendix 2 – Recommendations made in the Operational Review

Appendix 3 – Operational Review Report

(Enclosed for Council only – available for viewing on City's website)

DEPARTMENTS/OTHERS CONSULTED:

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Nancy Jaekel, Financial Planning Administrator - Housing & Children's Services

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