



THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF AMHERSTBURG

OFFICE OF THE CAO

Mission Statement: As stewards of the Town of Amherstburg, we strive to improve the quality of life of all residents through the delivery of effective, efficient, and affordable services.

Author's Name: Valerie Critchley	Report Date: March 31, 2025
Author's Phone: 519 736-0012 ext. 2228	Date to Council: April 14, 2025
Author's E-mail: vcritchley@amherstburg.ca	Resolution #:

To: Mayor and Members of Town Council

Subject: Future Policing Model in Amherstburg

1. **RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that:

1. The report dated March 31, 2025, regarding the status of investigations into the potential policing models for the Town of Amherstburg **BE RECEIVED**;
2. A formal request **BE MADE** to the Ministry of the Solicitor General for the provision of a Policing Resource Plan from the Ontario Provincial Police for policing in the Town of Amherstburg post December 31, 2028; and,
3. Administration **BE DIRECTED** to continue investigations into the various options available to the Town of Amherstburg with respect to policing post December 2028, in order to bring a comprehensive report and recommendation to Council regarding the same.

2. **BACKGROUND:**

On February 26, 2018, Council adopted the following motion:

That:

1. The report from the CAO dated February 9, 2018 regarding police services for the Town of Amherstburg **BE RECEIVED**;
2. The CAO **BE DIRECTED** to finalize the terms and conditions of a contract for policing services with the Windsor Police Services Board/City of Windsor for a term of 20 years commencing January 1, 2019; and,
3. The CAO **BE DIRECTED** to bring back a final contract **SUBJECT TO**

APPROVAL by the Ontario Civilian Police Commission.

On October 12, 2018, as contemplated by the above noted resolution, two contracts were entered into, one with the City of Windsor and the other with the WPSB for the provision of policing services to the Town of Amherstburg, “the ‘Agreements’”.

Article 2 of the agreement with the WPSB states as follows:

Article 2 – Term:

This Agreement shall run for a period of five (5) years commencing at 12:01a.m. on the 1st day of January, 2019 (the “Commencement Date”). This Agreement shall be renewed automatically for succeeding terms of five (5) years each (a “Renewal Term”) not to exceed a maximum total length of twenty (20) years, unless: (i) either party provides notice to the other party at least eighteen (18) months prior to the expiration of the then current term; or (ii) otherwise terminated pursuant to the terms and provisions herein.

Further, on February 8, 2023, Council determined that it did not wish to terminate the agreement and that it wished to enter into a further five (5) renewal term of the Agreements pursuant to Council Resolution #20230208-002 which states as follows:

That:

1. The report from the CAO dated January 23, 2023, regarding the renewal of the policing contract with Windsor Police Service **BE RECEIVED**; and,
2. The CAO **BE DIRECTED** to exercise the renewal clause in the contract dated October 12, 2018 between the Town of Amherstburg and the Windsor Police Services Board (“WPSB”) for the five-year period commencing January 1, 2024 and ending December 31, 2028.

Subsequent to the February 8, 2023 Council Meeting, the City of Windsor and Windsor Police Services were advised of Council’s decision and accordingly, the Agreements automatically renewed on January 1, 2024 for a further five (5) year term which will expire on December 31, 2028.

On January 13, 2025 the Town received a letter from the City of Windsor dated January 8, 2025, the sole contents of which stated the following:

Windsor City Council at its in-camera meeting held December 9, 2024, adopted the following recommendation of the Windsor Police Service Board:

***“That the Windsor Police Service Board recommends to the Council of the City of Windsor that the policing agreement with the Town of Amherstburg renewed on January 1, 2024 for a five-year period, NOT BE RENEWED, for an additional term.*”**

This will serve as your official notice that the current contract between the Town of Amherstburg and the City of Windsor for policing services will not be renewed for a further term.

The above noted letter was the first communication, written or verbal, that the Town had from the City or WPS indicating that it wished to discuss the terms of the Agreements or that it was contemplating not renewing the Agreements past the current term. A copy of the letter is attached for Council’s reference as Appendix “A”.

All of this was reported to Council in camera on January 27, 2025 and was also reported in a public Council Report on February 24, 2025. At that time, Council passed the following resolution:

That:

1. Administration **BE DIRECTED** to:
 - a. Formally advise the City of Windsor that the Town wishes to have discussions regarding the renewal of the current contract post December 31, 2028;
 - b. Meet with the Town of Lasalle to discuss the potential of a partnership or contract for service with the Town and its police service post December 31, 2028;
 - c. Conduct further investigations into the approximate cost of the OPP providing service to the Town of Amherstburg;
 - d. Prepare an “order of magnitude” costing regarding re-establishment of a standalone Town of Amherstburg Police Service; and,
 - e. Investigate the possibility of a Regional County Police Service.
2. Administration **BE DIRECTED** to report back to Council on the above noted items once all relevant information is gathered;
3. The Confidential In-Camera Report entitled “Policing Agreements with the City of Windsor/Windsor Police Services,” written by Valerie Critchley, CAO, **BE RELEASED** publicly in its entirety as well as the initial letter received from the City of Windsor.

This report will provide Council with an update on the steps that have been taken with respect to this matter since the last direction was provided on February 24, 2025.

3. DISCUSSION:

A. City of Windsor Option

As directed by Council, correspondence was sent to the City of Windsor on February 25, 2025, advising that the Town wishes to have discussions regarding renewal of the current contract. A response was received on March 5, 2025, which advised that the matter would be brought before Windsor City Council at its next In-Camera Council Meeting scheduled for April 14, 2025. Administration will report to Council once further information is received from Windsor.

B. Option to Contract with Lasalle Police Services

A meeting was held on March 3, 2025 between the Mayor and CAO and the following representatives of Lasalle: Mayor Crystal Meloche, CAO Joe Milicia and Chief of Police for Lasalle, Michael Pearce. The meeting was congenial and informative with the parties exchanging very preliminary information with respect to service levels, possible governance structures, order of magnitude costs and other potential

operational issues. Specifics with respect to these issues will be provided to Council in closed session as they would form the basis for any future negotiations on this matter.

C. Costing of OPP Policing Option

As reported on February 24, 2025, before making a formal request to the Ministry of the Solicitor General for the OPP to provide a Policing Resource Plan for the Town, Administration wished to provide Council with an order of magnitude costing for OPP services. Administration has utilized the tools provided by the OPP to make this cost estimation and this amount has also been provided to Council in closed session given it is part of potential negotiations. As this initial work has now been completed, Administration recommends that the formal request now be made of the Ministry.

D. Re-establishment of a standalone Town of Amherstburg Police Service

Regarding the preparation of an order of magnitude costing with respect to the re-establishment of a standalone Amherstburg Police Service, Administration has been gathering that information. Particularly, Administration had a very informative meeting with the Chief and Deputy Chief of the Strathroy-Caradoc Police Service with respect to its annual operational and capital costs, sources of revenue and equipment costs. Strathroy-Caradoc is a useful comparator as it is an amalgamated municipality with a similar population to Amherstburg (although it is larger in land mass by approximately 87 square kilometers). This information will also be presented to Council in closed session as it will ultimately be a part of any on-going negotiations on this matter.

E. Investigate the possibility of a Regional County Police Service

Finally, with respect to investigating a Regional County Police Force, this matter was raised by Mayor Prue via two Notice of Motions considered by County Council on April 2, 2025. Mayor Prue's motions (the second being an alternative motion in the event the first motion failed) were as follows:

Motion 1:

WHEREAS *the Town of Amherstburg Policing Contract with the City of Windsor ends on December 31, 2028 and the City of Windsor has decided not to renew this contract with the Town of Amherstburg;*

AND WHEREAS *most of the municipalities in Essex County are currently receiving policing services from the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP);*

AND WHEREAS *the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Amherstburg has requested that due consideration be given to options for policing of the Town of Amherstburg that include a regional approach;*

AND WHEREAS *the County of Essex is uniquely positioned to administer and deliver programs as an upper tier municipality;*

NOW THEREFORE *it is requested that the Administration of the County of Essex work with local municipalities to explore options for traditional regional policing models*

for the County of Essex and to be in place for January 1st, 2029 and for Administration to report back as soon as possible.

Motion Two:

WHEREAS the Town of Amherstburg Policing Contract with the City of Windsor ends on December 31, 2028 and the City of Windsor has decided not to renew this contract with the Town of Amherstburg;

AND WHEREAS the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Amherstburg has requested that due consideration be given to options for policing of the Town of Amherstburg that include a regional approach;

AND WHEREAS the County of Essex is uniquely positioned to administer and deliver programs as an upper tier municipality;

AND WHEREAS there is a recognized interest in preserving local span of control and service levels in policing activities, while enjoying the economies of scale and cost effectiveness of centralized control over policing activities;

AND WHEREAS the decision on how a community is policed requires careful consideration and planning, and communities in Essex County may approach such an endeavour on different time scales;

NOW THEREFORE it is requested that the Administration of the County of Essex work with local municipalities to explore possible options for a collaborative approach to policing in the long term where the Police Board, Command and Corporate structures are held at the County level and local communities are provided with options for flexible service delivery models to meet local needs and pricing. This model should be built upon the premise that any municipality can opt out of the program if they have other means of providing policing to their community and the costs borne for the command and corporate structures are levied equally amongst all signatories, with pricing for specific service delivery within each community being wholly the responsibility of the host community.

When considered by County Council, both motions were defeated. County Councillor/Mayor Sherry Bondy of Essex did introduce a motion that would direct staff to prepare a report outlining what it would cost to engage a consultant for a feasibility study on regional policing. The motion will be debated at a future County Council meeting. Should this motion pass, it would only direct staff to advise what a feasibility study would cost. County Council would then have to direct that the study be done. Given that Amherstburg is working on a defined timeline in order to have a policing service in place for January 1, 2029, the timeline involved in future investigations with the County leads to the conclusion that a Regional Police Service will not be an option for Amherstburg at this time.

Administration will now continue its analysis of the first four options listed above in order to bring all relevant information to Council for a decision and will continue to bring updates as they are available.

4. RISK ANALYSIS:

The main risks for the Town with respect to this issue are:

1. Financial; and,
2. Reduction in Level of Service

The mitigation strategy for these risks is the timely execution of due diligence regarding the options outlined in this report in order for Council to be able to make the most informed decision possible regarding policing in Amherstburg post December 31, 2028.

5. FINANCIAL MATTERS:

As the financial implications of each possible model will play a role in future negotiations with potential service providers, those details will be presented to Council in closed session while negotiations are ongoing and will be then presented publicly once there are fully negotiated options available for Council to consider.

6. ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPACTS:

N/A at this time.

7. CONSULTATIONS:

City of Windsor
Windsor Police Service
Town of Lasalle
Town of Lasalle Police Service
Strathroy-Caradoc Police Service
County of Essex

8. CORPORATE STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT:

Vision: Preserving our past while forging our future.

<i>Amherstburg Community Strategic Plan 2022 - 2026</i>	
<p>PILLAR 1 Deliver Trusted & Accountable Local Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Improve trust between council and staff, and residents, by strengthening governance and internal accountability structures.<input type="checkbox"/> Deliver transparent and efficient financial management.	<p>PILLAR 3 Encourage Local Economic Prosperity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Encourage development of commercial and industrial lands.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Increase effective communication and engagement with residents. <input type="checkbox"/> Develop our staff team, resources, and workplace culture. ✓ Continue to deliver strong core municipal services. <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure Amherstburg is an inclusive accessible and welcoming community committed to reconciliation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Continue to promote local tourism industry, especially overnight accommodation. <input type="checkbox"/> Continue to facilitate downtown development for residents and visitors. <input type="checkbox"/> Continue to leverage partnership opportunities with other provincial, federal, and local governments, agencies, and organizations.
<p style="text-align: center;">PILLAR 2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Invest in Community Amenities and Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Maintain safe, reliable and accessible municipal infrastructure and facilities. <input type="checkbox"/> Increase access to recreation opportunities for all ages. <input type="checkbox"/> Finalize and execute plans for town-owned lands (e.g. Duffy’s site, Belle Vue) <input type="checkbox"/> Create public access to water and waterfront <input type="checkbox"/> Prioritize opportunities to reduce environmental impacts of Town operations and increase Town resilience to climate change. 	<p style="text-align: center;">PILLAR 4</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Shape Growth Aligned with Local Identity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Define and communicate a vision for the Town’s future and identity. <input type="checkbox"/> Promote and plan for green and “climate change ready” development. <input type="checkbox"/> Review and implement policies that promote greater access to diverse housing. <input type="checkbox"/> Protect the Town’s historic sites and heritage. <input type="checkbox"/> Preserve the Town’s greenspaces, agricultural lands, and natural environment.

9. CONCLUSION:

At this time, in order to complete the required due diligence regarding this issue, it is recommended that Administration be directed to continue its investigations with respect to options (A) – (D) above regarding the provision of police services beyond December 31, 2028, liaise with all necessary parties in order to gather the information necessary for each option and to report back to Council regarding all said options in open session.


 Valerie Critchley
Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Future Policing Model in Amherstburg.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Apr 4, 2025

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:



Tracy Prince

**No Signature - Task assigned to Valerie Critchley was completed by assistant
Melissa Osborne**

Valerie Critchley



Kevin Fox