

Report to / Rapport au:

**HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE
COMITÉ DES RESSOURCES HUMAINES**

10 April 2024 / 10 avril 2024

Submitted by / Soumis par:

Chief of Police, Ottawa Police Service / Chef de police, Service de police d'Ottawa

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SUBJECT: UPDATE: STAFFING STABILIZATION STRATEGY

**OBJET: MISE A JOUR: STRATEGIE DE STABILISATION DES EFFECTIFS
REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

**That the Ottawa Police Services Board's Human Resources Committee receive
this report for information.**

RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT

**Que le Comité des ressources humaines de la Commission de services policiers
d'Ottawa prenne connaissance de présent rapport à titre d'information.**

BACKGROUND

The Ottawa Police Service (OPS) continues to face significant challenges associated with staffing. These challenges have resulted in ongoing staffing shortages, impacts to member wellness, and service gaps. Calls for service are continuing to rise, crime is more complex, demonstrations have become more disruptive, and the OPS is not able to keep up with current demand. Historical growth in the OPS' complement has not kept up with Ottawa's expanding population. OPS staffing levels are amongst the lowest of comparable police services in Canada. In addition, the Service has seen yearly increases in the number of members requiring time away from work to heal and recover from injury and illness, though those increases have stabilized in recent years. In addition to these pressures, Members leaving the service for retirement or resignation (attrition) has trended upwards in recent years.

Implementation of the Staff Stabilization Strategy will help to address these long-standing staffing challenges. Implementation of the plan will markedly impact the Service's abilities to provide adequate and effective policing in the community and is the cornerstone of the success of all OPS strategic priorities. The plan involves hiring for four pillars: attrition, stabilization, growth, and event response. To ensure that costs and hiring associated with the plan are manageable, the Service is hiring over a three-year period (2024-2026).

For each year between 2024 and 2026, ~145 sworn members will be hired based on projections, including new recruits and experienced officers. This includes hiring for just-in-time positions. In addition, 40 civilian positions will be hired per year based on projections. It is important to note that these projections fluctuate throughout the year as attrition rates can vary in year from projections made at the beginning of the year.

The staggered hiring approach ensures that the Service can take the necessary time, and make the needed efforts, to hire and onboard members in a way that is responsible and achievable.

Successful execution of the plan involves input and assistance from staff in Human Resources, Operations, Strategy and Communications, IT Services, Finance, Fleet, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, and Facilities. A project management approach, with two part-time assigned project leads, will ensure a coordinated approach to this monumental hiring initiative. The approach will provide structure needed to identify, report on, and mitigate risks and issues. A governance structure has been developed and implemented that will see regular project progress updates to senior leadership and the Board.

Identified risks and issues that may impact outcomes of this project include challenges obtaining the needed number of seats at OPC and ensuring that the diversity and number of candidates is in line with expectations. These items will be monitored and reported upon on a bi-weekly basis at a project team level, monthly at a senior leader level, and quarterly at a Board level.

DISCUSSION

In Q1 of 2024, a significant amount of work to plan for and begin implementing the Staff Stabilization Strategy occurred. Of note, work to develop strong project governance built based upon project management methodology has been completed. This includes development of a project governance framework, completion of a strategy implementation plan for 2024, active tracking and reporting on major risks and issues, and establishment of a Project Working Group. The Project Working Group includes representatives from all areas of the organization, representing Sworn and Civilian Staff

at all ranks, as well as dedicated project managers. The group ensures that risks and issues are identified early and mitigated, and that efforts across many different Commands and Directorates are coordinated to maximize likelihood of implementation effectiveness and efficiency.

Also, in Q1 of 2024, Sworn Class 3-2023, hired in late 2023, completed OPC training and have returned to the OPS for final training at the Professional Development Centre (PDC). This class will be sworn in in May and will begin work with their Field Training Officers shortly thereafter.

Hiring and onboarding activities were undertaken in Q1 of 2024 to staff Sworn Class 1-2024; 32 new recruits joined the Service in Q1 of 2024 and will begin their time at OPC in April 2024. This group of recruits will be sworn in in August 2024 and will begin their field training shortly thereafter. Recruitment efforts also kicked off in Q1 of 2024 to staff Sworn Class 2-2024, though these recruits will not attend OPC until June 2024.

Finally, efforts to recruit a small class of experienced officers began and activities to fill various vacated and new civilian positions continued during the quarter.

CONSULTATION

Prior to proceeding with budgeting for the Staff Stabilization Strategy, the OPS provided awareness of the Strategy to the Finance and Audit Committee (FAC) on September 7, 2023. The OPS subsequently brought the planned Staff Stabilization Strategy, adjusted based on feedback from the FAC and for awareness, to the Police Services Board (the Board) on September 25, 2023. Approval to proceed with inclusion of the Strategy as a primary budgetary ask was received in both instances.

Based on these approvals, the OPS built the Staff Stabilization Strategy into the 2024 Budget. The Strategy was one of the Service's major requests of the 2024 Budget. Approval of the budget needed to implement the Strategy was received through the budgeting process with approvals coming from the FAC, the Board, and City Council in late 2023.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

N/A

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

None.

CONCLUSION

Implementation of the Staff Stabilization Strategy from 2024 through until the end of 2026 is a significant effort for the OPS. The Strategy is linked to the Board's Strategic Plan and its success is important to the operations of the Service, the well-being of members, and the safety and security of citizens of the City of Ottawa.

Given the magnitude of this initiative, a project management approach will continue to be applied until the end of 2026. Regular reporting to the OPS Senior Leadership Team will continue to occur every six weeks, with regular reporting to the Board, through the FAC, on a quarterly basis.