

MEMBER REQUEST FOR DECISION (RFD) SPRING 2021 MUNICIPAL LEADERS' CAUCUS

DATE:

March 9, 2022

TOPIC:

Alberta Municipalities' Policy Position on the PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) Proposal for an Alberta Provincial Police Service (APPS)

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Alberta Municipalities strongly oppose the APPS models proposed in the PwC study and develop an advocacy and communications strategy to advance our position.

Further, **THAT** Alberta Municipalities urge the Government of Alberta to invest in the resources needed to:

- Address the root causes of crime (i.e., health, mental health, social and economic supports); and
- Ensure the justice system is adequately resourced to enable timely access to justice for all Albertans.

Further, **THAT** prior to issuing formal notice to terminate Alberta's contract with the RCMP, the Government of Alberta will put this question to all Albertans in the form of a clear referendum.

Should significant new information be forthcoming on the proposal, Alberta Municipalities may choose to revisit this position.

BACKGROUND:

In November 2019, Premier Jason Kenney established the Fair Deal Panel to assess whether Alberta is being treated equitably compared to other provinces within Canada. The panel conducted public hearings from December 2019 to February 2020 and released its final report in June 2020. The report included a recommendation to create an APPS to replace the RCMP. The province's response to the report indicated that further analysis and work was required before this recommendation could be implemented. The province subsequently awarded \$2 million to PwC to develop a feasibility study on establishing an APPS.

The PwC feasibility study was officially released on October 29, 2021. The PwC feasibility study does not provide a formal stance or recommendation on establishing an APPS; instead, it lays out a framework for how such a service could be implemented. Justice and Solicitor General is undertaking significant engagement with municipalities on the proposed framework. In total, 43 in-person and virtual sessions are scheduled between January 10 and April 1, 2022. These sessions are narrowly focused on the service delivery model proposed in the PwC feasibility study. However,

the study is silent with respect to many key municipal considerations for an APPS, such as the impact on policing costs and what a new police funding model would look like.

In consultation with members over the past year, Alberta Municipalities have identified several concerns with the PwC proposal on an APPS, as well as the Justice and Solicitor General engagement process. These include:

- The Government of Alberta's failure to date to hold a referendum on this topic, as committed to by Premier Kenney.
- The model's failure to prioritize improving public safety for communities, as the model is based solely on replicating current RCMP provincial police services.
- The lack of detailed information on funding for the proposed model, specifically:
 - How municipalities will be expected to contribute to police funding
 - How the loss of federal subsidies for RCMP policing would be covered
 - How municipalities will be supported to develop community safety and wellbeing plans
- Inaccurate estimates of transitional and operational costs.
- An unrealistic timeline for implementation.
- A lack of meaningful consultation with municipalities.
- The absence of a detailed plan for recruiting and training over 3,000 APPS members.
- A lack of clarity around the proposed governance model, specifically:
 - How local police committees would be appointed and funded
 - How detachments would be accountable to local police committees
 - How local police committees would work with the provincial police commission

Due to these concerns, Alberta Municipalities strongly opposes the APPS models as proposed in the PwC study.