

Children and Youth Planning Table Co-Chair Model

Voting Member Vote & Feedback – December 2019

Introduction

In 2017, Voting Members of the Children’s Planning Table (CPT) reviewed whether the Region of Waterloo’s Director of Children’s Services should continue as an ongoing Co-Chair of the CPT. As shown below, in 2017 the Voting Member Organizations considered 3 options related to the Co-Chair Model:

- To support status quo (i.e. Director of Children’s Services remains Co-Chair)
- To support the status quo with a review in a couple year’s time (i.e. Director of Children’s Services remains Co-Chair and CPT reviews in a couple of years)
- I do not support status quo (i.e. Director of Children’s Services should no longer be Co-Chair of the CPT)

Table 1: CPT Co-Chair Vote Results from 2017.

	Number of Votes	% of Votes	% of Voting Member Organizations
Support status quo	20	48.7%	30.7%
Support status quo with review in a couple of years	18	43.9%	27.7%
Do not support status quo	3	7.3%	4.6%

While there was no consensus on a single option, it was clear the majority of those who voted were in favour of the Director of Children’s Services remaining in the Co-Chair position for the time being. As such, CPT continued to be Co-Chaired by the Director of Children’s Services and a Community Co-Chair. Based on the response in 2017, the Steering Committee committed to reviewing the Co-Chair Model again in 2019.

On November 20, 2019, the Children and Youth Planning Table (CYPT) Steering Committee once again brought forward the Co-Chair Model to CYPT Voting Members for discussion. Following the November 20 meeting, Voting Members were engaged in an official process to vote and provide feedback on three potential Co-Chair Models for CYPT going forward:

- Option 1: 1 Community Co-Chair and 1 Director of Children’s Services Co-Chair
- Option 2: 1 Community Co-Chair and 1 Region of Waterloo Co-Chair
- Option 3: 2 Community Co-Chairs

Vote Outcome

As of December 4, 2019 there were 57 active CYPT Voting Member organizations. The official vote was sent to all 57 Voting Member Representatives (both primary and

secondary representatives, where applicable). Of the 57 active CYPT Voting Member organizations, 49 participated in the vote.

As shown in Table 2, looking only at Voting Member’s First Choice selection, the highest ranked Co-Chair Model option was Option 1: Community Co-Chair and 1 Director of Children’s Services Co-Chair with 29 selecting Option 1 as their First Choice. This accounted for 59.2% of all the votes and for 50.9% of all Voting Member Organizations. Option 2 had the second highest number of vote (12), followed by Option 3 (8).

As stated in the [CYPT Charter](#) “a decision/direction will be considered supported when at least 51% of all Voting Member Organizations are in favour”. As such, the Ranked Ballot continued to Round 2, where the option which received the least amount of votes was eliminated (in this case, Option 3 was removed). As shown in Table 3, those who selected Option 3 as their First Choice now had their Second Choice counted – which meant 4 additional votes went to Option 1 and 4 additional votes went to Option 2.

After Round 2, Option 1: Director of Children’s Services and Community Co-Chair had 67.3% of votes and 57.9% of all Voting Member Organizations.

Table 2: Ranked Ballot, Round 1 (1st Count of Votes- Voting Members First Choice)

Round 1	First Choice	% of Votes	% of Voting Members
Option 1 – Community Co-Chair and Director of Children’s Services	29	59.2%	50.9%
Option 2 - Community Co-Chair and Region of Waterloo	12	24.5%	21.1%
Option 3 – Two Community Co-Chairs	8	16.3%	14.0%

Table 3: Ranked Ballot, Round 2 (Second Count of Vote)

Round 2	First + Second Choice	% of Votes	% of Voting Members
Option 1 – Community Co-Chair and Director of Children’s Services	29 + 4	67.3%	57.9%
Option 2 - Community Co-Chair and 1 Region of Waterloo	12 + 4	32.7%	28.1%

Comments and Feedback from Voting Members

Option 1

Many Voting Member Organizations shared they believe the current Co-Chair Model (Option 1: Community Co-Chair & Director of Children's Services) is working well, many

sharing it feels like a good balance. Several shared the importance of consistency in the Co-Chair Model. The Director of Children's Services would be reliable and consistent.

Some Voting Members shared there is value in the Director representing the System Service Manager in the Co-Chair position as this person is likely to have a strong child-youth lens and have a system-level context. Related to the system level context, Voting Member Organizations also appreciate the connection the Director of Children's Services has to Regional Council and Provincial Government/Ministries. A Co-Chair from any other Region of Waterloo Department may not have the knowledge breadth or consistency necessary to address the broad needs of children and youth.

Option 2

Generally, CYPT Voting Members were in support of ensuring a strong partnership between the Region of Waterloo and the CYPT. One Voting Member shared "as a planning table, we have high aspirations for truly impacting the future of the children, youth and parents in our community and we can only be effective when we have a meaningful commitment from both the community and government." There was a general sense that having a Co-Chair from the Region (whether the Director of Children's Services or otherwise) would support the stability of the CYPT.

However, there was some uncertainty related to Option 2:

- "Is the Region committed to this model?"
- Is there a long term plan for who would be appointed to this position and from which departments they were coming (ex. Public Health)?
- Would CYPT have some sense of who would be coming so that maybe some of the priority work from the committee related to that department could possibly be prioritized (from a long range perspective) when we would have leadership from that department in the chair role."

Option 3

There were some Voting Members who shared they believe the CYPT could support and could be supported by a Co-Chair Model where both Co-Chairs are community based. As CYPT has evolved and gained traction, a handful of Voting Members shared having two Community Co-Chairs would allow the community voice to be highlighted and support CYPT in moving initiatives forward that are based on true community wants and needs.

Having two Community Co-Chairs allows for greater flexibility, sharing of responsibilities and sharing the opportunity for leadership. As one Voting Member shared, "Having two

community co-chairs provides additional leadership opportunities and voices at the Steering Committee Table.”

However, there were questions as to whether the capacity exists within the sector to support two community Co-Chairs on an ongoing basis. The time demand is significant, and if all of that demand is placed on community it could severely limit who is able/willing to participate.

Next Steps

The CYPT Steering Committee reviewed the results of the vote and the feedback from CYPT Voting Member Organizations. In agreement with the majority of Voting Members, Steering Committee has decided to move forward with the Director of Children’s Services as Co-Chair of the CYPT in perpetuity along with a Community Co-Chair (3-year term).

The CYPT will be moving forward to select a new Community Co-Chair in early 2020. All Voting Member Organizations (with the exception of the Region of Waterloo) are able to put forth a staff member from their organization to apply for the Community Co-Chair position. With the support of an Ad Hoc Selection Committee, the CYPT Steering Committee has the duty of selecting the successful applicant.

More information regarding the selection process (including timelines) will be shared with CYPT Voting Members in early 2020.