

Item No. 10.2.2 Board of Police Commissioners for the Halifax Regional Municipality June 17, 2024

то:	Chair Kent and Commissioners of the Board of Police Commissioners for the Halifax Regional Municipality
SUBMITTED BY:	Original Signed
	Cathie O'Toole, Chief Administrative Officer
DATE:	May 27, 2024
SUBJECT:	HRM Community Survey on Policing

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

March 8, 2021, Board of Police Commissioners for the Halifax Regional Municipality motion (Item No. 7):

THAT the Board of Police Commissioners request that a proposal for a Halifax Regional Police and Royal Canadian Mounted Police Policing Community Survey be developed based on discussions at the March 8, 2021, Board of Police Commissioners meeting and that Halifax Regional Police and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police return to a future Board of Police Commissioners meeting with a proposal.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Police Act. 2004, c. 55, section (3), states:

(3) Without limiting the generality of subsection (1), a board shall...

(c) ensure that community needs and values are reflected in policing priorities, objectives, goals, programs and strategies;

(d) ensure that police services are delivered in a manner consistent with community values, needs and expectations;

(e) act as a conduit between the community and the police service providers;

Section 8 (2) (h), (i), (j) and (k) of By-law P-100, which provides:

8 (2) The Board in accordance with the *Police Act* and HRM Bylaws may carry out any of the following roles and responsibilities: ...

(h) carry out any studies or investigations respecting its civilian governance responsibilities;(i) monitor gender, ethnic and minority group issues and making recommendations concerning these matters to the Chief of Police;

(j) ensure that community needs and values are reflected in policing goals and methods;

(k) act as a conduit between the community and the police service providers.

BACKGROUND

A report was presented to the meeting of the Board of Police Commissioners on March 8, 2021, which outlined background information on policing surveys in HRM. The report was requested for the information of the current and new commissioners and in light of the Wortley Report released in March 2019, which highlighted the importance of receiving community feedback through regular community surveys.

The full report can be found at **Attachment 1**.

The report outlined how, historically, a number of measures of public attitudes and satisfaction in relation to policing and other services were captured in a local public opinion survey until 2012, and through cycles of the HRM Citizen (now Resident) Survey in 2014 and 2018. In February 2017, HRP was directed by the Board to establish a quarterly policing survey, with the first part of the work being to engage with national partners to develop standardized indicators for policing surveys. A number of the resulting national 'Core Indicators'¹ were included in the 2018 HRM Resident Survey as part of the testing and validation process.

In November 2019, CBC reported on the Core Indicators research project and referenced concerns including a lack of community feedback in the development of the questions². HRP responded with a statement which clarified that a community survey had not been finalized, and which committed to taking community input into consideration before finalizing the topics and the questions³.

Through a standing offer, Narrative Research⁴ was engaged to develop a new proposal in 2019, to incorporate community engagement sessions. However the standing offer expired in 2020, before a proposal had been developed. This resulted in a new RFP process and MQO Research was selected for the standing offer to conduct policing surveys in HRM. That standing offer expired in September 2023.

DISCUSSION

HRM Resident Survey

As outlined above, questions on policing have been asked in cycles of the HRM Resident Survey, most recently in 2014, 2018, and 2021.

Following the concerns raised around some of the Core Indicator questions and in light of the Wortley Report recommendation (3.3a) that police surveys "should collect information on self-reported contacts with the police as well as respondent attitudes and perceptions of the police", the questions for the 2021 cycle were revised, and included isolation of respondents who had recently experienced a direct interaction with police. These were developed by HRP and approved by HRD management.

¹ Developing a Common Data Standard for Measuring Attitudes toward the Police in Canada (publicsafety.gc.ca)

² Halifax police want to know how much confidence citizens have in them (cbc.ca)

³ <u>Clarification of a news story related to a community surv | Halifax</u>

⁴ Previously Corporate Research Associates (CRA)

The 2018 survey included the policing questions within the public safety section. These questions can be found at **Attachment 2**.

The 2021 survey asked questions on policing and public safety in separate sections. The policing questions can be found at **Attachment 3**.

The next cycle of the HRM Resident Survey is scheduled for the fall of 2024, and planning with business units is underway by the HRM Corporate Planning and Performance team. HRP and HRD are working together on the policing questions. Following initial discussions, the suggestion is to retain the questions from the 2021 survey, with two proposed changes.⁵ This suggestion will be considered by HRM Corporate Planning and Performance once input from all business units has been received.

Stand-alone Community Survey

While the HRM resident survey is a valuable mechanism for collecting some data on public attitudes toward policing, there remain compelling reasons for a stand-alone community survey on policing. These are recognized by this Board through its policy⁶, which states how annual consultation of community members would allow for a better understanding of what trust and confidence in police means to them. The need to stay attuned to community needs and values on a regular basis is especially important given the rate at which the population of Halifax is growing, and its shifting demographic makeup.

Due to the municipality's need to collect sufficient data on all business areas while being mindful of respondent burden, the number of questions that can be asked in the HRM resident survey per business area is limited. A stand-alone survey would allow for a greater number of questions and the ability to explore areas of interest in depth.

Additionally, as outlined in a report from HRP to the Board meeting on February 27, 2017⁷, benefits of a stand-alone survey would include an increased survey frequency and reduced 'cross-contamination' effects⁸. The report describes how quarterly surveys are preferable to annual, to overcome seasonal impacts and reduce susceptibility to any significant events at that time, which may skew the findings. As a stand-alone survey would be shorter and subject-focused, it would be more conducive to a quarterly frequency than the resident survey.

Moving Forward

When the originating motion was passed in March 2021, it requested that HRP and HRD develop a proposal and return to the Board. Much has changed in the three years which have since passed, and much is in progress. Should the Board wish for ownership to remain with HRP and HRD, the development of this item will need to be assessed by the HRP and HRD Chiefs alongside other operational and organizational priorities and demands.

Alternatively, the Board may wish to consider assuming ownership of the survey, and investigate the financial and administrative implications of doing so.

⁵ Removal of a question relating to body worn cameras (PO5), and reinstatement of one of the 'Core Indicator' questions from the 2018 survey (PS5); *"Taking everything into account, how good a job do you think the police in this area are doing?"* This question was included in the 2018 HRM survey but removed for the 2021 HRM survey

⁶ Community Survey to Measure Trust and Confidence <u>https://www.halifax.ca/media/86025</u> (implemented March 2020, revised December 2023)

⁷ <u>https://www.halifax.ca/media/56391</u>

⁸ For example, if a resident is particularly satisfied or dissatisfied with one aspect of the municipality's services, they might apply this sentiment to their answers across all business areas

This was explored several years ago, as referenced in the February 27, 2017, report; "In fall 2013, Chief Jean-Michel Blais asked that oversight of the survey be handled by the Board of Police Commissioners given that, under the Police Act of Nova Scotia, they are to serve as the conduit between the community and the police service providers. The Board agreed they would undertake research on a citizen satisfaction survey and assume the oversight role, however, the Board's composition has changed since that time and there has been no further discussion and no action taken on this subject."⁹

During the Board discussions in 2013¹⁰ and 2014^{11,12}, Calgary Police Commission was referenced as a commission which has ownership of the bi-annual community survey on policing. That continues to be the case, with their 2024 survey currently underway.¹³

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no immediate financial implications. The initial and ongoing costs of a regular stand-alone community survey will be dependent on the many components involved in its planning, design, and implementation.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

No community engagement was required for the purpose of creating this Information Report.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Report to HRM Board of Police Commissioners dated March 8, 2021

Attachment 2 – 2018 HRM Citizen Survey: Public Safety questions

Attachment 3 – 2021 HRM Resident Survey: Policing questions

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <u>halifax.ca</u> or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

Report Prepared by: Joanne Smith, Research & Development Coordinator – Halifax Regional Police

Report Approved by: Chief Don MacLean – Halifax Regional Police Chief Superintendent Jeff Christie – RCMP Halifax Regional Detachment

⁹ <u>https://cdn.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/boards-committees-commissions/170227bopc911.pdf</u>

¹⁰ <u>https://legacycontent.halifax.ca/boardscom/bpc/documents/130610.BoardofPoliceMinutes.pdf</u> (p.7)

¹¹ https://legacycontent.halifax.ca/boardscom/bpc/documents/140113bopc.pdf (p.6-7)

¹² <u>https://legacycontent.halifax.ca/boardscom/bpc/documents/140414bopc.pdf</u> (p.4-5)

¹³ <u>https://www.calgarypolicecommission.ca/2024-community-perception-survey-is-underway/</u>



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Item No. 7.2 Board of Police Commissioners March 8, 2021

TO:	Chair and Members of the Board of Police Commissioners
	- Original Signed -
SUBMITTED BY:	Chief Dan Kinsella, Halifax Regional Police
DATE:	March 8, 2021
SUBJECT:	Background Information on Policing Surveys in HRM

ORIGINS

At its meeting of January 18, 2021, Board of Police Commissioners put and passed the following motion:

That the Halifax Board of Police Commissioners defer item 7.3 to the March 8, 2021 meeting pending receipt of a supplemental report detailing the background of the Community Survey, specifically the Survey's original goals and a list of items that Halifax Regional Police and Royal Canadian Mounted Police require direction from the Board of Police Commissioners.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Police Act. 2004, c. 55, section (3), states:

(3) Without limiting the generality of subsection (1), a board shall...

(c) ensure that community needs and values are reflected in policing priorities, objectives, goals, programs and strategies;

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(h) carry out any studies or investigations respecting its civilian governance responsibilities;

(i) monitor gender, ethnic and minority group issues and making recommendations concerning these matters to the Chief of Police;

(j) ensure that community needs and values are reflected in policing goals and methods;

(k) act as a conduit between the community and the police service providers.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON PAGE 2

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board of Police Commissioners request that a proposal for an HRM Policing Community Survey be developed based on discussions at the March 8, 2021 Board of Police Commissioners meeting and that Halifax Regional Police return to a future Board of Police Commissioners meeting with a proposal.

BACKGROUND

In his report on Halifax Police Street Checks issued in March 2019, Dr. Scot Wortley highlighted the importance of receiving community feedback through regular community surveys. Police-specific surveys have been implemented and discussed in different forms for a number of years prior to that in HRM. Recently, following the appointment of new commissioners, the Board of Police Commissioners (BoPC) requested an information note on the history of police surveys in HRM, details of the more recent discussions related to the next survey to ensure BoPC members have a shared understanding of these discussions up until now in order to provide appropriate direction to staff on next steps.

DISCUSSION

Until 2012, HRP annually collected a small number of measures related to public satisfaction with the police by placing questions within a local omnibus survey (The Urban Report through Corporate Research Associates, now called Narrative Research). This survey was discontinued in 2012.

Alongside this survey, measures of public attitudes toward police and crime were also captured from time to time through the overall HRM Citizen Survey. The last two of these were 2014 and 2018.

In April 2015, the Board of Police Commissioners passed a motion directing HRP to provide a staff report on the involvement of the Board in the development of a Citizen Satisfaction Survey. The development of this report was delayed due to capacity gaps at the time to move ahead.

In fall 2016, after HRP hired a Research Coordinator, it prepared a staff report on the development of a citizen survey. This was considered at the February 27, 2017 meeting of the Board of Police Commissioners, where HRP was directed to establish a quarterly survey based on a plan set out in that report. The first part of this plan was to work with other national partners to align HRP's survey indicators with other surveys elsewhere in the country.

As a result of this motion, HRP representatives worked with the CACP's POLIS committee, Public Safety Canada, and several other police services to develop a common data standard for surveys of public attitudes toward police in Canada. The data standard was endorsed by CACP in 2018 and the main report on this common data standard was released in 2019.

In a November 2019 CBC story that reported on the above survey prototype, some community members expressed concerns about HRP's adoption of this survey model, citing a lack of community feedback in the creation of the survey questions. At the time, the BoPC initiated a discussion with staff on taking into account this community feedback and bring forward a new proposal.

HRP and RCMP, along with then BoPC Chair Natalie Borden, engaged Narrative Research at the time in the development of a new proposal that would be more responsive to community concerns. Representatives from Narrative Research provided presentations to BoPC to incorporate additional feedback. Overall, the BoPC members expressed support for the model that was proposed at the time, although the number and scale of community engagement sessions was yet to be finalized. HRP and RCMP also noted that a discussion would be required to ensure we had an appropriate amount of allocated budget before the proposal was finalized.

In 2020, while still in the process of developing the proposal, it was learned that HRP's standing offer with Narrative Research had expired, necessitating a new RFP process. In September 2020 the process concluded and MQO Research was selected for the standing offer to conduct policing surveys in HRM.

Goals of Community Survey Exercise:

In designing the RFP and in choosing MQO Research, the following principles and goals were emphasized as per the most recent discussions with the BoPC at the time (the following is excerpted directly from the RFP document):

HRM police services seek a standing offer for a suite of services, which cumulatively will allow HRP and Halifax District RCMP to establish an ongoing program of measurement of quality of policing services, citizen satisfaction and public confidence in policing in Halifax in a cost-effective manner. The desired services are as follows:

- **Public engagement sessions:** Before launching the initial survey, the provider should conduct public engagement with Halifax residents to support survey design and receive input on a preliminary set of themes and/or questions for measurement. These could involve a combination of in-person sessions or other methods (e.g. online) to allow community input into identifying the appropriate balance of questions and areas of focus for the initial survey. The session design and questions will need to clearly link to the quantitative portion of the survey.
- Initial survey design and delivery (Core quantitative survey): The provider should propose an approach to design and delivery of a population-representative survey of Halifax residents. Design should involve development of indicators that emerge from the findings from the public engagement sessions, as well as inclusion of validated survey indicators from similar surveys locally or in other Canadian jurisdictions. The provider may propose any combination of telephone (landline, cell phone and/or smartphone-based), paper, online, and/or other survey strategies, so long as these are appropriate to creating a population-representative sample.
- Proposal of options for surveying diverse communities: The provider should propose one or more options for ensuring the views of diverse communities (for example African Nova Scotian, newcomer, LGBTQ2S+, youth, etc.) are included in the surveying and measurement strategy, especially where the views of these communities may not be adequately captured by a population-representative survey. These could involve targeted oversampling, additional in-person (location-based) surveys, open online surveys, respondent-driven (e.g. 'snowball' sample) surveys, or other strategies as appropriate.
- **Ongoing surveying/measurement strategies:** The provider should propose one or more options to (a) identify the most important ('key') indicators from the population-representative survey and the surveys of diverse communities, and (b) engage in ongoing measurement of trust and confidence after the initial survey has been designed and delivered.
- Reporting: The provider should indicate how they would report on each of the above-listed components including expectations for standard reporting and expected processes whereby police services may request additional reporting and data analysis based on the collected data (outside of standard reporting).

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION

The cost of the project is dependent on the overall design of the survey and the number of community engagement sessions. Due to the lack of certainty of the timeline for the community survey, there is no specific allocation in the 2021/22 budget for a police survey.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

No community engagement was required for the purposes of creating this background report.

ATTACHMENTS

N/A

A copy of this report can be obtained online at halifax.ca or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

Report Prepared by: Neera Ritcey, Corporate Affairs Division, Halifax Regional Police, 902.490.5063

Report Approved by: Dan Kinsella, Chief of Halifax Regional Police

Public Safety

Please note: The Halifax Regional Municipality includes Halifax Regional Police and Halifax District RCMP. In your responses, please focus on your overall experience with police in the municipality.

PS1. When you think about police in Halifax, to what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

Police	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. The police treat people fairly					
 b. The police show care and concern for the welfare of the citizens they deal with 					
c. The police make decisions based on facts					
d. The police provide the same quality of service to all citizens					
e. The police understand the issues that affect this community					
 f. I generally support how the police usually act 					
g. I would help the police if asked					
h. I would call the police to report a crime					
i. I would call the police for assistance					

PS2. In the past 2 years, did the police approach you, stop you, or make contact with you for any reason?

- □ Yes
- □ No (Skip to PS4)

- PS3. How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the way the police treated you the last time this happened?
 - □ Very satisfied
 - □ Satisfied
 - □ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
 - □ Dissatisfied
 - □ Very dissatisfied
- PS4. About how often would you say that the police in your neighbourhood exceed their authority?
 - □ Never / Almost never
 - □ Rarely
 - □ Sometimes
 - □ Most of the time
 - □ Always / Almost always
- PS5. Taking everything into account, how good a job do you think the police in this area are doing?
 - □ Excellent
 - □ Good
 - □ Average
 - Poor
 - □ Very poor

PS6. How safe from crime do you feel walking alone in your area after dark?

Please check only one

- □ Very safe
- □ Reasonably safe
- □ Somewhat unsafe
- □ Very unsafe
- □ Do not walk alone

PS7. Have you, or someone in your household been a victim of a crime in the past year?

YesNo (please skip to PS11)

PS8. The last time this happened, where did this incident happen?

- □ At your home
- □ Near your home
- \Box At your work
- □ Elsewhere in the Halifax region
- □ Outside of the municipality

PS9. What type of crime was it?

- □ Property crime (e.g. break and enter, theft, arson, fraud, mischief)
- □ Violent crime (e.g. robbery, assault, attempted murder, murder, abduction)
- □ Other kind of crime (e.g. indecent acts, harassment, hate speech, cybercrime)

PS10. Did you or anyone else report it to the police?

□ Yes □ No Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency (HRFE) provides Fire and Emergency Management services throughout the Halifax Regional Municipality. These services are delivered by career and volunteer personnel.

PS11. Fire services are based on three lines of defence: Public Education, Fire Prevention, and Emergency Response. Are you or are you not aware that HRFE provides the following fire services / activities?

Fire Services	Aware	Not Aware
Public Education / Information programs		
Fire prevention / Fire code inspections and enforcement		
Fire fighting and rescue		
Medical response		
Motor vehicle accident response		
Technical / Water rescue		
Hazardous Materials response		
Community / Public events (e.g. parades / festivals)		

PS12. Emergency Management ensures readiness in the event of a natural or man-made disaster. Are you or are you not aware that HRFE provides the following services?

Emergency Management	Aware	Not Aware	
Community risk analysis			
Disaster planning and exercises			
Response and recovery			
Manages the municipality's Emergency Operations Centre (EOC)			

- PS13. Have you required or witnessed a response from Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency in the past year?
 - □ Yes
 - □ No (if no, please skip to question PS15)

PS14. How satisfied were you with the services provided by Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency?

Please check only one

- □ Very satisfied
- □ Satisfied
- □ Dissatisfied
- □ Very dissatisfied
- □ Don't know / No opinion
- PS15. How confident are you that Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency will respond to emergency calls in a timely manner?

Please check only one

- □ Completely confident
- □ Confident
- □ Not very confident
- □ Not at all confident
- □ Don't know / No opinion
- PS16. In the event of an emergency or disaster situation, Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency recommends that you have enough supplies to last you for 72 hours, and a plan in case you need to evacuate your home. Do you meet this recommended guideline?

Please check only one

- □ Yes
- 🗆 No

Policing

Please note: The Halifax Regional Municipality includes Halifax Regional Police and Halifax District RCMP. In your responses, please focus on your overall experience with police in the municipality.

PO1. Have you had a direct interaction with the police in the last 3 years?

- □ Yes Halifax Regional Police (HRP)
- □ Yes Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)
- □ Yes Both
- □ Yes Unsure which police organization
- □ No (skip to question PO4)

PO2. What was the general nature of your interaction(s) with the police?

Check all that apply

- □ I was a victim of crime
- □ I was a witness to a crime
- □ I was a suspect in a criminal investigation
- □ I was supporting a victim / witness / suspect
- □ I was involved in a motor vehicle accident
- □ I was a driver / passenger in a traffic stop
- □ I reported a crime / incident by telephone 911
- □ I reported a crime / incident by telephone non-emergency number
- □ I reported a crime / incident online
- □ I reported a crime / incident in person
- □ I was required to testify at court
- □ I needed an administrative service (e.g. fingerprints, criminal records check)
- □ I dealt with property which was lost / found / required destruction
- □ I made a complaint
- □ I gave compliments
- □ I am a member of the media and requested information
- Other (Please specify): ______

PO3. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Then Skip to PO5)

Police	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The police treated me with respect					
The police took the time to understand my situation					
I was provided with all the required information by the police					
My situation was dealt with efficiently by the police					
There were no accessibility barriers in my interaction(s) (e.g. able to communicate in first or chosen language, and by my preferred communication method, buildings adapted to accommodate any disabilities, etc.)					
Overall, the police treated me fairly					

PO4. Having not had any direct interaction with the police in the last 3 years, what is your opinion on the police based on?

Select all that apply.

- □ Direct observation of police activity
- □ Accounts from other people
- □ Information in the media
- □ Academic literature
- □ I do not have an opinion on the police (please skip to first Public Safety question PS1)

PO5. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Police	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I would call 911 if I needed police assistance in an emergency					
I would call the non-emergency number if I needed police assistance in a non-emergency					
If I was a victim or witness in a crime, I would report it to the police					
I would cooperate with the police if they asked me to					
If I felt it was necessary, I would make a complaint against police					
Police information is readily available (e.g. contact information on websites, media news releases, online crime prevention advice)					
I am in favour of the police having body worn cameras					