



AUDITOR GENERAL FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

ACCESSIBILITY • INDEPENDENCE • TRANSPARENCY • PERFORMANCE

NEWS RELEASE

November 17, 2015

OFFICE OF AGLG RELEASES PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT ON THE CITY OF MERRITT'S OVERSIGHT OF RCMP POLICING

Surrey – A performance audit of the City of Merritt's management and utilization of the Municipal Policing Unit Agreement (MPUA) and its police budget oversight between 2010 and 2013 has found that there were opportunities to strengthen the City's accountability and performance management under the 2012 agreement, Auditor General for Local Government Gordon Ruth said today.

“Overall, the City had a limited level of awareness of enhancements within the agreement which contributed to low levels of oversight of policing services relative to the authorities,” said Ruth. “We also found communication was strong and the relationship between the City and the RCMP Detachment was positive.”

The audit report released today on the Office of the Auditor General for Local Government website (www.aglg.ca) includes a detailed examination of the City's systems, practices and policies between 2010 and 2013, as well as relevant documentation and discussions with key management and staff.

“Our recommendations to Merritt will serve to strengthen its governance and will improve the City's oversight and stewardship of policing resources,” said Ruth. “We believe the City should take steps to increase the understanding of municipal staff and Council regarding the 2012 MPUA and the authorities it provides them, and consider establishing a structure such as a police committee to ensure sound oversight.”

“I'm pleased with the City of Merritt's positive response to the audit, and that they felt the audit added value as well as their commitment to act on our recommendations,” said Mr. Ruth. “The City has made some improvements since we completed our field work and we encourage it to improve its practices through implementing our recommendations.”

This is the AGLG's second audit under the topic Local Government Performance in Managing Policing Agreements and Police Budget Oversight. Three additional audits under this topic are scheduled for release in the coming months.

The AGLG will release shortly an AGLG Perspectives Booklet on Policing Services Performance Assessment. It will provide a suggested performance metrics assessment framework for local governments to assist them in strengthening their oversight and accountability of policing services.

The release of the Merritt audit report completes the audit process for the City. Prior to being finalized, the report was reviewed by the independent Audit Council, which has the statutory authority to provide the AGLG with comments to assist with the completion of each performance audit report.

- end -

CONTACT:

Gordon Ruth
Auditor General for Local Government
Gordon.Ruth@aglg.ca
604-930-7100
www.aglg.ca