

## MOTION

### 5. **Deterring and Preventing the Distribution and Sale of Psilocybin Mushrooms and/or Other Illicit or Controlled Drugs Unlawfully Sold in the City of Vancouver**

At the Regular Council meeting on July 23, 2019, Council referred the following motion to the Standing Committee on Policy and Strategic Priorities meeting on September 11, 2019, to hear from speakers, beginning at 3 pm.

MOVED by Councillor De Genova

#### WHEREAS

1. The Controlled Drugs and Substances Act categorizes Psilocin (3-[2(dimethylamino)ethyl]-4-hydroxyindole) and any salt thereof AND Psilocybin (3-[2-(dimethylamino)ethyl]-4-phosphoryloxyindole) and any salt thereof;
2. "Dirty Money" the report authored by Dr. Peter German Q.C., commissioned by the provincial government states "The most lucrative crimes in Vancouver are related to illegal drug sales. The drugs of choice cover the spectrum, from natural products such as cannabis, cocaine and heroin, to chemical creations such as opioids and hallucinogens. The purchasers are everyday residents of Vancouver and are of every ethnicity, cultural heritage and gender." (Page 37, section 122);
3. Dr. German also states in the "Dirty Money" report "Police sources indicate that large quantities of illicit drug money also transit through Vancouver and are related to Mexican drug cartels, including the Sinaloa and the CJNG. Furthermore, Middle East Organized Crime (MEOC) is believed to have a strong foothold in Vancouver and be working in concert with Mexican cartels. Fifteen local crime groups provide transportation and other support services. The involvement of home grown outlaw biker gangs in the illegal drug trade has been documented for decades."(Page 37, section 123);
4. In 2015, the City of Vancouver implemented amendments to the Zoning by-laws to allow for Medical Marijuana Related Use (MMRU). Although many dispensaries and compassion clubs applied and were successful in obtaining Development Permits and opening dispensaries, no information on the source of supply for these drugs was required. When the by-law passed, federal law prohibited the sale of cannabis by dispensaries;
5. The City of Vancouver had difficulty with enforcement for dispensaries that violated the conditions of the MMRU. Many dispensaries and stores operated without a license, refusing to shut down;
6. Further, the dispensaries can only acquire their marijuana from illegal sources. The Medicinal Mushroom Dispensary website states "We provide micro doses of psilocybin mushrooms for medicinal purposes." The website goes on to state under the category of "Location" Serving all of Canada by Mail Order. We will be opening a store front in Vancouver soon;
7. Psilocybin and psilocin compounds, and other substances included in the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (CDSA) are being studied for potential to

treat a variety of medical and psychological conditions, and any health benefits are unsubstantiated. The Health Canada website titled “Psilocybin and psilocin (“Magic Mushrooms”)” cautions “It is important to note that these studies administered purified active ingredients, i.e. psilocybin, in clinically supervised settings. Currently there are no approved therapeutic products containing psilocybin in Canada”;

8. Listed on the government of Canada website, Problematic Substance Use and Controlled and Illegal Drugs webpage, information states:

*“Magic mushrooms may be sold as either dried whole mushrooms or as a powder. People may choose to take the mushrooms as: eaten raw or cooked, drunk as a tea or as a mixture with a fruit juice, sniffed up the nose (snorted) when in a powder.*

*Psilocybin and psilocin can also be sold as a powder or in tablets or capsules and can be produced in illegal labs. These active ingredients, psilocybin and psilocin, can also be injected intravenously. The content of the drugs from illegal labs is not tested and may contain other dangerous substances.”;*

9. A report to the Vancouver Police Board dated September 1, 2015 titled Service and Policy Complaint #2015-112 regarding enforcement against states: “Marihuana dispensaries are illegal; however, the issue of enforcement against marihuana dispensaries is a complicated one because of intersecting legal, social and political factors. The City of Vancouver (“the City”) has decided to regulate rather than close all marijuana dispensaries using its by-law powers.”

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council direct staff to engage and work with the Vancouver Police Department, Vancouver Coastal Health and appropriate stakeholders to address businesses and or dispensaries participating in the unlawful sale and/or distribution of substances protected by the Controlled Substances and Drug Act (CSDA), and report back with possible recommendations to Council, by the end of 2019, including consideration for:

- i. Any impact to public safety, including the City of Vancouver’s commitment to deterring and preventing money laundering and criminal activity;
- ii. Public health, including the impact and consequences of businesses promoting unsubstantiated health benefits of potentially harmful substances;
- iii. Potential implications to the City of Vancouver’s annual operating budget that may result from not supporting rapid action to close and prevent businesses participating in the sale of unlawful substances, listed in the CDSA.

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