Council Member Motion
For the Committee of the Whole Meeting of July 14, 2022

To:	Committee of the Whole	**Date:**	July 5, 2022
From:	Councillor Ben Isitt		
Subject:	Advocacy for Harm Reduction Services		

Background:

The Victoria Cannabis Buyers Club ("VCBC") has provided harm reduction services and access to medical cannabis in the City of Victoria for more than two decades.

On several occasions the City of Victoria has placed itself on record supporting the harm reduction services offered by the VCBC, most recently in 2020 when the City wrote to Health Canada in support of the VCBC's application for a temporary exemption from the provisions of the *Cannabis Act*.

A considerable amount of time has passed since the City's last communication on this matter and there is ongoing uncertainty regarding continuity of the VCBC's important health services.

It is therefore recommended that the City reiterate its support for VCBC's application.

A draft letter to Health Canada, as well as a letter of support from leading research scientists in the field of substance-use policy, are attached for reference.

Recommendation:

That Council requests that the Mayor write, on behalf of Council, to Health Canada, reiterating the City of Victoria's support for a temporary exemption for the Victoria Cannabis Buyers Club from the provision of the *Cannabis Act*, and offering to participate in discussions with Health Canada and the VCBC to help identify a path forward to regulatory compliance.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor Isitt

Attachments:
1. Draft letter from the City of Victoria to Health Canada
2. Letter of support from substance-use policy experts, March 2022