
HALDIMAND COUNTY

Report CAO-01-2021 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee
For Consideration by Council in Committee on April 20, 2021



OBJECTIVE:

To establish the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Report CAO-01-2021 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee be received;
2. AND THAT the proposed Terms of Reference for a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee as outlined in Attachment #1 to Report CAO-01-2021 be approved and provided to the Police Services Board;
3. AND THAT the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee be established, and staff be directed to conduct the member recruitment and selection process;
4. AND THAT the initial committee term run until November 14, 2026, with four-year terms concurrent with Council terms, thereafter.

Respectfully submitted: Craig Manley, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The implementation of a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee at Haldimand County will assist Council in recognizing the critical role civic leadership has to play in promoting inclusion and upholding the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Ontario Human Rights Code and specifically to:

- Take steps to recognize and implement actions against systemic and individual racism and discrimination within local government and the community.
- Support community members, individuals and staff who experience racism and discrimination from municipal interactions and implement actions to address these matters.
- Support policing services in their efforts to be exemplary institutions in combating racism and discrimination.
- Provide equal opportunities as an employer, service provider and contractor.
- Involve residents by giving them a voice to promote diversity and inclusion in municipal decision making.
- Promote respect, understanding, and appreciation of cultural diversity and the inclusion of indigenous and racialized communities into the cultural fabric of the municipality.

The committee's mandate will be to provide recommendations, advice and information to the Mayor, Council, Senior Staff and the Police Services Board on the following:

- Actions to removing barriers to inclusion for all residents in our community and to create an atmosphere conducive to harmonious community relations in Haldimand County;

- Initiatives and measures to achieve a greater understanding of the increasingly diverse communities in Haldimand County and their vision for our community to help build cohesion among diverse populations;
- Advise and provide recommendations on the development and review of policies, procedures, practices and master plans to ensure they reflect the County's commitment to fostering diversity and inclusion within the organization, and within the community;
- To make recommendations to assist in improving the education and cultural competence of municipal staff;
- Advise and provide recommendations on the development and review of policies and procedures of the Police Services Board;
- Ensuring more effective outreach on municipal initiatives to include diverse communities;
- To develop and implement measures/programs to facilitate discussions with community groups to promote broader understanding and engagement between residents of diverse backgrounds and abilities including workshops, seminars and public meetings; and
- To act as a visible central body to direct individuals or groups expressing concerns of tension, racism or discrimination within the municipal mandate to the appropriate municipal body for review, to inquire into/mediate these concerns on behalf of the complainant and to recommend solutions.

BACKGROUND:

As a result of communications posted on the Haldimand County Police Services Board's website on September 23, 2020 regarding the on-going land occupation of a development in Caledonia, a number of complaints were made to the Ontario Civilian Police Commission ("Commission"). This resulted in a subsequent discussion with the Commission, and the Board reconsidering its position and outlining an action plan to address the concerns.

One of items identified in the action plan by the Board was recognition of the benefit to the Board and its processes of having access to community-based equity, diversity and inclusivity resources. This is a matter that is also contemplated by the new policing legislation that endorses the creation of an equity, diversity and inclusivity (EDI) advisory group. County staff committed to assisting the Board in this regard by preparing Terms of Reference and recruiting for the advisory group.

ANALYSIS:

Staff believe that given the growth of the County, its increasing diversity of residents and the inter-relationships that exist with adjacent indigenous communities it would make sense to expand the advisory group to include both Police Services Board matters as well as other County matters. Included as Attachment #1 are draft Terms of Reference presented for Council approval.

The proposed Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee is anticipated to meet a minimum of 4 times annually and would consist of 7 members as follows:

- An appointed member of the following Advisory Committees:
 - Accessibility Advisory Committee
 - Seniors Advisory Committee
 - Youth Advisory Committee
- 4 additional community members intended to ensure a wide range of diverse representation.

The Advisory Committee would have a term to coincide with the term of the Council. Given the current term ends in late 2022 as well as the timing required to recruit volunteers, it is proposed that the initial term be extended to the end of the next term of Council (November 14, 2026).

Should Council approve the creation of the proposed Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee, County Staff would initiate the recruitment and selection process with the intent to complete it by the Fall 2021.

The Committee will be required to submit an annual report to Council to provide an overview of its activities in relation to its mandate.

FINANCIAL/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

Not applicable.

STAKEHOLDER IMPACTS:

Not applicable.

REPORT IMPACTS:

Agreement: No

By-law: No

Budget Amendment: No

Policy: No

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft Haldimand County Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee Terms of Reference