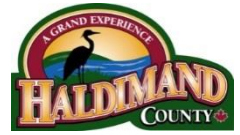


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# HALDIMAND COUNTY

## Report CAO-01-2018 Public Relations and Media Events Protocol For Consideration by Council in Committee on March 27, 2018

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### OBJECTIVE:

To seek approval for the draft Public Relations and Media Events Protocol.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Report CAO-01-2018 Public Relations and Media Events Protocol be received;
2. AND THAT the draft Public Relations and Media Events Protocol included as Attachment #1 to Report CAO-01-2018 be approved;
3. AND THAT authority be delegated to the Senior Management Team to approve any future minor or housekeeping amendments to the Public Relations and Media Events Protocol.

**Prepared by:** Kyra Hayes, Coordinator of Strategic Initiatives

**Approved:** Karen General, CPA, CGA, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

At present, Haldimand County does not have a policy in place to direct the planning and execution of media/public relations events (e.g. grand openings, cheque presentations, etc). In order to ensure efficiency in the event coordination process and consistency with regard to Council representation at such events, it is recommended that procedures be established. This report outlines the need for a comprehensive protocol, which has been drafted, reviewed by Senior Management Team and attached for Council's review and approval.

### BACKGROUND:

Haldimand County recognizes the importance of the role that local media plays in communicating County news and information to residents. Publicizing grand openings, sod-turnings, re-dedications, cheque presentations, funding announcements and other activities through the media is integral to communicating County initiatives that enhance quality of life and community vibrancy for residents. While Council-approved policies exist that govern how press releases and media requests for comment are handled, no formal protocol regarding the initiation, planning and execution of media events has been established to date.

### ANALYSIS:

Haldimand County does not currently have a policy or protocol in place with respect to the coordination of media/public relations events. As a result, County staff across divisions are coordinating media events related to grand openings, funding announcements, cheque presentations and related activities without a consistent process or framework to guide these efforts. While media exposure is obtained

through these events, the absence of a standard operating procedure complicates the planning process and results in lost efficiency and inconsistency from community to community/event to event.

In many circumstances, media events are planned in partnership with external groups (e.g. community agencies or grant/funding recipients). The planning has occasionally proven to be difficult or cumbersome in the absence of a structured protocol and guidelines. With regard to these partnered or collaborative media events, there has not been a consistent or documented approach in establishing an appropriate invitee list, determining the order of speakers, coordinating the release of joint messaging and ensuring appropriate recognition is given for funding awarded.

Similarly, the absence of a formal protocol has resulted in a lack of clarity with regard to Council member representation at media events (such as photo opportunities or cheque presentation ceremonies). In order to ensure efficiency in the event coordination process and consistency with regard to Council representation at media events, it is recommended that procedures be established. Finally, it is important to have a formal policy in order to avoid inadvertent contraventions of the Municipal Elections Act when Members of Council want to promote County activities.

As such, the attached protocol outlines procedures for media events and other public-facing activities utilizing Haldimand County property, resources and funds. The protocol is broken down into 4 sections:

- County-initiated media/public relations events;
- external group or community partner-initiated media events;
- requests for Mayoral or Council member representation at community events; and
- cheque presentation ceremonies.

Ultimately, the attached protocol will simplify, expedite and ensure consistency in media/public relations event planning activities moving forward.

## **FINANCIAL/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:**

Not applicable.

## **STAKEHOLDER IMPACTS:**

All County Divisions that arrange events will be advised of the new protocol to be utilized in media/public relations event planning going forward. External groups that organize events on County property will also be advised of the protocol.

## **REPORT IMPACTS:**

Agreement: No

By-law: No

Budget Amendment: No

Policy: Yes

## **ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Draft Public Relations and Media Events Protocol