

GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETING
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

REPORT CLK-2024-15
October 22, 2024

SUBJECT: Council and Staff Relations Policy Review

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APPROVING: Rob Axiak, Chief Administrative Officer

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WELLAND acknowledge the ongoing importance and relevance of the Council and Staff Relations Policy (HUM-001-0035); and further

THAT Welland City Council provide feedback on any potential updates or revisions to the policy HUM-001-0035 to be approved at a future Council meeting.

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN

This recommendation is aligned to Council's strategic priority of ensuring "**Health and Wellbeing**" to promote personal health and well-being by offering an abundance of activities that meet the diverse needs and interests all while, advocating for improved health care throughout the city, and supporting the need for safety and security.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report is a reminder of the existence of policy HUM-001-0035, which outlines the conduct, responsibilities, and expectations between city staff and council. Additionally, the report seeks council's feedback on potential areas where updates to the policy may be necessary to ensure it remains relevant and effective. To that end, the recommendations include a reaffirmation of the policy and a request for council input on any amendments to be brought back to a future Council meeting for approval.

BACKGROUND:

Established in 2020, Policy HUM-001-0035 provides clear guidelines on the roles, conduct, and expectations of city staff and council, ensuring a respectful

and effective working relationship. The policy outlines that council is responsible for setting strategic direction and high-level priorities, while staff is tasked with implementing these decisions according to operational guidelines. This separation ensures that each party can perform its duties without overlap or conflict.

Key principles of transparency, collaboration, and respect for authority guide the policy, fostering mutual trust. It emphasizes proper communication protocols, ensuring that council receives accurate and timely information while maintaining staff's professional integrity.

The policy also ensures that council members direct requests through the CAO or department heads, preserving an efficient chain of command and preventing conflicting instructions to staff. Overall, policy HUM-001-0035 supports effective governance, professional administration, and a positive work environment for everyone.

As this policy is reaching the 5-year mark without revisions, an update and review of the policy is timely for both staff and council.

DISCUSSION:

Policy HUM-001-0035 is crucial for ensuring the City of Welland operates efficiently while maintaining a professional and productive relationship between council and staff. This policy sets clear guidelines for roles, communication, and expectations, fostering mutual respect, accountability, and good governance. By following the policy, both council and staff help create an environment of transparency and public confidence.

The policy defines council's role in providing strategic direction while staff manages daily operations. This clear separation of duties prevents conflicts and ensures that decisions are effectively implemented. Both council and staff need to adhere to these guidelines to uphold professional standards, efficient communication, and a well-functioning administration.

The continued relevance and effectiveness of policy HUM-001-0035 are key to smooth city operations. The policy has been instrumental in fostering mutual respect and clear communication, which are critical to good governance.

Reinforcing the Policy's Importance

The first goal is to remind council of the policy's significance. It safeguards the professional relationship between council and staff by promoting accountability, transparency, and structured communication, helping maintain a respectful and effective work environment.

Seeking Feedback for Updates

As the city evolves, the policy may need adjustments, such as updating

communication protocols or refining staff roles. Council's input is vital in identifying areas for improvement to keep the policy-relevant and efficient.

Policies like HUM-001-0035 should evolve with the city's needs. Council's experience with this policy provides valuable insights for refining its clarity and effectiveness. Inviting feedback ensures the policy remains a practical guide, supporting continuous improvement in governance and the professional relationship between council and staff.

FINANCIAL:

No financial implications related to this report.

CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, policy HUM-001-0035 is essential for maintaining an efficient, respectful, and well-governed City of Welland. Its clear guidelines on roles, communication, and expectations are crucial to fostering a productive relationship between council and staff. As the city evolves, it is important to ensure that the policy remains relevant and effective. We ask for council's input to identify any areas for improvement or updates that will further enhance communication, governance, and operational efficiency, ensuring that the policy continues to serve as a solid foundation for the city's success.

ATTACHMENT:

Appendix I – HUM-001-0035 – Council and Staff Relations Policy