



The Corporation of the Town of Tecumseh

Corporate Services & Clerk

To: Mayor and Members of Council

From: Laura Moy, Director Corporate Services & Clerk

Date to Council: October 22, 2019

Report Number: CS-2019-31

Subject: Public Complaints Policy

Recommendations

It is recommended:

That Report CS-2019-31 Public Complaints Policy **be received;**

And that the Public Complaints Policy as appended to Report CS-2019-31 **be adopted.**

Background

Section 270(1) 5 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, as amended, states “a municipality shall adopt and maintain policies with respect to the manner in which the municipality will try to ensure that it is accountable to the public for its actions, and the municipality will try to ensure that its actions are transparent to the public.”

In 2014, *Bill 8, Public Sector and MMP Accountability and Transparency Act, 2014*, was enacted to promote public sector accountability and transparency. Specifically, Schedule 5 broadens the Ontario Ombudsman’s office scope of authority from outside the provincial sector to handle public complains about municipal governments. If a person is not satisfied with how a municipality responded to their complaint, they now have the option to contact the Ombudsman’s office and file a complaint. As a result, many municipalities have bolstered their internal public complaints processes in light of this legislation.

Comments

A draft Public Complaints Policy (Policy) was circulated for review by all Town staff during the Customer Service Week held on October 7 to 11, 2019. Staff were encouraged to review the

Policy and submit any feedback or recommendations to the Corporate Services Department. All recommendations were reviewed and considered in the attached proposed Policy appended to this report as Attachment 1.

The purpose of the Policy is to provide a consistent and uniform process to respond to complaints received from members of the public regarding their dissatisfaction with programs, facilities, services, employees and/or operational procedures of The Corporation of the Town of Tecumseh (Town).

Through introducing guidelines and standards, the process of managing and resolving complaints will become more efficient, allowing staff to respond to complaints in a timely manner and provide an opportunity to improve the Town's programs and services.

In an effort to steward the Town's continuous improvement approach in municipal service delivery to residents and businesses, this Policy sets the Town's standards and guidelines for processing and communicating responses to formal public complaints. Staff are encouraged to resolve any issues at the point of service delivery, before the issue becomes a formal complaint. If unsuccessful, a formal complaint is generated and tracked through the Cityworks software.

The public complaint process has four stages:

1. Acknowledgement,
2. Assign,
3. Investigate, and
4. Resolve/Decision.

This process is designed to achieve open communications between the Town and the complainant, while fostering accountability throughout the process. Town staff will acknowledge a formal complaint within three (3) days and provide information on the next steps of the complaint process. They will also clarify, when needed, the nature of the complaint. This adopts a transparent approach with the complainant, as well as provides awareness on municipal practices and policies for greater understanding. The complaint will be assigned to an appropriate responsible staff member and responsible department to investigate and resolve. A final decision on a formal complaint will be issued within thirty (30) days, understanding that complex issues may require additional time, which the complainant will be notified of along with the reasons for the delay.

The proposed Policy assists with the Town's strategic priorities of leadership and good governance, specifically with communicating in a transparent and collaborative way while using tools to help inform continuous improvement on Town services.

Consultations

All Departments

Financial Implications

There are no financial considerations to the implementation of this policy.

Link to Strategic Priorities

Applicable	2019-22 Strategic Priorities
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Make the Town of Tecumseh an even better place to live, work and invest through a shared vision for our residents and newcomers.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure that Tecumseh's current and future growth is built upon the principles of sustainability and strategic decision-making.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Integrate the principles of health and wellness into all of Tecumseh's plans and priorities.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Steward the Town's "continuous improvement" approach to municipal service delivery to residents and businesses.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Demonstrate the Town's leadership role in the community by promoting good governance and community engagement, by bringing together organizations serving the Town and the region to pursue common goals.

Communications

Not applicable

Website

Social Media

News Release

Local Newspaper

This report has been reviewed by Senior Administration as indicated below and recommended for submission by the Chief Administrative Officer.

Prepared by:

Jennifer Alexander, MPA
Deputy Clerk & Manager Legislative Services

Reviewed by:

Laura Moy, Dipl. M.M., CMMIII HR Professional
Director Corporate Services & Clerk

Recommended by:

Margaret Misek-Evans, MCIP, RPP
Chief Administrative Officer

Attachment Number	Attachment Name
1	Public Complaints Policy