

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

Preamble

The provisions of the Constitution Act, 1982, the Ontario Human Rights Code, and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms that states:

15.(1) "Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination, and in particular, based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, or mental or physical disability"

Further, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms States:

27 This Charter shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the preservation and enhancement of the multicultural heritage of Canadians."

The Mayor and members of Council recognize 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.

Mandate

To achieve the foregoing objectives, a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee is established 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.

Membership

Composition

There shall be a maximum of 7 members on the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee. Membership shall include:

- An appointed member of the following Advisory Committees, the Chair or Vice Chair is suggested:
 - Accessibility Advisory Committee
 - Seniors Advisory Committee
 - Youth Advisory Committee
- 4 additional community members

One designated staff member shall serve as staff liaison. Other staff may be requested to join meetings or support the work of this committee as need arises.

The membership will generally represent the diversity of the County including geographical and gender balance and individuals with lived experience related to one or more of the following areas:

- Ethnocultural and linguistic diversity
- Racialized communities or People of Colour
- New immigrants
- Indigenous communities
- LGBTQ2S+ individuals
- Individuals living with low income / homeless
- Faith-based diversity

All attempts will be made to stay within the guideline composition; however, if the applications received or the qualifications of applicants do not fully address the guideline composition criteria, the most capable and qualified applicants will be recommended for appointment to fulfill the membership composition.

Reporting structure

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee will report to Council through the General Manager of Corporate and Social Services.

Term

The term of membership shall be for four years concurrent with Council's elected term of office. Membership shall be approved by Council in accordance with membership requirements in the terms of reference.

Roles and Responsibilities

Chair and Vice Chair

A Chair and Vice-chair will be elected from committee members on a biannual basis at the first meeting of the new year to preside over meetings and committee business. Committee criteria considerations will be used during the selection of the chair and vice chair.

It is the role of the Chair to preside over committee meetings so that its business can be carried out efficiently and effectively, and to act as liaison between the committee, Council, municipal staff and other committees. It is the role of the Vice-chair to preside over committee meetings and act as a liaison in the absence of the Chair.

Committee members

All Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee members, including the Chair and Vice-chair, have the responsibility to help achieve the committee's mandate and purposes. Committee members are also responsible for:

- Submitting an annual report to Council to provide an overview of activities undertaken by the committee in relation to its mandate
- Reviewing meeting materials before the meetings and arriving prepared to provide a broad perspective on the issues under consideration
- Contributing to the creation of an annual work plan
- Working diligently to complete assigned activities
- Participating on working groups, as appropriate
- Agreeing to describe, process, and resolve issues in a professional and respectful manner
- Providing input to help identify future projects or strategic priorities for future years' work
- Communicating activities of the committee to groups represented or those who may have an interest and offer information back to the committee

Resources

Corporate and Social Services is the designated lead department providing resource support for the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee.

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee also has access to the technical expertise of staff from other County departments and is encouraged to collaborate with specific internal departments to implement specific initiatives in conjunction with the staff liaison.

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee shall receive administrative support from the staff liaison for meeting and agenda management.

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee shall develop an annual work plan and may submit an annual operating budget to be used for valid committee purposes to be approved by County Council for the current year and aligned with the annual committee work plan. Corporate and Social Services Department shall submit a budget request each year to Council for consideration and approval on behalf of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee.

Meetings

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee shall meet at least four times per year, and may meet more frequently if required. A meeting schedule should be set and circulated to the members for approval each year and posted on the County website. Should a time sensitive matter arise requiring immediate attention, the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee may meet at the discretion of the chair.

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee meetings will be held at the Haldimand County Administrative Building or in a virtual format at a time as determined by the members. All meetings will be open to the public.

Meetings shall be governed by the County's Procedural By-law, being a by-law to govern the calling, place and proceedings of the meetings of Council and its committees, as may be amended from time-to-time.

A committee member who is unable to attend a meeting, shall forward their regrets to the Committee Chair as soon as possible. Quorum of the Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee shall be reached with the presence of a majority of the members, at a time no later than thirty (30) minutes past the time for which the beginning of the meeting was scheduled.

Absenteeism

Members who miss three unauthorized consecutive meetings shall be deemed to have resigned from the committee and will be notified of this in writing by the Chair.

Amendments to the Terms of Reference

The terms of reference should be reviewed and refined at a minimum of every four years at the start of the term of Council to ensure that they remain current and meaningful.

Proposals to amend the terms of reference shall require the approval of a majority of the members present. Proposed amendments to the terms of reference shall be submitted to Council for approval.

Glossary of terms

Discrimination: The treatment or consideration based on class or category rather than individual merit and that can be used to privilege (special treatment in favour of) as well as disadvantage (special treatment against) a particular group or individual.

Diversity: The presence of differences in the lived experiences and perspectives of people that may include race, ethnicity, colour, ancestry, place of origin, political belief, religion, marital status, family status, physical ability, mental disability, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age, class, education, and / or socio-economic situations. Individuals affiliate with multiple identities.

Equity: The fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people. It involves striving to identify and eliminate unfair biases, stereotypes, or barriers that may limit the full participation of individuals or groups in society.

Inclusion: An active, intentional, and continuous process to address inequities in power and privilege, and build a respectful and diverse community that ensures welcoming spaces and opportunities for all to fully participate and flourish.

Racialization: The process where society creates differences between races as real, different and unequal in ways that affect areas of economic, political, and social life. People can be racialized not only based on skin colour, but also according to other perceived characteristics such as their culture, language, customs, ancestry, country or place of origin, or religion.