

## Briefing Note

<b>Title</b>	<b>Public Engagement Policy/Boards and Committees Update</b>
<b>Issue</b>	An update of the Public Engagement Initiative and introduction of proposed documents.
<b>Previous Council Direction</b>	<p>May 24, 2016 – Motion 189/16: That Council approve the Terms of Reference for the Public Engagement Framework Working Group.</p> <p>May 10, 2016 – Public Engagement Framework along with Terms of Reference for the Working Group was introduced to Council during Committee of the Whole meeting.</p> <p>December 8, 2015- Motion 395/15: Public Engagement Framework Initiative (6.1.C) was approved within the 2016 - 2018 Corporate Business Plan.</p>
<b>Report</b>	<p><u>Background Information</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sturgeon County is faced with the challenge which many other municipalities face - Sturgeon County needs to define how the organization wishes to engage the public.</li> <li>As part of its review of the <i>Municipal Government Act (MGA)</i>, the Provincial Government has stated that <i>“Albertans have indicated there is a lack of clarity around the scope of municipalities’ responsibility to engage with their constituents. Due to the existing flexibility of public participation provisions in the MGA, municipal public participation is inconsistent across the province”</i> (Alberta Government, 2015).</li> <li>In response, the Provincial Government will require that “municipalities adopt public participation policies that outline their approaches for engaging with stakeholders, although municipalities will continue to have the flexibility to determine their approach to public participation” (Alberta Government, 2015).</li> <li>The Provincial Government has not mandated when the policy must be in place or the extent to which municipalities should be engaging the public; they have merely articulated that municipalities need to <i>define</i> how they engage the public.</li> </ul>

- In an effort to be proactive Administration has started the process to have an approved public engagement policy in 2016.
- A review of the Council Boards and Committees selection process was also recognized as a Corporate Initiative.
- Council approved the Public Engagement Framework Initiative (6.1.C) within the 2016 - 2018 Corporate Business Plan that included creation of a public engagement policy and a review of the Council Boards and Committees selection process.

Work done to date on this Initiative:

- Interviews were conducted with Councillors in January 2016 to gain insight into the interpretations of current Sturgeon County engagement practices, processes and challenges. It was confirmed that the Boards and Committee review on communication and selection process would be of great benefit to the project.
- On May 24, 2016, Council approved the Terms of Reference for the Public Engagement Framework Working Group to complete this initiative. Using this document an administrative work group was established.
- Interviews were conducted with current Council Boards and Committees in June 2016 to determine efficiencies and identify any gaps in the communication methods and selection process.
- The Administrative Working Group conducted comparative research on best practices for all aspects of this initiative.
- To provide information on proposed changes and receive feedback, additional consultation was completed in September with the Council Boards and Committees with the exception of the Community Services Board, which will be completed in early October.

Proposed Policy for Public Engagement:

The following document has been created to support changes to Public Engagement:

- **Public Engagement Policy** – purpose is to guide public engagement processes inclusive of all external and internal public engagement opportunities such as; statutory, non-statutory and other proposed applications, plans, projects, and studies that may have an impact on the residents of the County. This Policy will replace Public Input Policy ADM-PUB-1 (attached).

Proposed Change – Council Boards and Committees Public Members Selection Process

Each year, Sturgeon County residents are encouraged to share their time and skills to fill key roles on boards and committees. Council

typically appoints chosen candidates to the boards/committees during the month of December.

Sturgeon County Council recognizes the value in taking the time to find candidates with the right values, skills, attitude and commitment. A well suited candidate brings specific skills and expertise that contribute to good governance; and provides a diversity of perspectives, reflecting the best interest of the community.

In light of that, the Administrative Working Group is proposing changes to the current recruitment process to establish a process that includes well-defined roles and expectations as well as an application process to ensure that all candidates are qualified and fairly evaluated using consistent criteria and process.

It's important to follow a detailed recruitment process to ensure that the right candidate is chosen for this very important job. Each Board and Committee Selection Committee will provide recommendations of candidates to Council for approval. The Committee will be composed of member(s) of County Council, Chair or delegates of each Committee and a respective Municipal Representative.

**Proposed recruitment process timeline:**

Action	Timeline	Who
Create Vacant Position Package	September 1	Legislative Services
Advertise for Board Members	Sept/Oct	Communications
Applications submitted to Selection Committee (SC)	Late Oct	Legislative Services
Provide Interview schedule to SC	November	Legislative Services
Interviews are conducted	November	Selection Committee
Candidate recommendations	December	Selection Committee
Successful Candidate appointed	December	Council

The following documents have been created or updated to support changes to Council Boards and Committees Public Members Selection Process and guidelines for communication between the Council Boards and Committees:

- **Bylaw 1381/16, Amendment to Committees Bylaw-** Amendments proposed will create the Selection Committee which has a mandate to establish a clear and consistent approach respecting

	<p>the process for appointing Public Members to Boards and Committees. Additionally, the Bylaw now provides guidelines on two-way communication between Boards and Committees and Council. The amendments also complete a revision that was previously approved which removed the reference to the Sturgeon Industrial Heartland Advisory Committee through Bylaw 1332/14(attached).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Selection Committee Terms of Reference-</b> The primary purpose of the document is to set out the mandate for the committee which is to conduct a consistent approach to selecting Board and Committee Members for Council Committees.</li> </ul> <p><u>External Communication</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consulted with each of the active Council Boards and Committees during their meetings in June and September.</li> </ul> <p><u>Relevant Policy/Legislation/Practices:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None.</li> </ul>
<b>Implication</b>	<p><u>Strategic Alignment:</u></p> <p><b>Strong Local Governance and Regional Leadership:</b>  <u>Goal 1.1:</u> Sturgeon County provides efficient and effective leadership  <u>Strategy 1.1.4:</u> Citizens are engaged as active participants in municipal governance, representing the broader community.</p> <p><b>Operational Excellence</b>  <u>Goal 6.1:</u> Sturgeon County invests in organizational infrastructure, people and skills to deliver customer satisfaction and value for taxes. This initiative aligns with the commitment to communicating with our residents in a transparent and consistent manner.</p> <p><u>Organizational:</u></p> <p>At the conclusion of the Public Engagement Framework project, the organization will have a consistent and transparent approach as to how the public will be consulted along with guidelines for communication between the Council Boards and Committees and Council. The timeframes provide for an effective Organizational Meeting.</p> <p><u>Financial:</u></p> <p>Minimal impacts financially, the cost of a meeting per committee</p>

<b>Follow Up Action</b>	1. Attend October 11, 2016 regular Council Meeting seeking approval for governing documents.
<b>Attachment (s)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Draft Public Engagement Policy</li> <li>2. Existing Public Input Policy</li> <li>3. Draft Bylaw 1381/16 Committees Bylaw</li> <li>4. Bylaw 1332/14- Disestablishment SIH Advisory Committee</li> <li>5. Draft Selection Committee Terms of Reference</li> </ol>
<b>Report Reviewed by:</b>	 Christine Beveridge, Senior Legislative Officer, Legislative Services   Peter Tarnawsky, County Commissioner – CAO