City of Peterborough

To:	**Members of the General Committee**
From:	**Sandra Clancy, CAO**
Meeting Date:	**March 2, 2020**
Subject:	**Report CAOCS20-001**
	Communications Policies

Purpose

A report to recommend a Communications Policy, a Visual Identity Policy and a Heraldic Identifiers Policy be approved and to inform Council on the development of a Community Engagement Charter.

Recommendations

That Council approve the recommendations outlined in Report CAOCS20-001, dated March 2, 2020, of the CAO, as follows:

a)   That the Communications Policy attached as Appendix A of this report be approved.

b)   That Chapter 151, Crest – Logo – Policy, attached as Appendix B of this report be repealed;

c)   That the Visual Identity Policy attached as Appendix C of this report be approved; and

d)   That the Heraldic Identifiers Policy attached as Appendix D of this report be approved.

Budget and Financial Implications

Communications activities are built into the annual operating and capital budgets through the various departments and divisions that engage in communications.

The implementation of the Community Brand was approved through previous Capital Budget allocations with the direction that the transition will primarily occur as existing inventory is replaced through its normal use.

Background

Over the last several years, the City has taken steps to enhance how it communicates and engages with residents to reflect the values of responsiveness, accountability and transparency in government. Beyond the foundational values, there is a customer service component to enhancing communications: stakeholders and residents want to be able to access information in a convenient and timely fashion. Recent initiatives undertaken by the City include:

- Establishing a new Community Brand
- Updating the City website, peterborough.ca
- Implementing an online community engagement platform, Connect Peterborough, at connectptbo.ca

The policy framework recommended through Report CAOCS20-001 will provide guidance and the foundation for advancing how the City communicates and engages with residents and stakeholders.

Communications Policy

The City does not currently have a Communications Policy. The Communications Policy (Appendix A) establishes values and sets broad objectives that will be used to direct more specific actions. The Policy reinforces the expectation that communication practices are open, inclusive, transparent and responsive.

It recognizes that the City operates with a decentralized communications model that includes the subject matter experts – staff from the various divisions – as active proponents in sharing information and engaging with the community. Communication Services is a resource that provides guidance and support, with more intensive assistance as required.

A next step is the creation of a detailed communications plan that sets out specific goals and actions that the City will take to enhance communications.

Updating the City website, implementing an online community engagement platform

The City recognized that it was falling behind in the area of communications. While policies and plans are essential for setting priorities and direction, immediate action needed to be taken in some areas. One of those actions was updating the City website, which was about 20 years old. In May 2019, the City launched its new website at peterborough.ca. A focus group and feedback from the broader community helped influence the design of the website. The navigation of the new website is based on the user who is looking for information and services instead of being structured based on municipal departments and divisions providing the service. The website includes new online, interactive tools to offer more convenient options for how the user can interact with the City.

Part of the website project included implementing an online community engagement platform. Online community engagement platforms have become common in municipalities. They provide a convenient way for residents and stakeholders to engage with municipalities on topics through a variety of engagement tools in the online space (i.e. comment boards, two-way conversations online, surveys, and interactive maps).

Online engagement tools don't replace the need for public meetings and personal contact; however, they can reach residents who may not have the time or inclination to attend public meetings or to connect directly with City staff or Council. As the City experienced with the survey on the 2020 Budget priorities in April-May 2019, there is substantial demand for opportunities to provide feedback online – there were five Budget Roadshow meetings throughout the City with between 30 and 80 people at each meeting and the survey generated 996 responses with about 950 of those responses from the online survey.

Community Engagement Charter

Similar to corporate communications, the City's community engagement activities are largely occurring in a decentralized manner with the subject matter experts designing, planning and implementing their community engagement activities. Communication Services provides varying levels of support depending on available resources. The City will be reviewing existing and expected community engagement levels to provide recommendations on policies, procedures and necessary resources. The first step is consulting with the community on its expectations to help develop a Community Engagement Charter for Council's consideration.

Community engagement, both in person and online, informs and involves the community in decision-making about programs, services and projects by the municipality. Community engagement supports transparency, responsiveness and accountability.

The City undertakes community engagement activities as part of its normal operations. Studies and projects routinely include community engagement components. An example of an extensive community engagement process is the Official Plan Update,

which has included community involvement through several surveys, public meetings, workshops, and community outreach. Examples of more typical levels of community engagement for projects could include surveys on features to include in playgrounds and City staff attending local festivals to share information and collect feedback.

A Community Engagement Charter will set values and broad objectives for how the City engages with residents. It will serve as a foundation for the creation of a policy and guidelines, with the guidelines providing specific actions and a toolkit of options to employ when engaging the community.

To draft a Community Engagement Charter, the City will:

1. Establish a working group through an open call to residents

2. Consult with the working group on values and direction for community engagement

3. Survey the broader community, through both hard-copy and online versions, on values and direction for community engagement

4. Prepare a first draft of a Community Engagement Charter

5. Present the first draft of a Community Engagement Charter to the working group for discussion and feedback

6. Prepare revisions of the draft Charter

7. Provide the draft Charter for community review and feedback

8. Prepare revisions to the draft Charter and consult with the working group then the broader community on each subsequent version of the draft Charter

9. Present the recommended draft Charter and the related Community Engagement Policy for Council's consideration

The size of the working group will depend on the amount of interest from the community to provide the necessary flexibility to be as inclusive and representative of the community as possible.

Guidelines will be established for the Community Engagement Charter Working Group, similar to the terms of reference that were created for the Official Plan Working Group.

Visual Identity Policy and Heraldic Symbols Policy

The Visual Identity Policy (Appendix C) and the Heraldic Identifiers Policy (Appendix D) will replace the City's existing policy on the City logo and coat of arms, Chapter 151: Crest – Logo – Policy, which was originally adopted by Council on May 25, 1981. Chapter 151 made the orange "P" the official logo of the City. Subsequent to the orange

"P", the windswept tree with the slogan, "Peterborough, It's a Natural", became the unofficial logo of the City.

Council, at its meeting on April 9, 2018, through Report CPFS18-004, approved the direction for the new City logo and tagline.

A consistent visual identity supports effective communication. Residents and stakeholders should be able to easily recognize services and information that are provided by the City.

The Visual Identity Policy relates to the use of the Community Brand, including the logo, tagline and the brand idea. The Policy stipulates that every effort will be made by the City to ensure a consistent visual identity with the logo as the most commonly used visual element.

The Heraldic Identifiers Policy will guide the use of the City's coat of arms, flag and official seal. The coat of arms remains an official symbol of the City that is used for matters of formal protocol and ceremonial purposes. The coat of arms will primarily be used by City Council, the City Clerk's Office, Legal Services and by-law enforcement.

Summary

While the City has been enhancing how it communicates with residents through actions such as updating the City's website and introducing an online community engagement platform, establishing a new policy framework will serve as the foundation for future improvements to communication and engagement activities such as a Community Engagement Charter.

Submitted by,

Sandra Clancy
CAO

Contact Name:

Brendan Wedley
Manager of Communication Services
Phone: 705-742-7777 ext. 1636
Toll Free: 1-855-738-3755
E-Mail: bwedley@peterborough.ca

Attachments:
Appendix A – Communications Policy
Appendix B – Chapter 151, Crest – Logo – Policy
Appendix C – Visual Identity Policy
Appendix D – Heraldic Identifiers Policy