Progress Update Council Committees on Seniors, Youth, Accessibility

Report Purpose
To provide Council with an update on the development of bylaws to establish new Council Committees to provide strategic advice in the following areas: seniors, youth and accessibility

Recommendation
None

Council History
January 23, 2018 – Council carries motion 2018/16 THAT Administration prepare draft bylaws, for presentation to Priorities Committee by the third quarter of 2018, to establish three Council Committees to provide strategic advice in the following areas: seniors; youth; accessibility and that these committees be comprised of non-voting Council members, (one member and one alternate), and up to seven members of the public with administrative support to be provided by Family and Community Services.
April 17, 2018 – Priorities Committee provided with an update on the proposed approach to prepare draft bylaws

Strategic Plan Priority Areas
Economy: N/A
Governance: Having effective Council Committees is one way to support public engagement and support communication with the community on issues affecting the County's future.
Social: Using Council Committees may help to develop strong neighbourhoods and communities that support the diverse needs of Strathcona County's residents.
Culture: Council Committees that represent the diversity of residents or address diverse opportunities help to define and strengthen the community's identity.
Environment: N/A

Other Impacts
Policy: N/A
Legislative/Legal: Section 145 of the Municipal Government Act (MGA) provides that a Council may establish Council Committees by bylaw. Such a bylaw may establish the function of the Committee and the procedures to be followed.
Interdepartmental: This work is being conducted by Family and Community Services and Legislative and Legal Services.

Summary
Background
Administration is continuing the work to develop the content required for draft bylaws to establish the three new Council Committees. The April 17, 2018 update to Priorities Committee included proposed operating principles for these committees, a proposed mandate for each committee, and proposed engagement approach. Since then, a targeted public engagement process has been completed which, along with the jurisdictional review, previous engagement results (Community Talk) and internal expertise, is helping to inform the proposed mandate and responsibilities of these committees. Administration has also provided updates on this work to the Community Living Advisory Committee.

Survey results
A short on-line survey was developed to seek input on who should be on the committees and what issues each committee should explore. The survey was distributed through the Strathcona County public engagement e-newsletter distribution list (2400 subscribers) and the County e-newsletter (600 subscribers), to the four Seniors Leagues, Seniors United Now, the Strathcona County Interagency committee, all Strathcona County Community Leagues (eleven rural and one urban), Community Living Advisory Committee, Recreation, Parks and Culture staff, and Family and Community Services staff. The Information and Volunteer Centre posted the survey link on their website; Youth Council members completed it at one of their meetings and intercept surveys were conducted on May 18, 2018 at Millennium Place.

There were 242 responses to the targeted survey. Overall results included:
- About 60 per cent of respondents rated Strathcona County as a good/very good place for seniors to live and that affordable housing for seniors, home care services for seniors and seniors mental and physical health are important issues for the Seniors Committee to talk about.
- About 70 per cent of respondents rated Strathcona County as a good/very good place for young people (age 14-29 years) to live and that youth mental health, support systems for youth, job opportunities and youth safety are important for the Youth Committee to talk about.
- About 30 per cent of respondents rated buildings in Strathcona County as being moderately accessible and 34 percent rated buildings as being accessible for individuals with physical disabilities.
- General support for membership on committees to include the target demographic as well as those with expertise in the area.

Looking at the responses by age group, the results were similar with the exception of responses on who should be on the Committees. For the Youth Committee and the Accessibility Committee, respondents who identified as youth or as having accessibility challenges were less supportive of including individuals with expertise in the area on the committees.

Based on preliminary analysis, there are three core areas of responsibility for each committee:
- Identify and engage stakeholders in the three areas
- Act as a resource to administration and Council by providing a seniors, youth, or accessibility lens on County policies, programs and services
- Identify issues and opportunities and provide strategic advice to Council

Proposed elements of the terms of reference for each committee are attached (Enclosure 1).

Next steps will include more in-depth analysis of the survey data as well as data from Community Talk and the jurisdictional scan conducted for this project to inform responsibilities for each committee. Specific to the youth committee, consideration will also be given to linkages between the current Youth Council and work directed to Administration to explore gaps in services for youth in Strathcona County. More detailed responsibilities for the three new committees will be described in the draft mandate letters which will come forward to Council along with the terms of reference and bylaws to establish the three committees by end of third quarter of 2018.

Enclosures
1   Council Committees: Seniors, Youth, Accessibility
2   Update on Council Committees Presentation