

**To:** Warden and Members of County Council

**From:** Director of Corporate Services

## **Policy Review and Amendments – Tuition Reimbursement Policy, Employee Expense Policy and Delegation Policy**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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1. That County Council approve the Tuition Reimbursement Policy No. 5.05, as attached to Report No. CS 2021-23, for inclusion in the County's General Policy Manual, effective July 14, 2021;
2. And further, that Council approve amendments to the Employee Expense Policy No. 6.02, as attached to Report No. CS 2021-23, effective July 14, 2021;
3. And further, that Schedule "A" to By-law No. 4890-2007, being a by-law to establish a Delegation of Powers and Duties Policy, be amended as attached to Report No. CS 2021-23, effective July 14, 2021;
4. And further, that By-law No. 6355-2021, being a by-law to repeal the following By-law Enforcement Appointment By-laws: By-law No. 5643-2014 (Risk Management Officials) and By-laws No. 5914-2017, 5221-2010 (Weed Inspector).

### **REPORT HIGHLIGHTS**

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- Tuition Reimbursement Policy is a new policy designed to promote a learning environment for our employees and career development for the mutual benefit of the employee and the organization
- Employee Expense Policy amendments clarify the difference between professional development and educational courses – now referenced under the Tuition Reimbursement Policy
- Consolidates all By-law Enforcement Appointments within the Delegation of Powers and Duties Policy
  - repeals existing appointment by-laws to avoid duplication and risk of conflicting and/or outdated documentation

## Implementation Points

The new policy and policy amendments as set out in this report will take effect upon Council's adoption of the recommendations contained in this report.







## Financial Impact

There are no financial implications associated with the recommendations contained in this report beyond what has been approved in the current year's budget.

## Communications

The new policy and policies as amended will be updated in the County's General Policy Manual and staff will be appropriately informed.

## Strategic Plan (2015-2018)

					
WORKS WELL TOGETHER	WELL CONNECTED	SHAPES THE FUTURE	INFORMS & ENGAGES	PERFORMS & DELIVERS	POSITIVE IMPACT
				5.ii.	6.i.

## DISCUSSION

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### Background

A new policy has been developed by Human Resources to set out specific terms and conditions to clarify employee eligibility for funding educational courses determined to be of mutual benefit to the employee and the organization.

The Employee Expense Policy sets out guidelines for County paid expenses incurred by Council and staff to attend professional development opportunities and meetings outside of Oxford County. The last revision of this policy occurred in March 2013.

The County's Delegation of Powers and Duties Policy relating to the provisions of Bill 130 under the *Municipal Act, 2001*, was first adopted in 2007. At the time of passing, certain existing by-laws delegating authority to staff were repealed as it was intended to consolidate all delegated powers in the new comprehensive policy. Since enactment, the By-law has been reviewed on an annual basis until 2015 and then again in 2018, each time resulting in additions to the delegated powers. The review period for this policy is when deemed appropriate by the Chief Administrative Officer – Subsection 18.2.

## **Comments**

### **Tuition Reimbursement Policy**

The Tuition Reimbursement Policy is a new policy to provide clarity with respect to the employer's commitment to employees who wish to pursue career development related to the employee's present position or future career aspirations within the organization. This policy distinguishes between "educational course" and "professional development", such as conferences, workshops, seminars that are fully paid under the Employee Expense Policy.

If the educational course is requested by management as a matter of enhancing an employee's academic development for their current position, the County will fund 100% of the cost, subject to training budget approval. Otherwise, costs related to an educational course for an employee will be reimbursed up to a maximum of \$2,000 annually, subject to management approval, confirmation of successful completion and approved budget.

The draft Tuition Reimbursement Policy is attached to this report as Attachment 1.

### **Employee Expense Policy**

Review of the Employee Expense Policy was initiated in response to the introduction of the Tuition Reimbursement Policy in order to clarify distinction between the two policies and, in doing so, updated other provisions to ensure relevancy is maintained.

In summary the amendments include:

- Definitions – to align definition of Education Course to the new Tuition Reimbursement Policy and clarify additional time required for travel would be considered time in lieu – consistent with the Overtime Policy.
- Section 3.1 – Eligible Expenses – references the new Tuition Reimbursement Policy for expenses related to educational courses.
- Section 3.4 – Meals – removes limits for the cost of each meal based on time of day (breakfast, lunch or supper), defaulting to reimbursement for meals supported by receipts for up to \$75 per day when attending professional development, working or attending meetings outside the County (no change in total daily limit).
- Section 4.0 – Other – references the new Tuition Reimbursement Policy for expenses related to educational courses.
- Section 4.2 – Other – remove reference to procurement of food and beverages for meetings and internally hosted events, as it is deemed to not apply to "employee expenses" in the context of this policy.

The draft Employee Expense Policy amendments are marked with changes in Attachment 2 to this report.

## Delegation of Powers and Duties

The impetus for this review of the Delegations of Powers and Duties Policy was to consolidate disparate by-law enforcement officer appointment by-laws in one comprehensive delegation by-law to ensure they remain current. Considering the last review of the Policy occurred in 2018 a concurrent fulsome review was undertaken with a fresh perspective from our new CAO.

In summary the amendments include:

- Subsection 8.2 c) limits the execution of agreements by the CAO and Director, without Council approval, if the agreement is for a term not exceeding five years, with the exception of real estate purchases – adding “that exceed \$25,000 or real estate leases that exceed \$50,000 annually”.
- Section 9.0 Authority to sign letters of support or comment on third party matters of interest related to County services, subject to no financial implications and no commitment to County resources.
- Section 10.0 Authority delegated to the CAO to approve, amend or replace certain policies related to administration, subject to no budget impact.
- Section 11.0 Authority delegated to the CAO and a Director to initiate and execute settlement and other documents related to legal matters, including commencing claims, applications, motions and appeals before any court of tribunal, other than the Land Planning Appeal Tribunal, with an upset limit of \$100,000 and subject to funding availability.
- Section 13.0 Director of Community Planning is authorized to sign certain documents related to plans of subdivision and final condominium plans related to final approval. This authority is expanded in scope to include granting temporary one-time extensions of three months for draft approvals; and grant extensions of draft approvals for not more than three years, subject to area municipal council approval.
- Section 14.0 Director of Human Services delegated authorities have been updated to cite revised legislation - *Child Care and Early Years Act*, formerly *Day Nurseries Act*.
- Subsection 15.5 authorizes the Director of Corporate Services to provide property tax relief, consistent with the *Municipal Act* and Financial Hardship Policy, as set out in By-law No. 5912-2017, to approve applications for property tax relief in the form of deferrals of charges to property in accordance with Section 391 of the *Municipal Act*, imposing charges for capital costs related to sewage and water services upon owners of lands to which services are provided in the residential class for persons who demonstrate financial hardship.
- Subsection 16.4 authorizes the Director of Public Works to enter into or renew Land Use Permits with sporting and recreational organizations and agencies subject to providing liability insurance to the satisfaction of the Director of Corporate Services, including naming the County as an additional insured and holding the County harmless from any action.
- Subsection 16.5 authorizes the CAO to appoint County staff positions to enforce the County's Sewer Use By-law in accordance with subsection 15(1) of the *Municipal Act*.

Appointments will be cited in Schedule “A” to the Delegations of Powers and Duties Policy, amended from time to time by approval of the CAO.

- Subsection 16.6 authorizes the CAO to appoint County staff positions as Risk Management Officials and Risk Management Inspectors in accordance with subsection 47(6) of the *Clean Water Act* for the purposes of enforcing Part IV of the *Act*. Appointments will be cited in Schedule “B” to the Delegations of Powers and Duties Policy, amended from time to time by approval of the CAO.
- Subsection 16.7 authorizes the CAO to appoint County staff positions as Woodlands Conservation Municipal Law Enforcement Officers for the purpose of enforcing County of Oxford By-law No. 6035-2018, being the Woodlands Conservation By-law, in accordance with subsection 135(1) of the *Municipal Act*. Appointments will be cited in Schedule “C” to the Delegations of Powers and Duties Policy, amended from time to time by approval of the CAO.
- Subsection 16.8 authorizes the CAO to appoint County staff positions as County Area Weed Inspectors in accordance with the provisions of 6(1) of the *Weed Control Act* for the purpose of enforcing provisions of the *Act* with respect to noxious weeds. Appointments will be cited in Schedule “D” to the Delegations of Powers and Duties Policy, amended from time to time by approval of the CAO.

In addition to the new and revised authorities as summarized above there were a number of administrative changes made to ensure the delegation aligns with the appropriate level of authority with the respective accountabilities and responsibilities. All changes are reflected in the marked up draft Delegation of Powers and Duties Policy attached to this report at Attachment 3.

## **Conclusions**

Upon Council approval of the proposed new policy and policy amendments, they will be posted in the General Policy Manual and the Delegation of Powers and Duties Policy, as amended will be appended to By-law No. 4890-2007.

## **SIGNATURES**

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### **Departmental Approval:**

Original signed by

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Lynn S. Buchner, CPA, CGA  
Director of Corporate Services

### **Approved for submission:**

Original signed by

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Michael Duben, B.A., LL.B.  
Chief Administrative Officer

## **ATTACHMENTS**

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- Attachment 1 – Draft Tuition Reimbursement Policy
- Attachment 2 – Draft Employee Expense Policy, as amended
- Attachment 3 – Draft Delegation of Powers and Duties Policy, as amended