

Municipality of Lakeshore – Report to Council

Chief Administrative Officer



To: Mayor & Members of Council
From: Truper McBride, Chief Administrative Officer
Date: June 2, 2022
Subject: Culture Strategy

Recommendation

This report is for information only.

Background

Lakeshore's Culture Strategy (Appendix A) was first presented to Council as information at the May 31st 2022 regular meeting of Council. Council deferred the matter to the June 14th 2022 regular meeting of Council.

Council's Strategic Plan identifies Organizational Excellence as one of five priority areas of focus for this term of office.

At the September 22nd 2020 Regular Meeting of Council, the following resolution was passed:

Corporate Culture and Values 333-09-2020

Moved By Councillor Kerr Seconded By Councillor Santarossa

Council reaffirm its commitment to become an employer of choice in Ontario; and,

Direct Administration to include funding in future budgets to develop a Corporate Culture Excellence Strategy and return to Council in January 2021 with an outline of the work plan, as presented at the September 22nd 2020 Council meeting.

At the May 31st 2022 regular meeting of Council, Lakeshore's Culture Strategy was presented to Council to receive feedback. Administration is looking for Council input as to which elements of the findings should be higher priority for implementation, whether there are any elements missing, and whether any focus needs to be changed.

Why should employers care about culture and why is it important?

Positive work environments provide the following benefits to employers:

1. Reduces cost associated with employee turn over, increases retention of staff;
2. Improves Lakeshore's external reputation and brand;
3. Assists with developing strong work ethics;
4. Creates enhanced relationships with citizens and stakeholders through daily interactions;
5. Increased efficiency and productivity of workforce; and,
6. Decrease in short term disability claims and sick days taken for mental/physical health.

As a result of Council identifying this as a strategic priority, Administration designed a workplan that has continued over the course of this term to improve the quality of life for employees.

The workplan has included the following:

1. Service Delivery Review – September 2020
2. Organizational Review – April 2021
3. Council requested report on recruitment challenges – Sept 2021
4. Council requested reports on retention challenges – October 2021 Closed Session
5. Culture Strategy Report to Council, May 31st 2022 (Appendix A)

In addition, numerous initiatives Council and Administration have already implemented since 2019 are listed in Appendix B – June 14th Culture Strategy Presentation.

All of these reports and studies had identified an overall culture issue affecting the Municipality of Lakeshore. It is important to note that this culture issue has transcended terms of Council and numerous Administrations.

Comments

The Culture Strategy (Appendix A) is the culmination of 8 months of work which provides Council a summary of the input and feedback collected from staff across the organization. It is important to note that there are **no** funding commitments, **no** funding authorizations, **no** staffing requests, and **no** compensation/benefits changes being presented as part of this report. By Council accepting this report for information and providing feedback will allow Administration to use this tool to guide future recommendations to Council.

The Culture Strategy (Appendix A) provides Council the following:

1. A framework of four focus areas to pursue future culture improvement initiatives as future budget pressures allow, which include;
 - a. Accountability
 - b. Connection and Communication
 - c. Recruitment and Competitiveness
 - d. Growth and Development
2. Current State Culture Assessment;
3. Comparative Analysis of other similar Municipalities with culture initiatives;
4. Proposed Vision and Values for the Corporation to guide culture development; and,
5. Presentation of the Workplace Improvement Team (Synergy Team of staff and leadership).

Administration is seeking input from Council on:

- Which elements of the findings/Culture Strategy framework (listed above) should be higher priority for implementation;
- Whether there are any elements missing; and,
- Whether any focus needs to be changed.

It is important to note that most initiatives within the framework do not require additional funding and can be addressed with existing resources. The Workplace Improvement Synergy Team, composed of a blend of union and leadership staff, has been designed to help guide work and champion cultural changes across the organization.

While compensation is identified by staff in some of the findings, typically feeling valued/appreciated and work/life balance are ranked higher than compensation when people are asked to list their motivational drivers. As a result, Administration believes there is significant room to improve culture through the way Council/Administration work together, collaborate, and treat each other through respectful discussion. Council has already dealt with compensation matters this term through three collective bargaining processes and the non-union compensation review and there is not a need to review this again for the short term until the next collective agreement process commences. Accepting this report as information does not trigger any additional compensation review work.

Following Council feedback, Administration will finalize the Culture Strategy with the Workplace Improvement Team and continue discussions with Council during the 2023 Corporate Strategic Plan development process

Changes from May 31st 2022 Employer of Choice and Culture Review Report

At the May 31st 2022 regular meeting of Council, the Employer of Choice report was deferred to the June 14th 2022 meeting.

In order to increase understanding of the strategy, minor changes in terminology have been incorporated into the version before Council. The changes included adding increased emphasis to elements not requiring increased resources, replacing 'Total Rewards' with 'Market Competitiveness and Recruiting', and changing the name of the Plan from 'Employer of Choice and Total Rewards' to 'Culture Strategy'. No substantive changes have been made to the Plan.

Next Steps

After receiving Council Member feedback, Administration will use the Culture Strategy to inform the discussions and process to develop Lakeshore's first corporate strategic plan. A corporate strategic plan is different than Council's list of priorities as it focuses on the creation of a long term plan to develop the Administration to ensure seamless delivery of Council priorities. In other words, Council's goal and priority setting focuses on where we are going and what success looks like to reach stated goals, while the corporate strategic plan lays out 'how' we will get there, key performance indicators, and internal service delivery improvements/efficiencies.

The previous report '2022 Employer of Choice and Culture Review' from May 31st 2022 indicated that a Master Plan would be developed with the findings from the review. Since the time of writing the previous report, further work has been done developing the scope for a corporate strategic plan early in the next term of office which presents a better opportunity to incorporate recommendations.

Accepting this report as information does not bind the next Council in anyway or fetter its discretion.

Financial Impacts

There are no financial impacts with adopting this report as information.

Any future initiative that may require additional funding would be presented through the annual budgeting process where Council can fully review and consider.

There are no new staffing requests associated with this report.

Attachments

Appendix A – Culture Strategy Report to Council, May 31st 2022

Appendix B – Culture Initiatives already implemented

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Culture Improvement Strategy.docx
Attachments:	- Appendix A - Culture Strategy.pdf - Appendix B June 14 Culture Strategy Presentation.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Jun 9, 2022

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Prepared by Truper McBride

Approved by Justin Rousseau