

Report to Council



Date: June 17, 2019
File: 0610-02
To: City Manager
From: City Clerk
Subject: Council Code of Conduct Policy

Recommendation:

THAT Council receives, for information, the report from the City Clerk dated June 17, 2019 with respect to a Council Code of Conduct Policy

Purpose:

To provide Council with background information regarding the creation of a Council Code of Conduct Policy.

Background:

Council expressed an interest in drafting a Code of Conduct that would establish written expectations in how they conduct themselves as members of Council. These would be a voluntary Code that reflect Council's principles and values, which are being established as part of the Council Priorities setting workshops. The UBCM Working Group on Responsible Conduct has published a Model Code of Conduct and a Companion Guide (attached) to assist Councils in developing their own Code. Some local governments refer to such documents as a "Code of Ethics" rather than as a "Code of Conduct". The District of Oak Bay Council Code of Ethics is provided as an example of a recently adopted Code. The City of Surrey voted recently to create an ombudsperson, whistleblower protection and lobbyist registry, and is the first BC municipality to proceed with such an initiative.

Staff suggest that if a Code developed and adopted by Council, that it be relatively brief, and not overly proscribed in nature. The greatest challenge Codes present is how transgressions of the Code are dealt with. Council's options for disciplining a fellow elected official are limited under the current provincial legislation.

Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements:

A Code of Conduct, if supported, should be adopted as a Council Policy, adopted at an afternoon Council meeting.

Existing Policy:

Elected Officials Oath of Office Bylaw No.10705

Council developed its own Oath of Office, which is reaffirmed at each Tuesday evening Council meeting. The four points contained in the Oath could also form the basis for the Code of Conduct:

- To perform the duties of the office of (Mayor)(Councillor) faithfully and with integrity;
- To abide by the statutes, bylaws and policies that govern the City and promote openness, accountability, and responsible leadership;
- To provide stewardship of the public assets through the development and evaluation of the City's policies and programs; and
- To always consider the well-being and interests of the community as a whole, leading the development of a safe, vibrant and sustainable City

Considerations not applicable to this report:

Internal Circulation:

Legal/Statutory Authority:

Financial/Budgetary Considerations:

Personnel Implications:

External Agency/Public Comments:

Communications Comments:

Alternate Recommendation:

Submitted by:

Stephen Fleming

City Clerk

Approved for inclusion: City Manager

cc: City Manager
Deputy City Clerk

Attachments:

UBCM Model Code of Conduct

UBCM Code of Conduct Companion Guide

Oak Bay Code of Ethics