

Recommendation:

That the Clerk's Office-2022-16 report, dated October 4, 2022 regarding an update to Policy A-23 – Complaint Handling Policy be received and that the Policy be updated in the Township's Policy Manual and provided to the public via the Township website.

Overview:

The Township's current Complaint Policy has been in place since the Fall of 2016. It was implemented to meet the requirements of Bill 8 - Public Sector and MPP Accountability and Transparency Act, 2014 which provides the Ontario Ombudsman the power to investigate and resolve complaints about municipalities.

In the use of the current policy, staff have encountered various issues and speed bumps with the procedures prescribed by the Policy. One of the issues is that the Policy removed the Manager of the department from the resolution process until the end instead of making them an active participant in the process. The procedures set out in the Policy were convoluted and creates confusion as to who does what and when and also created confusion for the public as calls for service or reports of concerns processed were being used for formal complaints and vice-versa. In drafting the Policy and Procedures that are attached to this report, staff have taken this issue into consideration and provided clarity and transparency to make the Policy more effective.

When the Policy was implemented in 2016, the Township through Council direction began using Marmak software to track complaints. The system appointed one staff member to administer the software and complete all inputs. Over the course of 2020 the present staff have found that the software is not providing good value for money and efficient operation. In lieu of the software, staff have created an Excel based tracking sheet which is able to fulfill the same role as the software at no cost and allow staff to provide a summary of complaints to Council and provide any required information to the Ombudsman in the event of an investigate.

Lastly staff have split the Policy into new Policy and Procure documents and have created a new Formal Complaint Form. This is to follow through on the recommendations from the Service Delivery and Organizational Review regarding the Township reforming and reviewing the Policies and their implementation and providing customer centered services.

Conclusion:

It is required by legislation that the Township have a complaint policy as per Bill 8. The revised policy that is being presented meets the requirements of the legislation, allows for accountability for all persons involved and allows information to be provided to Council and the Ombudsman.

Financial Impact:

The removal of the Marmak software creates a savings of a minimum of \$200.00 a month in fees.

Strategic Plan Applicability:

To ensure and enable an effective and efficient municipal administration.

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Revisions to Policy A23 - Township Complaint Policy.docx
Attachments:	- Draft 2022 Update - A23 - Complaint Handling Policy - Form.docx - Draft 2022 - A23-a - Public Complaint Procedure.docx - Draft 2022 Update - A23 - Complaint Handling Policy.docx
Final Approval Date:	Sep 28, 2022

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

Elana Arthurs