

Region of Queens Municipality
DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ACTION TEAM (DIAT)

Terms of Reference

Purpose

The purpose of Diversity and Inclusion Action Team (DIAT) is to provide Municipal Council with strong impactful advice, education, and recommendations for programs and services, while designing and implementing positive and supportive opportunities to promote and celebrate our diverse community to ensure that inclusion is achieved for all. The Team will guide the work of a Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator as they seek to carry out the mandate of this critical and necessary community advocacy and capacity building. This Team must ensure that the information and authority granted to it is always used in a non-partisan, non-personal manner, and the general well-being of the community always takes precedence over any individual person or business so that the best options to support community diversity and inclusion for each and every person is realized.

Authority

Diversity and Inclusion Action Team has been granted its legal authority to advise the Municipality by virtue of being delegated this responsibility with Council's approval on August 11, 2020, of this Terms of Reference. Council's authority to establish this Team is included in Sections 9A and 24(1) of the *Municipal Government Act*.

Scope

The scope of the volunteer Diversity and Inclusion Action Team shall be to review and assess all municipal operations as they relate to diversity and inclusion for residents and businesses. The development of this initiative has been ongoing since late 2019. The Team's reporting relationship is limited to advice and recommendations to the Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator who shall bring forth recommendations to the Chief Administrative Officer or Council when applicable to do so. Specifically, the Team shall endeavour to:

1. Provide a diversity lens and recommendations to the Municipality respecting materials, social media strategies, educational training, community engagement, and other issues that are believed to support diversity and increase inclusion for all throughout Queens County.
2. Recommend areas where the Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator may undertake research and data collection respecting diversity and inclusion in the community and share this data to inform and educate the community.
3. Develop criteria and implement a small grants program for diversity and inclusion programs, services, infrastructure, and progressive ideas that allow for community education, development of resources, training, and engagement of youth and non-traditional partners.
4. In concert with the Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator, consult with provincial and federal departments and agencies such as Office of African Nova Scotia Affairs, Nova Scotia Office of Aboriginal Affairs, Nova Scotia Accessibility Directorate, and others as appropriate to keep apprised programs and services for marginalized communities.
5. Act as an information resource by providing advice and capacity building to community organizations and businesses to educate them on the importance and benefits of diversity in their organizations or businesses and facilitate the provision of diversity and inclusion training when appropriate or requested.

6. Conduct outreach with community members and groups when the Team feels community leadership is needed and the Team feels it is best positioned to be the community spokesperson on the issue, or is most appropriate to provide community education or training.
7. Provide advice and recommendations to Council respecting opportunities to advance community education about diversity and inclusion, naming of infrastructure and amenities, minimum training requirements for municipal staff and Council, ways to include more diversity and inclusion in programs, services, and infrastructure, ensuring a respectful and equitable community for all to live and work.
8. Assisting disadvantaged or marginalized members of our community navigating programs and services to support their individual needs to ensure they can access timely and relevant supports.
9. Guide the work of the Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator to ensure community priorities are acted upon and annual work plans as approved by the Chief Administrative Officer are completed and implemented.
10. Assist the Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator with organizing meetings, conducting research, preparing reports, overseeing grant promotion and approvals process, liaising with community groups, business and Council, and leading by example.

Reporting Relationship

Diversity and Inclusion Action Team shall be accountable directly to Council of Region of Queens Municipality and the Team Leader indirectly to the Chief Administrative Officer for operational and administrative support.

Role of Team Leader

The Team Leader is ultimately responsible for organizing, chairing and facilitating all meetings. The Team Leader will also ensure that appropriate research, directions and recommendations are given to the Team, including the provision for review of work plans, policy directions, strategies, financial commitments, research and data collection, as well as all other items incidental to the effective operation and management of the Team while ensuring that the Team does not vary from its diversity and inclusion focus.

Role of Alternate Team Leader

An Alternate Team Leader shall be appointed and act in the place of the Team Leader during absences, unavailability, or conflicts of interest of the Team Leader.

Role of Action Team Member

Team Members are expected to prepare for and attend all meetings of the Team unless they provide prior notice of absence to the Team Leader. Team Members are required to always act in the best interest of the community generally and set aside personal beliefs and business interests at all times because they will conflict with the objectives and strategic directions of the Team. Team Members may seek or provide information to the Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator, but shall not direct the Coordinator.

Role of Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator

Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator shall act as a staff resource to Diversity and Inclusion Action Team. This person shall lead the research and report writing aspect of the Team's work to ensure the Team has the most accurate information upon which to make a decision or make recommendations to the Chief Administrative Officer or Council. The Team shall work with the Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator respecting policy

implementation and required research, while adhering to budget limitations. Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator shall act as non-voting resource to the Team.

Membership

Membership on Diversity and Inclusion Action Team shall include up to ten (10) non-municipal members of the public who are residents of Queens County, duly appointed by Council pursuant to Section 24 of the *Municipal Government Act* for a three-year term. Members appointed to this Team should have a clear background as a member of a marginalized community or a clear link to such, possess an open and positive mindset, be passionate about diversity and inclusion and understand the importance of such, be willing to undertake difficult discussions, understands the importance of education to reduce mistreatment of persons, and be comfortable talking about the importance of diversity and inclusion. Any resignation shall be tendered in writing to the Team Leader. Subsequently a replacement will be sought through the normal recruitment process to fill the remaining term of office. Any member who misses three meetings in any one fiscal year shall be deemed to be no longer a member of the Team. A Team Leader and Alternate Team Leader shall be elected at the first meeting of the Team by a majority vote of the members and shall continue to hold office until replaced.

Duration of Mandate

Diversity and Inclusion Action Team membership terms shall begin on October 1, 2020 and shall be for a term of three years. On September 30, 2023, all membership on the Team shall expire. Members are eligible for re-appointment effective October 1, 2023.

Frequency of Meetings

Meetings of Diversity and Inclusion Action Team shall be held on such day as the Team decides at the first meeting of the Team, with such meetings taking place at the same time agreed to by the Team monthly. Additional meetings may be held, or the above meetings date and times changed, when agreed to by consensus of the Team and prior notification is provided to the public. Diversity and Inclusion Action Team shall hold an annual meeting in September of each year where an election of chairperson for the ensuing year shall take place.

Quorum Requirements

No decisions may be made at any Diversity and Inclusion Action Team meeting unless a quorum of a majority of the current members of the Team is present in person.

Agenda, Minutes and Resolutions

Minutes, advice, and recommendations of Diversity and Inclusion Action Team shall be provided to each member of the Team within a reasonable time after the conclusion of such meeting. Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator will endeavour to provide each member of the Team with the agenda and required supporting documentation at least four days prior to every meeting.

Conflict of Interest

It is expected that all members of Diversity and Inclusion Action Team will adhere to the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*, disclosing any pecuniary or indirect pecuniary interest in any matter before the Team and refraining from taking part in, or trying to influence either before or after the meeting, any directions or decisions respecting such matters. Any breach of this guideline will require the Team Leader to ask Council to remove that member and appoint another member in their stead. If the breach is by the Team Leader,

this shall be reported to Council by the Alternate Team Leader. Diversity and Inclusion Action Team will conduct its business in accordance with the Municipality's Code of Conduct Policy.

Resources

Diversity and Inclusion Action Team shall have access to the Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator and other appropriate municipal staff as authorized by the Chief Administrative Officer, to undertake the required research it needs in order to make the most appropriate decisions in a timely manner. Requests for resources above the annual budgeted amount for the Team shall be made by the Team through the Team Leader to Council, on an as needed basis. The Team will have access to all documents and records of the Municipality that are publicly available and within its purview when requested and subject to confidentiality when noted.

Decision Making Process

All decisions of Diversity and Inclusion Action Team shall be made by majority vote of Team members present and eligible to vote. Where a majority is not forthcoming, the vote shall be determined in the negative. All decisions of the Team will be made without undue influence or biased decision-making favouring any Team member's personal or financial interests, or that of family members or close friends.

Confidentiality

All meetings of Diversity and Inclusion Action Team are considered public, except those matters deemed to be private and confidential in nature and subject to Section 22 of the *Municipal Government Act*. Minutes and subsequent resolutions of such meetings shall be recorded and publicly available upon approval by the Team. Information and reports of the Team shall be subject to normal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIPOP) regulations.

Communications

All communications and messaging from Diversity and Inclusion Action Team's work and activities shall come solely from the Team Leader or their designate. It is expected that all decisions of the Team will be supported by all members of the Team upon ratification. This does not limit the ability of an individual member from speaking freely with the media, but in all such cases the individual committee member should be clear that it is their personal opinion and not that of Diversity and Inclusion Action Team.

Reporting

Annually, the Diversity and Inclusion Action Team shall provide a written report to Council.

Responsibilities

Diversity and Inclusion Action Team shall be responsible for developing critical and measurable success factors of the Team through its associated research and annual work plan, including regularly evaluating its programs and services against these criteria. The Team is expected to make timely decisions and give solid advocacy and capacity building advice to the Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator that are in the best interests of all residents without exception.