

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee of Council Terms of Reference

The Town of Cobourg's municipal Council directed Staff to engage Cobourg's diverse community to help create potential draft terms of reference to advise Council and make recommendations to provide a monitoring and measuring role to help ensure that the Town applies an equity, diversity, and inclusion lens to its policies, services, and programs.

Preface

The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee of Council recognizes the Town of Cobourg's multicultural heritage and the mix of national, ethnic, and racial origins which exist in our population.

The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee of Council is dedicated to promote and foster inclusion and to address issues of discrimination based on:

- Race,
- National or ethnic origin,
- Colour,
- Religion or faith or other forms of conscientiously held beliefs,
- Sex,
- Sexuality (including sexual orientation),
- Language and linguistic origin,
- Gender identity and gender expression,
- Age (children, youth, adult, seniors),
- Mental or physical disability,
- Family status (including marital status),
- Socio-economic class, and
- For those persons who identify as First Nations with or without status, Métis, and/or Inuit.

This Committee is committed to the promotion of equity, racial acceptance, and multicultural education where citizens are empowered to achieve their full potential in our community.

The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee of Council works from a Decolonization and Anti-Oppression Framework.

Definitions

Anti-Oppression

Anti-Oppression is the work of actively challenging and removing oppression perpetuated by power inequalities in society, both systemic oppression and individual expressions of oppression. Anti-Oppression is a way of naming oppression that happens based on a person's identities.

Decolonization

Decolonization is the work of supporting Indigenous sovereignty and land repatriation, abolishing slavery, and dismantling imperialism.

Discrimination

Discrimination is the treatment or consideration based on class or category rather than individual merit and that can be used to privilege (special treatment in favour of) as well as disadvantage (special treatment against) a particular group or individual.

Diversity

Diversity is about the individual. It is about the variety of unique dimensions, qualities and characteristics we all possess.

Equity

Equity refers to the fair and respectful treatment of all people. This means that we do everything we can to identify and eliminate unfair biases, stereotypes or barriers that may limit full participation in our education system. A barrier is anything that keeps someone from participating fully in all aspects of society.

Inclusion

Inclusion is about the collective. It is about creating a culture that strives for equity and embraces, respects, accepts and values difference.

Oppression

Oppression is the use of power or privilege by a socially, politically, economically, culturally dominant group (or groups) to empower (take away or reduce power), marginalize, silence, or otherwise subordinate one social group or category.

Settler Colonialism

Settler Colonialism is the relationship between colonizers and Indigenous Peoples, where the colonizers are convinced of their mandate to rule and desire the Indigenous population to become a minority and/or vanish by doing acts of genocide, violence, and biological warfare.

Systemic Oppression

Systemic Oppression consists of practices, policies, laws, and standards that disadvantage a particular group or category of people.

Tokenism

Tokenism is the practice of making only a perfunctory or symbolic effort to do a particular thing, especially by recruiting a small number of people from underrepresented groups in order to give the appearance of sexual or racial equality within a workforce.

Updates to the Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference are to be seen as a “living document” and as such can be amended, updated, or refined through motions and approvals by a majority of the members outside of the regularly scheduled review of advisory committees.

Mandate

The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee of Council will provide support to staff in the drafting and implementation of an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Plan and shall provide a forum for consultation, feedback, and discussion on matters of equity, diversity, and inclusion in the Town of Cobourg.

The mandate of the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee of Council is:

1. To develop and recommend to the Mayor and Members of Town Council policies and programs which will create an atmosphere conducive to harmonious community relations within the Town of Cobourg.
2. To provide feedback and direction to the Mayor and Members of Town Council on an ongoing and annual basis regarding actions, policies, practices, and outcomes in relation to the mandate.
3. To act as a visible lead agent on communicating and recommending solutions to Town Council on issues that contravene the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.
4. To assist marginalized, underrepresented, and underserved groups through its appropriate sub-committees to develop programs for the improvement of equity, diversity, and inclusion at the Town of Cobourg.
5. To make recommendations regarding municipal programs and services provided by the Town of Cobourg, to provide equal access to all residents, and to encourage and assist in the education and cultural competence of Town of Cobourg staff.
6. To make recommendations regarding municipal policies and programs to provide equal employment opportunities.

Membership Composition

The Committee recognizes that many persons may be a member of more than one of the marginalized, underrepresented, and underserved groups, which brings a unique perspective. Further, the Committee understands that one person cannot speak for a group as a whole and will actively work against tokenism.

Voting Members

The Committee shall be comprised of a minimum of seven (7) and maximum of nine (9) voting members from the community representing a broad range of marginalized, underrepresented, and underserved groups. The hope is to have a cross-section of representative identities.

At least one member should have Indigenous ancestry, whether they are status or non-status.

Other voting members include two (2) members of Town Council.

Non-Voting Members

The Committee shall also include non-voting members from the following agencies:

1. One representative working with culture issues in the municipality from the Town of Cobourg,
2. One representative from Cobourg Police who preferably has personal knowledge related to a variety of equity, diversity, and inclusion issues,
3. One representative from the County of Northumberland to discuss shared and overlapping services and resources,
4. One representative from organization(s) who fall within the stipulated sectors, and
5. One post-secondary student attending Fleming College – Cobourg Campus, Loyalist College, Ontario Tech University, Gates College of Business, Culinary, & Healthcare, or another other college/university that is affiliated with Venture 13.

The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee of Council welcomes participation from the community at large as non-voting members to provide information and/or input to the Committee and/or specific initiatives.

Additional Town staff and representatives of diverse groups will be invited to attend meetings as needed to provide expertise related to a specific project.

Member Qualifications

Members must be Cobourg residents, rights holders living in the boundaries of the Williams Treaties, and/or individuals who work for organizations that provide services to Cobourg residents.

The following qualifications will be considered for appointing members to the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee of Council:

- Experience working in teams, with community groups, boards, or organizations,
- Knowledge, living, or lived experience with equity, diversity, and inclusion matters, and
- Commitment as a change-agent in equity, diversity, and inclusion matters in the community.

Unlike the other Advisory Committees of Council, the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee of Council has an age requirement of fifteen (15) to allow for the Youth perspective.

Appointments and Elections

Appointment Policies

Town of Cobourg's Advisory Committees and Local Boards are governed by our [Terms of Reference](#) and [Procedural Bylaws](#), and our [Advisory Committee Policy and Procedures](#).

There will be a separate application for the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee of Council that allows persons to voluntarily self-identify.

The Town of Cobourg typically recruits for Advisory Committee and Local Board members on two (2) specific occasions:

1. Immediately after a Municipal Election, and
2. As vacancies occur throughout the year.

Term of Office

Members of Advisory Committees shall be appointed for a four (4) year term that corresponds with the term of Council, expiring on November 30 of the year in which a municipal election is held, unless provided otherwise in their Terms of Reference or by a resolution of Council.

Committee members may be appointed to the same Committee upon reapplication for a maximum of eight (8) consecutive years and may reapply after an absence of one (1) year from that Committee.

Elections

The newly appointed Committee shall elect a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson as soon as practicable. In the interim, the member of Council or designate shall assume the role of Chairperson.

Meetings

Meetings, consultations, and events will be conducted in an accessible way to accommodate as many needs as possible.

Frequency

The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee of Council will meet monthly on the second Thursday of the month at 4:00 p.m. at Victoria Hall.

Members will be offered the option to call in via phone or video to attend meetings virtually.

Reporting

Reports to Council

The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee of Council reports to Town Council through the Chairperson and/or their designate, which can include one of the Town Councillors. All sub-committees report directly to the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee of Council.

All recommended action items from the Committee shall be provided to the Clerk, or designate, in the form of a Memo/Staff Report in order to include the item in the Agenda of the next Council meeting.