



Staff Report

Council Meeting Date: February 24, 2025

Subject: CLKS.2025.09 – Ward vs At-Large Election System Engagement

Report from: Christine Fraser-McDonald, Clerk

Attachments: Open House Notice

Recommendation

Be It Resolved that Council receives Report CLKS.2025.09 – Ward vs At-Large Election System Engagement for information purposes.

Background

At the September 25, 2024 Council meeting, Council passed a resolution to direct staff to proceed with seeking input from the community on their support for electing Councillors in a ward-based system or electing Councillors through an at-large system and that a public survey be created seeking community input.

On October 15, 2024 Council approved the proposal from Clerks on Call for an Electoral System – Community Engagement Strategy.

On January 27, 2025 Clerks on Call presented Council with the public [engagement plan](#).

Analysis

Public Engagement

Clerks on Call were tasked to undertake a community [engagement strategy](#) to enable Council to make decisions about whether to maintain the existing ward structure or to adopt an alternative at-large arrangement.

They developed and are in the process of conducting a public consultation process to allow the public to offer their perspectives on the present ward system and the alternative at-large system •

A dedicated page for public engagement can be found on the [municipal website](#) with a [short video](#) to explain the process and the difference in the Ward System vs At-large.

The Open Houses planned for February 12th and 13th in Paisley, Chesley and Tara were postponed due to inclement weather.

Open House New Dates:

- March 4th – Paisley Arena 5-7 pm
- March 5th – Tara Community Centre 3-5 pm
- March 5th – Chesley Municipal Office 6-8 pm

The new date has been circulated to ensure that all ratepayers are notified of the change of dates in the following manner:

- Direct mail to property owners
- News Release
- Social Media
- Shared with our Business Community channels
- Website

The main public information gathering tool will be the [Have your Say survey](#). The survey can be completed either digitally or in paper form. The engagement survey has been circulated through new release which was announced on local radio, social media channels and printed material in our facilities.

Information on the engagement process and paper copies of the survey were mailed with the tax bills to all properties with additional paper copies are available Municipal Office, the Community Centres and Libraries. The survey closes on March 20, 2025.

Following the engagement process, Clerks on Call will prepare a report that will to provide context for Council decision making on the 'preferred' electoral system for Arran-Elderslie

Link to Strategic/Master Plan

6.5 Engaging People and Partnerships

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding/Link to Procurement Policy

Engagement Strategy in the amount of \$5,850.00 plus HST, mileage and disbursement costs incurred to be funded from Account 01-1020-4300 – Contracted Services. (2024)

Advertisement costs will be funded from Account 01-1010-4354 – Election.(2025)

Approved by: Emily Dance, Chief Administrative Officer