

Terms of Reference

Equity & Diversity Advisory Committee

Purpose

The Equity & Diversity Advisory Committee (“the Committee”) provides advice to Council on identifying, preventing, and eliminating discrimination (based on race, religion, national origin, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, gender expression, disability, or sexual orientation) in Municipal services.

The committee plays a pivotal role in helping the Municipality of Cumberland become a more inclusive service provider in accordance with Nova Scotia’s Dismantling Racism & Hate Act (“the Act”). It will also increase connectedness across the county between government administrators and citizens.

Role

The Committee shall:

1. Advise council on the creation of an Equity & Diversity Plan. This Plan will guide council and Municipal employees with actions that should be taken to dismantle racism and increase inclusivity in county services.
 - The Plan is due to be available to the public by April 1, 2025, in accordance with the Act.
 - As guidelines are released, the Plan will be tailored to meet or exceed provincial requirements, such as review timelines or other prescribed information.
2. Advise council on the impact of municipal services, policies, and procedures on the public as it relates to equity, diversity, and inclusion.
3. Consult with the community on equity & diversity in Municipal services.
4. Be forward-thinking in consideration of what citizens’ future equity needs may be, and how to move towards a more positive future.
5. Review anonymized reports of discrimination.
6. Advise and make recommendations about strategies designed to achieve ideas developed in meetings, such as awareness campaigns, events, initiatives, etc.
7. Assist in monitoring compliance with federal and provincial government directives and regulations.

Composition and Terms of Appointment

- The Committee aims to have the greatest possible representation from a diverse array of voices:
 - Citizens with lived experience in discrimination based on race, religion, national origin, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, gender expression, disability, or sexual orientation
 - Citizens from different geographical areas of the Municipality
- Citizen appointments will have their primary residence in the Municipality of Cumberland as outlined in the Policy on Citizen Appointments (Municipality of Cumberland Policy 13-03). An exception may be made if the citizen's background and lived experience contributes a unique perspective to the committee's work (i.e.: a citizen from the Mi'kmaw community).
- The members of the Committee shall be appointed for a term of 3 years, and in accordance with the Policy on Citizen Appointments (Municipality of Cumberland Policy 13-03).
- The Committee shall elect a Chair and Vice-Chair every year.

Meetings

- The committee shall meet at least quarterly, or as needed to fulfill its duties (particularly in the beginning, the committee shall meet monthly in order to create the plan on time).
- A quorum shall be 50% plus 1 member of the committee, with at least 1 member present who is part of an equity-deserving group.
- Committee meetings should be open to the public where possible and appropriate.
- The committee may establish working groups to explore specific issues related to the accessibility plan and/or to other responsibilities.
- A working group may include additional employees who are not Committee members.
- The chair of a working group must be a member of the Committee.