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## Employee Engagement Action Plan Update

### Recommendation

That the report of the Acting General Manager, Corporate Performance Department dated March 12, 2018, be received as information.

### Topic and Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the employee engagement action plan as a result of the employee engagement survey conducted in 2017.

### Report Highlights

1. As part of the Mayor and City Council's Initiative for a Healthy City Hall, an employee engagement survey was conducted in 2017. Results were shared with management and staff in late 2017.
2. To address the results of the survey, management and staff are developing action plans to strengthen and improve employee engagement.
3. The City of Saskatoon has received recognition as one of Saskatchewan's Top Employers for 2018 and has also been highly recommended by employees as one of the top employers in Canada, Forbes 2018.

### Strategic Goal

The employee engagement action plan supports the Strategic Goal of Continuous Improvement by providing a better understanding into what is working and where we can make improvements to our organization to optimize employee engagement, leading to better outcomes for citizens.

### Background

Engagement surveys are a commonly used tool employed by organizations in both the private and public sectors. By improving employee engagement, organizations are more likely to maintain a strong, motivated workforce that is willing to expend extra effort to drive the organization's goals. The case for higher employee engagement is clear: higher productivity, better retention and lower absenteeism which results in a better citizen/taxpayer experience.

The City of Saskatoon's 2017 employee engagement survey is part of the Mayor and City Council's Healthy City Hall Initiative. The survey was launched in June 2017 and remained open until the beginning of July 2017.

As outlined in the Corporate Governance and Finance section of the 2018 Detailed Operating & Capital Budget, Strategic Outcomes and 2018 Initiatives include a goal to "facilitate and implement Employee Engagement Survey Action Plans in partnership with the Joint Union/Management Committee and Division Directors."

### **Report**

#### Employee Engagement Survey

The employee engagement survey was conducted and analyzed by McLean & Company, an independent third-party provider in 2017. Results were shared with management and staff in late 2017. A copy of the City of Saskatoon Engagement Report is provided in Attachment 1.

The survey results show that 75.6% of employees surveyed are engaged or almost engaged. This is in line with the benchmark of 75.3% for other organizations utilizing the McLean and Company survey; 13.4% of surveyed employees are indifferent and 11.0% disengaged, compared with 11.0% and 13.6% respectively as a benchmark.

Areas which employees rated very high and that the City should maintain and leverage relate to: work environment, co-worker relationships and work-life balance. Generally speaking, the survey showed that employees feel physically safe at work, do not feel discriminated against nor do they feel emotionally harassed at work.

Areas identified as needing improvement include: learning and development, senior management relationships and employee recognition. Collaboration across the organization and innovation are also identified as opportunities for improvement.

On a scale from 1-to-10, nearly three quarters of employees rate their workplace experience a '7' or greater.

#### Employee Engagement Action Plans

Since the completion of the survey, management has been working with employees to develop action plans tailored to both corporate and divisional levels. Action plans are focused on continuing activities that are working well and finding ways to boost areas where employee engagement could improve.

From a corporate perspective, the Administration hosted two co-design sessions with staff to identify various ideas to be captured within the corporate action plan.

The co-design approach uses equal collaboration between a wide range of people to resolve a particular challenge. A key principle of co-design is that the participants are the experts of their own experience and become central to the design process. In the context of the employee engagement project, participants of the co-design sessions:

1. Gain a better understanding of root issues and strengths specific to the corporate action plan topic areas.
2. Generate ideas and initiatives to improve employee engagement corporate-wide.
3. Help develop an action plan to make real and tangible improvements.

From the co-design sessions, a number of initiatives have been put forward, including but not limited to:

1. Open senior management meetings to employees to facilitate improved communication and understanding of senior leaders' roles.
2. Increased visibility of General Managers in the form of increased presence at employee meetings, walkthroughs, and job shadowing.
3. "Lunch and Learn" sessions where employees and managers across different divisions will come together to discuss a particular topic, share ideas and collaborate on solutions.
4. Develop impact statements for each job description to increase understanding of how the job contributes to the overall organization and how it impacts the citizens of Saskatoon.

At a divisional level, Directors are holding various focus group sessions with employees to generate action plan ideas specific to that division's engagement results.

Cross-functional teams will develop initiatives identified through the co-design and division focus group sessions, and will share their ideas across the organization and celebrate successes along the way.

### City of Saskatoon Recognized as Top Employer

The employee engagement survey is one very important measurement of how employees rate the City of Saskatoon as an employer. An engaged workforce tends to be more productive and deliver a higher quality of service than a disengaged workforce. A number of initiatives have been underway in recent years to improve employee engagement levels and ensure the City is a great place to work, live and play.

Benefits to such initiatives are evident with recent recognition; for the seventh year in a row, the City is one of Saskatchewan's Top Employers. Additionally, in 2018, Forbes rated the City among one of Canada's Best Employers. The Forbes survey ranked the City of Saskatoon in the top third of 300 Top Employers for 25 industry sectors across Canada.

### **Stakeholder Involvement**

The engagement survey was launched in June 2017 and remained open until the beginning of July. Employees were able to complete the survey either online or by completing a paper survey.

At a corporate level, action plans will be formed from the ideas put forward at the co-design sessions. Corporate level action plans are not specific to any Department or division, but rather will impact the entire organization. Through various focus group methods, employees were debriefed on the survey results and have provided feedback related to action plan formation for their specific division.

### **Communication Plan**

A variety of communication methods have been used throughout the project. A message to employees from the Mayor and former City Manager helped launch the survey. Announcements and updates have been provided at various employee

workshops. Managers have provided information directly to their employees. Posters and tent cards are being used and an internal SharePoint page keeps employees up to date on activities and actions.

### **Other Considerations/Implications**

There are no options, policy, financial, environmental, privacy, or CPTED implications or considerations.

### **Due Date for Follow-up and/or Project Completion**

Progress on action plans and follow-up engagement surveys will be regularly shared with the Administration and Personnel Subcommittee of Council.

### **Public Notice**

Public Notice pursuant to Section 3 of Policy No. C01-021, Public Notice Policy, is not required.

### **Attachment**

1. City of Saskatoon Engagement Report

### **Report Approval**

Written by:	Jennifer Webb, Human Resource Consultant, Employee Experience & Performance
Reviewed by:	Kim Matheson, Director of Employee Experience & Performance
Approved by:	Dan Willems, Acting General Manager, Corporate Performance Department

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