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**Halifax Regional Council**  
**October 11, 2005**  
**Committee of the Whole**

**TO:** Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

**SUBMITTED BY:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan English", written over a horizontal line.

Dan English, Acting Chief Administrative Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wayne Anstey", written over a horizontal line.

Wayne Anstey, Acting Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

**DATE:** October 5, 2005

**SUBJECT:** Council Priority Workshop: Council Action Plan

### **SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT**

#### **ORIGIN**

On September 15 and 16, 2005, Council, CAO and DCAO and the Senior Management Team attended what was termed at the time to be a Priority Setting Workshop. The preliminary results were contained in a report to Halifax Regional Council, Committee of the Whole, September 27, 2005. At the Committee of the Whole, a number of issues were raised. This report provides further clarity on these issues.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that:

1. Council endorse the key (10 or so) strategic focus areas as identified in Council's Action Plan
2. Council authorize staff to return with a status update and a suggested approach for further action on each item identified.

## **BACKGROUND & DISCUSSION**

At the Committee of the Whole held on September 27, 2005 when a preliminary report was presented, it was noted that not all Councillors were in attendance at the workshop, and as a result, there were a number of questions raised around it. An executive summary report on the workshop is being distributed to Council under separate cover.

Council has indicated its desire to provide direction to staff to address the key strategic issues or areas of concern facing the municipality at this time. The workshop provided an opportunity for Councillors to identify and propose their top strategic issues or areas of concern for staff to address. As a start, Council is now being asked to formally approve a list of the top 10 or so strategic issues or areas of concern and direct staff to report back to Council with options as to how these issues might be addressed in our upcoming Business Planning and Budget preparations.

There were a number of terms used at the workshop: issues, groupings of issues or themes, priorities and topics. To provide clarity, it is recommended that Council now formally identify for staff the most important areas they believe HRM needs to address in the coming months. In some cases, addressing the issue may mean new resources will be required; in others, it may mean redirecting existing resources; in others, it may mean HRM will have to cease certain activities; in still others, it may mean forming new partnerships with other levels of government or community groups.

Councillors at the September workshop listed close to 100 issues or areas of concern they would like addressed, and when boiled down into like or similar categories, the following topic or themes emerged:

- Regional Planning
- Youth
- Infrastructure
- By-law Enforcement
- Public Safety
- Taxation
- Traffic Congestion
- Transit
- Community Relations
- Community Recreation
- Community Development and Economic Development

As is Council's prerogative, it may choose to change this list now, or at any time in the future. From staff's perspective, it is recommended that Council review this list semi-annually or annually to ensure proper alignment of Council's strategic direction and staff efforts. Quarterly reports will be provided to Council on the progress in these areas.

All of the issues raised by Council are important, and staff will make every effort to deal with them. However, establishing the top choices means that these items will receive first attention. Staff is committed to supporting Council in addressing these areas.

In essence, these areas form Council's Action Plan and convey Council's commitment to residents and determination to deal with these areas or areas of concern in a most timely fashion.

As a start and following agreement by Council on the top 10 or so strategic choices to be included in Council's Action Plan, staff will come back with a status report on each item and a suggested approach to further action on the item. Discussion will include an analysis of current initiatives, issues, options for resolution, capacity and implications. Each of these areas should be discussed at Committee of the Whole, allowing Council to better ensure its direction is clear.

### **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

Any budget implications will be determined based on the direction provided by Council on each item.

### **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN**

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

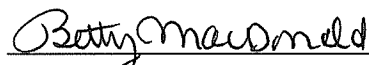
1. Council approve the list of all topic areas to be addressed and add additional detail to provide staff clear direction on the scope of the topic.
2. Council refer discussion to a Committee of Council to complete and report back to Council, with recommendations.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

None.

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/agenda.html> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report Prepared by:

  
Betty MacDonald/Director Governance and Strategic Initiatives