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Halifax Regional Council

August 9, 2005

September 6, 2005
September 13, 2005

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:

Betty MacDonald

Betty MacDonald, Director, Governance & Strategic Initiatives

DATE: August 3, 2005

SUBJECT: HRM Scorecard: 2nd Annual Report

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN:

HRM has adopted a framework for evaluating how well it is meeting the expected outcomes of its citizens and taxpayers. This report provides the results of the performance measures under the outcomes of the HRM scorecard and compares the results with last year's report. This report also identifies a number of initiatives that are underway to improve HRM's performance.

In the fall, Council will revisit the set of outcomes incorporated in the HRM Scorecard and will make adjustments as they see fit to ensure the outcomes reflect the expectations of the community.

BACKGROUND

In the spring of 2001, HRM's Program and Service Review Committee embarked upon a Performance Measurement Initiative of which the HRM Scorecard is one component. The focus of the Performance Measurement Initiative is to establish data collection, reporting and analysis procedures in HRM in order to monitor performance and provide accountability.

The HRM Scorecard is the tool being used to synthesize and clarify the set of outcomes expected by Council and the community from HRM. The outcomes address what the citizen and taxpayer expect from HRM. The balanced scorecard also encompasses two other perspectives that staff are currently addressing. The internal perspective identifies the processes that the organization must excel at in order to meet the citizen and taxpayer outcomes. The learning and growth perspective addresses the skills and learning processes required to improve performance.

DISCUSSION

To be helpful, performance measures should be specific, focussed on controllable facets of performance, reliable and timely. As well, they must be sensitive to the cost of obtaining the measurement information. Much discussion ensued at the staff level and at the Program & Service Review Committee, as the number of possible indicators is quite large. The issue of performance can be assessed from subjective and objective perspectives, recognizing the variety of factors affecting performance is quite numerous. HRM provides some 200 services and it is difficult to balance a useful report to the public that is concise, readable and informative.

As many of the outcomes are from the perspective of the citizen and the taxpayer, many of the measures chosen refer to the public's understanding of how HRM is performing. This report provides Council and the public with representative views of the public through a telephone survey conducted by Corporate Research Associates in May 2005. It also contains factual information on specific measures, and includes issues identified through public meetings, such as the police Town Hall Meetings and the Regional Plan sessions.

Last year's report identified citizen and taxpayer concerns with safety, the state of our streets and roads, and public transit. The 2005/6 Business Plans and Budget reflected these issues and increased expenditures were approved in these areas. We are currently in the process of establishing Community Response and Traffic divisions for policing. The Metro Link bus rapid transit service will begin this year for Portland Hills and Sackville, and the U-Pass will be expanded for Dalhousie students in January. Expenditures on streets and roads have increased and investment in improving our major transportation corridors will begin.

The impact of these initiatives will not be felt till next year. As is evident in this year's report, these issues remain as the top issues. Snow plowing, unnecessary spending, garbage collection, recreation programs, litter and graffiti cleanup were also noted. Overall, satisfaction with value for tax dollars increased, albeit from 63% to 67%.

This year's report shows some improvement as a result of a number of initiatives undertaken. Increases in public support of HRM priorities, satisfaction with HRM service, properties

inspected by Fire, applications for the HRM Kids program, solid waste diversion, participation in the Green Cart program were noted. 800 industries were inspected under our Source Control program. There are decreases in overall debt, pesticide applications, and water infrastructure leakage.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Any cost in measuring these indicators is absorbed in business unit budgets.

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

none.

ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A: **HRM Scorecard June 2005: Managing for Results**

Additional copies of this report, and information on its status, can be obtained by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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Report Approved by: _____