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**Subject:** Final Update – Ontario Ombudsman Report “Press Pause”

**Report to:** Regional Council

**Report date:** Thursday, February 20, 2020

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## **Recommendations**

That Report CAO 5-2020 **BE RECEIVED** and **CIRCULATED** to the Ontario Ombudsman for information.

## **Key Facts**

- The purpose of this report is to provide a final update respecting the implementation of the recommendations from the Ontario Ombudsman.
- Recommendation 14 of the Ombudsman Report “Press Pause” was for Niagara Region to report publicly, and to the Ombudsman Office, in six months’ time on its progress in implementing the recommendations, and at six-month intervals thereafter until such time as the Ombudsman was satisfied that adequate steps have been taken to address the recommendations.
- The Ombudsman’s Office has notified staff that they no longer require updates respecting the implementation of the report recommendations from the “Press Pause” report.

## **Financial Considerations**

There are no financial considerations associated with this report.

## **Analysis**

At its meeting held on July 18, 2019, Council received Report CLK 11-2019 which provided an update on the actions undertaken to date with respect to the Ontario Ombudsman Report “Press Pause”.

In December 2019, staff from the Ombudsman Office advised that they no longer required any further reports respecting the implementation of the recommendations from the “Press Pause” report.

In order to close the loop on the outstanding recommendations, staff are providing a brief outline of the outstanding items, many of which are to be considered by the Procedural By-law Review Committee. Staff are working on a draft of the new Procedural By-law and will include the recommendations from the Ombudsman Report as part of the consideration of the draft by-law. It is expected that the draft by-law will

be provided to the Procedural By-law Review Committee to begin its review in the coming months. The items to be considered further by the Committee include:

- Possible refinements of Policy C-RC-007 Management of Personal Items, Equipment and Disruptive Behaviour Prior to a Closed Session of a Committee or Council and Policy C-A-025 Managing Public Spaces in a Safe and Welcoming Environment
- A definition of “improper conduct” to be included in the above policies
- Expulsion from meetings and recording the reasons for any expulsions in the meeting minutes
- Council’s authority to exercise discretion to hold a closed session outside of the set agenda order

The following outstanding recommendations are under review by the Security Taskforce:

- Policies respecting *Trespass to Property Act*, improper and unreasonable conduct
- Policies respecting access to municipal property during meetings

## **Alternatives Reviewed**

No alternatives were reviewed.

## **Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities**

This report is based on the recommendations of the Ontario Ombudsman; however, the implementation of policies and procedures aligns with Council’s Strategic Priority of Sustainable and Engaging Government.

## **Other Pertinent Reports**

CLK 01-2018	Recommendations from the Ontario Ombudsman Report
GM 20-2018	Update on the Implementation of Recommendations from the Ombudsman Report “Press Pause” respecting the Regional Council meeting held on December 7, 2017
CLK 01-2019	Progress Report respecting Implementation of Recommendations from the Ontario Ombudsman Report “Press Pause”

CLK 11-2019      Second Progress Report respecting Implementation of  
Recommendations from the Ontario Ombudsman Report "Press  
Pause"

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**Prepared and Recommended by:**

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**Submitted by:**

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*This report was prepared in consultation with D. Gibbs, Director, Legal and Court Services.*

**Appendices**

None.