

WHEREAS Council identified in April 2012 the need to review options for a revised approach to Area Rating to achieve fair and equitable distribution of the Municipal tax levy, and implemented a Base Plus Ward Specific approach for the 2012 and 2013 tax years;

AND WHEREAS Area Rating is revenue neutral overall with the same total tax levy assessed regardless of the apportionment;

AND WHEREAS the Municipality is in a solid financial position as reflected in the Strategic Financial Plan, annual independent financial audits, and annual financial information reports provided to the province; and continues to operate well within prescribed Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing debt limits and conducted a comprehensive Service Delivery Review in 2012;

AND WHEREAS Council has reviewed the detailed work of the Area Rating Citizens Working Group, listened to community input, and consulted with amalgamated communities (e.g. City of Kawartha Lake, City of Hamilton, City of Quinte West and the City of Belleville) to develop a fair and equitable approach to Municipal taxation;

AND WHEREAS Option 10 provides a fair and equitable approach to apportioning the levy and generally aligns with Option 7;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Council approve these Options for discussion and consultation; and further;

- that the approach be phased in over 5 years; and further
- that Staff develop a policy and guidelines for annual review of the Area Rating By-law as part of the budget process; and further
- that a comprehensive review of the Area Rating By-law and all Municipal services be undertaken in 2016 with consideration to moving recreation facilities from Special Services to the Common tax levy.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a focus group be created to review Options 7 and 10 also including those outlined in the "Option Comparison Table" of the Director of Finance's Area Rating Report dated November 26, 2013; and further;

- to develop and frame the area rating information and recommendations for consultation including implementation; and further;
- that the focus group be comprised of the following; 1 representative from the Area Rating Working Group Ward 2 members; Mayor Linda Thompson; the Director of Finance and 1 representative from the Area Rating Working Group Ward 1 members;
- that the focus group provide a status report to the December 10, 2013 Committee of the Whole meeting and any recommendation be included in a report from the Director of Finance at the January 7, 2014 Committee of the Whole meeting;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a comprehensive community consultation process be undertaken to review the recommendations from the January 7th, 2014 Committee of the Whole meeting with a minimum of 2 meetings in both Wards and the use of an external facilitator;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this be completed for the April 1, 2014 Committee of the Whole meeting to allow full consideration of all public input before the Municipality is required to set the 2014 tax rate and the Area Rating Implementation By-law be finalized.