

Department and Division Name Change – Interpretation Bylaw

ISSUE

To accommodate the Fusion (SAP implementation) program mandate of ‘no customization’, the Corporation is required to update its organizational hierarchy terminology to align with SAP and industry-standard conventions. Under this model, “Divisions” will supersede “Departments”, and serve as the top-level structures under which Departments reside.

This terminology change may lead to inconsistencies in the interpretation of existing policies, bylaws, and other established regulations, which were written in accordance with the current “Department > Division” terminology. To mitigate these occurrences, it is recommended that an Interpretation Bylaw that allows for these terms to be interchanged be instated.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Standing Policy on Environment, Utilities & Corporate Services recommend to City Council that the City Solicitor be requested to prepare an Interpretation Bylaw to address the change in Department/Division terminology.

BACKGROUND

The Fusion program was initiated in 2019 to implement SAP as the City of Saskatoon’s Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) platform, to serve as a foundational tool for the consolidation of systems, processes and data throughout the Corporation.

In order to manage costs for this extensive program, one of Fusion’s key directives has been to limit customizations to the incoming system by re-aligning Corporate processes to coincide with SAP’s structure and industry-best practice requirements. One of these key requirements is the organization of business units being named in accordance with the structure of Division > Department.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

Historically, the City of Saskatoon has utilized an organizational structure of Departments containing Divisions. This must now be altered to reflect the structure of Divisions containing Departments to accommodate the requirements of SAP, and limit customizations and workarounds within the Fusion program.

Numerous existing bylaws reference both “Divisions” and “Departments” in various contexts and updating all references at a single point in time would be a laborious process with little immediate benefit. This administrative effort can be avoided by introducing an Interpretation Bylaw to allow the organizational unit names of “Department” and “Division” to be used interchangeably, until such time as the bylaws referencing this terminology can be updated.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

The Fusion Go-Live and concurrent Department/Division naming change will occur on January 4, 2021. As a result of the timing of Committee and Council meetings, there will be a brief period of time wherein the existing bylaws that reference “Departments” and “Divisions” will not reflect the updated Corporate structures of Division > Department. Both the City Solicitor’s Office and Strategy & Transformation have confirmed that this brief lapse results in minimal risk and are confident that the level of exposure to the City for this interim period is low.

The City Solicitor’s Office has advised that an added benefit to the introduction of an Interpretation Bylaw is that such a Bylaw would provide future opportunities to address common definitions and other questions of interpretation across all bylaws, without extensive alteration or re-work of existing bylaws.

While there are financial implications of changing policies and bylaws, with this approach the implications are minor and spread over time.

There are no social or environmental implications identified.

NEXT STEPS

If the recommendation is adopted by City Council, the City Solicitor will prepare the Interpretation Bylaw for approval and implementation. References to “Departments” and “Divisions” in other bylaws will be corrected through housekeeping amendments when those bylaws are otherwise being amended.

Report Approval

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