Recommendations:
That South Huron Council receives the report from S. Currie, Manager of Community Services, titled “2019 Corporate Communication Program Summary Report” for information.

Purpose:
Information.

Background and Analysis:
On June 18, 2018, Council adopted the South Huron Communication Policy and related Communication Strategy (motion #309-2018) to establish guidelines that ensure communication with stakeholders of the Municipality is open, efficient, effective and timely. Soon after on July 3, 2018, Council adopted the Municipality’s Engagement Policy (motion #347-2018) in recognition that public engagement is a key component of open, effective governance.

The purpose of this report is to provide a review of these corporate policies along with an annual summary of activities according to key performance indicators.

A Corporate Communication Strategy Summary is included in Appendix I.
Communication Program Key Performance Indicators

Municipal Website Usage
Information on website usage is gathered using Google Analytics, which can produce customizable reports.

- On a given day in 2019, 100-400 people used SouthHuron.ca to find information.

Website traffic spikes when staff post news releases or agendas for upcoming Council meetings. For example:

- October 22nd, 2018 – Municipal election night
- June 20, 2019 – Pinnacle Homes development announcement
- July 1, 2019 – Exeter & District Pool grand opening/Canada Day
- July 4, 2019 – Crediton Hall closure
- October 3, 2019 – October 7th Council Meeting Agenda

News Room Performance
To keep the public informed, South Huron regularly publishes items to the website and shares them on social media.

Public notices are the preferred communication product for routine operational updates to the public (e.g., road closures, Planning Act notices, etc). Staff published 70 public notices in 2019.

News releases are used to inform the public about decisions of Council, new municipal initiatives or major project milestone updates. These news items typically involve a quote from a municipal spokesperson and require approval from the CAO and Mayor before they are issued. The Municipality issued 17 news releases in 2019.

Social Media Performance
The Municipality is increasingly using social media to distribute information to the public. There are many different metrics to evaluate performance on
these platforms; however, one key indicator is the number of “followers” that the organization maintains over time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>@southhuron</th>
<th>January 2019</th>
<th>December 2019</th>
<th>Year Over Year % Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook followers</td>
<td>1190</td>
<td>1520</td>
<td>+ 27 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter followers</td>
<td>1832</td>
<td>1913</td>
<td>+ 4.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instagram followers</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Paid Advertising**
While the Municipality attempts to earn (free) media coverage whenever possible and use its own communication platforms to share information, it is sometimes necessary to pay for advertising to achieve our communication objectives of increasing awareness of a service, promoting an event, or meeting regulatory compliance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Examples</th>
<th>2019 Expenses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Radio Ads: Recreation program registrations, pre-budget consultation survey, Canada Day promotions, etc</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper Ads: “The Hub”, statutory notices required under <em>Planning Act</em>, <em>Municipal Act</em> etc.</td>
<td>$18,975.95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Engagement**
South Huron conducted three public engagement surveys in 2019 including the 2020 Pre-budget Survey, the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and Building By-law Review. Community consultation data is collected using software called Engagement HQ by Bang the Table. A summary of engagement statistics is provided here.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROJECT TITLE</th>
<th>AWARE</th>
<th>INFORMED</th>
<th>ENGAGED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2020 Pre-Budget Consultation</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate Change Adaptation Strategy</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of Building By-law 35-2005 Amendments</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Aware** visitors mean number of individual visits to the page
- **Informed** visitors mean someone performed an action on the page (e.g., downloaded a document, clicked a picture)
- **Engaged** visitors mean they completed the survey.
New Initiatives in 2019/2020

1. The Municipality started an Instagram account in June of 2019 to connect with youth. This pilot project was undertaken as part of the Municipality’s Youth Engagement Strategy.

2. South Huron is trialing a software platform called Engagement HQ to foster greater levels of community engagement on special projects.

3. To improve customer service, staff are working collaboratively with the South Huron BIA and Huron County Library in an attempt to create a one-stop information portal of community events.

4. Staff formed a Web Working Group to build internal capacity in administering the municipal website. For a period of 6 weeks in the summer of 2019, a representative from each department participated in a weekly, two-hour training session that covered topics such as:
   - How to use the website software and its capabilities
   - how to write for the web and South Huron publishing standards
   - Accessibility of Ontarians with Disabilities Act training

Methods for Collecting Public Feedback

Clearly, public input is vital to providing high levels of public service to our residents. In addition to phone, in-person and email contact with the public, staff monitor information needs using several methods:

- Social media messages
- Website search engine results
- Report It form submissions through SouthHuron.ca

Operational Considerations:

The communications and engagement policies of the Municipality have been effective in guiding the activities of staff, especially as we work to modernize our municipal operations and adopt new communication technologies.

Staff recommend one amendment be added to the Communication Policy to enable control over third-party advertising that occurs on municipal property. The provision reads:
Any third-party advertising on municipal property must be arranged through a partnering agreement with the Municipality of South Huron.

**South Huron’s Strategic Plan:**
The recommendation(s) included in this staff report support the following goal identified in the 2015-2019 Strategic Plan:

1. **Transparent, Accountable and Collaborative Governance**

**Financial Impact:**
None.

**Legal Impact:**
None.

**Staffing Impact:**
None.

**Policies/Legislation:**

**Consultation:**

**Related Documents:**
- South Huron Communication Policy
- South Huron Engagement Policy

Respectfully submitted,

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Scott Currie, Manager of Community Services