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London
CANADA

March 13, 2018

Chair and Members of the
Corporate Services Committee

Re: Workplace Harassment and Discrimination Prevention Policy

Throughout society, we are seeing women come forward with stories of harassment, sexual abuse and gender-based violence in unprecedented ways. The #MeToo and #TimesUp movements, led by women, are driving a much-needed and important conversation about ending these forms of abuse and violence. Everyone who is in a position to make or influence policy has a responsibility to respond to these calls-to-action.

All employees have a right to work in an environment that is free from harassment and discrimination. Council and Civic Administration must work together to ensure that we meet this obligation.

The City of London's Workplace Harassment Discrimination Prevention Policy sets out "Informal" and "Formal" processes to respond to complaints raised under the Policy. As written, the Policy does not provide options to employees in circumstances where an employee does not feel comfortable bringing the complaint forward through the established intake process. We have also heard concerns that the process outlined in the existing policy does not provide the independence that is necessary to carry out a fair review and/or investigation of a complaint.

We believe that a review of the Policy is required in order to ensure that all employees feel safe bringing a complaint forward. Section 13.0 of the Policy states that "the Policy shall be reviewed as required." The undersigned are therefore seeking support of the following recommendation:

"That the following actions be taken with respect to the Workplace Harassment and Discrimination Prevention Policy:

- a) the Civic Administration BE DIRECTED to undertake a review of the Workplace Harassment and Discrimination Prevention Policy and report back to the appropriate standing committee with suggested amendments to enhance the Policy;
- b) the Civic Administration BE REQUESTED to invite all collective bargaining units to participate in this review, along with external stakeholders with experience working with women who have experienced harassment, abuse and gender-based violence;
- c) the Civic Administration BE REQUESTED to bring forward an alternate process for individuals to submit a complaint under the Policy in circumstances where the individual is uncomfortable with bringing the matter forward through the established intake process: and,
- d) the Civic Administration BE DIRECTED to undertake a review of the Policy at least once per Council term.

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Brown
Mayor

Virginia Ridley
Councillor, Ward 10

Jesse Helmer
Councillor, Ward 4