



## Staff Report

**Report Title: Virtual Council and Committee Meeting Extension**

**Prepared By: Emily Dance, Clerk**

**Department: Clerk**

**Date: Sep. 8, 2021**

**Report Number: CLK-2021-09-104**

**File Number:**

**P09-COV20**

### **Attachments:**

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### **Recommendation:**

THAT the Township of Huron-Kinloss Committee of the Whole hereby approves Report Number CLK-2021-09-104 prepared by Emily Dance, Clerk AND approves that all open session meetings of Council and Committees continue to be conducted virtually until then end of 2021 when it can be further evaluated.

### **Background:**

Council and Committee meetings have been held virtually since April 2020. Staff has received positive feedback from residents, delegations, and consultants on the ability to participate in the virtual meetings during the pandemic.

### **Discussion:**

Now in Step 3 of the Province's COVID-19 pandemic response reopening plan, and with no determination from the province when we move to the exit step, along with concerns of the fourth wave and mutated variants, staff is recommending Council and Committee meetings remain virtual until the end of the year when it can be further evaluated.

The Township recognizes the importance of citizen participation in Council and Committee meetings however with the lack of space in Council Chambers to ensure social distancing, maintaining virtual meetings is the best option to serve the public at this time.

If a member of the public is unable to participate virtually, staff have procedures in place ensure the meetings are accessible to all our residents upon request.

Staff is suggesting that recommendations and considerations for hybrid type meetings and the associated challenges and conflicts be brought forward to the December, 2021 Committee of the Whole meeting for discussion.

**Financial Impacts:**

The costs remain low to host Council and Committee meetings virtually. The Township has enhanced the Zoom Platform subscription to include a toll-free number for members of the public.

**Strategic Alignment / Link:**

We are an accessible community by being open and transparent.

**Respectfully Submitted By:**

Emily Dance, Clerk

**Approved By:**

Mary Rose Walden, Chief Administrative Officer