

5. Media Access to City of Vancouver Staff

MOVER: Councillor George Affleck

SECONDER:

WHEREAS

1. The City of Vancouver values openness and transparency;
2. Media has an important role in communicating the actions of the City of Vancouver, and are crucial to ensuring informed, engaged citizens;
3. The budget allocated to the Communications Department has increased from \$1.25 million to \$1.94 million, and staffing has increased from 9 to 20 positions over the past four years;
4. Local media have raised concerns regarding open access to officials, timely interviews with officials, and the ability to receive information on city policies, activities, strategies, programs and spending;
5. City departmental staff are professional, have good judgement and are generally very knowledgeable in their fields of expertise;
6. Past policy permitted City Hall staff to communicate directly with members of the media at the discretion of their direct managers with no noticeable negative effects.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT staff provides a report to Council within three months which will explain:

- (i) Current policy relating to media access to Department Heads in the context of current global best practices;
- (ii) Clear and concise policy around timely access to information by media; and
- (iii) How the commensurate workload of the Communications Department could be monitored with the view of cutting costs in that department as part of continued efforts of the Shared Services Review.