



## **Administrative Report**

**To:** Warden MacDonald and Members of Essex County Council

**From:** Donald McArthur, Manager, Communications and Organizational Development

**Date:** Wednesday, March 19, 2025

**Subject:** Introduction of Employee Excellence Awards

**Report #:** 2025-0319-LLS-R12-DM

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### **Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to provide County Council with information about the inaugural County of Essex Employee Excellence Awards, which will be presented annually to employees from across the corporation in four categories: Teamwork, Innovation, Service Excellence, and Empowerment.

### **Background**

The County of Essex Strategic Plan calls for the County of Essex to be an “employer with impact” that fosters “positive employee experiences” and administers “employee recognition and appreciation programs” as part of an ongoing effort to “improve the recruitment and retention of high-quality talent at the County.” Additionally, an employee engagement survey conducted in 2023 highlighted areas for improvement including teamwork and innovation.

The County of Essex has launched multiple employee engagement initiatives, including a Cheers for Peers program where colleagues nominate each other for exemplary service, and a long-term service pin program recognizing years of service.

Last year, the inaugural year of the program, the County distributed 558 long-term service pins to employees across all departments recognizing combined years of service of nearly 9,000 years. This year, the County is distributing 189 pins, including three pins to employees with 40 years of service.

The Employee Excellence Awards program, which is launching this year with 25 recipients to be recognized tonight, is meant to celebrate employees who embody our organizational values, demonstrate excellence in their roles and

inspire others to achieve their best. Employees are our greatest asset at the County of Essex and the awards program highlights their exceptional work and acknowledges their tremendous efforts and value.

Distinct from the Cheers for Peers recognition program, where colleagues nominate each other, the process for the Employee Excellence Awards program is as follows: Department leaders bring forward nominations annually in each category to the Senior Leadership Team, which discusses the submissions and then votes for a winner and honourable mentions.

Winners receive a plaque and have their names added to the County of Essex recognition walls at the County of Essex Administration Building and Sun Parlor Home. Honourable Mention recipients will receive framed certificates.

All recipients will be celebrated publicly and on County Connect, the County's employee intranet.

## Discussion

The Employee Excellence Awards program will recognize employees from across the corporation in four categories that align with the goals of our Strategic Plan and areas for improvement that were identified by employees in our most recent employee engagement survey. The four categories are Teamwork, Innovation, Customer Service and Empowerment.

- **Teamwork:** This category recognizes employees who excel in collaboration, fostering unity and achieving collective goals. Teamwork is one of the core values in the County of Essex Strategic Plan and it was identified as an area for improvement in the employee engagement survey.
- **Innovation:** This category recognizes employees who introduce creative solutions, improvements or ideas that drive progress and enhance our operations. Innovation was identified as an area that needed improvement in the Employee Engagement Survey and improving service delivery through innovation is a goal in our Strategic Plan.
- **Service Excellence:** This category recognizes employees who go above and beyond in delivering exceptional service to internal or external colleagues and partners. Service Excellence is one of the core values in the County of Essex Strategic Plan.
- **Empowerment:** This category is open to all employees, including managers, and recognizes those who empower and uplift their colleagues, creating an environment for success and professional

growth. Empowering staff to work together as Team Essex County is one of the goals of our Strategic Plan.

A list of this year’s winners and honourable mentions, and a brief summation of why they are being recognized, is included with this report as Appendix A.

### **Financial Implications**

All Employment Engagement initiatives, including any costs associated with the Employee Excellence Awards program, is fully funded through the County’s annual operating budget.

### **Consultations**

None.

### **Strategic Plan Alignment**

<b>Working as Team Essex County</b>	<b>Growing as Leaders in Public Service Excellence</b>	<b>Building a Regional Powerhouse</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Scaling Sustainable Services through Innovation  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focusing “Team Essex County” for Results  <input type="checkbox"/> Advocating for Essex County’s Fair Share	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Being an Employer with Impact  <input type="checkbox"/> A Government Working for the People  <input type="checkbox"/> Promoting Transparency and Awareness	<input type="checkbox"/> Providing Reliable Infrastructure for Partners  <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting Dynamic and Thriving Communities Across the County  <input type="checkbox"/> Harmonizing Action for Growth  <input type="checkbox"/> Advancing Truth and Reconciliation

### **Recommendation**

That Essex County Council receive report number 2025-0319-LLS-R12-DM, Introduction of Employee Excellence Awards as information.

## Approvals

Respectfully Submitted,

*Don McArthur*

Donald McArthur, Manager, Communications and Organizational Development

Concurred With,

*David Sundin*

David Sundin, BA (Hons), LL.B., Director, Legislative and Legal Services/County Solicitor

Concurred With,

*Sandra Zwiers*

Sandra Zwiers, MAcc, CPA, CA, Chief Administrative Officer

<b>Appendix</b>	<b>Title</b>
N/A	N/A