Sent: Monday, July 8, 2024 8:57:59 AM

Personal information
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Delegation information
Committee: Executive Policy Committee
Committee - council: N/A
Committee - other: N/A
Agenda item (number and title): 6. Analysis of Costs Associated with a 'Living Wage'

Service inquiry: Submit Comments in writing
Participation preference: N/A
Comments in writing: Mayor Gillingham and Members of EPC:

The provision of a living wage is an essential component of a city government that provides a positive example to employers in the public, private and non-profit sectors. Implementation of a living wage would enable the City of Winnipeg to secure the title of 'employer of choice' in the employment market, attracting the best and brightest talent.

Many of the positions considered in this report are frontline staff who are the City's ambassadors, such as 311 customer service representatives. Paying these employees a living wage is critical to attracting qualified candidates for these roles. This is also important since such entry-level positions are a springboard to other positions of greater responsibility in the public service. In the long term, such a wage enhancement would assist the City in attracting and retaining the dedicated, professional and competent workforce it needs to fulfill City Council's vision.

I'm aware of the argument that wages should be set through the collective bargaining process. However, it is a regular practice for an employer to reclassify job positions and pay rates to meet market conditions.

As both a citizen and a former public servant, I have experienced and benefitted from the hard work of City frontline staff, as we all do. I strongly support compensating these workers in a way that reflects the value they add daily to citizens' lives.

To position the public service to attract the best candidates to serve our fellow Winnipeggers, I ask you to not simply receive this report as information. Rather, I implore you to direct the public service to help you do the right thing for affected employees by developing an implementation plan for a living wage as a priority.

Thank you for your consideration.

Steve West