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## Report 2024-052

**Report Title:** 2024 Non-Union Cost of Living Adjustment

**Committee Name:** Corporate Support

**Committee Meeting Date:** April 2, 2024

**Prepared by:** Lisa Ainsworth  
Director Corporate Services  
Corporate Services

**Reviewed by:** Matthew Nitsch  
Director Finance Treasurer  
Finance

**Approved by:** Jennifer Moore, CAO

**Council Meeting Date:** April 17, 2024

**Strategic Plan Priorities:**  Innovate for Service Excellence  
 Ignite Economic Opportunity  
 Foster a Thriving Community  
 Propel Sustainable Growth  
 Champion a Vibrant Future

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### Information Report

“**That** the Corporate Support Committee, receive Report 2024-052 ‘2024 Non-Union Cost of Living Adjustment’, for information; and

**Further That** the Committee recommend that County Council receive this report for information.”

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### Purpose

To provide Committee and Council with an overview of the 2024 Non-Union Cost of Living Adjustment.

### Background

The Council approved Non-Union Comparator Group includes:

- Municipality of Clarington
- Town of Pickering
- Hastings County
- City of Quinte West
- Town of Ajax
- County of Lennox & Addington
- City of Peterborough
- City of Brantford
- Town of Whitby
- Durham Region
- Prince Edward County
- Peterborough County

In 2022 Council authorized that the non-union cost of living calculation for non-union is to be granted in accordance with Human Resources (HR) Policy 4.3.7 Compensation, annually on January 1<sup>st</sup> without additional approval from Council.

The County of Northumberland provides compensation to its non-union employees that reflect the application of core principles as follows:

- Internal pay equity, i.e., gender neutral, equal pay for work of equal value at the same performance level.
- External pay equity i.e., market competitive job rates that ensure the County is paying the “going rate”.
- Pay-for-performance, i.e., linking pay to the skills a non-union employee brings to their position and the employee’s achievement of individual performance goals and measures.
- Fairness to all non-union employees in the application of the above pay principles.
- Open communications and feedback to employees on compensation and performance.

A core objective of HR Policy 4.3.7 is to fairly address market competitiveness through annual Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA). The COLA is calculated using an average of approved unionized increases, increases for the market comparator group and the January Consumer Price Index (CPI).

The non-union positions at the County presently number 249 full, part time, contract and student incumbents and include:

- The management group of ten departments
- The Road Patrol Supervisors and Fleet Supervisor
- The office administration group and Shift Superintendents within Paramedics
- The Community Recycling Centre administration group, staff and Roll-off Drivers
- The administration group within the Golden Plough Lodge
- All technical specialists and office administration staff in
  - o CAO Administration
  - o Finance
  - o Provincial Offenses
  - o Human Resources & Payroll
  - o Legislative Services
  - o Natural Heritage
  - o Northumberland County Archives and Museum
  - o Health, Safety & Emergency Planning
  - o Legal Services
  - o Public Works
  - o Information Technology Services
  - o Economic Development, Tourism
  - o Planning & Inspections
  - o Business Entrepreneurship Centre

- Ontario Agri-Food Venture Centre

## Consultations

The following provides an overview of the approved/recommended increases for the external comparator group, approved internal unionized increase and January's CPI.

Municipality 1	2.75%
Municipality 2	2.00%
Municipality 3	3.00%
Municipality 4	4.73%
Municipality 5	3.00%
Municipality 6	3.00%
Municipality 7	2.75%
Municipality 8	3.00%
Municipality 9	2.00%
Municipality 10	3.00%
Municipality 11	1.86%
Municipality 12	2.00%
<b>Total external comparator percentage</b>	<b>33.09%</b>
Union CUPE Local 1203 (bargaining in 2022)	2.00%
Union CUPE Local 1748	3.00%
Union OPSEU/SEFPO	Expires March 31, 2024
Union CUPE Local 3725	Expired September 30, 2023
Union ONA	Expired March 31, 2023
<b>Total percentage based on 2 of 5 unions</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>January 2024 CPI</b>	<b>2.70%</b>
<b>2023 Non-Union Cola</b>	<b>2.72%</b>

It should be noted that the absence of percentage increases for 3 of the County's 5 unionized groups has a negative impact on the COLA for the Non-Union group.

## Legislative Authority / Risk Considerations

The HR Compensation policy follows guidelines established in the Pay Equity Act, 1990 and Employment Standards Act, 2000.

As an Employer, Northumberland County continues to place focus on attraction and retention models, inclusive of compensation in order to ensure its ability to compete for and retain talent when a short commute allows for higher wages in in some cases more lucrative benefit packages while also offering a lower cost of living.

## Discussion / Options

As per By-Law 2020-11, County Councils annual salary adjustment each year on December 1<sup>st</sup> based on the December 1<sup>st</sup> Consumer Price Index for Ontario. The increase for County Council effective December 2023 was 3.4%

Not providing an annual cost of living adjustment will result in the County lagging behind CPI, internal unionized groups and external comparators, thereby compromising the County's ability to attract and retain staff.

## Financial Impact

2.72% increase for the non-union positions equates to \$527,937. 3% (\$546,682) was included in the approved 2024 budget.

## Member Municipality Impacts

The 2024 COLA recommended or approved by the County's 7 member municipalities is as follows:

Municipality 1	1.75%
Municipality 2	3.00%
Municipality 3	2.70%
Municipality 4	2.00%
Municipality 5	3.30%
Municipality 6	3.00%
Municipality 7	3.00%
Average Increase	2.68%

## Conclusion / Outcomes

The Corporate Support committee receive the 2024 Non-Union Cost of Living Adjustment report for information.

## Attachments

N/A