Minute No. 434
Report – Executive Policy Committee – July 6, 2016

Item No. 1 Open Government Policy – Action Plan

COUNCIL DECISION:

Council concurred in the recommendation of the Executive Policy Committee and adopted the following:

1. That the City of Winnipeg Open Government Action Plan (attached) be approved, and the Winnipeg Public Service be directed to report back with the Open Government Policy by February 2017.

2. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

Report – Executive Policy Committee – July 6, 2016

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by His Worship Mayor Bowman,

That the recommendation of the Executive Policy Committee be adopted by consent.

Carried

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On July 6, 2016, the Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service and submitted the matter to Council.

COUNCIL DECISION:

On May 18, 2016, Council concurred in the recommendation of the Executive Policy Committee and adopted the following:

1. That an extension of time of 60 days be granted for the Chief Administrative Officer to develop an Action Plan.

On November 25, 2015, Council concurred in the recommendation of the Executive Policy Committee and adopted the following:

1. That the Chief Administrative Officer be directed to implement an open government policy across all Departments in the City of Winnipeg.

2. That the Chief Administrative Officer develop an Action Plan for Council's endorsement within 6 months.

On October 28, 2015, Council concurred in the recommendation of the Executive Policy Committee and adopted the following:

1. That the City Clerk's Department be requested to report back to the Executive Policy Committee within 30 days with a report detailing leading open government initiatives in other jurisdictions.

2. That the report contain recommendations for implementing Open Government practices at The City of Winnipeg.

Report – Executive Policy Committee – July 6, 2016

DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

COUNCIL DECISION (continued):

3. That the City Clerk's Department, in consultation with the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer, report back annually thereafter on current initiatives other jurisdictions are implementing in Open Government, and identify initiatives which have been implemented at the City of Winnipeg as well as any future opportunities to improve Open Government.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Title: Open Government Policy

Critical Path: Executive Policy Committee - Council

AUTHORIZATION

Author	Department Head	CFO	CAO
F. Wiltshire	F. Wiltshire	n/a	D. McNeil

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Council approves the City of Winnipeg Open Government Action Plan (attached) and direct the public service to report back with the Open Government Policy by February 2017.

2. That the proper officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

REASON FOR THE REPORT

On November 18, 2015, Council concurred in the recommendation of the Executive Policy Committee and adopted the following:

1. That the Chief Administrative Officer be directed to implement an open government policy across all Departments in the City of Winnipeg.

2. That the Chief Administrative Officer develop an Action Plan for Council's endorsement within 6 months.

3. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Citizen engagement is on the rise, and the City of Winnipeg wants to be more accountable and provide better access to information for its citizens. The City of Winnipeg currently implements certain aspects of open government but does not have an all-encompassing policy in place. The City of Winnipeg's Open Government Action Plan will utilize the Office of Public Engagement to conduct public consultations, and to work with departments to develop an Open Government Policy that meets the needs of our citizens while balancing the City's ability to provide information.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Office of Public Engagement will begin work on organizing and executing public consultations on open government.

The Office of Public Engagement will conduct research and engage the public service on existing open government initiatives, and determine what they are able to contribute to the open government initiative.

HISTORY/DISCUSSION

Over the past decade citizens have been passionate about informing themselves on local community issues and engaging in government policy. Direct access to information and openness and transparency at all levels of government is being demanded in order to empower citizens.

The City of Winnipeg has components of an open government framework but does not have an all-encompassing standardized policy that is implemented City-wide.

On March 20, 2013, Council adopted an Open Data Initiative which endorsed the principles of providing Open and Accessible Data that could be shared with citizens, businesses and other jurisdictions the greatest amount of data possible while respecting privacy and security concerns.

On June 25, 2014, Council adopted the “Open Government Initiative - Improvements to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act Process” which directed the Winnipeg Public Service to implement a new process for Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA) requests. This process would focus on the concepts of openness and transparency in providing government data, while ensuring privacy and security of data for citizens and businesses, in keeping with the Open Data Initiatives adopted by Council.

On September 16, 2015, Executive Policy Committee requested that the Public Service conduct a review of all city data sharing and identify opportunities to apply machine readable format along with a review of security and privacy considerations and report back within 90 days.

On October 26, 2015 the City Clerk’s office prepared a report outlining leading open government initiatives in other jurisdictions and broad recommendations on next steps for the City of Winnipeg in implementing open government.

On November 18, 2015 the Chief Administrative Officer was directed to implement an open government policy across all Departments in the City of Winnipeg, and to develop an Action Plan for Council’s endorsement within 6 months.

Appendix 1 outlines the City of Winnipeg’s Open Government Action Plan, utilizing the Office of Public Engagement to conduct extensive public consultations and to work with departments to develop an Open Government Policy that meets the needs of our citizens while balancing the City’s ability to provide information.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Financial Impact Statement **Date: June 27, 2016**

Project Name: Open Government Policy

COMMENTS:

There is no financial impact associated with the recommendations of this report.

(Original signed by R. Hodges)
Ramona Hodges
Manager of Finance (Campus)
Corporate Finance Department

CONSULTATION

Office of Public Engagement
Corporate Support Services

OURWINNIPEG POLICY ALIGNMENT

Not applicable.

SUBMITTED BY

Department: Office of the Chief Administrative Officer
Division: Corporate Communications
Prepared by: Felicia Wiltshire, Director of Corporate Communications
Date: June 21, 2016

Unlocking the Door to City Hall
City of Winnipeg Open Government
Action Plan

Introduction

The City of Winnipeg is committed to providing its citizens with a more accountable, transparent, effective, and efficient government.

Building on the key benefits of Open Government as were published by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development as part of an Open Government Summit in 2010 in Paris, France, the City of Winnipeg strives to:

- Establish greater trust in government.
- Ensure better outcomes at less cost.
- Raise compliance levels.
- Ensure equity of access to public policy making.
- Foster innovation and new economic activity.
- Enhance effectiveness by leveraging knowledge and resources of citizens.

These drivers will serve as the basis for establishing an open government concept that will meet the needs of the City of Winnipeg and its citizens.

The City's Open Government initiative will be founded on the concepts of participation, transparency, collaboration, and accountability.

It is also important to note that open government is not synonymous with open data, but rather open data is one component of open government. Effective open government must include public engagement, enhanced accessibility to information, public education, and transparent governance, in addition to open data.

Open Government and the City of Winnipeg

Currently, the City of Winnipeg provides components of an open government framework, including:

- Open data portal
- Information on elected officials, including online itemized expenses
- Centralization of Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA) and the release of frequently requested documents
- Live streaming of Council and Committee meetings
- Agendas, minutes, dispositions and by-laws all posted online in the Decisions Making Information System (DMIS)
- Departmental listings of public engagement opportunities.

Next Steps

While the City of Winnipeg does apply elements of open government, they are not currently part of an all-encompassing policy, and therefore, do not completely fulfill their function. In order to develop a comprehensive and all-encompassing policy, the City needs to do a substantial amount of in-depth research and public engagement to ensure the goals that are set are realistic and achievable. The policy needs to balance the ability of the City to provide increased access to information for its citizens, while not conflicting with other legal and regulatory obligations. First and foremost, the City needs to determine what information the public wants and needs as well as the mediums and channels they would like to use to access information.

1. Pubic Engagement

The City of Winnipeg, through the Office of Public Engagement (OPE), will commit to involving the public in the development of an Open Government Policy, so the policy is able to balance the ability of the City to provide information with the public's desire for information.

The OPE will consult with residents in Fall 2016 to determine how the government can be more open, transparent and accountable, and will provide Council with regular updates on the public engagement process.

It is important that residents have input into the development of the City's Open Government Policy so the policy actually meets their needs.

2. Departmental Consultations

The OPE will develop a working group to engage staff from City departments to determine the full extent of work already being done on open government initiatives throughout the City. The working group will also work with departments to further refine what they are able to contribute to the open government initiative and to determine what is achievable.

There are a number of ways to address open government, but most importantly keeping in mind that direction outlined in an Open Government Policy does not conflict with other legal and regulatory obligations.

The concept of open government will require a change in culture at the City.

3. Development of an Open Government Policy

Based on the information obtained through public engagement and departmental consultations, the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer will prepare a City of Winnipeg Open Government Policy for Council's consideration and endorsement. This will be developed by February 2017, following the conclusion of the public engagement and departmental consultations.

Conclusion

While open government does not always provide people with an unlimited supply of information, it does allow for questions to be asked and concerns to be heard, and provides a platform for government to serve its citizens more effectively, in unconventional and non-traditional ways.

The concept of open government is one of participation and inclusion; in keeping with this concept, the development of an Open Government Policy for the City of Winnipeg must not be done in a silo. This policy document requires significant input from the public and needs to be embraced by the public service.

An Open Government Policy will not only allow pertinent information and communication to be readily available, but will also establish trust amongst the public and administration. For this policy to be achievable, the culture must change throughout the organization.

The document that will be created following this action plan will be one that is well researched, planned and thought out.