Minutes – Executive Policy Committee – January 21, 2020

REPORTS

Item No. 2 French Language Services Review Strategy

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service and recommended to Council:

1. That the Public Service be instructed to recognize that French language services should be accessible to all residents of the City of Winnipeg, and therefore, that when reasonably possible, French language services be provided upon request, regardless of geographic designation, through active offer (open invitation to the public to use one of our two official languages—English or French—when communicating with or receiving a service from the City of Winnipeg).

2. That the Public Service be directed to develop a five-year plan which will identify the capacity to provide services in French.

3. That the Department of Customer Service and Communications review *The Official Languages of Municipal Services By-law No. 8154/2002* with Legal Services to clarify the legal obligations of the municipal government, and report back within 180 days.

4. That the Public Service review and update the by-law a minimum of every 5 years to ensure it meets the needs of the community.

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

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Allard,

That the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service be concurred in and forwarded to Council.

Carried

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Title: French Language Services Review Strategy

Critical Path: Executive Policy Committee – Council

AUTHORIZATION

Author	Department Head	CFO	CAO
N. Young	F. Wiltshire	N/A	M. Ruta, Interim CAO

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It is imperative that departments and special operating agencies work closely with the French Language Services (FLS) Division to implement a plan relating to the provision of the delivery of French language services. A multi-year strategic FLS plan would outline the practical ways and means by which the City can actively offer and effectively provide its services in French as they relate to its policies, programs, and services including programs and services provided by third parties on behalf of the City. Continual collaboration, discussion, and capacity building are necessary to ensure the City meets its legal obligations and to ensure that next steps are to be successfully implemented.

Several key findings were identified in the four-week FLS public engagement review with community groups and members, expressing concerns, barriers and aspirations they would like to see implemented (attached as Appendix 1).

Having a revised and updated by-law, *The Official Languages of Municipal Services No. 8154/2002* (by-law), to foster a larger and more inclusive delivery of FLS by the Public Service is important to meet the needs of the community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Council instructs the Public Service to recognize that French language services should be accessible to all residents of the City of Winnipeg, and therefore, that when reasonably possible, French language services be provided upon request, regardless of geographic designation, through active offer (open invitation to the public to use one of our two official languages—English or French—when communicating with or receiving a service from the City of Winnipeg).

2. That Council directs the Public Service to develop a five-year plan which will identify the capacity to provide services in French.

3. That the Department of Customer Service and Communications review *The Official Languages of Municipal Services By-law No. 8154/2002* with Legal Services to clarify the legal obligations of the municipal government, and report back within 180 days.

4. That the Public Service review and update the by-law a minimum of every 5 years to ensure it meets the needs of the community.

5. 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

At its July 19, 2018 meeting, Council concurred in the recommendation of the Executive Policy Committee and adopted the following:

1. That the Public Service implement the strategy outlined in this report to conduct a review of French language services provided by the City of Winnipeg, including consideration of public input and a review of:

    A. The City of Winnipeg Charter, Part 9;
    B. the Official Languages of Municipal Services By-law No. 8154/2002;
    C. The City of Winnipeg Wards and Communities Regulation, 154/92;

and report back with recommendations to Council for approval in the summer of 2019.

At its September 26, 2019 meeting, Council granted a 120-day extension of time to report back.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

If the recommendations are approved, there will be a tangible impact on the delivery and use of French by the City of Winnipeg.

HISTORY/DISCUSSION

History

In June 1992, the Province of Manitoba passed Bill 78, amending The City of Winnipeg Act (Part 3). Part 3 was proclaimed effective May 1, 1994. As required under the new law, a French Language Coordinator was appointed in September, 1993. Part 3 also required that the City report annually to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs on the progress it was making on meeting its FLS obligations.

On April 24, 1994 Council passed the first By-law (No 6402/94) for the provision of municipal services in both official languages.

On September 26, 2001 Council approved the final report of the French Language Services Task Force which contained a number of recommendations, including that a Councillor be

appointed to address future matters relating to the provision of French Language Services for the City of Winnipeg.

On December 11, 2002 Council passed By-law No. 8154/2002 – Official Languages of Municipal Services By-law. This By-law replaced all previous by-laws regarding French language services and reflected the enactment of Part 9 of The City of Winnipeg Charter, as well as outlining more specifically the obligations of each department.

In 2015, a new full-time position responsible for French Language Services was approved by Council. On October 3, 2016 a new manager was hired. Under the general supervision of the Director, Customer Service & Communications, the Manager is responsible for providing leadership and direction to the Public Service, senior administration and Council in the development and management of French language services. This position is responsible for managing the City's Bilingual Service Centre, and for ensuring bilingual service requirements are being met under Part 9 of The City of Winnipeg Charter. Furthermore, this position is responsible for the development of policies, By-Law(s), and administrative directives, for advising departments/Special Operating Agencies on policy, for liaising regularly with other levels of government, and for following up on community groups on complaints related to French language service matters.

In December 2017, the Wards Boundaries Commission prepared a final report establishing the boundaries and the name of each ward for the City of Winnipeg.

The sociocultural profile of Winnipeg's Francophone community is changing, and existing services do not take this into account. Consider the following trends:

3. Francophone immigration signals the need for integration of newcomers who speak in French and not in English and who settle in neighbourhoods other than Saint-Boniface for lack of affordable housing available and with increased social needs;

4. While the designated areas of Part 9 include the Riel District, the Francophones remain in every corner of Winnipeg. We must find ways to serve them;

5. Francophiles are an integral part of the "Francophone Community" strategy;

6. New technologies have an impact on service delivery, not to mention that a human contact is needed to interpret the information. Young people want the snapshot. The ageing population has other needs.

In working with the departments, it is clear that the current framework stated in the City of Winnipeg By-law No. 8154/2002, a bylaw that guides the development of strategic plans, needs to be updated and modernized.

There are several actions that will need to be undertaken to achieve this review:

1. Evaluation of municipal French language services provided by the City of Winnipeg;

2. Development of the French Language Services Review would be supported by a public consultation strategy intended to:

    a. Inform the public about the current services the City offers in French;

b. Gather feedback on services currently not offered in French that the public would like available as well as services offered in French that the public does not find valuable;

c. Build public awareness about the current policies and requirements governing the delivery of French language services (*City of Winnipeg Charter, Part 9* and *The Official Languages of Municipal Services By-Law No. 8154/2002*);

d. Identify and prioritize opportunities for the delivery of French language services; and

e. Continue to foster and strengthen relationships with stakeholders and the broader French community that can support the implementation of the French language service plan.

3. Development and implementation of both short and long term strategies;

4. Development and implementation of innovative delivery models;

5. Promotion and awareness of review and outcomes of the delivery of French language services.

Discussions

ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN	Timeline
Ensure thorough environmental assessments at the department and special operating agency level, including establishment of relevant baseline information regarding such matters as current French language services available, French language service delivery locations and methods, bilingual human resources available and their language proficiency levels.	Winter 2018
Provide for an effective delivery of French language services (direct service, service at a distance, active offer, use of interpreters, etc.) as required throughout the organization and for all pertinent program activities; and research various bilingual service delivery models that exist in other bilingual municipalities in Canada (i.e.: Ottawa, Moncton).	Spring 2019
Public Engagement Strategy to work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered. Communicate and collaborate with individuals, groups and organizations concerned with the delivery of French services.	May-June 2019
Ensure regular follow-ups with the Province of Manitoba's Minister responsible for French language services and the Council Francophone Liaison to understand the needs of the Francophones within the City of Winnipeg.	Ongoing
Identify priority services and programs to enhance communication in French according to the results of the inventory and concerns raised by the francophone community.	Summer 2019
Determine the most appropriate and effective role for the French	

Language Services Division in helping departments deliver these services.	
Implement an awareness strategy for the Francophone community regarding active offer and importance to request service in French, and to promote services that are available in French.	Spring | Summer 2020
Offer training on the active offer to City employees.	Ongoing
Promotion and by-law amendments communicated to the public	Fall 2020
Write and implement a multi-year action plan with the City of Winnipeg Departments and Special Operating Agencies.	Fall 2021
Annually evaluate the progress achieved by this action plan in the Annual Report on French Language Services and make any necessary changes.	Summer (annually)

The French Language Services Division will support departments and special operating agencies in preparing their multi-year strategic plan as well as prepare a guideline manual to assist the public service in fulfilling their responsibilities with regard to the French Language Services Charter and by-law of the City of Winnipeg and provide guidance in their implementation.

The manual contains guidelines relevant to senior officers and officials, directors, managers, human resources directors and consultants in the various public service to which the charter and by-law apply.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Financial Impact Statement **Date:** **December 12, 2019**

Project Name:

FRENCH LANGUAGE SERVICES REVIEW STRATEGY

COMMENTS:

The proposed amended by-law of The Official Languages of Municipal Services No. 8154/2002 may result in financial implications to the city with increasing the translation costs by clarifying the legal obligations of the municipal government to serve both residents and general public; however, any increase in costs are not determinable at this time.

Original signed by
Tanis Yanchishyn
Manager of Finance & Administration (Campus)
Corporate Finance Department

CONSULTATION

This Report has been prepared in consultation with:
Legal Services (as to legal issues)

OURWINNIPEG POLICY ALIGNMENT

01-1C Direction 3: Complete Communities provide options for accessing services, amenities and community resources by ensuring that most of the daily necessities of life— services, facilities, and amenities— are readily accessible.

03-1 Direction 2: Provide equitable access to municipal programs, services and facilities.

- Strive to engage a diverse cross section of local stakeholders in planning initiatives.
- Support the provision of services and communication in age-friendly and alternative formats. Work to implement accessible City communications.

The Charter and by-law include representation and inclusivity, reflecting the need to offer access to services and programs in both official languages.

03-2 Direction 3: Work in partnership with communities to identify and address neighbourhood issues.

The Charter and by-law are to help support and address community issues by considering input and feedback on any municipal project in the language of their choice.

WINNIPEG CLIMATE ACTION PLAN ALIGNMENT

n/a

SUBMITTED BY

Department: Customer Service & Communications
Division: French Language Services
Prepared by: Nicole Young, Manager
Date: December 13, 2019