Minutes – Executive Policy Committee – January 17, 2023

REPORTS

Item No. 2 Creation of a Plain Language Communication Policy

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive Policy Committee granted an extension of time of 180 days for the Winnipeg Public Service to report back with respect to a plain language policy to be used by the City in all external communications and administrative reports.

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Lukes,

That an extension of time of 180 days be granted for the Winnipeg Public Service to report back with respect to a plain language policy to be used by the City in all external communications and administrative reports.

Yea:	Gillingham, Browaty, Lukes, Mayes, Orlikow, Rollins	6
Nay:		0

Carried

David Grant submitted a communication with respect to the matter.

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On April 20, 2022, the Executive Policy Committee directed the Winnipeg Public Service to report back in 180 days with respect to a plain language policy to be used by the City in all external communications and administrative reports.

COMMUNITY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On March 23, 2022, the Assiniboia Community Committee passed the following motion:

WHEREAS the City of Winnipeg Governance Review identified multiple recommendations citing a need for materials to use a simpler writing style to enable the public to understand City communications;

AND WHEREAS clear and effective communication is essential for the City of Winnipeg to deliver many services that are essential to daily life;

AND WHEREAS Winnipeg continues to grow through immigration, and English is not the first language of many new residents;

AND WHEREAS documents written using plain language are more likely to meet accessibility standards and are easier to have translated;

AND WHEREAS plain language helps improve the relationship between the government and citizens;

DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

COMMUNITY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION (continued):

AND WHEREAS governments that adhere to plain language principles have reported increased access to services, compliance with regulations, and decreases in costs due to reduced phone calls and emails, enabling faster processing;

AND WHEREAS Corporate Communications provides recommendations to departments to reduce technical and industry jargon, but does not provide training, robust guidelines, or policies to ensure the use of plain language in materials;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Executive Policy Committee be requested to direct the Winnipeg Public Service to develop a plain language policy to be used by the City in all external communications and administrative reports.