Minute No. 543
Report – Standing Policy Committee on Community Services – May 31, 2023

Item No. 7 Extreme Weather Response

COUNCIL DECISION:

Council concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services and adopted the following:

1. That Council approve the following policies and directives to strengthen the City's extreme weather response:

    A. Formally adopt as policy that the City's threshold for extreme cold weather activity is a temperature forecast of -25°C or colder (with or without wind chill), based on notifications from Environment and Climate Change Canada.

    B. Direct the CAO or his designate to create a City-led, extreme weather PSA alert system similar to alerts issued in other cities, with alerts concurrent with any -25°C forecast to begin in the Winter of 2023-24, and direct the CAO to submit to the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services a draft policy governing heat and cold weather alerts by September 30, 2023.

    C. Direct the CAO to allocate $1.0m in additional 24/7 Safe Space funds included in the 2023 Budget Update to expand 24/7 Safe Space partnerships in a ring around Downtown, and pilot new extreme weather initiatives as outlined in the Attachment.

    D. Direct the CAO to formally pre-designate a single City-owned or controlled building as the primary site for use as a temporary overnight shelter in the event of shelter system overflow, shelter shutdown or other similar emergencies, including extreme weather. The CAO or his designate will report back to the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services by September 30, 2023 on existing or recommended procedures to use the designated space, and what (if any) additional partnerships or resources are needed to stage this site for contingencies.

    E. Invite End Homelessness Winnipeg to make regular submissions to the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services on the progress of its Extreme Weather Response plan and to flag any trends in HIFIS data that may be of use to help the City further adjust extreme hot and cold weather responses in 2024-25.

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

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DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Orlikow,

That the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services be adopted by consent.

Carried

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On June 12, 2023, the Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services and submitted the matter to Council.

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On May 31, 2023, the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services concurred in the Council Motion of May 30, 2023, and submitted the matter to the Executive Policy Committee and Council.

COUNCIL DECISION:

On May 30, 2023, Council ruled automatic referral of the following motion to the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services:

Moved by Councillor Orlikow,
Seconded by His Worship Mayor Gillingham,

WHEREAS Mayor Gillingham committed to update Winnipeg's extreme cold weather policies and to expand the 24/7 Safe Space system in his election platform to offer more emergency shelter options to unhoused people in all weather conditions;

AND WHEREAS End Homelessness Winnipeg and other community partners are already executing the Coalition's Extreme Weather Response Plan.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT that Council approve the following policies and directives to strengthen the City's extreme weather response:

1. Formally adopt as policy that the City's threshold for extreme cold weather activity is a temperature forecast of -25°C or colder (with or without wind chill), based on notifications from Environment and Climate Change Canada.

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DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

COUNCIL DECISION (continued):

2. Direct the CAO or his designate to create a City-led, extreme weather PSA alert system similar to alerts issued in other cities, with alerts concurrent with any -25°C forecast to begin in the Winter of 2023-24, and direct the CAO to submit to the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services a draft policy governing heat and cold weather alerts by September 30, 2023.

3. Direct the CAO to allocate $1.0m in additional 24/7 Safe Space funds included in the 2023 Budget Update to expand 24/7 Safe Space partnerships in a ring around Downtown, and pilot new extreme weather initiatives as outlined in the Attachment.

4. Direct the CAO to formally pre-designate a single City-owned or controlled building as the primary site for use as a temporary overnight shelter in the event of shelter system overflow, shelter shutdown or other similar emergencies, including extreme weather. The CAO or his designate will report back to the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services by September 30, 2023 on existing or recommended procedures to use the designated space, and what (if any) additional partnerships or resources are needed to stage this site for contingencies.

5. Invite End Homelessness Winnipeg to make regular submissions to the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services on the progress of its Extreme Weather Response plan and to flag any trends in HIFIS data that may be of use to help the City further adjust extreme hot and cold weather responses in 2024-25.

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