# The City of Winnipeg

## Councillors' Ward Allowance Fund Policy Report

Audit Findings Report to the Governance Committee of Council

For the year ended December 31, 2022

KPMG LLP

Prepared as of May 30, 2023

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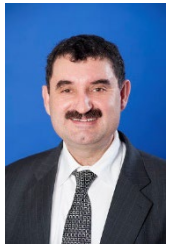


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### Our refreshed Values

**What we believe**

**Integrity**
We do what is right.

**Excellence**
We never stop learning and improving.

**Courage**
We think and act boldly.

**Together**
We respect each other and draw strength from our differences.

**For Better**
We do what matters.

# Executive summary

## Purpose of this report[1]

The purpose of this Audit Findings Report is to assist you, as a member of the Governance Committee of Council, in your review of the results of our compliance audits of the Councillors' Ward Allowance (CWA) and Chairperson Expenditures Reports for five Councillors selected randomly by management of The City of Winnipeg (the City) as at and for the year ended December 31, 2022.

### Overview of the Councillors' Ward Allowance Fund Policy

The Councillors' Ward Allowance Fund provides funds for City Councillors to pay for furnishings, office equipment, materials and administrative services required to operate their offices. The fund is also used for business expenses incurred by Councillors to perform their duties, communicate with their constituents and represent their wards.

Chairmanship funds are received by elected officials in recognition of extra duties and expenses incurred by virtue of acting as a chairperson of a committee, or other additional Council roles. Chairperson expenditures are required to follow the provisions of the *Councillors' Ward Allowance Fund Policy*.

The adopted budgets for the Councillors' Ward Allowance Fund in 2022 amounted to an allocated budget of $84,924 per ward and either $4,000 or $2,970 for other Council roles.

The *Councillors' Ward Allowance Fund Policy* ("the Policy") provides direction on the guiding principles for the funds, guidance for spending, and detailed roles and responsibilities for fund stakeholders.

### Roles and responsibilities

The Policy establishes key controls over administration of the fund expenditures. The Policy also prescribes the roles and responsibilities of Councillors, the City Clerk's Department, the Corporate Finance Department, and the Governance Committee of Council, in relation to the funds. The provisions of the Policy also apply to additional funds provided to chairpersons of committees of Council and for other Council roles.

All organizational stakeholders are responsible for following all accounting, audit and income tax principles, and rules relating to the Policy.

Councillors are authorized to spend funds allocated to their wards and are responsible for ensuring that the funds spent comply with the provisions of the Policy.

The City Clerk's Department is responsible for reviewing and processing CWA expenditures on an ongoing basis in accordance with the Policy; it is also responsible for providing accounting and financial support to Councillors, including on the handling of difficult and unusual transactions. In the event that the City Clerk's Department requires policy interpretation or guidance on the appropriateness of an expenditure, the matter is referred to the Governance Committee of Council. The City Clerk's Department can also bring forward policy amendments to the Governance Committee of Council.

The Corporate Finance Department is responsible for processing payment for CWA expenditures at the direction of the City Clerk's Department, and for the monthly posting of CWA expenditures for each ward and chairperson account on the City's website.

The Governance Committee of Council makes decisions on the appropriateness of expenditures brought to their attention. The Committee also reviews policy amendments brought forward by the City Clerk's Department and recommends policy amendments to Council.

[1] This Audit Findings Report should not be used for any other purpose or by anyone other than the Governance Committee of Council. KPMG shall have no responsibility or liability for loss or damages or claims, if any, to or by any third party as this Audit Findings Report has not been prepared for, and is not intended for, and should not be used by, any third party or for any other purpose.

## Control and other observations

We did not identify any control deficiencies that we determined to be significant deficiencies in internal control over financial reporting (ICFR).

We identified a recommendation listed in the Observation and Recommendation section of this report.

Refer to Appendix 1 for the definitions of the various control deficiencies.

## Independence

We are independent of the City and have extensive quality control and conflict checking processes in place. We provide complete transparency on all services and follow Audit Committee approved protocols.

## Materiality

We have determined materiality for each CWA and Chairperson Expenditures Reports for the year ending December 31, 2022.

*Refer to page 5.*

## Uncorrected differences

We did not identify differences that remain uncorrected.

# Audit Quality: How do we deliver audit quality?

Transparency report

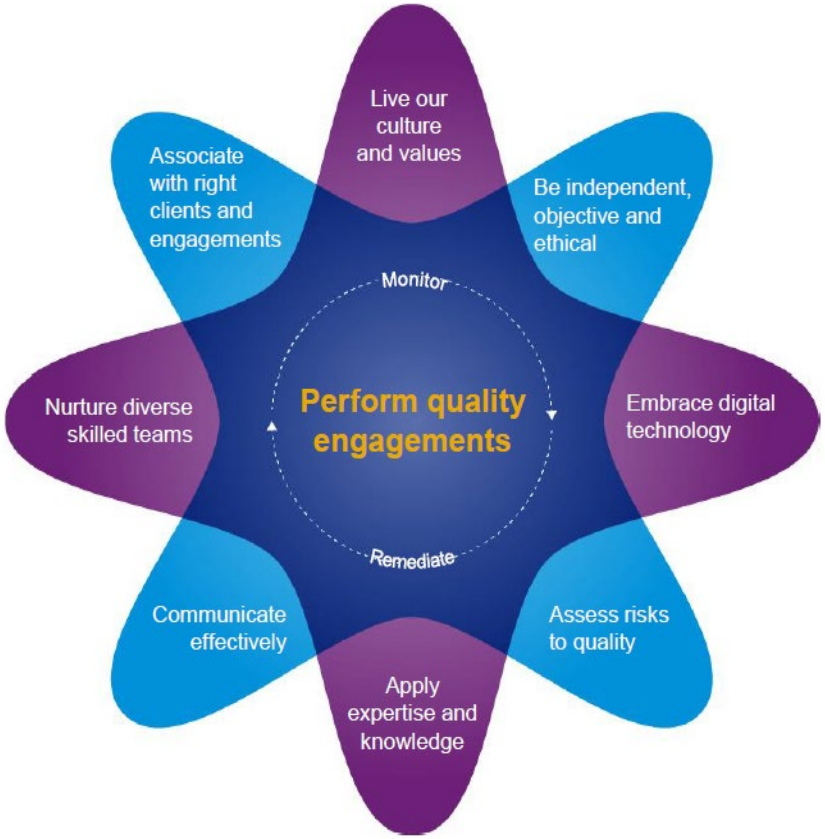
**Quality** essentially means doing the right thing and remains our highest priority. Our **Global Quality Framework** outlines how we deliver quality and how every partner and staff member contributes to its delivery.

'**Perform quality engagements**' sits at the core along with our commitment to continually monitor and remediate to fulfil on our quality drivers.

Our **quality value drivers** are the cornerstones to our approach underpinned by the **supporting drivers** and give clear direction to encourage the right behaviours in delivering audit quality.

We define '**audit quality**' as being the outcome when:

- audits are **executed consistently**, in line with the requirements and intent of **applicable professional standards** within a strong **system of quality controls;** and
- all of our related activities are undertaken in an environment of the utmost level of **objectivity, independence, ethics,** and **integrity.**




**Doing the right thing. Always.**

# Audit quality indicators (AQIs)

The objective of these measures is to provide the Governance Committee of the Council and management with more in-depth information about factors that influence audit quality within an audit process. Below you will find the current status of the AQIs that we have agreed with management are relevant for the audit.

| AQI | Measurement criteria | Milestone measurement and status | G Y R |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Team Composition** | Experience of the team | Both Partners involved have 10+ years of experience with the City of Winnipeg and 6 years or involvement with the Councillors' Ward Allowance and Chairpersons Expenditure Report audits.<br>The Senior Manager has been involved in these audits for the last 6 years. |  |
| **Technology in the Audit** | Implementation of Technology in the Audit | Utilized a KPMG shared site to provide management with a secure site in which to provide KPMG with the information required for the audit and reduced the need for sending information by e-mail and eliminated the use of a USB stick.<br>KPMG utilized pivot tables and Vlookup in Microsoft Excel to prepare the expenditure reports for each Councilor. |  |
| **Timing of Prepared by Client (PBC) items** | Timeliness of PBC items | Both the Corporate Finance and the City Clerks Departments had all required information prepared for the commencement of our field work. The information we received was complete and we received full co-operation from all involved. |  |

**Legend:**  Nothing to report  Some matters to report  Specific matters to report

# Materiality

Materiality is used to identify risks of material misstatements, develop an appropriate audit response to such risks, and evaluate the level at which we think misstatements will reasonably influence users of the financial statements. It considers both quantitative and qualitative factors. To respond to aggregation risk, we design our procedures to detect misstatements at a lower level of materiality.

| Materiality determination | Comments | Amount |
|---|---|---|
| **Benchmark** | Based on the average annual total expenditures of the five selected Councillors.<br>This benchmark is consistent with the benchmark used in the 2021 audit. (2021 - $89,985) | $88,330 |
| **Materiality** | Determined to plan and perform the audit and to evaluate the effects of identified misstatements on the audit and of any uncorrected misstatements on the financial statements. (2021 - $900) | $883 |
| **% of Benchmark** | Percentage applied to above benchmark to calculate materiality. (2021 – 1%) | 1% |
| **Performance materiality** | Used 75 percent of materiality, and used primarily to determine the nature, timing and extent of audit procedures. (2021 – $675) | $662 |
| **Audit Misstatement Posting Threshold (AMPT)** | Thresholds used to accumulate misstatements identified during the audit. (2021 - $34) | $33 |

**We will report to the Governance Committee of the Council:**


Corrected audit misstatements


Uncorrected audit misstatements

# Observations and recommendations

## Observations and recommendations – Current year Finding

### 1. Expenses Not Recorded in the Correct Accounting Period

#### Criteria

As per The Councillors' Ward Allowance (CWA) Fund policy section Four: "Expenses must be charged to the year in which they occurred. Expenses cannot be carried forward to different years".

#### Condition

During our audit of one ward, we noted an expense recorded in the incorrect accounting period, with an expenditure incurred in 2021 recorded improperly in 2022. The following table summarize the observation noted:

| Invoice Date | Recording Date | Expense Description | Comment |
|---|---|---|---|
| September 12, 2021 | January 5, 2022 | Tee Sign on Golf Course | Expense is related to the financial year ending December 31, 2021 and it was recorded in the financial year ending December 31, 2022. |

Observations over expenditures recorded in the incorrect period have been found in previous audits.

#### Cause

We understand that the Corporate Finance Department has policies and procedures in place to follow up with the Councillor's Liaison Coordinator to obtain all invoices for the year. However, there is a risk that expenses might not be recorded in the correct accounting period due to the invoice not being received or submitted by the year-end cut-off date.

#### Effect

The recording of expenses in the incorrect period may result in overstatement or understatement of expenditures and the calculation of the unexpended funds to be carried over to future years to be inaccurate.

### RECOMMENDATION 1

Consistent with prior years, we recommend that the City Clerk & the Corporate Finance Department review the completeness of year-end accruals, in attempt to ensure the reports reflects all expenditures for the year. In situations where an invoice has not been received before the year-end accounting is closed, an estimated accrual should be recorded.

### MANAGEMENT RESPONSE – CITY CLERK'S DEPARTMENT

The City Clerk's and Corporate Finance Departments agree with the recommendation. The Departments have previously taken steps to mitigate the frequency of these types of accounting issues, which have resulted in the reduction of their occurrence. The Departments will continue to conducted additional reviews to ensure completeness and accuracy for the reporting period.

# Informational - Election Year

## 1. Additional work performed over election year cut-off period

### Criteria

As per The Councillors' Ward Allowance (CWA) Fund Policy, the following specific policies relate to the election year cut-off period:

- *"The incumbent Councillor shall only be authorized to expend funds for that portion of the year that the Councillor is in office."*
- *"Councillors shall not use CWA funds to purchase any furnishings and/or office equipment after the day wherein Councillor Candidates are allowed to register for civic office."*
- *"Councillors shall not use CWA funds to prepare and/or distribute any advertising, newsletters, etc. after the day wherein Councillor Candidates are allowed to register for civic office. However, the Councillor may communicate with his/her constituents on specific issues during this period. Pre-paid annual advertising expenses incurred prior to this period, not pertaining to the election, are allowed."*
- *"Councillors shall not use city purchased equipment or office space or CWA funds to pay for any services performed in support of Councillors' campaign for re-election."*
- *"Councillors shall not use CWA funds to undertake Community Events after the day wherein Councillor Candidates are allowed to register for civic office."*

### KPMG response and observation

To address the additional requirements of the Policy during the election year cut-off period, we selected additional sample for the councillors during this period.

During our review of these additional samples, we found no instances of non-compliance with the Policy.

We observed that the policy relating specifically to advertising during the cut-off period and the allowable pre-paid annual advertising expenses is susceptible to misinterpretation relating to the timing of the pre-paid expense and the type of advertising that would not pertain to the election.

### RECOMMENDATION 1

We recommend that the policy over the election year cut-off period relating to the advertising expenses be clarified relating to pre-paid annual advertising expenses to give a more detailed description of the timing and type of advertising allowed.

### MANAGEMENT RESPONSE – CITY CLERK'S DEPARTMENT

The City Clerk's Department agrees that some of the above wording regarding the regulation of expenditures in an election year is ambiguous and can lead to misinterpretation. The City Clerk's Department intends to bring forward a report to amend the CWA policy, to specify the time period for which Councillors can purchase pre-paid advertising.

# Appendices

## Content

**Appendix 1: Background and professional standards**

**Appendix 2: KPMG's audit approach and methodology**



# Appendix 1: Background and professional standards

## Internal control over financial reporting

As your auditors, we are required to obtain an understanding of internal control over financial reporting (ICFR) relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the compliance with the CWA Fund Policy, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of internal control.

Our understanding of ICFR was for the limited purpose described above and was not designed to identify all control deficiencies that might be significant deficiencies and therefore, there can be no assurance that all significant deficiencies and other control deficiencies have been identified. Our awareness of control deficiencies varies with each audit and is influenced by the nature, timing, and extent of audit procedures performed, as well as other factors.

The control deficiencies communicated to you are limited to those control deficiencies that we identified during the audit.

# Appendix 2: KPMG's audit approach and methodology

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