Minutes – Executive Policy Committee – March 19, 2024

BUDGET REVIEW

Item No. 11 Creation of a Plain Language Communication Policy

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE DECISION:

The Executive Policy Committee received the matter as information.

(See Budget Review Item 31)

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Browaty,
That the matter be received as information.

Carried

COUNCIL DECISION:

On September 29, 2023, Council concurred in the recommendation of the Executive Policy Committee and adopted the following:

1. That the Plain Language Policy, attached as Appendix A, be approved with the following amendments:

    A. In Section 3.1, add the following:

        i. "i. All 311 Services"

        ii. "The Public Service will mandate a plain language training program for all staff who write public facing materials as part of their job. The current training programs offered by the city will need to be modified to incorporate ISO standards."

    B. In Section 4:

        i. Delete Section 4.1 in its entirety and replace with the following:

            "4.1 Director of Customer Service & Communications

            The Director of Customer Service & Communications is responsible for administering this policy, including ongoing reviews every two years. The Director shall post the Plain Language Policy on the Customer Service & Communications webpage, along with an online mechanism to accept feedback on the policy."

        ii. In Section 4.2, delete the period after the words "follow this policy", and replace with the following:

            ", within 90 days. This position is also responsible for providing clarity on the requirements of this Policy."

DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

COUNCIL DECISION (continued):

iii. In Section 4.3, delete the period after the words “follow this policy”, and replace with the following:

“, within 90 days.”

iv. In Section 4.4, delete the period after the words “follow this policy”, and replace with the following:

“, within 90 days.”

v. In Section 4.6, add the following:

“Responsible for identifying a key contact in their department that will be fully versed in plain language practices. They will help ensure that their departments are adhering to the updated plain language policy.

Complete mandatory training for staff who write public facing materials as part of their job.”

C. Delete Section 5 in its entirety and replace with the following:

“5. The Policy will be reviewed, at minimum, every two (2) years via an administrative report brought forward to City Council. Performance will be reviewed using Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)/ and or performance metrics that will be developed by the public service within 6 months upon the adaptation of the plain language policy.

This will ensure public-facing written materials will be at a grade 8 reading level or lower so that most individuals can understand the information.”

2. That the Public Service report back with a review on the effectiveness of the Plain Language Policy no later than July 2028.

3. That the Public Service be directed to report back to Executive Policy Committee within 6 months of adoption of the policy, outlining what Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and or performance metrics have been developed, as outlined in section 5 of the policy.

DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

COUNCIL DECISION (continued):

4. That any new costs associated with the training referred to in section 3.1 of the policy be referred to the 2024 Budget Review Process.

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