Minutes – Executive Policy Committee – September 17, 2024

REPORTS

Item No. 7 Plain Language Key Performance Indicators

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive Policy Committee laid the matter over for 30 days.

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Lukes,
That the matter be laid over for 30 days.

Carried

David Grant submitted a communication in opposition to the matter.

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On July 9, 2024, the Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation and granted an extension of time of 30 days for the Winnipeg Public Service to report back on the matter..

On June 18, 2024, the Executive Policy Committee granted an extension of time of 30 days for the Winnipeg Public Service to report back on the matter.

On May 22, 2024, the Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation and granted an extension of time of up to 30 days for the Winnipeg Public Service to report back on the following:

1. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and any additional performance metrics to evaluate the success of the Plain Language Policy as it applies to the other public-facing written materials noted in section 3.1, namely:

    - Advertisements
    - Correspondence
    - Presentations
    - Publications
    - Signage
    - Social media
    - Website content
    - All 311 Services

2. Confirmation that the directions outlined in section 4 of the Policy have been satisfied.

David Grant submitted a communication with respect to the matter.

DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION (continued):

On March 12, 2024, the Executive Policy Committee passed the following motion:

WHEREAS the administrative report includes performance metrics to measure the success of the Plain Language Policy as it applies to Administrative Reports (executive summaries only);

AND WHEREAS the policy includes a number of other materials to which the plain language guidelines apply;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the matter laid over for 90 days and the Public Service be further directed to report back on the following:

1. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and any additional performance metrics to evaluate the success of the Plain Language Policy as it applies to the other public-facing written materials noted in section 3.1, namely:

    - Advertisements
    - Correspondence
    - Presentations
    - Publications
    - Signage
    - Social media
    - Website content
    - All 311 Services

2. Confirmation that the directions outlined in section 4 of the Policy have been satisfied.

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"

DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

COUNCIL DECISION (continued):

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."

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."

DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

COUNCIL DECISION (continued):

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.

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.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Title: Plain Language Key Performance Indicators

Critical Path: Executive Policy Committee

AUTHORIZATION

Author	Department Head	CFO	CAO
D. Driedger	F. Wiltshire	T. Graham	S. Armbruster, Interim CAO

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Public Service will measure the success of the Plain Language Policy every two years.

The grade level readability score of public facing written materials will be measured. A random sample of public facing written materials will be used in our assessment.

The Public Service will compare those written before and after the policy to measure success over time.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That this report be received as information.

REASON FOR THE REPORT

On September 29, 2023, Council approved the Plain Language Policy, directing that it be reviewed every two years using Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure its success.

Council further directed the Public Service to report back to the Executive Policy Committee within six months of the adoption of the Plain Language Policy, outlining what KPIs and/or other performance metrics have been developed.

On March 12, 2024, the Executive Policy Committee laid the matter over and further directed the Public Service to report back within 90 days on the following:

1. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and any additional performance metrics to evaluate the success of the Plain Language Policy as it applies to the other public-acing written materials noted in section 3.1, namely:
    - Advertisements
    - Correspondence
    - Presentations
    - Publications

- Signage
- Social media
- Website content
- All 311 Services

2. Confirmation that the directions outlined in section 4 of the Policy have been satisfied

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

There are no direct implications to receiving this report as information. If approved, the Public Service will report back to Council in 2026 on the success of the Plain Language Policy using the Key Performance Indicators outlined in this report.

HISTORY/DISCUSSION

On September 29, 2023, Council approved the Plain Language Policy (Policy).

The purpose of the Policy is to guide members of the Public Service on the use of suitable language in the City's public-facing written materials to ensure the intended audience can understand what is written, be better informed, and act on important information or participate.

The Policy applies to public-facing written materials produced by the City of Winnipeg, in both official languages (English and French), including but not limited to:

A. Administrative reports (Executive Summary section only)
B. Advertisements
C. Correspondence
D. Presentations
E. Publications
F. Signage
G. Social media
H. Website content
I. All 311 Services

The Public Service was directed to report back to the Executive Policy Committee outlining the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) it intends to use to measure the success of the policy.

The KPI the Public Service intends to use is a grade level readability score.

The Public Service will measure the success of the Policy by comparing the grade level readability score of a random sampling of:

A. Administrative reports (Executive Summary section only)
B. Advertisements
C. Correspondence
D. Presentations
E. Publications
F. Signage, and
G. Social media

The Public Service will measure the success of the Policy as it applies to website content by reporting on the number of webpages that have been re-written to comply with the Policy.

The Public Service will measure the success of the Policy as it applies to all 311 services by reporting on the number of scripts that have been updated and rewritten to comply with the Policy.

As a first step, the Public Service will to assess a random sampling of the grade level readability score of the public-facing written materials before the Policy was approved.

The data gathered will be used to determine the change over time. This will help the Public Service measure the success of the Policy.

The metrics gathered will be shared as part of the bi-annual review of the Policy.

On March 12, 2024, Executive Policy Committee requested confirmation that directions outlined in section 4 of the Policy have been satisfied.

4.1 The Director of Customer Service and 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 and Communications webpage, along with an online mechanism to accept feedback on the policy.

> The Policy has been posted on the City's website under Accesibility plans and policies. The page includes a link to the Policy, along with a feedback form.

4.2 The Manager of Corporate Communications will review the City of Winnipeg Writing Style Guide and update it as required to ensure the instructions contained within it follow this Policy, within 90 days. This position is also responsible for providing clarity on the requirements of this Policy.

> The City of Winnipeg Writing Style Guide has been updated to reflect this Policy.

4.3 The Manager of Marketing and Advertising will review the City of Winnipeg Brand Manual and update it as required to ensure the instructions contained within it follow this Policy, within 90 days.

> The City of Winnipeg Brand Manual has been updated to reflect this Policy.

4.4 The Manager of Web and Social Media will review the City of Winnipeg Design System and update it as required to ensure the instructions contained within it follow this Policy, within 90 days.

> The City of Winnipeg Design System instructions have been updated to follow this Policy.

4.5 Administrative Report authors are responsible for ensuring that the Executive Summary section of the Administrative Report adheres to this Policy and the appendicies to this Policy.

The Manager of Corporate Reporting and Projects has communicated this requirement to all Departments and continues to communicate the requirement to report authors as reports are submitted into the Report Information System for review.

4.6 Departments are responsible for ensuring that public-facing written materials adhere to this Policy and the Appendices to this Policy. Responsible for ensuring that materials written on behalf of the City by third parties adhere to this Policy and the Appendices to this Policy. 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.

Departments will continue to be responsible for adhereing to this Policy and its Appendices. Communications staff have been identified for each department to serve as the key contact and are fully versed in plain language practices. Each department is also responsible for making a plan with Human Resource Services for their departmental staff to complete the mandatory training.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Financial Impact Statement

Date: July 31, 2024

Project Name:
Plain Language Key Performance Indicators

COMMENTS:

There are no financial implications associated with the recommendation of this report.

Randy Bernard

Randy Bernard, CPA, CMA
Manager of Finance & Administration (Campus)
Corporate Finance Department

CONSULTATION

This Report has been prepared in consultation with:

N/A

OURWINNIPEG POLICY ALIGNMENT

Goal: Leadership and Good Governance

1.4 Integrated Knowledge and Resources
Coordinate inter-departmental systems, projects and resources, making the best use of internal and external expertise to better understand service needs, find the most appropriate solutions, optimize resources, and maximize community outcomes.

1.19 Equitable Service Access
Achieve best practice standards in equitable customer service and communications, enabling all community members to understand and navigate municipal service-delivery systems and decision-making processes, in the official language of their choice.

WINNIPEG CLIMATE ACTION PLAN ALIGNMENT

Consideration was given as to whether this report connects to the Winnipeg Climate Action Plan (CAP), and it was determined that the CAP is not applicable to this specific report.

WINNIPEG POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY ALIGNMENT

Consideration was given as to whether this report connects to the Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) and its Goals and Objectives, and it was determined that the PRS is not applicable to this specific report.

SUBMITTED BY

Department: Customer Service and Communications
Division: Corporate Communications
Prepared by: David Driedger
Date: July 31, 2024