Agenda – Executive Policy Committee – December 9, 2025

REPORTS

Item No. 27 Budget 2026 Governance Model

COMMUNITY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On November 24, 2025, the City Centre Community Committee recommended to the Executive Policy Committee:

1. That Council request that the Governance Committee, with support from the City Clerks, Auditor and the Winnipeg Public Service, to provide Council with a formal recommendation on a compliant and transparent governance structure for the development of the municipal budget for Budget 2026 and beyond.

2. That this recommendation include options and best practices for ensuring:

    A. meaningful participation by all Councillors;

    B. clear alignment with the City of Winnipeg Charter;

    C. appropriate documentation, reporting, and public transparency;

    D. and accountability mechanisms suitable for major capital and operating budgets.

3. That the recommendation be delivered to Council no later than December 2026 to ensure it can inform the completion of Budget 2026.

4. That no ad hoc or informal budget groups be utilized in the formation of Budget 2026 pending the adoption of a proper governance framework.

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

COMMUNITY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On November 24, 2025, the City Centre Community Committee passed the following motion:

WHEREAS the City Auditor has warned that Council has not been adequately briefed on the NEWPCC project;

AND WHEREAS the City Auditor further advised that infrastructure governance requires comprehensive reform and that both Administrative and Council reports are not currently "fit for purpose";

AND WHEREAS despite these warnings, the promised governance review has not been released in advance of Budget 2026;

AND WHEREAS governance of the municipal budget process has deteriorated over this Council term;

AND WHEREAS during Years 1 and 2, the Mayor committed to shared responsibility and a transparent, collaborative budget process, including through the establishment of a budget working group in which EPC members participated meaningfully;

AND WHEREAS in Year 3, as the multi-year tax rate increased from 3.5% to 5.95% and significant utility rate hikes were anticipated, the collaborative structure was abruptly abandoned;

AND WHEREAS a "Budget Savings Group" composed of three Councillors, appointed without public disclosure and operating outside the City's governance framework, assumed key budget functions without minutes, terms of reference, transparency, or accountability;

AND WHEREAS five wards including Fort Rouge–East Fort Garry; and River Height-Fort Garry were excluded entirely from this process;

AND WHEREAS the City of Winnipeg Charter assigns budget responsibilities to the Executive Policy Committee, and not to an ad hoc group without formal authority, bylaw mandate, or reporting obligations;

AND WHEREAS operating outside the approved governance structure undermines fair participation, the credibility of the budget process, and Council's ability to meet its fiduciary obligations to the public;

AND WHEREAS ongoing concerns persist regarding unrealistic revenue assumptions and opaque decision-making;

DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

COMMUNITY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION (continued):

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the following be submitted to the Executive Policy Committee:

1. That Council request that the Governance Committee, with support from the City Clerks, Auditor and the Public Service, to provide Council with a formal recommendation on a compliant and transparent governance structure for the development of the municipal budget for Budget 2026 and beyond.

2. That this recommendation include options and best practices for ensuring:

    A. meaningful participation by all Councillors;

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