

**Corporate Planning and Financial Services Report to  
Regular Meeting of Council  
2023 February 14  
Budget Document Design and Process Refinement Working Group**

**ISC: UNRESTRICTED  
C2023-0196  
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**RECOMMENDATION:**

That Council receive this report for the Corporate Record.

**HIGHLIGHTS**

- Administration will establish a working group that will allow interested members of Council to provide valuable insight to improve the design of service plan and budget documents and processes so that they meet the needs of Council and Calgarians.
- At the 2023 February 01 Strategic Meeting of Council, Administration were directed to bring a Terms of Reference for a working group back to Council by 2023 February 14.
- Administration found that the best approach to achieve the results intended by Council would be to establish an Administrative Working Group and invite all members of Council to attend.
- The Administrative Working Group will enable a two-way dialogue between Council and Administration, leading to a better set of documents and a better decision-making process.
- Background and Previous Council Direction is included as Attachment 1.

**DISCUSSION**

The City's Service Plans and Budgets help set the short to medium term direction for the corporation. As such, it is very important that the documents that form the substance of the Service Plans and Budgets, and the processes that are used to produce them work: (1) for the purposes of Council decision-making; (2) to inform Calgarians and encourage their participation, and; (3) as effective guidance for Administration. These are shared goals for Council and Administration.

During Council discussions on this matter, it became evident that the best way to achieve the intended result is for Council and Administration to participate in a shared conversation. A traditional committee meeting is not always able to accommodate less formal back and forth between Council and Administration, so Council directed Administration to prepare a Terms of Reference for a Budget Document Design and Process Refinement Working Group.

Administration concluded that the best approach to achieve Council's intended result would be an Administrative Working Group where members of Council would be invited to participate in an advisory capacity. This stands in contrast to a working group composed of Councillors as members directing the work Administration, which would have required more formality and not achieved the desired results.

The working group model will allow for a more informal exchange of ideas between Council and Administration. It is anticipated that this meeting structure will help Council and Administration to come to: (1) a better understanding about our shared objectives, and; (2) a better set Service Plan and Budget documents and processes.

**EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public engagement was undertaken        | <input type="checkbox"/> Dialogue with interested parties was undertaken |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public/interested parties were informed |  |

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- Public communication or engagement was not required

## **IMPLICATIONS**

### **Social**

This work will help inform how all priorities, including social priorities, are translated into service planning and budgeting documents.

### **Environmental**

This work will help inform how all priorities, including environmental priorities, are translated into service planning and budgeting decisions and documents.

### **Economic**

Enhancing Service Plan and Budget documents and processes may help to better illustrate the value of City services.

### **Service and Financial Implications**

No anticipated financial impact

## **RISK**

There are two key risks associated with the establishment of a working group:

- A working group may not include the input of all members of Council. To mitigate this risk, participation in working group meetings has been left open to all of Council. Further, a summary of the discussions highlighting any material changes to the current set of plan and budget documents, processes and policies will be reported back to Executive Committee.
- Expectations regarding timeframes for the degree of change desired may be misaligned. To mitigate this risk, Administration will be transparent in its assessment of the possible changes and develop realistic timelines for implementation.

## **ATTACHMENT(S)**

1. Previous Council Direction, Background
2. Budget Document Design and Process Refinement Working Group

Department Circulation

General Manager/Director	Department	Approve/Consult/Inform
Carla Male	Corporate Planning and Financial Services	Approve
Chris Stewart	Director, Corporate Planning & Performance	Approve