

WBC - RECOMENDATION 5 COUNCIL EFFECTIVENESS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Ward Boundary Commission (WBC) recommended that Council create a Task Force of five Members of Council to investigate and advise on Council and Councillor effectiveness. The recommendation was subsequently referred to the Manager, Coordinating Committee of the Councillor's Office (CCCO), as discussions were already underway within the Councillor's Office with respect to achieving greater efficiency and effectiveness.

Councillors have been canvassed for their views on how Council and Councillors can become more effective. This report analyses the views of Councillors in comparison to a scan of on-going Council and Councillor effectiveness initiatives and informs Members of Council of the status of current initiatives.

OFFICE OF THE COUNCILLORS RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Council not establish a separate Task Force on Council Effectiveness.
2. That Council effectiveness matters contained in attachment 1, regarding Council procedures and meeting management be referred to The City Clerk for inclusion in the Procedure bylaw review.
3. That items b), c) and d) of WBC Recommendation 5, as follows
 - b) "Developing Council Customer Service improvement initiatives",
 - c) "Guidelines for strategic and effective operations of a Councillor's office" and
 - d) "Researching and recommending for implementation best practices from other Municipalities",insofar as they pertain to Ward operations and/or the operations of the Office of the Councillors, be referred to the CCCO for consideration.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY

At its meeting held 2014 November 14 Council dealt with the Recommendations contained in Report WBC2014-0772 which included Recommendation 5, as follows:

- " 5. Establish a Task Force of 5 Members of Council, with Administrative support, on Council Effectiveness. This Task Force is responsible for recommendations on all aspects of Council and Councillor effectiveness, including, but not necessarily limited to:
- a) analysis of current Council organizational innovation initiatives,
 - b) developing Council Customer service improvement initiatives,
 - c) guidelines for strategic and effective operations of a Councillor's office, and
 - d) researching and recommending for implementation best practices from other Municipalities."

Council subsequently adopted a referral motion as follows:

"... that WBC Recommendation 5 be referred to the City Manager to return to a Special Strategic Planning Meeting of Council in Q3, 2015, with a report on the

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complexity of matters and the interests of Members of Council to become more efficient and effective in the future.”

At its meeting held 2015 July 27 Council subsequently reconsidered its previous direction and adopted the Recommendation contained in Report C2015-0651 as follows:

“That Recommendation 5 of the Ward Boundary Commission contained in the WBC2014-0772 report, be referred to the Manager CCCO, who is currently undergoing the work, and further to report back through the Legislative Governance Task Force no later than 2015 Q4.”

BACKGROUND

The WBC, an independent body, was appointed by Council to determine the appropriate number of Wards and Councillors for The City of Calgary. In the fall of 2014 the WBC recommended to Council that the current number of Wards and Councillors was to remain unchanged, but made several other recommendations.

WBC Recommendation 5 was one of the recommendations out of the WBC Report which Council directed further action be taken. In the case of this recommendation the current phase of action is to investigate and report on the interests of Members of Council in becoming more efficient and effective.

INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

The report concludes that a Task Force of Council would be redundant in that a continued focus on current initiatives and consideration by the Legislative Governance Task Force (LGTF) and the Coordinating Committee of the Councillors Office (CCCO) of additional opportunities will adequately fulfill the purposes of the proposed Task Force.

The City Clerk's Office has been consulted with respect to Council procedural feedback as this work is planned and underway through the Legislative Governance Task Force work plan.

The Manager, Office of the Councillors has undertaken an investigation with respect to Councillors interest in becoming more efficient and effective. The investigation consisted of one-on-one interviews with Councillors.

The investigation found all Councillors are engaged in becoming more efficient and effective and several ideas were forwarded to improve Council effectiveness. From the interviews with Councillors themes were created from their feedback and are presented in Attachment 1 along with corresponding current initiatives underway.

Individual Councillor and Ward Office Effectiveness

Areas of investigation on effectiveness of individual Councillors and of the Office of the Councillors suggested are:

- b) Developing Council Customer Service improvement initiatives*

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The comments of Councillors regarding their thoughts on the development of improved customer communications were focused on ward communications. The conclusion in this regard is that WBC Recommendation 5, be referred to the CCCO to be dealt with in conjunction with work going on in relation to WBC Recommendation 6 regarding development of an online communications strategy for the Office of the Councillors.

c) *Guidelines for Strategic and Effective Operation of a Councillors Office*
Investigation found most Councillors are pleased with their ward operations. Councillors brought some concerns, but also suggestions for becoming more effective in ward operations and these will be referred to the CCCO for direction or undertaken directly by the Manager, Office of the Councillors, depending on the nature of the concern or suggestion.

The possibility of establishing guidelines for strategic and effective operation of a Councillors office is best referred to the CCCO.

d) *Researching for Implementation Best Practices of Other Municipalities*
Councillors were asked if they agree that Council should direct that research be undertaken and a report returned relating to best practices of other municipalities in relation to ward office effectiveness. It is clear through feedback received that Councillors do not want practices forced on them but rather would be interested in adopting those best practices they feel might work for them in their offices.

The possibility of undertaking research of practices of other municipalities to garner lessons on the best practices involved in ward operations is probably best referred to the CCCO.

Strategic Alignment

Improved Council effectiveness will promote the Council priority of 'A well run city'.

Social, Environmental, Economic (External)

No affects identified.

Financial Capacity

Current and Future Operating Budget:

No impact.

Current and Future Capital Budget:

No impact.

Risk Assessment

The risk of not reviewing efficiencies and effectiveness on a regular basis will result in additional costs overtime for the CCCO.

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REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):

Recommendation 1 and 2:

Based on interviews with Councillors it is clear there is broad support for consideration of ways to improve Council effectiveness, particularly:

- a) more focus on vision, strategy and governance,
- b) changes to make Council and Committee interaction more effective and
- c) improved meeting processes and protocols.

Councillors have advanced a number of suggestions for improvement of Council effectiveness. These have been compared to current Council/Committee effectiveness initiatives and it has been found that work is on-going in most of the areas identified by Councillors. Council effectiveness will be well served by continuing work on these initiatives and referring identified gaps to LGTF. Accordingly, it is concluded that a committee of Council Task Force on Council Effectiveness would be redundant and is not recommended.

Recommendation 3:

It is asserted that the subject matter and scope of the specific suggestions of the WBC in its Recommendation 5 b), c) and d) as they relate to the operations of Councillors offices and/or of the Office of the Councillors is such that these matters should be referred to the CCCO.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Identified areas of improvement, bucketed and with actions taken by LGTF and CCCO to improve efficiencies and effectiveness.