

Agenda

Governance Working Group

1st Meeting of the Governance Working Group

August 24, 2020, 1:00 PM

Committee Room #4, City Hall

Members

Councillors: J. Morgan (Chair), S. Hillier, A. Kayabaga, S. Lewis, P. Squire and M. van Holst, and C. Saunders (Secretary).

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To make a request specific to this meeting, please contact abush@london.ca.

	Pages
1. Call to Order	
1.1 Disclosures of Pecuniary Interest	
2. Consent Items	
3. Items for Discussion	
3.1 Advisory Committee Review – Interim Report II	2
4. Deferred Matters/Additional Business	
5. Adjournment	

Report to Governance Working Group

To: Chair and Members
Governance Working Group
From: Cathy Saunders, City Clerk
Subject: Advisory Committee Review – Interim Report II

Recommendation

That the Civic Administration BE PROVIDED with direction related to proposed changes to the current City of London Advisory Committee structure, that the working group may want to consider further.

Executive Summary

The purpose of this second interim report is to provide an overview of the current advisory committee landscape, examine the legislative requirements and to present additional related information, specific to the City of London. Additional background and supporting documentation is presented in order to provide for a more fulsome discussion. This report does not go in to additional detail related to consultation and engagement that has been previously reported to council.

Analysis

1.0 Background Information

1.1 Previous Reports Related to this Matter

- Finance and Administrative Services Committee, February 27, 2012
- Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee, December 16, 2013
- Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee, March 17, 2014
- Civic Works Committee, June 19, 2018
- Corporate Services Committee, November 13, 2018
- Corporate Services Committee, March 19, 2019

1.2 Legislative Requirements

At the time of writing this report, municipalities are legislatively required to have the following:

- Accessibility Advisory Committee
- Planning Advisory Committee
- Community Safety and Well-Being Plan Advisory Committee

The legislative references and requirements of the above-noted committees are as follows:

- *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 c. 11*
 - Section 29(1) – the council of every municipality... “shall establish an accessibility advisory committee...”
 - the AODA outlines the membership requirements of the committee, and the roles, which include:
 - advice to council about the requirements and implementation of accessibility standards, the preparation of reports and all functions outlined in the regulations
 - council shall seek advice related to the purchase/lease/building/renovating premises or structures

- *Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter P.13*
 - Section 8(1) – the council of every single-tier municipality “shall appoint a planning advisory committee in accordance with this section”
 - The only membership requirement outlined in the Act is “at least one resident of the municipality who is neither a member of a municipal council nor an employee of the municipality.”

- *Police Services Act, R.S.O. 1990 Chapter P. 15*
 - Section 145(1) – “A municipal council that prepares a community safety and well-being plan shall establish an advisory committee.” (The City of London is required to prepare a plan.)
 - Section 145(3) – outlines the minimum membership requirements: representatives from the local LHIN or “health” representative, education, community or social services, education, community or social services for children/youth, custodial services for children/youth, police, and “other prescribed persons”.

The City’s obligations with respect to these mandated advisory committees are currently met as follows:

- Accessibility Advisory Committee – current, existing advisory committee for London.
- Planning Advisory Committee – requirements met through the work of the Environmental and Ecological Planning Advisory Committee, the London Advisory Committee on Heritage and the Urban Design Peer Review Panel.
- Community Safety and Well-Being Plan Advisory Committee – established and conducted administratively.

In addition to the above-noted legislatively required advisory committees it is important to note the following requirements related to Heritage Advisory Committees.

- *Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. O. 18*
 - Section 28(1) – “The council of a municipality may by by-law establish a municipal heritage committee to advise and assist the council on matters relating to this Part, matters relating to Part V and such other heritage matters as the council may specify by by-law.”
 - Section 28(2) – “The committee shall be composed of not fewer than five members appointed by the council.”

It is not a requirement to have a heritage committee, the legislation is permissive (municipalities “may” establish). However, if a municipality establishes a municipal heritage committee, there are legislative requirements to consult, etc., simply because the committee exists.

1.3 Current Structure in London

1.3.1 The current advisory committees in the City of London are as follows:

Reporting to the Civic Works Committee:

- Cycling Advisory Committee
- Transportation Advisory Committee

Reporting to the Community and Protective Services Committee:

- Accessibility Advisory Committee
- Animal Welfare Advisory Committee
- Childcare Advisory Committee
- Community Safety and Crime Prevention Advisory Committee
- London Housing Advisory Committee

Reporting to the Planning and Environment Committee:

- Advisory Committee on the Environment
- Agricultural Advisory Committee
- Environmental and Ecological Planning Advisory Committee
- London Advisory Committee on Heritage
- Trees and Forests Advisory Committee

Reporting to the Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee:

- Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-Oppression Advisory Committee

The citizen appointments to the current above-noted committees is until June 30, 2021.

1.3.2 Other citizen groups

In addition to the above-noted “formal” advisory committees, there are a vast number of additional committees/task forces/focus groups that are managed by the Civic Administration, without a direct reporting relationship to the municipal council. A sampling of these is included as Appendix A, to this report. These administrative committees have a variety of functions, including but not exclusive to consultation, “expert” advice, networking and working groups. Several of these committees are relative to significant corporate initiatives, such as Age-Friendly City and the Community Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. The work of these committees is managed by specific service areas, and is always included in staff reports or presentations to a standing committee – without an on-going formal reporting relationship.

1.3.3. Other council committees

The following Task Forces, Working Groups and “Other” committees are currently established in London:

- Audit Committee
- City County Liaison Committee
- Downtown Parking Working Group
- Governance Working Group
- Rapid Transit Implementation Working Group
- Town and Gown Committee
- Waste Management Working Group

These additional groups are exclusive of required committees of governance, such as the Dearness Home Committee of Management and local Water Supply Joint Boards of Management.

2.0 Discussion and Considerations

2.1 Why have municipal advisory committees?

The general purpose of municipal advisory committees is for the public to provide advice on various matters to the council. In some cases this is a form of engagement/consultation (terms used interchangeably in this report), and in other cases this is by means of an ‘expert panel’. Historically speaking, the use of ‘expert panels’ was a means to obtain advice that was otherwise not available from the administration in a municipality.

The existing advisory committees in London are primarily for the purpose of consultation.

Consultation/engagement/participation can mean different things to different people, and as a result it has been the topic of much research and debate as to best approaches and measuring success. In terms of advisory committees, it is intended to

inform the council of public preferences, in order to influence decision making. It should assist the council in its decision making processes and result in better public uptake of these decisions. In order for this to be the outcome, the consultation needs to be genuine and perhaps best achieved in the very early stages of the decision making process.

Legislative requirements for consultation can result in a variety of negative effects particularly when it is a matter of “reacting” to an established plan or policy. The consultation will not necessarily foster a response where the input would be perceived as valuable or influential. Successful engagement is rooted in collaboration. It is time consuming and needs to be inclusive. Past reports have outlined feedback from advisory committee members who have indicated these points – frustration of the time available to provide input, and the perception that little value is attributed to their input.

In other cases, London advisory committees more closely resemble expert panels. The membership requirements are very specific, and the role is detailed and defined. These expert panels were established to provide advice to the municipal council where experts were not on staff to provide such advice.

With this in mind, the working group may want to consider the following: Do the existing London advisory committees provide for adequate consultation, are there steps to undertake to become more collaborative? Does the current structure provide for a reasonable representation of the London citizenry and their opinions? Do the existing London advisory committees continue to provide advice that is otherwise not available administratively? If not, what steps can be taken to improve the structure and better achieve these outcomes?

2.2 How should municipal advisory committees be populated?

The current Terms of Reference for each advisory committee are very specific with respect to representations. For example, the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee voting membership is as follows:

One representative from each of the following four specific organizations:

- Friends of Captive Animals
- London Dog Owners Association

One representative from each of the following general categories:

- Wildlife Rehabilitator, including naturalists with either educational credentials or active involvement with wildlife through an organization
- Animal Rescue Group
- Veterinarian or Veterinary Technician
- Local Pet Shop Owner
- 10 Members-at-Large

The specific nature of these memberships has sometimes resulted in a committee taking on more of an “advocacy” role for a specific matter. This specificity can also limit broader participation from the public at large, which could be considered more ‘genuine’ consultation. It is for this reason that there was a recommendation in March of 2019 to populate the committees with only “members-at-large”. This temporary approach attempted to remove some potential barriers and applications were submitted by individuals who had never previously applied, however there were also many individuals who are re-appointed and/or appointed to multiple committees. In short, there was progress, but still room for improvement.

Term limits exist within the General Policy for Advisory Committees, however, frequently appointments have been made “notwithstanding” the policy due to the limited number of applicants for vacant positions.

Some municipalities utilize an extensive application and interview process for advisory committee appointments. In London, based on current terms of reference, 161 voting

member appointments need to be made. This could be a significant undertaking for London, and may have the unintended consequence of discouraging applications.

Many large municipalities have undertaken comprehensive reviews of their advisory committees. Like London, there are committees with long history in the city and the community. While this establishes a role for the committee, it can also discourage new involvement, unintentionally. To this end, some municipalities are contemplating “civic lotteries” for recruiting members. This could be undertaken through completely random appointments or by a random selection (by administration) of applicants.

2.3 How should the work of the advisory committees be established and directed?

A common feedback theme in previous reports was related to the work (and workplans) of the advisory committees. This has been identified by elected officials, staff and the advisory committee members. The current terms of reference for each advisory committee (and the general policy) are meant to guide the work but in reality the committees tend to generate and develop projects on their own, in the absence of a specific request from the council or staff.

The numerous committees noted in Appendix A are established administratively, and the work is assigned by the administration. As a result, these committees have clear direction and work focus; in many cases, but not always, they are established temporarily for this same reason. These committees do not have a direct reporting relationship to council, but rather the committees’ work is brought forward to council through staff reports as required.

Another interesting approach that is being taken by other municipalities is to “reset” (advisory) committees with each term of council. In most cases this is done following the approval of the new council’s strategic plan. This creates linkages to the council’s direction for the term, and allows for the advisory committees to have clear direction in the deliverables of the strategic plan (which is also linked closely to the budget).

3.0 Financial Impact/Considerations

3.1 Budget and Budget Impacts

The “line item” in the current budget for advisory committees is approximately \$60,000 annually. This amount includes the ‘expense’ budget for each committee, catering costs, parking and administrative costs related to accommodations. It is not reflective of any staff time, committee/council time, printing, postage, etc.

The true cost of the current advisory committee structure is difficult to quantify.

The Terms of Reference outline meeting frequency, and most of the current advisory committees meet monthly (with holiday exceptions). In 2019, the cumulative hours in session for the advisory committees totalled approximately 198 hours (113 meetings); noting that there was a minor interruption due to membership appointments. This does not include the significant amount of time that most committees also dedicate to sub-committee meetings, whose reports are considered at the full committee meeting.

Conservatively, the City Clerk’s office estimates the following average staff time allocation, based on the 2019 meeting data:

	Clerks Staff*	Additional Staff**	Total estimate (hrs)
Pre-meeting	7 hrs/meeting	3 hrs/meeting	1113.0
During meeting	198 hrs/yr	594 hrs/yr (3 staff)	792.0
Post meeting	2.5 hrs/meeting	1.5 hrs/meeting	451.5
Standing Committee/Council	0.75 hrs/meeting	0.75 hrs/meeting	169.5
			2526.0

*Committee Clerk, Support Clerk, Manager

**Committee resource staff, Managers, Directors

This calculation does not account for the time of non-voting resource members that are not part of the Civic Administration.

There are a number of additional ancillary staff hours that are not included in this estimation, such as facilities, finance and ITS. This is not a full cost-benefit analysis, but rather a calculation projection to demonstrate more holistically the investment in advisory committees. It is also important to note that this calculation is based on ‘hours’ in session, and the associated numbers of meetings, it does not account for meetings held where quorum was not achieved.

4.0 Key Issues and Considerations

4.1 Previous Reviews and Reports

As noted at the beginning of this report, there have been several recent considerations of the advisory committee structure. There have also been numerous recommendations from the committees to amend their individual terms of reference. These combine to indicate that there are improvement opportunities from the viewpoint of all parties involved: the advisory committee members, civic administration and elected officials.

Considerations for potential changes:

- link ‘advice’ and initiatives directly to the current strategic plan;
- shift to have consultation be administratively driven, similar to the sampling of committees/groups included in Appendix A;
- remove the direct reporting relationship to council, except where required (making the functionality of any groups more flexible);
- establish and enforce membership term limits;
- incorporate end-dates for any established committees/groups to complete their work; and
- continue to enhance recruitment efforts to foster membership that is reflective of the community.

4.2 Current Council Policy - establishment of task forces/working groups

There is an existing council policy related to the establishment task forces/working groups, attached as Appendix B. Regardless of any changes that may be considered in relation to the current advisory committee structure, council has the ability at any time to establish new groups.

5.0 Conclusion

The on-going review of the City of London advisory committees demonstrates the ever-changing nature of the needs and the required structure. There has not been a notable change to the structure through any of these reviews, although from time to time additional committees have been added. This demonstrates council's past recognition of value that such committees can provide, however there has also been a large amount of feedback (from all parties) that offer potential alternatives to the existing structure.

The approach to consultation by municipalities is changing quickly with the evolution of virtual and digital opportunities. The recent (and on-going) COVID experience also dictates a need to re-examine how we do things. And finally, the need to improve/enhance the inclusivity of engagement may all combine to present an important occasion for considering changes to our existing practices.

The conclusion of current appointments in June of 2021 provides an opportunity of time to refine any potential changes the council may wish to consider and/or implement. It could also be feasible to implement any such changes with a reasonable amount of time still left in the council term.

Prepared, Submitted and Recommended by:

Cathy Saunders, City Clerk
Michael Schulthess, Deputy City Clerk
Barb Westlake-Power, Deputy City Clerk

Appendix A

Act-i-Pass Steering Committee

Active and Safe Routes to School Team

Age Friendly London: Working Groups (8)

Age Friendly Network

All Kids Belong

All Kins in Camp Conference Committee

Basic Needs Committee (Part of the Crouch Neighbourhood Resource Centre)

Child Abuse Prevention Council

Child and Youth Network

Child and Youth Network – Priority Working Groups (4)

Closed-Schools Site Review Committee

CMSM & School Board Group

CMSM Partners Network

COL/YMCA/Library Working Committees

Community Data Program Leads Table (National)

Community Diversity Inclusion Strategy Leadership Team

Community Diversity Inclusion Strategy: Priority Committees (5)

Community Health Collaborative Steering Committee and Sub-committee

Community Health Indicatory System Steering Committee

CRHESI – Centre for Research on Health Equity and Social Inclusion, Health Sciences, Western University

East Lions Community Centre Steering Committee

East London Optimists

Family Centre Service System Governance Table

Family Centre Strategic Collaboration Teams (6)

Fanshawe College Program Advisory Committee (Recreation & Leisure)

Glen Cairn Community Partners Working Group

Internal Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Committee

Lambeth Citizens Recreation Council

License Child Care Network (LCCN)

London Middlesex Immigration Partnership Working Group(s)

London and Area Association for Volunteer Administration

Neighbourhood Resource Association of Westminster Park Steering Committee

Networking for an Inclusive Community

Northwest London Community Partners

Parks and Recreation Master Plan Steering Committee

Population Health Working Group

Provincial-Municipal Early Years and Child Care Technical Table

Skills Camp Steering Committee

South London Neighbourhood Resource Centre Board

Stepping Out Safely Conference Committee

Strive

TRACKS Advisory Committee

TVDSB/COL Community use of Schools Coordination Committee

Equity and Inclusion Council

PAC Committee for Fanshawe Public Safety Programs

Urban Design Peer Review Panel

Municipal Addressing Advisory Group

Safe Cities for Women and Girls

London for All



London
CANADA

Establishment of Task Forces and Working Groups Policy

Policy Name: Establishment of Task Forces and Working Groups Policy

Legislative History: Adopted August 22, 2017 (By-law No. CPOL.-62-294); Amended July 24, 2018 (By-law No. CPOL.-62(a)-403)

Last Review Date: April 15, 2019

Service Area Lead: City Clerk

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 This policy establishes the protocol for Members of Council to establish Task Forces or Working Groups.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 Not applicable.

3. Applicability

- 3.1 This policy shall apply to Members of Council. This policy is in no way intended to prevent individual Members of Council from initiating the formation of Task Forces and Working Groups, but is directed at ensuring that such undertakings have the official sanction of the Council.

4. The Policy

- 4.1 When individual Members of Council believe that it is desirable and necessary to establish a Task Force or Working Group to address a particular issue or topic, they shall seek the Municipal Council's approval, through the appropriate Standing Committee, for the establishment of such bodies.

Working Groups and Task Forces will not be provided with support services by the Civic Administration unless explicit approval has been given by City Council.