

Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee

Report

6th Special Meeting of the Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee
March 22, 2022

PRESENT: Councillors M. van Holst, S. Lewis, J. Helmer, M. Cassidy, M. Hamou, J. Morgan, S. Lehman, A. Hopkins, P. Van Meerbergen, S. Turner, E. Pelozza, J. Fyfe-Millar, S. Hillier

ABSENT: Mayor E. Holder (Chair), M. Salih

ALSO PRESENT: M. Ribera, B. Westlake-Power
Also Present: L. Livingstone, A. Barbon, B. Card, S. Corman, J. Davison, K. Dickins, O. Katolyk, S. Mathers, M. Schulthess and Dr. A. Summers
The meeting is called to order at 2:31 PM; it being noted that the following Members were in remote attendance, Councillors M. van Holst, J. Helmer, M. Cassidy, A. Hopkins, P. Van Meerbergen, S. Turner, E. Pelozza and S. Hillier.

1. Disclosures of Pecuniary Interest

That it BE NOTED that no pecuniary interests were disclosed.

2. Consent

None.

3. Scheduled Items

None.

4. Items for Direction

4.1 Temporary Reintroduction of Mask By-law to Limit the Spread of COVID-19 - Councillors Helmer, Turner and Cassidy

Moved by: S. Lehman

Seconded by: J. Fyfe-Millar

That the communication dated March 20, 2022, from Councillors J. Helmer, S. Turner and M. Cassidy, BE RECEIVED.

Yeas: (13): M. van Holst, S. Lewis, J. Helmer, M. Cassidy, M. Hamou, J. Morgan, S. Lehman, A. Hopkins, P. Van Meerbergen, S. Turner, E. Pelozza, J. Fyfe-Millar, and S. Hillier

Absent: (2): Mayor E. Holder, and M. Salih

Motion Passed (13 to 0)

Additional votes:

Moved by: J. Helmer

Seconded by: S. Turner

That the attached by-law BE INTRODUCED at the Council meeting to be held on March 22, 2022 to temporarily require the use of face coverings within enclosed publicly-accessible spaces in the City of London.

Yeas: (3): J. Helmer, M. Cassidy, and S. Turner

Nays: (10): M. van Holst, S. Lewis, M. Hamou, J. Morgan, S. Lehman, A. Hopkins, P. Van Meerbergen, E. Pelozza, J. Fyfe-Millar, and S. Hillier

Absent: (2): Mayor E. Holder, and M. Salih

Motion Failed (3 to 10)

5. Deferred Matters/Additional Business

5.1 CONFIDENTIAL Solicitor-Client Privilege/Litigation-Potential Litigation

Moved by: S. Lewis

Seconded by: J. Fyfe-Millar

That the committee convene in closed session to consider a matter pertaining to litigation or potential litigation and advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose.

Yeas: (13): M. van Holst, S. Lewis, J. Helmer, M. Cassidy, M. Hamou, J. Morgan, S. Lehman, A. Hopkins, P. Van Meerbergen, S. Turner, E. Pelozza, J. Fyfe-Millar, and S. Hillier

Absent: (2): Mayor E. Holder, and M. Salih

Motion Passed (13 to 0)

The Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee convenes, In Closed Session, from 3:27 PM to 3:55 PM.

6. Adjournment

Moved by: E. Pelozza

Seconded by: S. Hillier

That the meeting BE ADJOURNED.

Yeas: (13): M. van Holst, S. Lewis, J. Helmer, M. Cassidy, M. Hamou, J. Morgan, S. Lehman, A. Hopkins, P. Van Meerbergen, S. Turner, E. Pelozza, J. Fyfe-Millar, and S. Hillier

Absent: (2): Mayor E. Holder, and M. Salih

Motion Passed (13 to 0)

The meeting adjourned at 4:23 PM.

20 Mar 2022

Members and Chair
Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee

re: temporary reintroduction of mask bylaw to limit the spread of COVID-19

Dear Colleagues,

In July 2020, before the Province of Ontario had introduced its own regulations regarding masking, Municipal Council directed Civic Administration to consult with the Medical Officer of Health and the County of Middlesex on legislative measures that the Medical Officer of Health recommends be enacted to reduce the spread of COVID-19 infections in our community. That same month, Municipal Council adopted a bylaw requiring face coverings in enclosed spaces that are accessible to the public. The bylaw expired at the end of 2020 while similar provincial rules ([O. Reg. 364/20](#)), were still in place. Those provincial requirements will be ending on 21 March 2022.

Back in 2020, we did not have the protective benefit of vaccines, which have reduced the risk of severe outcomes like hospitalization and death. We are very thankful for the hundreds of thousands of Londoners who have protected themselves and others in our community by getting vaccinated. And to those who have taken many other steps in addition to vaccination to limit the spread of this virus in our community and throughout the world.

However, the impact of COVID-19 and the highly transmissible Omicron variant continues to be significant. Even with severely restricted testing, which means new cases will be undercounted, new cases exceeded 2,000 per week in Middlesex-London during the most recent wave. Tragically, 95 people in Middlesex-London have died of COVID-19 since this year began.

There are encouraging signs. Hospitalizations and deaths have decreased from the record highs experienced earlier this year. Wastewater surveillance suggests that the incidence of COVID-19 in our community has declined from its peak in mid-January.

But the [projections released by the Ontario Science Advisory Table](#) last week are very concerning. The moderate scenario, a 40% increase in contacts with half of those contacts maskless, is projected to result in 300 people in ICUs at the start of May, more than double the scenario where public health measures are maintained rather than dropped.

We believe three aspects of the science table projections are particularly important (emphasis added).

First, from the key findings (page 2):

“Given the relaxation of public health measures and consequent increase in transmission, hospital and ICU occupancy will likely increase over the next few weeks, but less than in January 2022 and for a limited period of time **if changes in behaviour are only moderate.**”

“The extent of this increase, and of a person’s risk of contracting COVID-19, will depend on the number of close contacts (**especially indoors without masking**), vaccination status, and the spread of the more transmissible BA.2 subvariant.”

Second, they show that all waves of the pandemic, including the fifth wave that started in December, have been hardest on those who have the lowest income. The rate of deaths per capita for the lowest income quintile is **double** that of the highest income quintile (page 7).

The science table clearly makes the point that masking reduces the odds of infection, depending on the type of mask worn: cloth (56% lower), surgical masks (66% lower) and N95/KN95 (83% lower) (page 15). A recent review of research (17 studies) on the [association between mask mandates and population-level outcomes](#), from Public Health Ontario, that implementation of mask mandates is associated with statistically significant reductions in case growth (and, with smaller effect sizes, reduced rates of hospitalizations and deaths).

The recent increases in COVID-19 deaths in places like Denmark, Norway and Sweden, which dropped most public health measures in early February, is also very concerning. These are all countries with fairly high vaccination coverage (74% to 81% of the eligible population fully vaccinated).

We believe it is prudent and necessary to reintroduce, on a temporary basis, the mask bylaw passed by Municipal Council in 2020, revised to include children over the age of two. We are not out of the woods yet.

We have consulted with the Medical Officer of Health for Middlesex-London, Dr. Alex Summers, and he is supportive of organizations considering the tools available to them to increase the wearing of masks, given the current incidence of COVID-19 in our community.

We are therefore requesting a special meeting of Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee be called the afternoon of Tuesday, 22 March 2022, in advance of our regular council meeting, to consider reintroducing the mask bylaw from 2020, revised to include everyone over the age of two rather than the age of 12 as in the bylaw enacted in 2020. It is our hope that the Medical Officer of Health will be able to attend the meeting to answer any questions colleagues may have about the effectiveness of masking.

We believe any such bylaw should be temporary, so we are suggesting that it should be effective until midnight on 9 May 2022, one week after our first regular council meeting in May. Generally, we believe rules requiring masks to be worn indoors should only be lifted once the incidence of COVID-19 in our community, as measured by cases, hospitalizations and deaths, is at a much lower level. If the incidence of COVID-19 is the same or higher than it is now, we could consider extending the mask bylaw at the 3 May Council meeting.

We regret the short notice of this letter, but time is of the essence.

Sincerely,



Jesse Helmer
Councillor, Ward 4



Stephen Turner
Councillor, Ward 11



Maureen Cassidy
Councillor, Ward 5

Bill No.
2022

By-law No.

A by-law to temporarily require the use of face coverings within enclosed publicly-accessible spaces in the City of London.

WHEREAS Council of the City is desirous to enact a by-law to require mandatory face coverings in enclosed spaces that are accessible to the public to help contain the spread of COVID-19;

AND WHEREAS subsection 8(1) of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, S.O. 2001, c. 25 ("*Municipal Act, 2001*") provides that the powers of a municipality shall be interpreted broadly so as to confer broad authority to enable it to govern its affairs as it considers appropriate and to enhance its ability to respond to municipal issues;

AND WHEREAS subsection 10(2) of the *Municipal Act, 2001* authorizes a municipality to pass by-laws with respect to: economic, social and environmental well-being of the municipality, including respecting climate change; the health, safety and well-being of persons; and the protection of persons and property, including consumer protection;

AND WHEREAS subsections 425(1) and 429(1) of the *Municipal Act, 2001* authorize a municipality to pass by-laws providing that a person who contravenes a municipal by-law is guilty of an offence and to establish a system of fines for offences under a by-law;

AND WHEREAS subsection 436(1) of the *Municipal Act, 2001* provides that a municipality has the power to pass by-laws providing that the municipality may enter on land at any reasonable time for the purpose of carrying out an inspection to determine whether or not a by-law passed under the *Municipal Act, 2001* is being complied with;

AND WHEREAS subsection 444(1) of the *Municipal Act, 2001* authorizes a municipality to make an order requiring the person who contravened a by-law, caused or permitted the contravention, or the owner or occupier of the land on which the contravention occurred, to discontinue the contravening activity;

NOW THEREFORE the Municipal Council of The Corporation of the City of London enacts as follows:

MANDATORY FACE COVERINGS BY-LAW

Definitions

1. In this by-law:

"By-law" means this By-law;

"City" means The Corporation of the City of London or the municipality of the City of London, as the context requires;

"Council" means the Municipal Council of the City of London;

"EMCPA" means the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.9, as amended from time to time;

"Emergency Order" means the emergency orders passed by the Province of Ontario pursuant to the EMCPA related to COVID-19 including any regulations enacted pursuant to EMCPA;

"Face Covering" means a mask or face covering, including a bandana or scarf, construction of cloth, linen or other similar fabric that fits securely to the head and

is large enough to completely and comfortably cover the mouth, nose and chin without gapping. A Face Covering may include, but is not required to be, a medical mask such as surgical masks, N95 or other similar masks worn by healthcare workers;

“HPPA” means the *Health Protection and Promotion Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.7, as amended from time to time;

“Officer” means a police officer; a person appointed by Council as a municipal law enforcement officer; an officer, employee or agent of the City whose responsibility includes enforcement of this By-law;

“Operator” means a person or organization which is responsible for or otherwise has control over the operation of an Establishment;

“Person” or any expression referring to a person or people, means an individual over the age of two (2) and also includes a partnership, limited partnership, and a corporation and its directors and officers, and all heirs, executors, assignees and administrators;

Application of this By-law

2. This By-law applies to all Establishments and Persons in the City.
3. For the purposes of this By-law, an Establishment means any portion of a building that is located:
 - (a) indoors; and,
 - (b) where the public is ordinarily invited or permitted access to whether or not a fee or membership is charged for entry.
4. For greater clarity, Establishments shall include the following:
 - (a) premises or any portion thereof which are used as a place of business for the sale or offering for sale of goods or services, including restaurants or the sale of any food or beverage, and including a mall or similar structure containing multiple places of business;
 - (b) churches, mosques, synagogues, temples, or other places of worship;
 - (c) City indoor recreational facilities open to the public, community centres including indoor recreational facilities, whether publicly accessible or requiring membership;
 - (d) libraries, art galleries, performing arts centres, museums, aquariums, zoos, and other similar facilities;
 - (e) community service agencies providing services to the public;
 - (f) banquet halls, convention centres, arenas, stadiums, and any other event space;
 - (g) premises utilized as an open house, presentation centre, or other facility for real estate purposes;
 - (h) common areas of hotels, motels or other short-term rentals, such as lobbies, elevators, meeting rooms, or other common use facilities;
 - (i) concert venues, theatres, cinemas, casinos, and other entertainment facilities;
 - (j) other business, organizations and places that are permitted to operate in accordance with the Emergency Orders.
5. Notwithstanding the generality of section 3 and the specificity of section 4, Establishments shall not include the following:
 - (a) day cares, schools, post-secondary institutions, and other facilities used solely for educational purposes;
 - (b) hospitals and portions of buildings used by regulated health professionals;
 - (c) buildings owned or operated by the Province of Ontario or the Government of Canada;

- (d) portions of community centres, arenas or other buildings that are being used for the purpose of day camps for children or for the training of amateur or professional athletes;
- (e) school transportation vehicles;
- (f) court facilities, or a portion of a building where any similar legislated judicial or quasi-judicial proceeding is taking place;
- (g) professional offices that are not open to the public and are open by appointment only (such as a lawyer or accountant office);
- (h) indoor areas of buildings that are accessible to employees only.

6. Notwithstanding section 2, this By-law does not apply to any Officer, City employee, or a person hired or engaged by the City to do work or perform services within an Establishment for the specific purposes of performing policing, municipal or enforcement services, including but not limited to, the enforcement of this By-law, or the provisions of an act of Parliament or the Legislature, or an order made under an act of Parliament or the Legislature.

7. Nothing in this By-law is to be construed as permitting anything which is prohibited under federal or provincial legislation, and where there is a conflict in this respect between federal or provincial legislation, or *EMCPA* order, or *HPPA* order, the federal or provincial legislation and orders authorized thereunder shall prevail.

General Obligations and Prohibitions - Operator

8. Subject to the exemptions in section 12, every Operator shall require that Face Coverings are worn by anyone engaged in the operation of the business or delivery of a service or product at an Establishment, including employees, volunteers, agents, or contractors.

9. The Operator shall conspicuously post at all entrances to the Establishment clearly visible signage containing the following text:

**ALL PERSONS ENTERING OR REMAINING IN THESE
PREMISES SHALL WEAR A MASK OR FACE COVERING
WHICH COVERS THE NOSE, MOUTH AND CHIN AS
REQUIRED UNDER CITY OF LONDON BY-LAW PH-20.**

The following persons are exempt from the requirement to wear a Mask or Face Covering:

- (a) children under two years of age;**
- (b) Persons with an underlying medical condition or disability which inhibits their ability to wear a Face Covering;**
- (c) Persons who are unable to place or remove a Face Covering without assistance;**
- (d) employees or agents of the Establishment within an area designated for them and not publicly accessible, or in an area separated by a physical barrier;**
- (e) Persons who are reasonably accommodated by not wearing a Face Covering in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code;**
- (f) Persons in an Establishment, while receiving services involving the face and requiring the removal of the Face Covering, including but not limited to eating or drinking, or while actively engaging in an athletic or fitness activity;**

- (g) **Persons within an Establishment, while participating in a religious service, for rituals which require an uncovered mouth.**

Please be respectful of the rights of individuals who are exempt from wearing a mask in conformity with the exemptions provided in the By-law.

To report an incidence of non-compliance with the By-law, contact covidorderconcerns@london.ca or (519) 661-4660

General Obligations and Prohibitions – All Persons

10. Every Person shall wear a Face Covering before entering and while inside an Establishment.
11. Every Person shall ensure that any Person under their care, including children, comply with section 10 of this By-law.
12. Notwithstanding sections 10 and 11 of this By-law, the following Persons shall be exempt from wearing a Face Covering:
- (a) Persons with an underlying medical condition or disability which inhibits their ability to wear a Face Covering;
 - (b) Persons who are unable to place or remove a Face Covering without assistance;
 - (c) employees or agents of the Establishment within an area designated for them and not publicly accessible, or in an area separated by a physical barrier;
 - (d) Persons who are reasonably accommodated by not wearing a Face Covering in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code;
 - (e) Persons in an Establishment, while receiving services involving the face and requiring the removal of the Face Covering, including but not limited to eating or drinking, or while actively engaging in an athletic or fitness activity;
 - (f) police, fire, or paramedics where it may interfere with the performance of their duties; and,
 - (g) Persons within an Establishment, while participating in a religious service, for rituals which require an uncovered mouth.
13. No Person shall be required to provide proof of any of the exemptions set out in section 12.

Administration, Inspection, and Enforcement

14. The City's Municipal Law Enforcement Office is responsible for the administration and enforcement of this By-law and may appoint delegates or assign duties to City employees for those purposes.
15. The provisions of this By-law may be enforced by an Officer.
16. An Officer may enter on land or buildings at any reasonable time and in accordance with the conditions set out in sections 435 and 437 of the *Municipal Act, 2001* for the purpose of carrying out an inspection to determine whether or not the following are being complied with:
- (a) an order or other requirement made under this By-law; or
 - (b) an order made under section 431 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*.
17. An Officer, for the purposes of the inspection under section 20 and in accordance with the conditions set out in section 436 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, may:

- (a) require the production for inspection of documents or things relevant to the inspection;
- (b) inspect and remove documents or things relevant to the inspection for the purpose of making copies or extracts;
- (c) require information in writing or otherwise as required by an Officer from any person concerning a matter related to the inspection; and,
- (d) alone or in conjunction with a person possessing special or expert knowledge, make examinations or take tests, samples or photographs necessary for the purposes of the inspection.

18. An Officer may undertake an inspection pursuant to an order issued by a provincial judge or justice of the peace under section 438 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, in accordance with the conditions set out in that section, where they have been prevented or is likely to be prevented from carrying out an inspection under section 16.

19. Any Person or Operator who contravenes any provision of this By-law is guilty of an offence and upon conviction is liable to a fine and such other penalties as provided for by the *Provincial Offences Act*, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter P.33, as amended.

20. Upon conviction of an offence under this By-law, a person or operator shall be liable to a fine in accordance with section 429 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, as follows:

- (a) a minimum of \$500 and a maximum fine of \$100,000.00;
- (b) in the case of a continuing offence, for each day or part of a day that the offence continues, a minimum of \$500 and a maximum fine of \$10,000.00, and the total of all daily fines for the offence is not limited to \$100,000.00; and
- (c) in the case of a multiple offence, for each offence included in the multiple offence, a minimum fine of \$500, and a maximum fine of \$10,000.00, and the total of all fines for each included offence is not limited to \$100,000.00.

21. Where a person or operator has been convicted of an offence, the court in which the conviction has been entered and any court of competent jurisdiction thereafter may, in addition to any other remedy and to any penalty imposed by this By-law, make an order:

- (a) prohibiting the continuation or repetition of the offence by the person or operator convicted; and,
- (b) requiring the person or operator convicted to correct the contravention in the manner and within the period that the court considers appropriate.

22. An offence under this By-law may constitute a continuing offence or a multiple offence as set out in the *Municipal Act, 2001*.

General

23. This By-law shall not be interpreted so as to conflict with a provincial or federal statute, regulation or instrument of a legislative nature, including an order made under the EMCPA or the HPPA.

24. If a court of competent jurisdiction declares any provision or part of a provision of this By-law invalid, the provision or part of a provision is deemed severable from this By-law and it is the intention of Council that the remainder of this By-law shall continue to be of full force and effect.

25. This By-law comes into force and effect on the day it is passed and shall remain in effect until May 9, 2022.

PASSED in Open Council on

Ed Holder
Mayor

Michael Schulthess
City Clerk

First Reading –
Second Reading –
Third Reading –

DRAFT