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| TO: | CHAIR AND MEMBERS CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING ON MARCH 8, 2016 |
| FROM: | CATHY SAUNDERS CITY CLERK and LYNNE LIVINGSTONE MANAGING DIRECTOR NEIGHBOURHOOD, CHILDREN AND FIRE SERVICES |
| SUBJECT: | CHILD MINDING FOR THE PUBLIC AT PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MEETINGS OF MUNICIPAL COUNCIL STANDING COMMITTEES |

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| RECOMMENDATION |
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That, on the recommendation of the City Clerk and the Managing Director of Neighbourhood, Children and Fire Services, the following actions be taken with respect to the provision of child minding services for the public at Public Participation Meetings related to a Standing Committee Meeting:

- a) the report entitled "Child Minding for the Public at Public Participation Meetings of Municipal Council Standing Committees", dated February 16, 2016, BE RECEIVED;
- b) the Civic Administration BE ADVISED if the Municipal Council wishes the Civic Administration to further investigate the provision of child minding services for the public at Public Participation Meetings of Municipal Council Standing Committees;
- c) subject to the decision with respect to b) above, the Civic Administration BE AUTHORIZED to undertake a Request for Proposal process to seek proposals from Third Party Service Providers for the provision of child minding services for the public at Public Participation meetings of Municipal Council Standing Committees with the proposals providing the costs and associated protocols for a 12 month "pilot project", commencing upon the selection of a preferred Proponent; and
- d) subject to the decision with respect to b) above and the completion of c) above, the Civic Administration BE DIRECTED to report back to a future meeting of the Corporate Services Committee with detailed costs, operating protocols and a recommended Purchase of Service Agreement;

it being noted that the provision of this service is directly linked to the Leading in Public Service strategy included in the City's Strategic Plan to be an open, accountable and responsive government; and it being further noted that funding to support this initiative is not currently budgeted in the City's proposed 2016–2019 Multi-year Operating Budget.

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| PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER |
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None.

BACKGROUND

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to identify and discuss issues relating to the provision of child minding services for the public at Public Participation Meetings of Municipal Council Standing Committees, and to seek direction from Municipal Council whether or not to proceed with requesting proposals from Third Party Service Providers for the provision of child minding services at Public Participation Meetings.

Background

At the March 31, 2015 meeting of Municipal Council, the Civic Administration was asked to investigate the feasibility of having child minding services available for members of the public during Public Participation Meetings of Municipal Council Standing Committees.

Legislative Requirement – The *Child Care and Early Years Act 2014* came into effect on August 31, 2015, replacing the existing *Day Nurseries Act* at that time. The *Child Care and Early Years Act 2014* defines “child care” as the provision of temporary care or supervision of children in any circumstance, other than in exempted circumstances. Regulation 137/2015 of this Act sets out a number of exemptions for programs or types of care that are not “child care” and therefore do not require a license. Preliminary information from the Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch, Early Learning Division, Ministry of Education, is that as long as the parents of the children remain in the same building as their children, and are available to attend to the children if the need arises, a “child minding” service would qualify as an exempted circumstance, and would therefore not require a child care license. Therefore for the purposes of this report, the “child minding” service being discussed is defined as the “non-licensed temporary non-custodial care or supervision of children to the age of 12 where the child’s parents are in the same building, but apart from the children”.

Other Municipalities – A December 2015 scan of 13 municipalities in Canada (Edmonton, Vancouver, Halifax, Calgary, Waterloo, Ottawa, Hamilton, Toronto, Kingston, Saskatoon, St. John’s, Winnipeg, Fredericton) found no municipalities that offer child minding to the public or Councillors for Council or Standing Committee meetings.

Scope of the Child Minding Service

This report deals exclusively with the provision of child minding services for the public during Public Participation Meetings of Municipal Council Standing Committees. Standing Committees include Civic Works, Community and Protective Services, Corporate Services, Planning and Environment and Strategic Planning and Priorities committees. The discussion in this report is not intended to apply to child minding services for any other circumstances, including Advisory Committee meetings, community public consultations, Councillor initiated Town Hall meetings or any other meetings that are not a Public Participation Meeting of a Standing Committee.

In 2014, there were 36 Public Participation Meetings of Standing Committees. In 2015, there have been 38 Public Participation Meetings as of November 30, 2015. Meeting length has ranged between 26 minutes and 8 hours 37 minutes, with an overall average length of slightly longer than 3.5 hours. There is a great deal of unpredictability in meeting length, which creates significant practical logistical issues in costing and providing this service.

Number and Duration of PPMs - Jan 2014 - November 30, 2015

| Standing Committee | # of Mtgs with PPMs | Avg Mtg Length (hr:mn) | Shortest Mtg Length (hr:mn) | Longest Mtg Length (hr:mn) |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Civic Works | 7 | 2:42 | 0:31 | 5:00 |
| Community and Protective Services | 5 | 3:23 | 2:05 | 5:00 |
| Corporate Services | 5 | 1:41 | 0:36 | 2:35 |
| Planning and Environment | 44 | 3:48 | 0:26 | 8:14 |
| Strategic Planning and Priorities | 13 | 4:04 | 0:45 | 8:37 |

74 PPMs held January 2014 through November 30, 2015

Service Delivery Model

The Civic Administration recommends that child minding services for the public at Public Participation Meetings of Standing Committees be delivered through an approved Third Party Provider. The City would enter into an Agreement with a non-profit organization to manage and provide the service. The Agreement would stipulate the expected schedule and duration of the service; the process for scheduling the service; the method for costing the service; the expectations of the Provider with respect to the number and qualifications of staff; insurance requirements; policy and protocol requirements (i.e. registration process, fee recovery if any); training requirements etc. The City's responsibility would be to schedule the service and provide a suitable room. The Provider's responsibility would be to manage all aspects of the service delivery itself.

Contracting with a Third Party Provider offers additional advantages, including:

- Experienced Qualified Providers – There are existing organizations in London, such as the Ontario Early Years Centres, that offer drop-in programs as a core component of their regular service delivery. These organizations are experienced in setting-up and operating drop-in age and developmentally appropriate programs
- Faster Implementation – The organizations in London that currently provide child minding services have established protocols and policies dealing with all aspects of the service (e.g. staff screening, program planning, food handling, security, etc.) and would be able to provide this expertise immediately to the City.
- Easier Program Management - By contracting with a Third Party Provider, the Civic Administration is able to transfer all of the significant management, staffing, scheduling and logistical challenges associated with providing the service to the Third Party Provider, while maintaining high level responsibility for scheduling when the service will be needed. It is recommended that the City Clerk's office be responsible for management of the child minding service, in their capacity as the support Service Area for Council.
- Risk Management – By contracting with an Approved Third Party Provider, the City can ensure that most of the liability and risk management issues become the responsibility of the Third Party Provider.
- Short Term Flexibility – If the decision is made to proceed with offering a child minding service for the public at Public Participation Meetings, it is recommended that it be offered on a pilot-project basis in order to assess long-term demand. Using a Third Party Provider will allow the City to evaluate the potential demand for the service without committing to permanent new cost pressures.

Financial

Based on the City's very limited experience with child minding services, it is estimated that the cost to contract with a Third Party Provider could be approximately \$350 to \$400 for an average 4 hour Public Participation Meeting. This cost includes management of the service; staff recruitment, screening, training and scheduling; room set-up and take-down; child minding; and toys and materials.

In order to estimate the possible costs associated with the provision of child minding services at Public Participation Meetings, the following assumptions have been made:

- 40 Public Participation Meetings per year
- Average duration per meeting – 4 hours
- Cost is fixed – Third Party Provider is paid regardless of whether children show up or not

| | Third Party Provider |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| No. of PPMs Per Year | 40 |
| Average Length per PPM | 4 Hours |
| Estimated Cost per Average PPM | \$400 |

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| Estimated Cost Per Year | \$16,000 |
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Additional Considerations

The following considerations will have to be explored if the decision is made to proceed:

- Location and Facility - The child minding space must be located within the same building in which the Public Participation Meeting is taking place, and situated such that parents are easily accessible to the child, if needed. Additional requirements include access to washrooms; diaper change facility with secured garbage and waste disposal; food preparation areas if food is to be provided; food storage areas for food that is either brought by children (e.g. children bring snacks/ supper etc.) or stored for distribution (e.g. crackers, juice, etc.); lockable storage space for equipment and supplies, etc.
- Number and Age of children – Depending on the child minding space that is used and the number of adults working in the space, it may be necessary to limit the number of children for whom the service may be provided. It may also be necessary to set minimum and maximum ages of the children, which in turn could impact the number of staff required (e.g. Child Care and Early Years Act requirements are 1 adult for every 3 children under 18 months, but 1 adult for every 10 kindergarten aged children).
- Fees for Service – It is recommended that the public not be charged for the service, and that the cost be included in the City Clerk’s budget. An increase to the City Clerk’s budget would be required to accommodate the additional service. Providing the service at no cost to parents meets the objective of making Public Participation Meetings accessible to all Londoners, and eliminates significant logistical and security concerns associated with cash management.
- Pre-Registration – Pre-registration by the parents for the child minding services is highly desirable, especially if the number and/or ages of the children is limited. However, parents may not be able to plan far enough in advance to pre-register, effectively limiting their ability to participate. An alternative could be that parents who pre-register are given priority on the day of the meeting over parents who show up with children that are not pre-registered.

Implementation Approach

If the Civic Administration is directed to further investigate the establishment of a child minding service for the public at Public Participation Meetings of Standing Committees, an ad-hoc group including City Clerk’s, Corporate Security, Legal, Risk Management, and Facilities will need to be established to identify issues, policies and protocols that will need to be addressed and possibly included in the Request for Proposal from potential Third party Providers.

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| FINANCIAL IMPACT |
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Current estimates are that the child minding service could cost between \$15,000 and \$20,000 per year. Costs for the service are not currently included in the City’s proposed 2016 – 2019 budget.

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| PREPARED BY: | RECOMMENDED BY: |
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| IAN GIBB MANAGER, CHILDREN'S SERVICES NEIGHBOURHOOD, CHILDREN & FIRE SERVICES | LYNNE LIVINGSTONE, MANAGING DIRECTOR - NEIGHBOURHOOD, CHILDREN & FIRE SERVICES |
| RECOMMENDED BY: | |
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| CATHY SAUNDERS CITY CLERK | |

- C: Anna Lisa Barbon, Financial Services
 Kyle Murray, Financial Services
 Cathy Saunders, City Clerk's
 Lynn Marshall, Legal Services
 Jason Wills, Risk Management
 Dave O'Brien, Corporate Security
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