



SUBJECT: Standing Committee Structure Options

TO: Corporate Services, Strategy, Risk & Accountability Cttee.

FROM: Office of the City Clerk

Report Number: CL-18-23

Wards Affected: N/A

Date to Committee: October 4, 2023

Date to Council: October 17, 2023

Recommendation:

Receive and file clerks department report CL-18-23 entitled Standing Committee Structure Options; and

Provide feedback to the Mayor regarding the proposed new Standing Committee structure.

PURPOSE:

Vision to Focus Alignment:

- Building more citizen engagement, community health and culture

Background and Discussion:

The current standing committee structure has been in place since January 2020, as per report CL-01-20, and By-law 04-20. The current structure includes the following:

- Audit Committee
- Community Planning, Regulation and Mobility Committee
- Corporate Services, Strategy, Risk and Accountability Committee
- Council Workshop Committee
- Environment, Infrastructure and Community Services Committee

** For the balance of this report – the Audit Committee is removed from this discussion as it is comprised of mixed membership, of members of Council and the public and at this time is out of scope. There will also be no changes made to Council Workshops, or CPRM – Public Meeting. CSSRA – Budget will be renamed to Budget Committee.

On June 26, 2023, by way of motion memorandum, Council resolved to review the standing committee structure. A direction was provided to the City Clerk to review the system, to streamline the decision-making process, and establish a revised system in advance of presenting the annual calendar of meetings report.

On July 1, 2023, [Bill 3](#), the Strong Mayors, Building Homes Act, 2022, by way of [O. Reg. 180/23](#) was extended to the City of Burlington. With respect to committees, the Mayor may create committees of Council, assign their functions and appoint their Chairs and Vice Chairs. As there are no regulations that provide additional context, this ability applies to committees of Council comprised solely of members of Council. Any changes require a mayoral decision.

The purpose of bringing the proposed new committee structure to Committee and Council is to close out the outstanding staff direction to the Office of the City Clerk and solicit feedback and recommendations from Committee and Council prior to any changes being made.

Mayor Meed Ward has worked with the Office of the City Clerk to scope an alternate committee system which is intended to help streamline Council business. In presenting this report, staff are fulfilling SD-29-23, and affording Council time to review and reflect on what is proposed. The Mayor intends to review the feedback received from Council members at CSSRA on October 4, and issue a Mayoral decision outlining the new system, in keeping with Bill 3 requirements.

The proposed new committee system is as follows:

- Audit Committee – No change
- Council Workshop – No change
- CSSRA Budget – renamed Budget Committee
- CPRM – Public Meeting - No change

The balance of Standing Committee work will be directed to a Committee of the Whole. The Committee of the Whole will be comprised of distinct sections. The meeting will be opened by the Mayor, who will start the meeting, oversee any delegations, and complete all consent items (includes pulled matters), and then will pass the gavel to Chairs (appointed Council members) who will chair segments of the meeting.

- Corporate Services, Strategy, Risk and Accountability (which includes the City Manager's Office)
- Community Planning Regulation and Mobility

- Environment Infrastructure and Community Services

The Mayor would then chair the final portions of the meeting, including Closed Session, through to adjournment. The Chair/Vice Chair rotations for the distinct sections remain as established under the Mayor's appointments report MO-03-22, at this time no changes are proposed.

Strategy/process/risk

The outcome sought is to solicit feedback from Council on a proposed new Standing Committee structure intended to streamline the decision-making process, provide more predictability for staff, Council and the public about meetings and where items are considered. It is anticipated that while increasing efficiency, opportunities for engagement and participation will be maintained or enhanced.

For the current standing committee structure, committee week consists of three full days, however it has become common to cancel or to combine meetings due to a lack of items of business. This practice frees up time for Council, but it also contributes to a disruption in the cadence in which we conduct our business. When meetings are combined or cancelled, it may lead to public confusion, and require additional communications support to clarify the changes of an adapted meeting schedule.

In stacking standing committee business into one Committee of the Whole over two days, the meeting is recessed from one day to the next. Compressing committee business into two-days will help to release a full day of business, and may help in scheduling all related meetings (Council Workshop/Audit) into one full week.

Options Considered

At the October 4, 2023 meeting members of Committee could advocate to keep the committee structure as is or make changes to the proposed model. All feedback received by the Mayor will be considered when determining their final decision.

Financial Matters:

Not applicable.

Climate Implications:

Reducing the instances standing committees convene, may help to reduce Council's overall carbon footprint.

Engagement Matters:

Streamlining the way standing committee business occurs may lead to a greater predictability for when business will occur and help to promote participation.

Conclusion:

This report is provided to committee for discussion purposes. All discussion provided at this meeting will be received by the Mayor. The input gathered may be incorporated into a final decision rendered on a new standing committee structure for the City of Burlington.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin Arjoon

City Clerk

905-335-7600 ext. 7702

Report Approval:

All reports are reviewed and/or approved by Department Director, the Chief Financial Officer and the Executive Director of Legal Services & Corporation Counsel.