



LEGISLATIVE AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL SERVICES

TO:	Council	
DATE:	September 27, 2022	DIVISION: All
FILE:	N/A	APPLICATION: N/A
SUBJECT:	Request for Decision: Creation of a Council Committee of the Whole	

POLICY DIRECTION:

Section 203 of the *Municipal Government Act* allows Council to delegate its powers, duties, and responsibilities to a committee, the Chief Administrative Officer, or a designated officer.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

At the July 26, 2022, Council meeting, Council approved nine project charters, one of which was the Governance Improvement Charter. The purpose of this project is to improve the County's governance process by creating a forum for Council to receive updates and discuss strategic and governance matters in a more informal setting.

There are a variety of tools available to Council to address governance and strategic related items. In March of 2022, the Public Presentation Committee (PPC) was formed to provide a venue for people to present ideas and proposals to Council, this Committee is one way that Council has improved its governance process. To fulfill Council's governance requirement set out in the Governance Improvement Charter, Administration recommends the creation of a Council Committee of the Whole, known as the Governance Committee.

The intent of a Council Committee of the Whole is to provide a venue for a more informal discussion of matters that do not require a decision to be made. The Committee would provide a venue for Council to hear updates, presentations, and provide direction to Administration on a variety of matters. The Committee is not intended to replicate Council meetings, but rather shall provide Council the ability to approach these matters with governance and strategic direction in mind.

Should Council wish to consider creating a Council Committee of the Whole known as the Governance Committee, Option #1 would provide direction to Administration to bring a report back to Council that would include a Terms of Reference for a proposed Council Committee of the Whole (Governance Committee) and associated amendments to the Boards and Committees Bylaw. The Committee meetings are proposed to begin in January of 2023.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION:

Administration recommends Option #1.

Administration Resources

Michelle Mitton, Legislative and Intergovernmental Services



BACKGROUND:

There are a variety of methods that Council can use to perform their governance roles. Administration is in the process of reviewing how Council performs these roles with the Governance Improvement Charter project.

Throughout the year, Administration presents reports to Council on a variety of topics including emerging and ongoing projects, initiatives within the County, and upcoming bylaws for review and comment. Certain items require a Council decision, while others seek Council direction or provide information to update Council. Currently, all types of items are accommodated during regularly scheduled Council meetings. The result is often Council meetings with a high volume of items, including public hearings. This can leave limited time for robust discussion or debate on any governance and strategic related items.

Governance is a system and process, not a single activity, and therefore successful implementation of a good governance strategy requires a systematic approach that incorporates strategic planning, risk management, and performance management. Like culture, it is a core component of the unique characteristics of a successful organization.

Administration researched a number of municipalities in Alberta and British Columbia to see what tools were used to assist Council with the range of items they must consider. Municipalities in both provinces use Council Committees of the Whole to bring forward items requiring clarification or direction to Administration, updates on new and ongoing projects and initiatives, and regular reporting.

In the County's past, there have been Committees of Council that have accommodated some of the matters that could go to the Committee of the Whole. These committees have included:

- Infrastructure Operations Committee (2006 – 2013);
- Public Services Committee (2006 – 2013);
- The Policy and Priorities Committee (a combination of the Infrastructure Operations Committee and Public Services Committee) (2013 - 2018); and
- Governance and Priorities Committee (2019 - 2020)

On February 25, 2020, Council passed a motion to rescind the Terms of Reference for the Governance and Priorities Committee. The primary reason for disbanding the committee were the limited number of items coming to the Committee. Council determined that these items could be accommodated during Council Meetings.

Through the research of other municipalities and past Council Committees, along with consideration of recent agenda items, Administration has determined that there would be value in creating a Council Committee of the Whole. This would assist with managing the volume at Council meetings and allow Council additional time to consider and discuss certain items and provide meaningful direction to Administration.

Administration recommends that meetings of the proposed Committee occur monthly and commence in January 2023. Administration recommends, through its review, that Council delegate the following to the proposed Committee:

- monitoring progress towards the achievement of Council's strategic goals;
- providing guidance on Council policies;
- providing guidance on governance-related bylaws;
- receiving department reports as information;
- receiving updates and providing feedback and direction to Administration on emerging and ongoing projects and initiatives;



- receiving updates from Administration regarding changes to federal, provincial, and municipal legislation;
- providing clarification and direction to Administration when additional clarity and direction is necessary; and
- any other governance or strategic matter that warrants further discussion or direction from the Council Committee of the Whole.

Items that could be brought to the Committee include, but are not limited to, providing input to the annual budget prior to the final budget going before Council for decision, updates to Area Structure Plans that are for information or a policy or that requires guidance on the direction Administration should take prior to it going to Council for decision.

This Committee is not intended to be a steppingstone that is required prior to an item being brought to Council. Items are not required to come to the committee if they do not require additional guidance or direction prior to going to Council for decision.

NEXT STEPS:

Should Council provide direction to create this Committee, Administration would bring a proposed Terms of Reference, and associated bylaw amendments, by October 11, 2022. This would allow for the appointment of the chair and the dates of the proposed Committee to be included on the 2023 Council and Committee dates calendar that is brought to Council for approval at the October 25, 2022 Organizational Meeting. The first meeting of the Committee would be in January of 2023, to allow time for both internal and external implementation.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS:

An assessment of internal resources required to support the committee will be included with the report that accompanies the proposed Terms of Reference and accompanying Bylaw amendments.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

The proposed Committee would align with Council's Strategic Plan to provide Service Excellence and responsible governance.

OPTIONS:

Option #1: THAT Administration be directed to prepare a Terms of Reference for a Council Committee of the Whole and associated amendments to the Boards and Committees Bylaw and to return to Council with these items on October 11, 2022.

Option #2: THAT alternative direction be provided.

Respectfully submitted,

Concurrence,

"Amy Zaluski"

"Dorian Wandzura"

Director,
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Chief Administrative Officer

MM/jb