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Report 2025-063

Report Title: Revised Standing Committee Terms of Reference

Committee Name: Corporate Support

Committee Meeting Date: April 1, 2025

Prepared by: Maddison Mather
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Corporate Services

Reviewed by: Lisa Ainsworth
Director of Corporate Services
Corporate Services

Approved by: Jennifer Moore, CAO

Council Meeting Date: April 16, 2025

Strategic Plan Priorities: Innovate for Service Excellence
 Ignite Economic Opportunity
 Foster a Thriving Community
 Propel Sustainable Growth
 Champion a Vibrant Future

Recommendation

“**That** the Corporate Support Committee, having considered Report 2025-063 ‘Revised Standing Committee Terms of Reference’, recommend that County Council approve the revised Standing Committee Terms of Reference documents for Northumberland County’s 6 Standing Committees at the April 16, 2025 County Council meeting.”

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend revisions to Standing Committee Terms of Reference documents in order to streamline Committee correspondence and to make additional minor updates.

Background

At the March 19, 2025 County Council meeting, Council considered options to streamline Standing Committee correspondence and adopted option #2 as outlined in Report 2025-046 'Standing Committee Correspondence' (attached). Council also direct staff to update Standing Committee Terms of Reference documents in order to reflect this new process.

Option #2 entails that after correspondence regarding a subject matter is initially considered by Standing Committee / Council, all correspondence regarding the same subject matter will not be included on subsequent Standing Committee agendas. However, correspondence of the same subject matter will be emailed to the Standing Committee Chair on a monthly basis, in advance of agenda publication. If the Standing Committee Chair wishes to bring forward similar correspondence that has been previously considered in order to highlight the momentum that is taking place on an area of municipal importance, then the Chair shall advise the Clerk/Deputy Clerk. Staff will continue to file correspondence received from other municipalities and municipal associations and maintain these records in accordance with the County's records retention by-law.

Consultations

N/A

Legislative Authority / Risk Considerations

- Council Procedural By-law
- Standing Committee Terms of Reference

Discussion / Options

In addition to updating the Standing Committee Terms of Reference documents to streamline Committee correspondence, staff are also recommending a few additional changes, including:

Membership

The 'Membership' section of the Terms of Reference documents online that "The Committee shall be comprised of three (3) County Council members, being the current Warden and two (2) members appointed by Council. If the Warden provides advance notice of their absence from a Committee meeting, the Deputy Warden shall attend in their place."

However, since the Deputy Warden is also a member of 2 Standing Committees, there could be instances where the Warden is unable to attend and cannot send the Deputy Warden in their place, due to the Deputy Warden already being a Committee Member. This situation could potentially impact meeting quorum.

Thus, staff are recommending that when the Warden is unable to attend, and the Deputy Warden is already a Member of the Committee, that the Warden has the ability to send another Member of Council in their place, and that this Member will have voting privileges at that Committee Meeting.

Staff also recommend that the sentence "If the Warden provides advance notice of their absence from a Committee meeting, the Deputy Warden shall attend in their place" be updated to clarify that when the Deputy Warden attends a Committee meeting in the Warden's place,

that the Deputy Warden has voting privileges. This has always been the practice at Standing Committee meetings; however, it is important to clarify this in the Terms of Reference documents.

Chair

The 'Chair' section of the Terms of Reference documents outlines that "if the Chair is absent the other member shall chair the meeting. The Warden shall not chair Committee meetings".

However, staff are recommending updating this section to clarify that if the Chair is absent or participating electronically, the other member shall chair the meeting. Staff also recommend updating this section to indicate that the Warden may Chair Committee meetings in instances where the other Committee member is participating electronically. This change reflects current practices, and it is important to note that electronic participation must adhere to the requirements outlined in the Council Procedural By-law.

Delegations

The 'Delegation' section of the Terms of Reference documents outlines that "Delegations will be heard when that business item is dealt with, as set out in the agenda, or at a time as determined by a majority of the Committee Members."

Staff recommend updating this section to clarify that delegations requested by members of the public / organizations in advance of agenda publication that do not relate to an item on the Committee agenda, will be heard under the 'Delegation' section of the agenda. However, delegations related to an agenda item will still be heard when that business item is set out in the agenda. For example, if a member of the public wishes to make a delegation regarding a staff report, their delegation will take place after the staff overview / presentation of the staff report, but prior to Committee deliberation on the item.

In addition, staff are recommending adding to the Terms of Reference documents that delegations that do not relate to an agenda item, must be requested six business days in advance of the scheduled meeting date, including the submission of any delegation material(s), such as a PowerPoint presentation. This recommended update aligns with current practices.

Proclamations

In the 'Proclamations' section of the Terms of Reference documents, staff recommend including reference to the County's 'Commemorative Observances, Proclamations, and Flag' policy, which outlines proclamation criteria and the application process.

Petitions

In the 'Petitions' section of the Terms of Reference documents, staff recommend including reference to the County's 'Petition to County Council' policy.

Financial Impact

N/A

Member Municipality Impacts

N/A

Conclusion / Outcomes

Staff recommend that County Council adopt the revised Standing Committee Terms of Reference documents for Northumberland County's 6 Standing Committees at the April 16, 2025 County Council meeting."

Attachments

- 1) Report 2025-063 ATTACH 1 'Report 2025-046 'Standing Committee Correspondence'
- 2) Report 2025-063 ATTACH 2 'Generic Terms of Reference Document – Redline Version'
- 3) Report 2025-063 ATTACH 3 'Public Works Committee Terms of Reference'
- 4) Report 2025-063 ATTACH 4 'Community Health Committee Terms of Reference'
- 5) Report 2025-063 ATTACH 5 'Finance & Audit Committee Terms of Reference'
- 6) Report 2025-063 ATTACH 6 'Corporate Support Committee Terms of Reference'
- 7) Report 2025-063 ATTACH 7 'Social Services Committee Terms of Reference'
- 8) Report 2025-063 ATTACH 8 'Economic Development, Tourism, and Land Use Planning Committee Terms of Reference'