

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Committee name:	Youth Engagement Working Group
Reporting to:	Committee of the Whole
Date of formation - expiration date:	March 21, 2022
Meeting frequency:	At least quarterly
Staff lead:	Victoria Etchegary, Organizational Performance and Strategy
Other staff liaison:	As deemed necessary by lead staff as per Section 4.2.1
Council member:	Councillor Ophelia Ravencroft

2. PURPOSE

The Youth Engagement Working Group will oversee implementation of the Youth Engagement Strategy approved by Council in October 2020 and provide ongoing advice and guidance on how to best engage youth on City matters. The Working Group will provide perspective on topics that are of interest to youth, will recommend the most appropriate engagement tools and methods, and help identify barriers and gaps that might impact youth engagement. In doing so, the Working Group will consider the City’s Engage! Policy and other relevant City policies, programs and tools including the City’s Online Youth Panel. The Working Group will also consider how the City’s established relationships with youth serving agencies can be leveraged to ensure engagement of hard-to-reach youth such as newcomers, youth at risk, and other vulnerable groups.

Working Group Relationship to Strategic Plan:

- A Connected City – A City where people feel connected, have a sense of belonging, and are actively engaged in community life.
- A Sustainable City – A City that is sustainable today and for future generations; economically, environmentally, and financially.

Other City Plans, Guides or Strategies:

- All City Plans and Strategies

Other Distinct Deliverables and Considerations:

- The Working Group will provide youth perspectives on the development of City strategies, policies or programs as requested by Council, staff, or other City body.

3. MEMBERSHIP AND COMPOSITION

3.1 COMPOSITION

The Working Group will be comprised of youth with diverse backgrounds and perspectives as well as representatives from youth serving agencies.

3.1.1 Public Members

Public

The Working Group will be comprised of no more than six (6) to eight (8) youth aged 18 to 30 consisting of Public members who are volunteers and will receive no compensation for participation. Preference will be given to residents of St. John's. A member of the public from this category will be elected by the group to Co-Chair the committee.

Organizations

The Working Group will be comprised of no more than two (2) to three (3) persons representing youth serving agencies. It is recommended that the organizational representatives be board members, executive directors or someone with decision making authority in the organization. Each organization may also appoint an alternate representative to attend committee meetings if the primary member is unable to attend.

Subcommittees

When deemed necessary, the Working Group may strike a sub working group to deal with specific issues or deliverables. Sub working groups must have at least one member from the larger Working Group. Sub working groups shall meet independently, reporting to the Working Group on specified meeting dates, or as deemed necessary by the Working Group Chair.

3.1.2 Staff and Council Members (Ex-Officio Members)

Lead Staff

A Lead Staff will co-chair the working group as approved by the appropriate City executive or Senior management. Other staff support/attendance may be requested by the Co-Chairs where required.

City Clerk

The City Clerk will provide support to the Working Group as determined by the Chair and the City Clerk.

Council

Given the profile of Youth and the City's commitment to improve youth engagement, a Council Champion will be assigned to this Working Group.

3.2 LENGTH OF TERM

Public

Unless otherwise indicated, the term of appointment is two years. Recognizing the value of experience and the need for continuity, incumbents who are willing to seek reappointment may signify their intent to serve an additional two years (one year at a time) for a total of four years. In some cases, members may be encouraged to provide guidance, expertise and attend in a bridging capacity following the end of their term.

Organizations

The role of an organization will depend on its relationship with the Working Group and ongoing ability to represent interests of a stakeholder group relevant to the purpose of the Working Group. Where appropriate, organizations will be required to alternate appointed representatives following the completion of each term.

Staff

A review of Staff role will occur every four years.

Cooling-off Period (Former City Staff and Council)

There will be a cooling-off period of two years for Council and Staff once they are no longer associated with the City. Setting term lengths with a cooling-off period will promote gradual turnover, ensuring a constant balance between new members and former staff or council.

Additional Considerations:

- Public members may not serve on more than one City Working Group, Committee, or Experts Panel at a given time.
- Midterm Appointments: When an appointment is made which does not coincide with the beginning of a term (i.e. to fill vacancy) the partial term (i.e. less than two years) shall not count towards the maximum length of service or number of terms on the Working Group for the appointee.
- Unless otherwise expressed in this Terms of Reference, the limit on length of Working Group membership for any public member is one two-year term with possibility for extension for two more years, one year at a time.

Exceptions to the above terms are as follows: when an insufficient number of applications have been received; if a particular area of expertise is indispensable and there are no other suitable replacements; if the Working Group would suffer from a lack of continuity (i.e. more than half of all members are replaced at once); if directly related to the Working Group's purpose as defined in its Terms of Reference.

4. ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND REPORTING

4.1 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Working Group roles include:

- Supporting the implementation of the Working Group's defined Purpose.
- Providing age specific resident and organizational based expertise.
- Working within given resources.

Shared Member Responsibilities:

Conduct

Members shall strive to serve the public interest by upholding Federal, Provincial and Municipal laws and policies. Working Group members are to be transparent in their duties to promote public confidence. Members are to respect the rights and opinions of other Working Group members.

Preparation

Meeting agenda and accompanying materials will be circulated electronically one week prior to all meetings; members are expected to review all distributed materials prior to meetings. Alternate material distribution methods to be made available upon request.

Agendas

- Agendas to require focus with clear parameters for content and alignment with terms of reference/purpose.
- Agendas will be finalized one week before Working Group meetings.
- Items and accompanying material that are received after the agenda has been prepared and distributed (but prior to the meeting) will be moved to the following meeting's agenda at the discretion of the City Clerk.
- All public members are to submit potential agenda items and related material to the Working Group Chairs for consideration.

Attendance and Participation

Active participation in the Working Group meetings is expected of all public members. "Active participation" may refer to both meeting attendance and/or engagement. An effort should be made to attend meetings in person or remotely. If a member declines two consecutive attempts to schedule a meeting or is unable to attend two consecutive scheduled meetings without justified absence, that member may be retired from the committee at the discretion of the City Clerk.

Working Group members who wish to request a leave of absence for an extended period of time (3+ months) may submit such a request to the City Clerk. Previously submitted applications may be used to fill temporary vacancies created by approved leaves of absence.

Voting

Council members and City Staff are ex-officio and therefore non-voting.

4.2 MEMBER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**4.2.1 City Staff****Lead Staff**

- Co-Chair the Working Group.
- Act as a liaison between the Working Group and the City; linking across departments on issues relevant to committee work.
- Ensure the Working Group is informed about City policy, procedure, and available resources in reference to specific agenda items and provide procedural and/or technical advice to assist working group where appropriate.
- Lead the Working Group in the establishment of timelines, deadlines, creation of sub working groups.
- Request additional staff support/attendance as needed.
- Develop agendas for distribution.
- Incorporate input from the Working Group into ongoing City work where appropriate (e.g. projects, staff updates, publications).

Other Staff Liaison

- The work of Other Staff Liaisons intersects the purpose of the Working Group and therefore they may be required to participate.

City Clerk

- To be responsible for legislative functions related to the working group operation, establishment, review, and term amendments. This includes leading or supporting day-to-day committee activities such as the co-ordination of meeting schedules and the external/internal distribution/posting of advisory committee agendas and reporting forms (i.e. meeting notes/minutes).
- Facilitate and support the recruitment and appointment process through assisting in the development of "Notice of Vacancy" contents while ensuring all relevant forms and supporting documentation are completed and received.
- In adherence with the terms of reference, the Office of City Clerk and Lead Staff will oversee committee selection with input from relevant departments.
- The Office of the City Clerk will work with Lead Staff members to ensure new members receive orientation.

4.2.2 MEMBERS

Members are expected to advise the City on how best to deliver on the purpose of the Working Group. Members will apply personal skills, knowledge and experience in carrying out functions commensurate with the defined purpose of the Working Group. Roles to include active participation in meetings; representing youth interests in the community. Organizational members will be conduits to/from their respective organizations. As such they will be expected to provide insight on behalf of organizational stakeholders and update their members on the work of the Working Group.

WORKING GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

4.2.3 COUNCIL

Council members have a focused role. One council representative will act as Champion for the Working Group. The Council Champion will be encouraged to attend meetings and to act as a liaison between the Working Group and council.

In cases where an item of Working Group business (as detailed in a given meeting agenda) would benefit from having more than one council representative attend, it will be the responsibility of the Staff Co-Chair to inform council Champion.

4.3 REPORTING

The Youth Working Group shall report through the Committee of the Whole to City Council.

Standardized Reporting Process:

- The Staff Co-Chair Chair and City Clerk will complete reports for the Committee of the Whole
- The Staff, or a designate, will submit a report, along with any other Working Group updates, to its reporting department.

Notes:

- Council to be kept informed of Working Group activities through formal reporting and through the appointed Council Champion and on occasion Working Group Youth Co-Chair as deemed appropriate.
- Organizational representatives will be required to report (i.e. maintain open communication) with their respective organizations regarding the Working Group.

5. COMMITTEE RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION**5.1 RECRUITMENT, VACANCIES, AND APPLICATIONS**

Recruitment practices will be consistent for all Working Groups. When new members are required a "Notice of Vacancy" will be prepared by the City Clerk and distributed through City communication channels. Additional communications opportunities may be identified by relevant departments/ Working Group members. This document will include general information regarding Working Group purpose, the terms of reference and a link to the Application Form. Notice of Vacancy will be vetted through the Working Group as well.

A vacancy on a Working Group occurs when a member resigns, vacates a position or when their resignation is requested by the Chair. Vacancies may occur at: the date of resignation; the date the member ceases to be qualified; the date the Working Group Chair declares the position vacant due to lack of attendance or incapacitation.

All applicants must complete an online expression of interest. Applications will be made available in large print format upon request and may be submitted electronically, via mail, by phone, or in person to the attention of the City Clerk's Office.

5.2 ELIGIBILITY AND SELECTION

Eligibility

Appointments to a City of St. John's Working Group will be made providing adherence with the following eligibility requirements:

1. Preference will be given to residents of St. John's. Exceptions may be made by the selecting body.
2. Organizational representatives must be based in or serve/do business within the City of St. John's.
3. Organizational representatives are not required to be residents of St. John's.

Commitment to Equity and Inclusiveness

The City of St. John's is strongly committed to equity and inclusiveness. In selecting Working Group members the City will aim to design processes that are transparent, accessible, and free of discrimination and to seek to remove barriers for disadvantaged groups.

Selection Criteria

In addition to eligibility requirements, an applicant's specific skills and experience will be important factors in committee selection. While all who meet the Eligibility Requirements outlined above are encouraged to apply, applicants with demonstrated participation in groups or initiatives with goals relevant to a Working Group's purpose will be preferred. Some other considerations pertaining to general selection criteria include past professional and volunteer experience, ability to perform required tasks, and complementary skills, or competencies possessed. Those who are selected to serve on City Working Group's will be notified by email. Selection will be managed by lead staff and City Clerk with input from committee members on gaps/target groups.

6. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The City of St. John's recognizes that engagement between the City and its citizens is an essential component of an effective municipal government. The City views public engagement as a process – one that facilitates dialogue with the right people, using the right tools, at the right time, on subject areas of mutual interest.

In accordance with the City of St. John's [Engage! Policy](#), the role of the Youth Working Group in the spectrum of engagement will fall within the realm of "Involvement/Collaboration." This means that the Working Group will play an active role in the implementation of the Youth Engagement Strategy.

Working Groups are only one of the ways to engage with the City. Where applicable the City will consider the use of other tools to gather perspectives and input. For more information on public engagement in the City of St. John's or to find out how to get involved or learn about what's coming up, check out the engagement page on the City's website. You can also check out the City's [Engage! St. John's](#) online engagement platform and connect with us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

7. OTHER GOVERNANCE**7.1 REVIEW OF TERMS**

Taking into account recommendations from the Working Group Co-Chairs and Council Champion, the City Clerk and Lead Staff will review the Working Group terms of reference documents every two years. The purpose of this review will be to ensure that the operations and function of the Working Group are still aligned with its defined purpose (i.e. the Working Group remains relevant to City Plans).

7.2 MEETINGS AND SCHEDULES

Working Groups are to meet as often as required to oversee the implementation of the Youth Engagement Strategy. The exact frequency of Working Group meetings will be determined by the Co-Chairs in consultation with the WG.

To meet the committee meeting quorum, 50% + 1 voting members must be present.

Unless otherwise specified (generally one week prior to a meeting) Working Group meetings shall be held virtually or in person and every effort will be made to ensure flexibility in participation.

Meetings may be recorded.

7.3 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND CONFIDENTIALITY**Conflicts of Interest**

A conflict of interest refers to situations in which personal, occupational, or financial considerations may affect or appear to affect the objectivity or fairness of decisions related to the Working Group activities. A conflict of interest may be real, potential, or perceived in nature. Conflict of interest may occur when a Working Group member participates in discussion or decision-making about a matter which may financially benefit that Member or a member of his/her family, or someone with whom the Working Group member has a close personal relationship, directly or indirectly, regardless of the size of the benefit.

In cases where the Working Group agenda or discussions present a conflict of interest for a member, that member is required to declare such conflict; to abstain from discussion; and remove himself/herself from the meeting room until the agenda item has been dealt with by the Working Group.

Confidentiality

All Working Group members are required to refrain from the use or transmission of any confidential or privileged information while serving with the Youth Working Group.

WORKING GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE



Staff Liaison Name:

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Public Co-Chair Name:

Signature: _____

Date: _____

City Clerk Name:

Signature: _____

Date: _____