



To: SPECIAL COUNCIL

Meeting Date: 5/9/2023

Subject: Procedure By-law Review and Hybrid Meeting Procedure

Submitted By: Danielle Manton, City Clerk

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Report No.: 23-112-CRS

File No.: C11

Wards Affected: All Wards

RECOMMENDATION(S):

THAT Report 22-112-CRS Procedure By-law Review and Hybrid Meeting Procedure be received;

AND THAT the Procedure By-law and accompanying Hybrid Meeting Procedure attached as Appendix A through D to Report 22-112-CRS be presented to Council for enactment for a trial period ending on November 15, 2024;

AND THAT prior to the conclusion of the trial period, the City Clerk be directed to undertake a mid-term review of the Procedure By-law and Hybrid Model to include consultation with the community and Council;

AND FURTHER THAT following the mid-term review, the City Clerk be directed to report back to Council with a finalized Procedure By-law and Hybrid Meeting Procedure incorporating revisions from the review.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present to Council a revised Procedure By-law that concludes the review undertaken with the previous term of Council and incorporates provisions to facilitate the transition from fully virtual (electronic) to hybrid meetings for the 2022-2026 term of Council.

Key Findings

- In June 2020, Council amended Procedure By-law 18-15 as a result of Bill 187, *Municipal Emergency Act, 2020* that permitted Ontario Municipalities to conduct meetings electronically during the Provincial and Municipal emergency period associated with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- On August 11, 2020 Council further amended the Procedure By-law 18-15 as a result of Bill 197, the *COVID-19 Recovery Act*. The changes in legislation permitted Ontario municipalities to conduct meetings electronically on a permanent basis, regardless of an emergency pursuant to the *Municipal Act, 2001*.
- In December of 2020 Clerks staff began consultations with the previous term of Council as part of a comprehensive review of the City's Procedure By-law. Council members were broken into smaller groups to go through the existing by-law section by section and discuss the changes they would like to see. The review was based on a best-practices review of procedure by-laws from municipalities throughout Waterloo Region, Hamilton, Burlington, Oakville and beyond.
- On July 27, 2021 Council approved Report 21-224-CRS Council Chamber Audio and Video System replacement, which outlined the need to replace the technical meeting equipment in Council Chambers as a result of equipment not being able to facilitate hybrid meetings or integrate with the City's new electronic meeting management system.
- In July of 2022 Clerks Division staff completed a comprehensive review of Procedure By-law 18-15 with members of the 2018-2022 term of Council, which included consultation on proposed changes to the by-law and the addition of an Appendix with a Hybrid Meeting Procedure for the City of Cambridge.
- At its November 29, 2022 Meeting, Council considered Report 22-057-CRS Procedure By-law Review and Hybrid Meeting Procedure which was deferred to a future meeting date to permit Council more time to review the proposed changes to the Procedure By-law.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with adopting the revised Procedure By-law and associated Hybrid Meeting Procedure.

Funding for the Council Chamber Audio and Video System Replacement project was previously approved and funded through capital project A/00794-10 with a planned budget of \$264,000 funded from the Rate Stabilization Reserve Fund – Safe Restart Agreement funding received from the Province with work completed in the fall of 2022.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT:

- Strategic Action; or
- Core Service

Objective(s): WELLBEING - Connect people to services that support individual and community wellbeing

Strategic Action: Not Applicable

Program: Council Services

Core Service: Council and Citizen Committees

The periodic review and adoption of Procedure By-law changes is essential in preparing for a new term of Council, ensuring the by-law reflects changes in legislation and meets the needs of Council and its current practices. Updates to the by-law fulfill the Clerk’s responsibilities under the *Municipal Act*, 2001 and align with the City’s Strategic Plan in fulfillment of the objective of wellbeing by providing avenues for citizens of Cambridge to become engaged in local government processes and ensuring accountability and transparency of local government process.

BACKGROUND:

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and declared State of Emergency, Standing Committee meetings at the City of Cambridge were suspended as Council transitioned to fully virtual (electronic) meetings and began meeting as “Special Council”. The transition to electronic meetings was made possible through the passage of Bill 187, *Municipal Emergency Act*, 2020 which permitted Ontario Municipalities to conduct meetings electronically during the Provincial and Municipal emergency period stemming from the onset of the pandemic.

With the shift to “Special Council” meetings, all scheduled Statutory Public Meetings under the *Planning Act*, 1990 were taking place in the mornings of Council days as “Special Council Statutory Public Meetings” and generally ran from 10 a.m. until around 12 noon depending on the number of public meeting items on an agenda. Following the Statutory Public Meeting portion of Council Meetings, Council was reconvening at 5 p.m. as Special Council to complete the balance of its agenda.

In August of 2020, the province passed Bill 197, the *COVID-19 Recovery Act* which changed legislation to permanently allow Ontario municipalities to conduct meetings electronically, regardless of an emergency pursuant to the *Municipal Act, 2001*. Following the passage of this legislation and the loosening of pandemic related restrictions, a number of municipalities began to adopt hybrid meeting procedures as a means to welcome Council members, staff and the public back to their Council Chambers while also maintaining the flexibility that virtual participation provided.

In late 2020, the City's Clerk's Office began preparations to move toward hybrid Council Meetings through the commencement of a comprehensive review of Council's Procedure By-law and the development of a Hybrid Meeting procedure. Critical to the shift to hybrid meetings; however, was the need to upgrade technology in Council Chambers to facilitate hybrid meetings and to integrate with a new electronic meeting management system. With the new meeting management system in place and the technology upgrade complete, the last item to bring before Council is the revised Procedure By-law and Hybrid Meeting Procedure.

At the November 29, 2022 meeting of Council, Council considered Report 22-057-CRS Procedure By-law Review and Hybrid Meeting Procedure which presented the 2022-2026 Term of Council with the proposed new Procedure By-law based on the completion of the comprehensive review of the current Procedure By-law (By-law 18-15). The report was subsequently deferred by Council to permit additional time to review the proposed changes and accompanying Hybrid Meeting Procedure.

ANALYSIS:

Passed in February of 2015, the City's current Procedure By-law (By-law 18-15) was the subject of a comprehensive review with the 2018-2022 Term of Council over the course of a nearly two (2) year period commencing in December of 2020. The current review of the Procedure By-law has included comments and recommendations from Council, staff and feedback from delegations to Council. The attached draft Procedure By-law is included for Council review along with a proposed Hybrid Meeting Procedure.

Following the deferral of the proposed new Procedure By-law and accompanying Hybrid Meeting Procedure at Council's November 29, 2022 meeting, additional changes to the by-law were incorporated based on feedback received from current members of Council. These changes are outlined below in the section entitled "Additional Considerations" Staff are also proposing community consultation on the new by-law and Hybrid Meeting Procedure which are outlined below in the section entitled "Additional Considerations".

Part A: Procedure By-law Review

A number of significant changes to the City's Procedure By-law are being brought forward for Council's consideration as part of this report. A summary of the changes is provided below.

Definitions

Additional definitions were added for frequently referenced terms in the by-law that were not previously defined and to incorporate definitions that were added as part of amendments such as "Consent Agenda", "Declared Emergency", "Electronic Participation", "Non-Jurisdiction", "Pecuniary Interest", "Point of Privilege" and "Quorum". New definitions were added for terms such as "Hybrid Meeting" and "Council Workshop".

Application

A new section entitled "Application" was added to the by-law which addresses the applicability of the rules and regulations in the procedure by-law to Council and Standing Committee Meetings and how matters for which rules are not provided in the procedure by-law of Council are to be addressed. Wording was added in this section on the applicability of the by-law to the city's various Advisory Committees of Council which was not previously addressed although the proceedings of these bodies are based on Council's Procedure By-law.

Roles

In discussion with the previous term of Council, members felt that there needed to be greater clarity added to the by-law around the role of the Mayor and Council as well as the roles of the Clerk and Chief Administrative Office (City Manager). Based on wording from the Municipal Act, a section on roles and responsibilities has been added to the by-law.

Advisory Committees of Council and Advisory Committee By-law

A section has been added to the Procedure By-law that speaks to the process of establishing Advisory Committees of Council and their reporting structure. At its November 29, 2022 meeting, Council considered a report presenting an Advisory Committee Review and recommended the adoption of a Public Appointment Policy which was subsequently approved by Council.

It is an uncommon practice for the responsibilities of Advisory Committees to be set out in a by-law as an Appointment Policy is a more appropriate and flexible avenue to address this.

Should Council approve moving forward with the new Procedure By-law attached as Appendix A to this report, the Advisory Committee By-law 18-133 would be repealed upon the new Procedure By-law coming into effect.

Standing Committees of Council

The previous Procedure By-law contained little information on the established Standing Committees of Council as they instead formed part of the City's Advisory Committee By-law 133-18. As Standing Committees are comprised entirely of members of Council and report directly to Council they have been removed from the Advisory Committee By-law and are now incorporated into the Procedure By-law along with details on their specific responsibilities.

Recordings of Meetings

Clarification has been added around how meetings at the City are recorded. In the case of open meetings, live streaming of meetings on the City's YouTube Channel will continue under the new Hybrid Meeting Procedure.

Council Workshops

A new section on Council Workshops has been added to the by-law to address cases where time is required for the purpose of training, discussions with other levels of government and outside agencies, complex matters or strategic planning. Workshops have been in use at the City for some time; however, were not formalized as part of the previous Procedure By-law. Of note in the new by-law is that staff have included a clause that exempts Council Workshops from quorum requirements in order to proceed. As workshops are for education and training purposes, quorum is not necessary at these types of meetings.

Hybrid Meetings

The new by-law includes a section that speaks to Hybrid Meetings. Staff are recommending that in accordance with provincial legislation passed during the COVID-19 pandemic that virtual participation be permitted at any meetings of Council, Standing Committees or Advisory Committees, this would include closed sessions of these bodies for members of the respective Committees or Council only. This section of the by-law includes reference to the Hybrid Meeting Procedure attached as Schedule A of the by-law which will be discussed in greater detail later on in this report.

Closed Session

Council's previous Procedure By-law did not include the legislated reasons for which Council may meet in closed session. This is something that is typically spelled out in

most Procedure By-laws and has therefore been incorporated along with the existing process for moving into closed session. Additional changes to the closed session provisions of the by-law include restrictions around the disclosure of information contained in reports or that was discussed in closed session. Further, the process for filing a Closed Meeting Investigation has been added to the by-law to reflect the legislative requirements set out in the *Municipal Act*.

Council Information Package

Members of Council have been receiving a bi-weekly Council Information Package for the last couple of years containing internal informational communications and correspondence from external bodies including other municipalities and levels of government. These packages most commonly contain resolutions of other municipalities that Council may wish to bring forward for discussion and support. Council Information Packages included on the Consent Agenda as part of the next Council Meeting and are received as information. The new by-law contains provisions around the Council Information Package that will help to formalize this process as part of Council's regular procedure and speaks to restrictions around the type of information that should not be included in a Council Information Package, including items that are likely to generate discussion, that have a financial component to them or where there is a by-law to be passed.

Other Business

A new section entitled "Other Business" has been added to the order of business on agendas. This section will allow Council members to share announcements, highlight happenings in their Ward or the City generally and to highlight the work of Advisory Committees.

Notices of Motion

Additional criteria around the use of Notices of Motion have been included in the new by-law to address some of the concerns that have surfaced on their use. Specifically, the by-law contains provisions around delegations trying to register with Clerks staff to speak to Notices of Motion that have not yet been presented to Council. Staff are recommending that unless timing restraints exist with the Notice of Motion that delegations not be permitted to speak to a Notice of Motion until it is brought forward on the next Agenda to be considered and voted on. Where there is urgency around the Notice of Motion, Council maintains the right to waive the rules to both consider and vote on the Notice of Motion at the same meeting where it is presented and to also permit any delegations to speak.

Further, staff are recommending that once a Notice of Motion is finalized that the Clerk be responsible for circulating the wording to Council prior to the Member bringing it forward.

By-laws

The section concerning by-laws has been condensed to bring it in line with the practices of other municipalities. As per the previous practice, the Clerk will continue to be able to make administrative editorial changes to by-laws once they are passed in order to correct any errors.

Petitions

A new section concerning petitions received from the public has been added to the by-law to provide greater clarity on how these will be handled and brought before Council. The wording of this section follows the current practice which includes the redaction of personal information.

Delegations

The timelines for submitting delegation requests to the Clerks Division have been updated to reflect the registration deadlines for any meetings that are scheduled to occur during the day. Due to technical challenges around the display of video presentations from delegations, Clerks staff are recommending that video presentations not be permitted.

The time limit for delegations representing groups has been reduced from 15 minutes to the standard 5-minute limit. Delegations who need more than 5 minutes maintain the right to bring their request before Council through the Clerk and Council shall put the matter to a vote. The previous 15-minute limit for groups was difficult for Clerk's staff to monitor and it has proven challenging to confirm if delegates are part of a group with virtual participation as opposed to in person. By removing this and having Council grant additional time it provides a more equitable approach to all delegations rather than those who are part of a formal or informal group.

Staff have added a list of matters to which delegations are not permitted in the by-law to provide greater clarification. For matters that do not fall within the jurisdiction of Council but that the public would like Council to take a position on, a provision has been added to the by-law that in such cases the individual or group may approach their Ward Councillor to request that a Notice of Motion be brought forward on the matter.

Public Conduct at Meetings

This section has been expanded on to include clothing with political messaging, heckling, offensive and disrespectful behavior and behavior that is disruptive to the meeting and Council's deliberations.

Rules of Conduct

Greater clarity has been added to this section around how the Chair should handle Members who insist on disregarding the rules of procedure and the process that should be followed to bring the meeting back to order.

Assignment of Motions

The previous term of Council voiced unanimous support for wanting the Clerk to continue assigning motions to individual members by Ward, with the Chair of the associated Standing Committee assigned as the Secunder. Staff are recommending that this practice continue and have worked wording around this into the new by-law.

Alternative Motions to Staff Recommendation

Staff reports contain recommendations that Council is not obligated to pass if it does not agree with them. Staff are recommending that Members who wish to introduce alternative motions than what is contained in the staff report notify the Clerk of their intent to do so no later than 24 hours prior to the meeting so that the Clerk can work with the Member and necessary staff to develop the appropriate wording for the motion. Once drafted and approved by the Member, the Clerk would circulate the alternative wording to all Members of Council and staff.

Withdrawal of Motions

The current procedure by-law did not accurately speak to the process to withdraw a motion that had been moved and seconded and was before Council. At any time after a motion has been moved and seconded and is with Council or Committee it may be withdrawn with the consent of the mover and seconder. A motion that was withdrawn may also be renewed during the same meeting. A vote is not required to withdraw a motion.

Motions to Reconsider and Motions to Rescind

The previous procedure by-law did not accurately capture the proper use of a Motion to Reconsider in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order. When properly used, a motion to reconsider's purpose is to revisit a decision that was made at the same meeting and potentially change the decision that was made. On the other hand, the purpose of a Motion to Rescind is to change something that was adopted at a previous meeting.

In review of these procedural ‘tools’, staff have updated the new by-law to reflect the correct process and have added in the parameters around when and how they are to be used as well as the required votes for them to pass.

Schedules Added to Procedure By-law

Staff have included three (3) schedules as part of the new procedure by-law. Schedule A (included as Appendix B to this report) is the Hybrid Meeting Procedure which will be discussed in detail in the next section of this report. Schedule B (included as Appendix C to this report) provides a table of commonly used motions.

During the review of the by-law with the previous term of Council, members felt that it would be helpful to include a table of commonly used motions in Council and Committee Meetings and their order of precedence. It was felt that having this quick reference guide would be of aid to members as it outlines the purpose of each type of motion and other characteristics such as whether it can be debated, amended and the type of vote required for it to pass.

Schedule C to the by-law (included as Appendix D to this report) is a guidance document on Points of Order and Points of Privilege. Staff had noted in recent years that some Members of Council struggled with knowing when to use these procedural tools and the process for how to address them and have therefore developed a guidance document with examples to guide future Councils.

Additional Considerations - Deferral of Report 22-057-CRS at the November 29, 2022 Council Meeting

Following the deferral of the proposed new Procedure By-law and accompanying Hybrid Meeting Procedure at the Council Meeting of November 29, 2022, staff received feedback from members of the current term of Council regarding changes to the proposed by-law they wanted made. The majority of these changes were minor edits and housekeeping in nature to adjust typos or omissions in some sections; however, a recommendation was received to add a new section to the by-law that would add clarification and protect Council in circumstances where it selects to waive its rules. As such the following blanket provision has been added to **Part 19** of the new Procedure By-law:

Suspension of Rules

19.1 Any rules or procedures established by this by-law, other than a quorum requirement, may be suspended at or for a particular Council Meeting, by resolution, provided two-thirds of Members of Council present vote in favour thereof, unless prohibited by law.

Part B: Transitioning to Hybrid Meetings

With approval to move forward with the technology upgrade to Council Chambers, staff began to develop a Hybrid Meeting Procedure that would guide the new Council with maneuvering this new meeting format once it took office.

Hybrid Meetings provide the opportunity for participation in person or virtually for all attendees and are based on several guiding principles:

1) Meeting participants should be able to participate using multiple methods

The ability to participate in a meeting through multiple methods, such as by attending Council Chambers in-person or by joining virtually, is the key to effective hybrid meetings.

Enabling participants to choose their method of participation is important to ensure that their needs are met, which encourages participation and increases accessibility. Staff are looking to offer in-person attendance which may be restricted to begin with based on room capacity limits. Participants will also be offered attendance through zoom and telephone.

2) Meeting participants should have an equitable experience regardless of their method of participation

Hybrid meetings will be set up to ensure that participants are treated equitably regardless of which method they use to join. The audiovisual technology has been configured so that the in-person and virtual options provide as similar an experience as possible for both the participants and members of the public.

3) Meeting participation should be in alignment with prevailing public health guidance

As the City has transitioned through the COVID-19 pandemic period and has reopened facilities, the hybrid meeting approach has allowed the most flexible response to changing public health guidelines. Hybrid meetings allow for future public health measures to be addressed quickly and responsively.

4) Future changes should be based on best practices

Hybrid meetings represent a new approach to municipal Council meetings in Ontario. All municipalities have the opportunity to learn from the experience gained throughout the pandemic and develop best practices on hybrid meetings going forward. The hybrid meeting approach will continue to evolve and be reviewed as best practices are developed.

Benefits of Hybrid Meetings

The main benefits of Hybrid Meetings are noted as follows:

1) Council Participation

Virtual participation allows for Councillors to join the Council meeting, even if they are not able to attend the meeting in-person in Council Chambers. While in-person attendance is expected to remain the most common type of participation for Council, the option to join virtually allows for flexibility. Council Members who may not be able to attend meetings for periods of time due to illness, injury or recovery from surgery, for example, may be able to attend from home and not miss extended periods of meetings. Similarly, Council Members suffering from minor illnesses may attend the meeting if they are feeling well enough, but may stay home to avoid spreading an illness to other people. The COVID-19 pandemic has illustrated the importance of preventing the spread of illness through physical distancing. Virtual participation also allows for Council Members to join meetings from outside of Cambridge, such as during travel.

The flexibility provided by virtual participation allows Council Members to avoid missing meetings due to other commitments. For example, a Councillor who must attend a personal medical appointment during a meeting may have been unable to attend the entire meeting in-person. However, it may be possible for the Councillor to join for the remainder of the meeting through virtual participation. While Councillors are encouraged to avoid scheduling other commitments during meetings, Council Members may be able to attend more meetings that would ordinarily have been missed in their entirety.

Previously, virtual participation was limited in the Municipal Act, as Members of Council participating virtually did not count towards quorum and could not join closed session meetings through virtual participation. As these legislated restrictions no longer remain in effect, there is no longer a legal distinction between in-person and virtual participation.

One of the Hybrid meeting goals is to ensure that all Members of Council are treated equally within a meeting, regardless of the method in which they join the meeting. The procedure for hybrid meetings attached as Appendix B to this report does not set limits regarding Members of Council virtual participation, such as a minimum number of Members physically present or a maximum number of times per year a Member may join virtually. Such restrictions place an administrative burden on staff to track for all meetings and Members and set virtual participation apart from in-person participation, which encourages a perception that virtual participation is not equivalent to in-person participation. Further circumstances may change for a Member of Council and limiting the number of meetings a member may attend virtually may be perceived as non-inclusive.

2) Greater Accessibility of Meetings

Virtual participation allows for greater accessibility for Council and Standing Committee meetings. For members of the public, staff or Council Members with mobility or other accessibility needs, being able to attend a Council meeting virtually improves the ability to participate. Virtual participation may also increase the ability for members to participate in the case of long-term illnesses or recoveries. It also gives flexibility for members who may be expecting or planning to take parental leave, or who have young children, to be able to attend meetings more frequently and fit around their schedule.

The 2022 Municipal and School Board Election underscored the importance of increasing accessibility of meetings. Potentially increasing the number of local residents who wish to participate in municipal government provides strong support for hybrid meetings. In-person meetings may present an accessibility barrier that hybrid meetings can help to reduce.

3) Increased Public Participation

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, virtual Special Council meetings saw continued public participation. Residents had the ability to provide comments through written correspondence, or by joining the meeting live by telephone or in some cases through Zoom. Staff added additional measures to ensure residents would be able to join successfully. Due to these options, public participation remained high during the pandemic and virtual participation even allowed for delegations to join from outside the Cambridge area. Technology has caused some delays when connecting with virtual participation and although this may present challenges moving forward with Hybrid meetings the upgrade to Council Chamber technology is expected to mitigate most of the challenges.

Moving forward the option to participate virtually will provide additional engagement opportunities for public participation. Delegations will have an option to attend meetings in person or by participating virtually through Zoom or by telephone. The City is excited to see meetings move to a hybrid model and will ensure there is increased awareness around this practice. Virtual participation also allows for residents to join a meeting without the same time commitment as attending in person. For example, residents who may commute for work outside Cambridge may be able to provide their delegation from their work location, without the need to take time off work and travel back to Cambridge to attend in person. This increases options for public participation and ensures inclusivity of our community.

Part C: Citizen Advisory Committees and Local Boards

Citizen Advisory Committees met virtually through to the end of the 2018-2022 term of Council. The Clerk's Division will continue to provide guidance to any Advisory Committees and local boards wishing to meet virtually but will permit committees to make the decision on whether to meet virtually or in-person on their own. Hybrid meetings are challenging for Citizen Advisory Committee meetings as there are limited locations where the technology can support a mixture of both in-person and virtual participation. The Council Chambers having recently gone through technology upgrades is not available for the first 6 months of 2023 to be used for any other meetings other than Council meetings to ensure staff and Council are all comfortable with the settings placed in the new technology. Staff will work with Citizen Committees and Local Boards when the Chambers is open to other uses.

Part D: Revised Approach to By-law and Hybrid Meeting Procedure Review

Based on additional discussions around the proposed new Procedure By-law and Hybrid Meeting Procedure staff are recommending a modified approach to what was outlined in Report 22-057-CRS considered at the November 29, 2022 Council Meeting. This modified approach would now permit staff to undertake a public consultation period on the new Procedure By-law and Hybrid Meeting Procedure with the goal of gauging the public's understanding of Council's procedures and areas where improvements can be made or where there can be better communication to individuals who regularly engage with Council on matters before it.

Staff's amended recommendation is that Council adopt the new Procedure By-law for a trial period ending on November 15, 2024 (the mid-point of this current Council term), after which time the City Clerk would undertake a public consultation initiative to gain feedback from the community and Council on the new Procedure By-law and Hybrid Meeting Procedure and report back to Council with any recommended changes.

EXISTING POLICY / BY-LAW(S):

Procedure By-law 18-15, as amended, is in effect. Should Council approve the new Procedure By-law included as Appendix B to this report, By-law 18-15 and all related amendments would be repealed.

Section 238 (2) of the *Municipal Act*, 2001 provides that every municipality have a procedure by-law for governing the calling, place and proceedings of meetings.

Further, the *Municipal Act*, 2001 requires that, subject to the provisions in Section 239, all meetings be open in order for members of the public to observe the meetings. In

order to comply with these provisions, members of the public who do not wish to attend Council meetings in-person may still view open meetings online through the City's calendar and through YouTube. Following the meeting all Council meetings are archived on the City's website. In 2021, the City implemented an electronic meeting management cloud solution that enhances the accessibility of meeting materials and includes the posting of a pdf copy of all meeting materials as well as an HTML copy of meeting materials. For ease of access, meeting agendas and minutes are video time stamped after the meeting has occurred so that the public can click on an item of interest in an agenda or in the minutes and go straight to that discussion without having to view the whole meeting.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There is no financial impact.

PUBLIC VALUE:

Engagement:

Public involvement has been invited through the City's delegation survey which has provided consistent feedback since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic and transition to virtual meetings. This feedback has been taken into consideration as part of the development of the hybrid meeting procedure presented as part of this report.

As outlined in the Analysis section of this report, staff are now recommending that a public consultation period occur prior to the end of the mid-point of this current Council term to gauge the public's understanding of Council's procedures and to understand where improvements can be made with a report back to Council on recommended changes to the new Procedure By-law and Hybrid Meeting Procedure.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE INPUT:

Advisory Committees Consulted:

The City's Advisory Committees were not consulted as part of the procedure by-law review during the previous term of Council. Advisory Committee training conducted by Clerk's staff following the recruitment and appointment of new members will include training on the new procedure by-law, should it be adopted by Council.

Advisory Committees will have the option to continue meeting virtually or may transition back to in-person meetings when they reconvene meetings in the new year.

PUBLIC INPUT:

Throughout the span of the pandemic, the public has continued to play an integral part in the Council meeting process while Special Council meeting virtually. There was ongoing engagement in virtual meetings, through delegations and written submissions. With the transition to hybrid meetings, the public now has the opportunity to participate in Council meetings both in-person and virtually, which will provide greater flexibility and increased public participation.

INTERNAL / EXTERNAL CONSULTATION:

Upon Council approval of the proposed new Procedure By-law and Hybrid Meeting Procedure, staff will ensure the new by-law is posted to the City's website for the public and will provide copies to Council as a reference. The City's delegation form will be updated to give those wishing to address Council the option to appear either in-person or through virtual participation at meetings. As agendas serve as notice of meetings, agendas and the City's website will be modified as well to reflect the move to a hybrid meeting structure.

CONCLUSION:

A significant amount of time has been put into the review of the procedure by-law and to develop a hybrid meeting procedure for the City of Cambridge. At this time, staff are recommending that the by-law and hybrid meeting procedure be approved for a one-year period to allow time for the new Council to become more comfortable with meeting procedures and the Hybrid Meeting format. Prior to the completion of the one-year period, Staff will undertake consultations with Council to capture any additional changes to the procedure by-law and hybrid meeting procedure.

REPORT IMPACTS:

Agreement: No

By-law: Yes

Budget Amendment: No

Policy: No

APPROVALS:

This report has gone through the appropriate workflow and has been reviewed and or approved by the following as required:

Director

Chief Financial Officer

City Solicitor

City Manager

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Report 23-112-CRS Appendix A – Draft Procedure By-law
2. Report 23-112-CRS Appendix B – Hybrid Meeting Procedure
3. Report 23-112-CRS Appendix C – Table of Common Motions
4. Report 23-112-CRS Appendix D – Points of Order and Privilege Guidance Document