

Review of proposed advisory bodies as “local boards”

Under the *Municipal Act, 2001* as well as other pieces of legislation such as the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, a body deemed to be a “local board” may be subject to provisions that require it to establish certain by-laws, policies, rules or procedures, and/or make it subject to particular oversight mechanisms.

Subsection 8(1) of the *Municipal Act, 2001* also provides that the “powers of a municipality under this or any other Act shall be interpreted broadly so as to confer broad authority on the municipality to enable the municipality to govern its affairs as it considers appropriate and to enhance the municipality’s ability to respond to municipal issues.” As further described in this report, Courts have recognized that the powers given to municipalities under the *Municipal Act, 2001* should be interpreted broadly and purposively to allow municipalities to achieve their goals and have provided deference to municipalities in establishing “local boards” that provide advice on matters that are integral to the day-to-day operations of the City.

As Council may have broad authority with respect to “local boards,” it is necessary to determine which bodies are considered to be “local boards” for the purposes of applicable statutory provisions. As noted in the [2022-2026 Governance Review](#) report, this determination may rely upon statutory definitions and case law – including the case of *Kroetsch v. Integrity Commissioner for the City of Hamilton, 2021* (ONSC 7982), in which the Ontario Divisional Court determined that the City of Hamilton’s LGBTQ Advisory Committee was a “local board” and not an “ad hoc informal committee,” and concluded that the City and Integrity Commissioner were reasonable in making those determinations. It was noted in the decision that courts have recognized that the powers given to municipalities under the *Municipal Act, 2001* should be interpreted broadly and purposively to allow municipalities to achieve their goals. The Court found in this instance that the LGBTQ Advisory Committee has “a measure of independence, but it is integral to the day-to-day business of the City,”¹ as described in the staff report to which this document is attached.

Below, staff have considered the proposed advisory bodies described in this report against relevant legislative provisions and case law to determine their status as “local boards.” This includes as follows:

1. Advisory Committees (Page 2)
2. Council Sponsors Groups (Page 14)
3. Department-led Working Groups (Page 15)

¹ [Kroetsch v. Integrity Commissioner for the City of Hamilton](#), 2021 ONSC 7982 (CanLII), at paragraph 49.

It should be noted that legal challenges and court decisions with respect to identifying bodies as “local boards” arise from time to time in municipalities across Ontario. In some instances, case law may be specific to a particular local body and circumstances, making it difficult to implement a definitive approach for bodies that may have different mandates or attributes. That said, staff regularly review the status of “local boards” through the governance review process in order to apply statutory definitions and case law to the context of Ottawa-based bodies. In addition, although certain advisory bodies may not be deemed to be “local boards,” staff have established general guidance that recognizes the need for consistency, accountability and transparency. This general guidance will also be reviewed through regular governance reviews.

Additional information follows.

1. Advisory Committees

Advisory Committees are considered to be statutory “local boards,” primarily because they are established under legislation or have direct ties to legislation, as described below.

Accessibility Advisory Committee

Mandate and responsibilities

Subsection 29(1) of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) provides that, “The council of every municipality having a population of not less than 10,000 shall establish an accessibility advisory committee or continue any such committee that was established before the day this section comes into force.”

The duties of the Advisory Committee, as set out in Subsection 29(4) of the AODA, include that the committee shall:

- a) advise the council about the requirements and implementation of accessibility standards and the preparation of accessibility reports and such other matters for which the council may seek its advice under subsection (5);
- b) review in a timely manner the site plans and drawings described in section 41 of the *Planning Act* that the committee selects; and
- c) perform all other functions that are specified in the regulations.

Subsection 29(5) of the AODA sets out the duty of Council with respect to the Advisory Committee, stating that, “The council shall seek advice from the committee on the accessibility for persons with disabilities to a building, structure or premises, or part of a building, structure or premises,

- (a) that the council purchases, constructs or significantly renovates;

- (b) for which the council enters into a new lease; or
- (c) that a person provides as municipal capital facilities under an agreement entered into with the council in accordance with section 110 of the *Municipal Act, 2001* or section 252 of the *City of Toronto Act, 2006*.”

The mandate of the City of Ottawa’s Accessibility Advisory Committee during the 2018-2022 Term of Council was “to fulfill the duties of a Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee as outlined in the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and to provide advice to Council on programs, policies and services provided to persons with disabilities and seniors.”

The Terms of Reference for the Accessibility Advisory Committee stated that the Advisory Committee would be available as a resource to staff, providing input on matters being pursued to achieve Council’s strategic priorities. The Accessibility Advisory Committee was also responsible for providing advice to Council on programs, policies and services provided to persons with disabilities and seniors. Furthermore, the Accessibility Advisory Committee was responsible for ensuring that its business aligns with, and serves to complement, City Council’s strategic priorities.

Size and composition

Subsection 29(3) of the AODA requires that a majority of the members of the committee “shall be persons with disabilities.”

During the 2018-2022 Term of Council, the Accessibility Advisory Committee had a total maximum membership between nine and 15 members, and was organized as follows:

- In keeping with the requirements of the AODA, a majority the members of the committee shall be residents with disabilities.
- At least two members would be residents who are 60 years of age or older
- As much as practicable, the membership should reflect the City’s diverse population.

The membership also included one Member of Council in a liaison capacity.

Status as a “local board”

The overarching definition of “local board” set out in Subsection 1(1) of the *Municipal Act, 2001* is as follows [emphasis added]:

“local board” means a municipal service board, transportation commission, public library board, board of health, police services board, planning board, **or any other board, commission, committee, body** or local authority **established** or exercising any power **under any Act with respect to the affairs or purposes**

of one or more municipalities, excluding a school board and a conservation authority; (“conseil local”)

As the Accessibility Advisory Committee is a mandatory body established under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, it is considered to be a “local board” of the City of Ottawa. As noted above, the Accessibility Advisory Committee has a statutory role with respect to providing advice to Council.

Community Safety and Well-Being Advisory Committee

Mandate and responsibilities

Subsection 143(1) of the *Police Services Act* provides that certain municipal councils, including Ottawa City Council, “shall prepare and, by resolution, adopt a community safety and well-being plan.” Subsection 145(1) of the *Police Services Act* further requires that, “A municipal council that prepares a community safety and well-being plan shall establish an advisory committee.”

Under Subsection 145(6)(a) of the *Police Services Act*, “In preparing a community safety and well-being plan, the municipal council or councils shall ... consult with the advisory committee.” This consultation requirement also applies to the revision of a community safety and well-being plan, in accordance with Subsection 150(3) of the *Police Services Act*.

On December 5, 2018, Council considered the [2018-2022 Council Governance Review](#) report and approved the following, among other things (Part IB, Recommendation 4):

- Directed the General Manager of Emergency and Protective Services to develop a draft community safety and well-being plan; and
- Approved amending the Terms of Reference for Crime Prevention Ottawa (CPO) to provide CPO with the responsibility to establish an advisory committee to be designated the City’s Community Safety and Well-Being Advisory Committee for the purposes of Bill 175.

CPO’s board of directors subsequently acted as the Advisory Committee for the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan, as reflected in the Terms of Reference approved by Council on June 26, 2019, through the report titled, “[Crime Prevention Ottawa Terms of Reference](#).”

On October 27, 2021, City Council considered the report titled, “[Community Safety and Well-Being Plan](#),” and approved the City’s Community Safety and Well-Being Plan. Council also directed the General Manager of Community and Social Services “to develop a governance structure, an evaluation and performance measurement framework, and a financial strategy for the administration, implementation, evaluation, and funding of the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan ...”

On April 27, 2022, Council considered the report titled, "[Community Safety and Well-Being Plan Progress Update](#)." Among other matters, the report noted that the governance structure for the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan included a new Advisory Committee "who will guide the strategic direction of the Plan advising the other entities in the governance structure and over time bringing forward proposed changes as progress is made to City Council."

The report stated that, "Staff thanks the Crime Prevention Ottawa Board of Directors for serving as the Advisory Committee and assisting with the development of the Plan. The new Advisory Committee was built with a focus on the shift to implementation and will continue to adhere to the legislative requirements."

The report further stated that the Advisory Committee would play the following roles:

1. Serve the legislative role of Advisory Committee for the Plan
2. Provide advice and recommendations to:
 - a. The Community Leadership Action Teams (*Note: These Teams are also discussed in the above-noted report as part of the governance structure*):
 - i. In a review of the action plan for their successful implementation of the plan
 - ii. Professional expertise and advise on policy, resources, process, and technical skills such as: data, financials, legal, and intersectionality and equity
 - iii. Having a global view of cross cutting issues and barriers in supporting their identification and strategies for removal
 - iv. Receiving status updates from Community Leadership Action Teams in the monitoring the overall plan
 - b. City Council on:
 - i. Reporting on outcomes measures and new and emerging trends
 - ii. Recommended revisions to the Plan
 - iii. A financial strategy, including where required seeking funding from external sources for Plan implementation
 - c. The Community Safety and Well-Being Office on:
 - i. Framework for implementation of Community Leadership Action Teams including, reporting cycle, project management approaches, facilitation process for membership, and other Secretariat supports.
 - ii. Process for new and emerging issues, process for action and strategies that are not meeting intended goals and making necessary adjustments; and process for reviewing the Plan
 - iii. Evaluation planning and outcome measurement framework
3. Leveraging resources from member organizations to achieve collection action in the Plan's implementation

The report also stated that, “The Advisory Committee will also act as champions of the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan within their organizations and across the broader Ottawa community.”

Size and composition

Section 145 of the *Police Services Act* sets out minimum membership requirements for the Advisory Committee, as well as related considerations. The report titled, [“Community Safety and Well-Being Plan Progress Update,”](#) stated as follows:

“The Advisory Committee will be a multi-sectoral group including community representatives, content experts in fields of key enablers for the Plan, such as financials, data, performance and outcome measurement and legal expertise, community agencies, service providers, people with lived and living experience, and City staff. Representation from the Community Leadership Action Teams will attend as required to present and provide updates on their progress. As per the legislative requirements, the Advisory Committee must have the following eight members:

- An employee of the municipality
- Representative of the education sector
- Representative of the health and/or mental health sector
- Representative of community and/or social services
- Representative of the children and/or youth sector
- An entity that provides custodial services to children and/or youth
- Representative of the Police Services Board
- The Chief of Police or his or her designate

In addition, representatives with areas of expertise required to ensure success of the Plan will be added including:

- A representative from the Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition
- Financial expertise in government finances to guide the financial strategy and planning.
- Data analysis, research, and evaluation to guide the development of the performance measurement and evaluation framework as well as the ongoing review of key performance indicators and outcome measures.
- Legal expertise to guide systems thinking approaches in human rights and privacy.
- Request for the Ottawa Health Teams to support alignments with the health and social service sector.
- Request for Ottawa Coalition of Business Improvement Areas representative to bring the voice of Ottawa’s business and expertise in the relationship between ‘commercial’ and ‘residential’ within neighborhoods.

An intersectional lens will be applied to ensure broad representation of the community to represent a wide range of experiences including but not limited to, race, gender, disability, religions, geography, language, and age of candidates.”

Status as a “local board”

The overarching definition of “local board” set out in Subsection 1(1) of the *Municipal Act, 2001* is as follows [emphasis added]:

“local board” means a municipal service board, transportation commission, public library board, board of health, police services board, planning board, **or any other board, commission, committee, body** or local authority **established** or exercising any power **under any Act with respect to the affairs or purposes of one or more municipalities**, excluding a school board and a conservation authority; (“conseil local”)

As the Community Safety and Well-Being Advisory Committee is a mandatory body established under the *Police Services Act*, it is considered to be a “local board” of the City of Ottawa. As noted above, the Community Safety and Well-Being Advisory Committee has a statutory role with respect to acting as a consultative body to Council in preparing a community safety and well-being plan, and revising the plan.

French Language Services Advisory Committee

Mandate and responsibilities

On May 9, 2001, Ottawa City Council enacted the City’s [Bilingualism By-law](#) (By-law No. 2001-170). Council also considered the report titled, “[Bilingualism Policy](#),” and approved, among other things, that the former City of Ottawa’s Bilingualism Policy be continued.

The *Bilingualism By-law* includes various provisions relating to the Bilingualism Policy, including that, “A citizen of Ottawa has the right to communicate in English and French in accordance with the bilingualism policy ...” and that, “A citizen of Ottawa has the right to receive available services in either English or French in accordance with the bilingualism policy ...”

Clause R.1.19 of the [Bilingualism Policy](#) requires the City to establish “an Advisory Committee on French Language Services with a mandate to advise the municipal administration and Council with regard to the implementation of the Policy on bilingualism.”

On December 14, 2017, Bill 177, the *Stronger, Fairer Ontario Act (Budget Measures), 2017*, received Royal Assent. Bill 177 was an omnibus bill that amended various statutes, including the *City of Ottawa Act, 1999*. The amendments require the City to pass a by-law providing that the administration of the municipality shall be conducted in

both English and French and that all or specified municipal services to the public shall be made available in both languages, in accordance with Subsection 14(1) of the *French Language Services Act*. Subsection 11.1(4) of the *City of Ottawa Act, 1999*, as amended by Bill 177, states that the scope and content of the mandatory by-law “shall be as determined by the city.” Subsection 11.1(5) of the *City of Ottawa Act, 1999*, as amended by Bill 177, clarifies that the City’s existing *Bilingualism By-law* (By-law No. 2001-170) meets the requirement for the mandatory by-law.

Further to the requirements set out in the Bilingualism Policy, the mandate of the French Language Services Advisory Committee during the 2018-2022 Term of Council was “to advise Ottawa City Council on issues that impact the implementation of the Bilingualism Policy and its application to the City’s services, programs, policies and initiatives.”

The French Language Services Advisory Committee was responsible for providing advice to Ottawa City Council on issues pertaining to policy, programs and service delivery in the area of official languages. The French Language Services Advisory Committee was available as a resource to staff, providing input on matters being pursued to achieve Council’s strategic priorities. The Terms of Reference further noted that, “Above all, the French Language Services Advisory Committee is responsible for ensuring that its business aligns with, and serves to complement, City Council’s strategic priorities.”

Size and composition

The French Language Services Advisory Committee’s membership during the 2018-2022 Term of Council included seven to 11 citizen members and one Member of Council in a liaison capacity.

Status as a “local board”

The overarching definition of “local board” set out in Subsection 1(1) of the *Municipal Act, 2001* is as follows [emphasis added]:

“local board” means a municipal service board, transportation commission, public library board, board of health, police services board, planning board, **or any other board, commission, committee, body** or local authority **established** or exercising any power **under any Act with respect to the affairs or purposes of one or more municipalities**, excluding a school board and a conservation authority; (“conseil local”)

As noted above, Bill 177, the *Stronger, Fairer Ontario Act (Budget Measures), 2017*, amended the *City of Ottawa Act, 1999* to require the City to pass a by-law in accordance with Subsection 14(1) of the *French Language Services Act*. The City’s *Bilingualism By-law* (By-law No. 2001-170) meets this requirement and includes references to the City’s Bilingualism Policy approved by Council on May 9, 2001.

The Bilingualism Policy requires the City to establish an Advisory Committee on French Language Services “with a mandate to advise the municipal administration and Council with regard to the implementation of the Policy on bilingualism.”

As the French Language Services Advisory Committee is a mandatory body required under a City policy directly tied to a municipal by-law that is required by statute, the Advisory Committee is considered to be a “local board” of the City of Ottawa. As noted above, the French Language Services Advisory Committee has a role with respect to advising staff and Council regarding issues that impact the implementation of the Bilingualism Policy referenced in the mandatory *Bilingualism By-law*.

Planning Advisory Committee

Mandate and responsibilities

The Planning Advisory Committee is a mandatory advisory committee required under the *Planning Act* as amended by Bill 73, the *Smart Growth for Our Communities Act, 2015*.

Under Section 8 of the *Planning Act*, a number of municipalities, including the City of Ottawa, must appoint a planning advisory committee. Subsection 8(4) of the *Planning Act* provides that, “The members of a planning advisory committee shall be chosen by the council and shall include at least one resident of the municipality who is neither a member of a municipal council nor an employee of the municipality.” Beyond membership-related requirements, municipal councils have the flexibility to establish a planning advisory committee with the structure and mandate that best suit the needs of the municipality.

On December 13, 2017, Council considered the report titled, “[Planning Advisory Committee – Establishment](#),” and approved the establishment of the Planning Advisory Committee and the Advisory Committee’s Terms of Reference. The mandate of the Planning Advisory Committee during the 2018-2022 Term of Council was “to advise Ottawa City Council on planning matters, specifically with respect to the annual work plan of the Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development department (PIED) and such other matters as Planning Committee, Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee or Council may specify.”

Size and composition

The composition of the Planning Advisory Committee during the 2018-2022 Term of Council included the following members, appointed by Council:

- Three Members of Council including:
 - Chair of Planning Committee
 - Chair of the Built Heritage Sub-Committee

- Chair of Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee
- Two residents, appointed by Council, residing in the Rural Area of Ottawa
- Two residents, appointed by Council, residing inside the Greenbelt
- Two residents, appointed by Council, residing within the Urban Area but outside of the Greenbelt
- A representative nominated by the Federation of Citizens' Associations of Ottawa
- A representative nominated by the Greater Ottawa Homebuilders' Association
- A representative nominated by the Building Owners and Managers Association
- A practicing architect and member of the Ontario Association of Architects
- A practicing landscape architect and member of the Ontario Association of Landscape Architects
- A practicing professional planner and member of the Ontario Professional Planners Institute

Status as a "local board"

The overarching definition of "local board" set out in Subsection 1(1) of the *Municipal Act, 2001* is as follows [emphasis added]:

"local board" means a municipal service board, transportation commission, public library board, board of health, police services board, planning board, **or any other board, commission, committee, body** or local authority **established** or exercising any power **under any Act with respect to the affairs or purposes of one or more municipalities**, excluding a school board and a conservation authority; ("conseil local")

As the Planning Advisory Committee is a mandatory body established under the *Planning Act*, it is considered to be a "local board" of the City of Ottawa. While municipal councils have the flexibility to establish a planning advisory committee with the structure and mandate that best suit the needs of the municipality, the *Planning Act* includes requirements with respect to matters such as membership.

Advisory Committees – By-law, policy and oversight requirements

Further to the determination that each of the Advisory Committees described above is a "local board," it appears the following requirements and provisions are applicable.

Table 1 – Advisory Committees – Applicability of “local board” provisions

Statutory provisions	Section(s)	Applicable to Advisory Committees	Details
<p>Procedure by-law</p>	<p>238(2), 238(2.1)</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>A “local board” as defined under Subsection 1(1) of the <i>Municipal Act, 2001</i>, includes “a municipal service board, transportation commission, public library board, board of health, police services board, planning board, <u>or any other board, commission, committee, body</u> or local authority <u>established</u> or exercising any power <u>under any Act with respect to the affairs or purposes of one or more municipalities</u>, excluding a school board and a conservation authority” [emphasis added].</p> <p>For the purposes of the procedure by-law requirement, a subsequent refinement of the “local board” definition under Subsection 238(1) of the <i>Municipal Act, 2001</i> exempts certain boards but does not apply to Advisory Committees.</p>
<p>Open meetings (including oversight by City’s Meetings Investigator)</p>	<p>239 to 239.2</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>A “local board” as defined under Subsection 1(1) of the <i>Municipal Act, 2001</i>, includes “a municipal service board, transportation commission, public library board, board of health, police services board, planning board, <u>or any other board, commission, committee, body</u> or local authority <u>established</u> or exercising any power <u>under any Act with respect to the affairs or purposes of one or more municipalities</u>, excluding a school board and a conservation authority” [emphasis added].</p> <p>For the purposes of open meeting requirements, a subsequent refinement of the “local board” definition under Subsection 238(1) of the <i>Municipal Act, 2001</i> exempts certain boards but does not apply to Advisory Committees.</p>

Statutory provisions	Section(s)	Applicable to Advisory Committees	Details
<p>Mandatory policies (sale and other disposition of land, hiring of employees, procurement of goods and services)</p>	270(2)	Yes	<p>A “local board” as defined under Subsection 1(1) of the <i>Municipal Act, 2001</i>, includes “a municipal service board, transportation commission, public library board, board of health, police services board, planning board, <u>or any other board, commission, committee, body</u> or local authority <u>established</u> or exercising any power <u>under any Act with respect to the affairs or purposes of one or more municipalities</u>, excluding a school board and a conservation authority” [emphasis added].</p> <p>For the purposes of the mandatory policy requirements, a subsequent refinement of the “local board” definition under Subsection 269(1) of the <i>Municipal Act, 2001</i> exempts certain boards but does not apply to Advisory Committees.</p>
<p>Code of conduct for members of local boards</p>	223.2	Yes	<p>A “local board” as defined under Subsection 1(1) of the <i>Municipal Act, 2001</i>, includes “a municipal service board, transportation commission, public library board, board of health, police services board, planning board, <u>or any other board, commission, committee, body</u> or local authority <u>established</u> or exercising any power <u>under any Act with respect to the affairs or purposes of one or more municipalities</u>, excluding a school board and a conservation authority” [emphasis added].</p> <p>For the purposes of the code of conduct for members of local boards requirement, a subsequent refinement of the “local board” definition under Section 223.1 of the <i>Municipal Act, 2001</i> exempts certain bodies but does not apply to Advisory Committees.</p>

Statutory provisions	Section(s)	Applicable to Advisory Committees	Details
<p>Oversight role of Integrity Commissioner</p> <p>[with respect to the application of sections 5, 5.1 and 5.2 of the <i>Municipal Conflict of Interest Act</i> (MCIA)]</p>	223.3	Yes	<p>A “local board” as defined under Subsection 1(1) of the <i>Municipal Act, 2001</i>, includes “a municipal service board, transportation commission, public library board, board of health, police services board, planning board, <u>or any other board, commission, committee, body</u> or local authority <u>established</u> or exercising any power <u>under any Act with respect to the affairs or purposes of one or more municipalities</u>, excluding a school board and a conservation authority” [emphasis added].</p> <p>For the purposes of the Integrity Commissioner’s oversight role with respect to the MCIA, a subsequent refinement of the “local board” definition under Section 223.1 of the <i>Municipal Act, 2001</i> exempts certain bodies but does not apply to Advisory Committees.</p>
<p>Oversight role of municipal Auditor General</p>	223.19	Yes	<p>A “local board” as defined under Subsection 1(1) of the <i>Municipal Act, 2001</i>, includes “a municipal service board, transportation commission, public library board, board of health, police services board, planning board, <u>or any other board, commission, committee, body</u> or local authority <u>established</u> or exercising any power <u>under any Act with respect to the affairs or purposes of one or more municipalities</u>, excluding a school board and a conservation authority” [emphasis added].</p> <p>For the purposes of the Auditor General’s oversight role, a subsequent refinement of the “local board” definition under Section 223.1 of the <i>Municipal Act, 2001</i> exempts certain bodies but does not apply to Advisory Committees.</p>

Statutory provisions	Section(s)	Applicable to Advisory Committees	Details
Election-related rules and procedures [provision under the <i>Municipal Elections Act, 1996</i> (MEA)]	88.18 (MEA)	Yes	The definition of “local board” under Subsection 1(1) of the MEA is “a local board as defined in the <i>Municipal Affairs Act</i> , including a police village.” A “local board” as defined under Subsection 1(1) of the <i>Municipal Affairs Act</i> , includes “a school board, municipal service board, transportation commission, public library board, board of health, police services board, planning board, <u>or any other board, commission, committee, body</u> or local authority <u>established</u> or exercising any power or authority <u>under any general or special Act with respect to any of the affairs or purposes</u> , including school purposes, <u>of a municipality</u> or of two or more municipalities or parts thereof” [emphasis added].

2. Council Sponsors Groups

Given their ad hoc nature and role to provide advice to staff regarding specific matters, staff do not consider Council Sponsors Groups to be “local boards” of the City of Ottawa, as described below.

Council Sponsors Groups are not established or exercising any power under legislation. They do not provide advice directly to Council. They are created by Council/Standing Committees on an ad hoc basis to address specific policies, projects or Master Plan reviews. Council Sponsors Groups are typically composed of Members of Council and staff, and are one of the many ways in which staff may carry out its role “**to undertake research** and provide advice to council on the policies and programs of the municipality” [emphasis added], as set out in Subsection 227(b) of the *Municipal Act, 2001*. Unlike Committees of Council, Council Sponsors Groups do not have decision-making authority.

Council Sponsors Groups are created in accordance with general guidance established by City staff to ensure consistency, accountability and transparency. However, Council does not formalize Terms of Reference and Sponsors Group members are not required to abide by a code of conduct specific to their work on the Council Sponsors Group. The general work of Council Sponsors Groups in providing advice to staff regarding specific

matters as part of staff's research process is not intended to be integral to the day-to-day business of the City of Ottawa.

3. Department-led Working Groups

Given their ad hoc nature and role to provide advice to staff regarding specific matters, staff do not consider Department-led Working Groups to be "local boards" of the City of Ottawa, as described below.

Department-led Working Groups are not established or exercising any power under legislation. They do not provide advice directly to Council. They are created by staff on an ad hoc basis to provide advice to staff regarding specific matters. Department-led Working Groups are typically composed of members of the public and staff, and may include Members of Council in an *ex officio*/Council liaison capacity. Department-led Working Groups are one of the many ways in which staff may carry out their role "**to undertake research** and provide advice to council on the policies and programs of the municipality" [emphasis added], as set out in Subsection 227(b) of the *Municipal Act, 2001*.

Department-led Working Groups are created in accordance with general guidance established by City staff to ensure consistency, accountability and transparency. However, Council does not formalize Terms of Reference and Working Group members are not required to abide by a code of conduct specific to their work on the Department-led Working Group. The general work of Department-led Working Groups in providing advice to staff regarding specific matters as part of staff's research process is not intended to be integral to the day-to-day business of the City of Ottawa.