

Terms of Reference Engage! St. John's



ST. JOHN'S

Terms of Reference

City of St. John's Public Engagement – Creation of Engage! St. John's Task Force

On November 18, 2013, the City of St. John's Economic Development, Tourism and Public Engagement (EDTPE) Standing Committee endorsed the development of a framework for public engagement for the City. One aspect of the engagement process is the creation of a task force which will allow various stakeholders and the public at large to have an opportunity to help shape this framework.

MANDATE

The mandate of the Task Force is to review work that has already been done in other jurisdictions – best practices – and to work with City officials on the development of a policy and guiding principles for public engagement for the City of St. John's. The Task Force will also suggest effective tools and approaches for public engagement.

SCOPE

For the City of St. John's, "Public Engagement" is the process of facilitating dialogue with the right people, using the right tools at the right time on subjects of mutual interest. This tailored approach to engagement means that the City is looking to create relationships with its varied stakeholders and to work with those stakeholders throughout the engagement continuum from information sharing to active participation. The Task Force will consider all potential and existing engagement opportunities.

LEADERSHIP

The Engage! St. Johns Task Force will be chaired by the City's Economic Development, Tourism and Public Engagement Standing Committee Co-Chair– Mr. Dave Lane, Councillor at Large. Once the Task Force membership is in place, the leadership structure may change to provide an opportunity for community leadership as well.

PARTICIPATION ON THE TASK FORCE

The Engage! St. John's Task Force will be comprised of citizens-at-large as well as organizational stakeholders. Interested participants will be asked to submit an application.

Criteria for participation

Citizen-at-Large

The Engage! St. John's Task Force will reflect the diversity of the community and include a range of citizens reflective of:

- geography (ward),
- age (youth, nexters, seniors),
- gender,
- ethnicity,
- persons with disabilities,
- number of years lived in the city,
- profession,
- interest.

Citizen-at-large members must have a desire to enhance engagement between the community and the City of St. John's and must be able to attend meetings as set out in the proposed timeline.

Organizational Stakeholders

The Engage! St. John's Task Force must also represent organizational stakeholders within the community from a variety of sectors. Groups and organizations that participate must be representative of their sector, e.g. arts, tourism, sports, business, community services, education, etc.... and liaise and engage with their sectors as part of the process.

MEMBERSHIP

Members will be recruited using a variety of communications channels. The Task Force shall not exceed 25 members.

A committee comprised of staff representatives from each department will review all of the applications against the membership criteria and make recommendations to a special meeting of Council where final decisions will be made.

ROLE OF COUNCIL

Council members will participate in the special meeting to make the final selection of task force members and will also be invited to attend all public engagement meetings as part of the task force's work as observers.

ROLE OF STAFF

Staff representatives from all departments will be invited to attend public engagement meetings and will be available to provide clarity or information on various engagement processes as they are discussed.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Members are expected to be open and candid in discussing items as a Task Force. For this reason, it is important to maintain confidentiality. Members must respect the privacy of other members and agree not to disclose information or views expressed by individuals during meetings. Information and deliberations should remain confidential until there is general agreement and consensus by the Committee to make them public. Communication on behalf of the Committee to the media or other outside parties should be through the Chair and only upon the consensus and agreement of the Committee.

SUPPORT

The task force will be supported by staff of the Office of Strategy and Engagement. The Manager of Strategic Development will be the primary contact for the Task Force.

DURATION OF WORK

The Engage! St. John's Task Force will begin its work in early spring, 2014 and finish its final report with recommendations in early summer, 2014. Task Force members may have the option to continue on future engagement committees/working groups later in the process.

DUTIES and PROCESS:

The Engage! St. John's Task Force will report to the Standing Committee on Economic Development, Tourism and Public Engagement. The Task Force shall be responsible for the following:

- Reviewing materials provided (gathered through extensive research about other jurisdictions) to better understand the public engagement process and identify agreed upon best practices, including policy directions,

- Developing a proposed public engagement policy document with guiding principles for engagement for the City of St. John’s,
- Identifying effective engagement tools and approaches for consideration by the Standing Committee,
- Presenting draft and final recommendations throughout the work.

PROPOSED TIMELINE OF MEETINGS – subject to change based on the membership of the task force

Meeting #1	Early April	Step 1	Half -day meeting	Facilitated meeting to share and discuss researched information – internal and external
Meeting # 2	Mid April	Step 1 part 2	Half-day meeting	Facilitated to finalize best practices relevant to St. John’s
Meeting #3	Late April	Step 2	2-hour evening meeting	Facilitated to develop a draft policy document
Meeting #4	Early May	Step 2 part 2	Breakfast meeting	Facilitated to determine draft guiding principles
Meeting #5	Late May	Steps 3 & 4	Full-day meeting	Facilitated to identify effective tools and approaches and develop the final report for the Standing Committee.

Other meetings may be added following the first meeting if additional time is required to complete specific tasks or to present draft materials to the EDTPE Standing Committee.

REMUNERATION

Participation on the Task Force is voluntary and as such there is no remuneration paid to the Engage! St. John’s Task Force members.

Contacts and Communication:

Council:

Dave Lane

Councillor at Large, Co-Chair, Economic Development, Tourism and Public Engagement Standing Committee and Chair, Engage! St. John’s Task Force

dlane@stjohns.ca

Staff:

Victoria Etchegary

Manager, Strategic Development

Office of Strategy and Engagement

engage@stjohns.ca