

COMMUNITY WELL-BEING COMMITTEE

Terms of Reference

Approval authority	Council	Adopted by	Resolution No. 117/26_
Effective date	<u>2026-09-02</u>	Review date	At least once each Council term
Administrative lead	Chief Administrative Officer / Clerk	Committee type	Standing advisory committee of Council

1. Purpose

The Community Well-Being Committee (the “Committee”) assists the Council of the Municipal District of St. Stephen (“Council”) in carrying out its governance and oversight responsibilities for community well-being, inclusion, belonging, accessibility, and quality of life within the Municipality’s jurisdiction and capacity.

Governance role. The Committee reviews, listens, connects, monitors, and recommends. Council decides. Administration manages municipal operations and implements Council direction.

2. Authority and Accountability

The Committee is established by Council and reports to Council. It may make recommendations within this Terms of Reference but has no authority to:

- approve a policy, program, grant, contract, expenditure, partnership commitment, or other matter reserved to Council by legislation, by-law, or policy;
- direct municipal employees, assign administrative work, supervise service delivery, or exercise the authority of the Chief Administrative Officer / Clerk or another municipal officer;
- direct or oversee the work of a provincial department, health authority, police service, school district, social-service provider, or community organization;
- commit the Municipality or another organization to any expenditure, service, position, or obligation; or
- speak on behalf of Council or the Municipality unless expressly authorized by Council.

Council may refer additional community well-being matters to the Committee by resolution. If this Terms of Reference conflicts with legislation or a municipal by-law, policy, or Council resolution, the higher authority prevails.

3. Mandate and Responsibilities

3.1 Community Well-Being Priorities

The Committee shall:

- identify and assess community well-being priorities that are relevant to municipal decision-making, including inclusion, belonging, accessibility, social connection, community safety, and equitable access to municipal spaces, programs, and information;
- consider the differing experiences and needs of children, youth, families, older adults, newcomers, persons with disabilities, people experiencing social or economic vulnerability, and residents in both urban and rural areas;
- review community indicators, public feedback, and available evidence to identify significant trends, gaps, assets, and opportunities;
- advise Council on municipal policies, plans, facilities, programs, and investments that could materially affect community well-being; and
- provide advice on community well-being matters referred to the Committee by Council.

3.2 Inclusion, Accessibility, and Belonging

The Committee shall promote a community in which residents can participate, feel welcome, and access municipal opportunities with dignity. In doing so, the Committee may:

- review systemic barriers within municipal areas of responsibility and recommend practical improvements;
- consider accessibility and inclusion when reviewing municipal engagement, recreation, culture, public-space, and community-program initiatives;
- encourage approaches that reduce isolation and strengthen connection among residents and neighbourhoods; and
- support respectful engagement with people whose experiences are directly relevant to matters under review.

3.3 Community Safety and Resilience

At a strategic level, the Committee may review factors that affect residents' sense of safety, preparedness, and resilience. This may include the design and use of public spaces, community education, emergency preparedness awareness, social connection, and coordination among community partners.

The Committee does not direct policing, emergency response, enforcement, health care, housing placement, or social-service operations. Operational or urgent concerns shall be referred through the appropriate municipal or external channel.

3.4 Partnerships and Community Capacity

The Committee may:

- identify opportunities for constructive coordination among the Municipality, community organizations, service providers, institutions, and other orders of government;
- invite organizations or subject-matter experts to provide information relevant to the Committee's work;
- identify service gaps or emerging issues and recommend an appropriate municipal advocacy, convening, partnership, or referral role; and
- recognize and build upon existing community assets, volunteer capacity, and successful local initiatives.

The Committee shall avoid duplicating work already assigned to another organization and shall not assume responsibility for services outside the Municipality's mandate or approved resources.

3.5 Community Engagement and Advice

Subject to Council direction and coordination through administration, the Committee may recommend focused engagement on significant community well-being matters. Engagement shall have a defined purpose, use accessible and respectful methods, protect personal information, and clearly explain how public input will be used.

The Committee is not a forum for resolving individual complaints, determining eligibility for services, or managing personal cases. Members shall direct individual matters to the appropriate administrative or external process.

3.6 Monitoring and Policy Review

The Committee shall review relevant municipal strategies, policies, performance information, and Council referrals at intervals established in its annual work plan. It may recommend amendments or new policy direction to Council. Administration remains responsible for preparing policy language, procedures, implementation plans, resource estimates, and operational advice unless Council directs otherwise.

3.7 Coordination with Other Committees

Where a matter falls or may fall within the mandate of more than one committee, the matter shall be brought to Council for confirmation of the lead committee, the scope of each committee's involvement, and the expected reporting process.

The lead committee shall coordinate its review through the Chief Administrative Officer / Clerk. Other affected committees may provide input within the scope assigned by Council. Administration should, where practical, coordinate information and reporting to avoid duplicate reviews, competing work plans, and repeated requests for substantially the same work or advice.

A joint information session may be held where it would support an efficient and informed review; however, each committee shall maintain its own quorum, minutes, and recommendations unless Council establishes a joint committee or another process by resolution.

Where affected committees reach different conclusions, their recommendations and supporting reasons shall be presented together or cross-referenced in the report to Council. Coordination does not authorize a committee to act outside its mandate, direct administration, commit municipal resources, or make a decision reserved to Council.

4. Membership

- The Committee shall consist of up to seven voting members appointed by Council.
- Council shall appoint three members of Council and may appoint up to four public members.
- Council should seek public members who collectively bring relevant lived experience, community knowledge, professional or volunteer experience, and perspectives from different ages, abilities, neighbourhoods, and rural and urban areas.
- Public members serve the Municipality as a whole and do not represent or bind an employer, agency, interest group, or population unless Council expressly establishes a designated representative position.
- The Mayor is not a member unless appointed by Council. The Mayor may attend in accordance with the Municipality's procedural by-law and applicable law.
- The Chief Administrative Officer / Clerk, relevant staff, service providers, community partners, and advisors may attend in a non-voting capacity when requested or required.

5. Appointment, Term, and Vacancies

- Council shall appoint the Chair from among the Council members and may appoint a Vice-Chair from among the voting members.
- Appointments shall be reviewed annually. A member continues until a successor is appointed unless the member resigns, ceases to be eligible, or is removed by Council.
- Council may fill a vacancy at any time. A vacancy does not invalidate Committee proceedings provided quorum is maintained.
- Public-member recruitment and appointment should be open, inclusive, skills- and experience-based, and consistent with municipal policy.

6. Meetings and Procedure

- The Committee shall meet at least quarterly and may hold additional meetings when required. The Chair may call a meeting in coordination with the Chief Administrative Officer / Clerk.
- Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the Local Governance Act, the Municipality's procedural by-law, this Terms of Reference, and any other applicable Council policy.
- Committee meetings shall be open to the public except where a closed meeting is authorized by law. Electronic participation is permitted only in accordance with applicable law and the procedural by-law.

6.1 Quorum and Vacancies

Quorum is a majority of the voting positions that are filled at the time of the meeting, but shall never be fewer than four voting members.

- A position is vacant only when no person currently holds the appointment.
- The temporary absence of an appointed member does not create a vacancy and does not reduce the quorum requirement.
- If fewer than four voting positions are filled, the Committee shall not transact business until Council fills sufficient vacancies or expressly amends this Terms of Reference.

Voting positions filled	Members required for quorum
7	4
6	4
5	4
4	4
Fewer than 4	No business may be transacted

6.2 Voting and Meeting Administration

- Each voting member present has one vote. A tie vote is defeated. Proxy voting is not permitted.
- The Chair shall approve agendas in consultation with the Chief Administrative Officer / Clerk or designate. Materials should normally be distributed sufficiently in advance to permit informed review.
- The Chief Administrative Officer / Clerk or designate shall ensure that notice, agendas, records of closed meetings, and minutes are prepared and retained as required. Minutes shall record recommendations and decisions without attributing debate unless required by law or the procedural by-law.

7. Conduct, Conflicts, Confidentiality, and Respectful Participation

- Members shall comply with applicable conflict-of-interest requirements, the Council Code of Conduct where applicable, and municipal confidentiality and information-management requirements.
- A member shall disclose any actual or potential conflict and refrain from participating when required by law or policy.
- Confidential information received through Committee service shall be protected and used only for authorized municipal purposes.
- Members shall approach sensitive community issues respectfully, avoid requesting or disclosing unnecessary personal information, and refrain from using Committee service for partisan, personal, organizational, or commercial advocacy.

8. Access to Information and Advice

Through the Chief Administrative Officer / Clerk, the Committee may request information reasonably required to carry out its mandate. Requests that would require substantial unplanned work, external advice, community engagement, or expenditure shall be referred to Council or addressed through the Municipality's approved budget and work-planning processes.

The Committee may request the attendance of an appropriate municipal official, service provider, community organization, or subject-matter expert. Any engagement of independent professional advice requires prior Council authorization unless already authorized by policy and budget.

9. Reporting to Council

- Committee recommendations shall be presented to Council through approved minutes, a Committee report, or a staff report, as appropriate.
- Recommendations are not binding until adopted by Council.
- The Chair shall provide an annual report summarizing the Committee's work, attendance, community input received, significant observations, outstanding matters, and priorities for the next year.
- A significant or time-sensitive community well-being matter requiring Council attention shall be reported promptly.

10. Annual Work Plan

The Committee shall recommend an annual work plan to Council for approval. The work plan shall identify proposed priorities, expected outcomes, anticipated reports or engagement, coordination with other committees or partners, and any resource implications. Council may revise the work plan or refer additional matters at any time.

11. Administrative Support and Budget

The Chief Administrative Officer / Clerk shall identify appropriate administrative support and shall provide or designate meeting and records support. The Committee has no independent budget unless Council establishes one through the annual budget process.

12. Remuneration

Council members shall receive remuneration only as provided by the applicable remuneration by-law or policy. Public members shall serve without remuneration unless Council determines otherwise, but may be reimbursed for authorized expenses in accordance with municipal policy.

13. Review of Terms of Reference

The Committee shall review this Terms of Reference at least once during each Council term and recommend any amendments to Council. Council may amend or revoke this Terms of Reference at any time.

14. Effective Date

This Terms of Reference comes into effect upon approval by Council.