



SUBJECT: Annual report from the Burlington Ombudsman

TO: Corporate Services, Strategy, Risk & Accountability Cttee.

FROM: Clerks Department

Report Number: CL-07-21

Wards Affected: Not applicable

File Numbers: 110-03

Date to Committee: April 7, 2021

Date to Council: April 20, 2021

Recommendation:

Receive the annual report from ADR Chambers, Ombudsman for the City of Burlington.

PURPOSE:

Vision to Focus Alignment:

- Building more citizen engagement, community health and culture.
- Deliver customer centric services with a focus on efficiency and technology transformation.

Background and Discussion:

The *Public Sector and MPP Accountability and Transparency Act* came into force on January 1, 2016. This legislation expanded the function of the provincial Ombudsman to include investigation of decisions or recommendations with respect to the administrative acts of a municipality. The *Municipal Act* allows a municipality to appoint an Ombudsman to have the same responsibility for conducting investigations with respect to these administrative acts of the municipality.

The ombudsman serves as an impartial investigator, who reviews complaints about the administration of city's services or programs. This service is utilized only after the city's internal complaint procedures and processes have not resolved the issue to the

complainant's satisfaction. The scope is limited to the administration of the City of Burlington.

In December 2020, Burlington City Council re-appointed ADR Chambers as the Ombudsman for the City of Burlington for a two-year term. ADR Chambers also serves on behalf of the Region of Halton, the Towns of Milton and Oakville. As part of the agreement with ADR Chambers, they are required to submit an annual report to Council. The 2020 annual report is attached as Appendix A.

Strategy/process

This is a legislative function. Retaining an independent firm to carry out reviews, allows for the review to be conducted impartially.

Options Considered

This function is mandated through legislation.

Financial Matters:

The administrative fee for ADR Chambers is \$1,000 per month. As indicated in the annual report, three complaints resulted in a file being opened and investigated. There are additional costs associated with an investigation, in the past year \$14,298 was spent. With providing this service, there is no costs borne by the complainant.

Source of Funding

Contingency Reserve.

Other Resource Impacts

Not applicable

Climate Implications

Not applicable

Engagement Matters:

Supporting an ombudsman function allows for those who have had unsatisfactory customer experiences to have an external party do a review. It is an important function

to demonstrate the city's commitment to transparency and accountability.

Conclusion:

This report transmits the annual report from ADR Chambers.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin Arjoon

City Clerk

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Appendices:

- A. 2020 Annual report from ADR Chambers

Report Approval:

All reports are reviewed and/or approved by Department Director, the Chief Financial Officer and the Executive Director of Legal Services & Corporation Counsel.