



**SUBJECT:** Additional staff resource: Mayor's Office – options and recommendations

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

**FROM:** City Manager's Office

Report Number: CM-09-23

Wards Affected: Not applicable

Date to Committee: June 26, 2023

Date to Council: July 11, 2023

---

**Recommendation:**

Direct the City Manager to implement the prior approved 2023 budget staffing resource in the amount of \$107,486 to be included in the approved Regular Full Time (RFT) complement of the Mayor's Office.

**PURPOSE:**

**Background and Discussion:**

During the February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023 CSSRA budget meeting, Council considered a new Regular Full Time (RFT) staff position for the Mayor's Office. A business case was prepared (2023-072) and included in the detailed 2023 Budget Book in the amount of \$107,486 which represented the full year cost of salary and benefits for the additional staff position.

Following consideration by CSSRA Budget Committee, the following motion was approved:

**Additional Staff Resource - Mayor's Office**

*Approve operating budget funding and defer to City Manager for options and recommendations by Q2 2023 on how to proceed*

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the actions and steps taken by the City Manager and staff following approval of the above motion. The report includes four (4) options for consideration by committee including a recommended option by the

City Manager. The report does not justify the prior budget approval of the position including repeating information contained in the business case prepared by the Mayor's Office. In so doing, the purpose of the report is primarily to provide additional information to assist Committee in making an informed decision.

The City Manager accepts that council members have divergent views on this matter and for that reason the options provide a full range of possible outcomes. Although not all options are addressed in the report in terms of advantages and disadvantages, the City Manager and staff are prepared to discuss their merits and limitations at CSSRA committee. As always, staff are also prepared to discuss other options that Committee may want to consider by way of an amendment.

### **Strategy/process/risk**

Following Council approval of the motion, the City Manager and staff undertook the following steps:

1. Completed a functional review of the Mayor's Office
2. Completed individual interviews with all seven (7) members of Council, to gain a more in-depth and broader perspectives on resource needs both within the Mayor's Office and the Councilors offices

### Functional Review of Mayor's Office

Undertaken by the members of the Corporate Strategy Team including the Manager of Corporate Strategy and Continuous Improvement and the Corporate Business Improvement Specialist, the functional review encompassed facilitated sessions to gather and analyze information about Mayor's office customers, partners and stakeholders and services delivered. The sessions also included reviewing the process used to deliver the services and the intended outcomes. Appendix A provides an executive summary of the function review, process followed and key findings.

### Council Member Interviews

In order to hear directly from each member of Council and gather all perspectives to inform the development of report options and recommendations, individual structured interviews were held. The interviews took place over the course of two months between March and May 2023 and were held with the City Manager, Executive Director - Human Resources and Executive Director - Community Relations & Engagement. Each interview followed the same format and included three questions that were shared in advance. The three main questions are listed below, follow up questions were also asked during the interviews when needed to ensure clarity and understanding.

1. Tell us about any additional resources you currently require for your office?

2. Tell us about what resources you anticipate you will need to support the deputy mayor with portfolio?
3. Is there anything else we should know about that would assist us in preparing the report and our recommendations?

The results of all these interviews in the form of detailed interview notes, were collated and are reported back to Committee for consideration in summary form along with key themes. As indicated at the start of each interview, no specific comments attributable to any one individual council member, would be reported back in this report. Staff also advised members of council that this report would be included on the June 26th agenda for CSSRA Committee.

Appendix B summarizes the collated interview feedback and key themes from all interviews.

### **Options Considered**

In addressing the above motion passed on February 6<sup>th</sup> at the CSSRA Meeting and in preparing this report including feedback from all members of Council, four (4) mutually exclusive options have been developed for consideration of committee. Based on the structured interview and the findings and conclusions of the functional review, the options include:

#### **Option 1 – Assign 2023 Approved Staff Resource to Mayor’s Office.**

That the City Manager proceed with the following:

- Implementation of the prior approved 2023 budget staffing resource in the amount of \$107,486 to be included in the approved Regular Full Time (RFT) complement of the Mayor’s Office effective with Council approval of this report on July 11, 2023

#### **Option 2 – Reassign the Approved 2023 Additional Staff Resource to Community Relations and Engagement as Shared Resource (to support both Mayor and Councilors Offices).**

That the City Manager proceed with the following:

- Implementation of the prior approved 2023 budget additional staffing resource to be reassigned and included in the approved Regular Full Time (RFT) complement of the Executive Director of Community Relations and Engagement effective with Council approval of this report on July 11, 2023. Under the direction of the Executive Director, the position would

provide dedicated research and constituent focused support for both the Mayor and Councilor offices

**Option 3 - Reassign the Approved 2023 Additional Staff Resource to Strategy, Risk and Accountability as Shared Resource (to support both Mayor and Councilors Offices).**

That the City Manager proceed with the following:

- Implementation of the prior approved 2023 budget additional staffing resource to be reassigned and included in the approved Regular Full Time (RFT) complement of the Strategy, Risk and Accountability Group effective with Council approval of this report on July 11, 2023. Reporting directly to the Manager of Government Relations, the position would provide ongoing corporate government relations and other specialized municipal research support to the Mayor and all members of Council

**Option 4 – Rescind the 2023 Budget Approval and reduce proposed 2024 Budget accordingly.**

That the approval of the additional resource in the 2023 Budget be rescinded by Council and the Chief Financial Officer reduce the proposed 2024 Budget by the amount of \$107,486.

Rationale and Justification of Recommendation

Observations and key findings based on the functional review and interviews include the following:

- Based on the Mayor's Office functional review completed by staff, the recommended organizational design in Appendix A supports the establishment of 4 distinct functional areas:
  - a. Office Oversight
  - b. Constituent support
  - c. Communications
  - d. Strategic Management
- The area of highest identified need and the primary rationale for recommending option 1 is to address the current workload in the Mayor's Office, particularly related to the constituent support function and supporting the Mayor's Office community development initiatives.

- While no consensus was evident in the structured interviews as to the need for additional resources as noted in Appendix B, Council members did identify some suggested priorities for the additional staff resources with the highest area of need being a specialist research support available to all members of Council. Some limited support existed for having an additional staff resource provide coordinated communication support for Councilors and to provide research and business writing support to council members while functioning in their new of deputy mayor with portfolio.
- All Council members acknowledged strong support for the direct and ongoing administrative assistance provided to each of them by of their councilor assistants. Based on the interviews, it was clearly conveyed that each Council member has also adopted a personal “working style” that optimizes their own professional skills and strengths along with those of their council assistants. However, Council members did not for the most part see their councilor assistants also providing specialized research and business writing support (e.g. preparing motion memos).
- The need for specialized research skills to assist in preparing reports and other documents was noted by some councilors. The evolution of the deputy mayor with portfolio role was seen a potential area where specialized research and business writing expertise would be helpful in the future as that role further evolves.

While the City Manager does not recommend any change to the existing councilor assistant model, there is clearly a need to review and confirm the reporting relationship both directly to each council member and also to assess the level of involvement and impact on workload as a member of the Customer Experience (CX) team. The Executive Director of Community Relations and Engagement will undertake that review along with the Executive Director of Human Resources by Q4 2023.

- Support from some Council members did exist for additional support to the corporate government relations functions and specifically to assist with the increasing workload demands of the Manager of Government Relations.

With respect to the additional staffing position supporting corporate GR activities, the CM acknowledges that the recent level of provincial legislative changes affecting municipal government is unprecedented and additional resources are becoming a now need as well as are expected to increase over the balance of this term of Council. The City Manager takes the view that no one (1) additional staff resource however can satisfy all the needs as identified in the research completed for this report, and further review of resources needs for the corporate GR function is required.

In addition to the recommendation of option 1, the City Manager also supports the Mayor's intention to proceed immediately with recruitment of the Chief of Staff position to assume the key role of overseeing the strategic management function and participating in the day-to-day inter-governmental relationship functions of the Mayor's Office. In so doing, the four key functions of the Mayor's Office will be sufficiently resourced moving forward.

---

### **Financial Matters:**

During the February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023 CSSRA budget meeting, Council considered a new Regular Full Time (RFT) staff position for the Mayor's Office. A business case was prepared (2023-072) and included in the detailed 2023 Budget Book in the amount of \$107,486 which represented the full year cost of salary and benefits for the additional staff position. The budget approval remains in place and subject to approval of this report, the Chief Financial Officer will confirm the allocation of the budget funds into the Mayor's Office cost center.

### **Total Financial Impact**

To date the financial impact reflects the 2023 Budget approval amount of \$107,486 and subject to approval of the report, there will be no incremental financial impact to the City.

### **Source of Funding**

The additional position approved in the 2023 is funded directly from tax supported funding.

### **Climate Implications:**

NA

---

### **Engagement Matters:**

The City Manager engaged with all of Council as well as the Executive Director, Human Resource, Executive Director Community Relations & Engagement and the Executive Director, Strategy, Risk and Accountability.

---

## **Conclusion:**

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the actions and steps taken by the City Manager and staff following approval of the motion by CSSRA Committee and Council.

### **Additional Staff Resource - Mayor's Office**

*Approve operating budget funding and defer to City Manager for options and recommendations by Q2 2023 on how to proceed*

The report includes four (4) options for consideration by committee including a recommended Option 1 by the City Manager.

---

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Commisso

City Manager

905 335 7600 x 7608

## **Appendices:**

- A. Summary of Mayor's Office Functional Review
- B. Summary of Council Member Interviews

## **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.

## Executive Summary Mayor’s Office Functional Review APPENDIX A

Recommendations of function groupings in no particular order, structure or hierarchy) based on the assessment of processes within the Mayor’s Office with a review of current process capacities, gaps and team performance strengths (not individual performance strengths).

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Office Oversight Function</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Office team management &amp; oversight</li> <li>• Budget &amp; accounting</li> <li>• Office management admin</li> <li>• Public event management</li> <li>• Human resources planning &amp; development</li> <li>• Staff hiring, training, performance</li> <li>• Mayor’s calendar</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Constituent Support Function</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer inquiries &amp; issues escalation &amp; coordination</li> <li>• Report writing, presentations, speaking notes</li> <li>• Project management</li> <li>• Community outreach, engagement &amp; feedback</li> <li>• Supports Strategic Function: research, policy &amp; data</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Communications Function</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications strategy</li> <li>• Website, campaign, newsletter &amp; response</li> <li>• Media relations</li> <li>• Community outreach, engagement &amp; feedback</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Strategic Function</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mayor’s strategy</li> <li>• Interpersonal government relations – e.g. Mayor staff to Ministers staff</li> <li>• Leadership to Council &amp; Senior staff</li> <li>• Stakeholder management</li> <li>• Data collection &amp; analysis</li> <li>• Research &amp; development</li> <li>• Business process management &amp; CI</li> <li>• Financial planning</li> <li>• Crisis management</li> <li>• Policy management</li> </ul>

### 1. The Process Undertaken for the Functional Review

There were two (2) in-person facilitated sessions and one final session completed to share findings and recommendations. The first session gathered information from staff and the Mayor about types of customers, partners and stakeholders and services delivered in the Mayor’s Office. This also included outlining the process used to deliver the services and the intended outcomes for service delivery. The customer facing, core processes included:

1. Public Event Management (Ceremonies and community events)
2. Customer Intake and Inquires
3. Issues Escalation to Resolution
8. Communications (website, campaigns, newsletters, responses)
9. Community Business Representation
10. Advice and Consultation



- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 4. Community Outreach                                  | 11. Head of City Public Figure Representation |
| 5. Other Levels of Government Advocacy                 |   |
| 6. City Administration Liaison                         | 12. Community Engagement and Feedback         |
| 7. Media Relations (design development and management) |   |

In addition to customer facing core processes, supporting processes and key management processes were identified. These included processes such as, Financial Planning, Strategic Planning and Goal Setting, Report Writing, Policy Management, Research and Data Analysis, Calendar Administration and Staff Management.

The second session focused on determining challenges and improvements. These were identified through a SWOT analysis, an assessment of staff capacity and work-load concentration and a business process gap review. The key findings were documented as a Summary of Challenges and Possible Improvements. The summary of **Challenges** include:

- operational needs to meet the customer/community/constituent's immediate service expectations created a lack of long-term planning and strategic focus
- There were gaps in attention to several supporting processes (back-office functions)
- Task switching prevents staff from completing work efficiently. Staff's roles and responsibility are either too widespread or over capacity for the volume of work.
- A lack of research and data focus prevents being proactive in driving policy development and identifying important issues of focus
- There is a lack of capacity for the volume of constituent and business demands and expectations

The summary of **Possible Improvements** include:

- A strategic lead is needed to develop and monitor goals, and prioritize work accordingly
- Assign lead roles to staff to ensure proper focus on key deliverables
- Leverage strategic vision and support with staff lead functions to ensure there is capacity and competency in the team to deliver on this work
- Add to compliment to increase capacity to fill process gaps and investigate the utilization of technology to capture data and trends in Mayor Office service, policy and communication needs
- Leverage lead functions to ensure focus of capacity on prioritized work

## 2. Summary of Findings and Actions

The Mayor's Office Team demonstrated and shared often the importance of providing an excellent customer/constituent response turnaround time and a true

sense of caring for the community and their issues. Being accurate, present, and solutions and improvement minded were key strengths and the culture of this team. Analytical thinking and sharing in roles and responsibility has been an operational must for the team to tackle the complexity and constant flow of work. Their teamwork and trust in each other has also been a key to their success, however their dedication and the current community expectations to delivering services has often created an overload in their capacity (sometimes working additional 10-15 hours a week).

The following are a list of the most significance actions recommended to streamline processes, begin to create capacity and define priority in efforts:

1. Assign the role and responsibility of the strategic function within the Mayor's Office
2. Create a division of tasks/activities between Office Administration and Constituent Support
3. Determine the key strategic areas of focus to make the greatest impact on policy,
4. Resource community outreach and government advocacy.
5. Determine a formal and document the customer intake and triage business process in collaboration with Service Burlington and the other Councilor's Offices.

**SUMMARY OF COUNCIL MEMBER INTERVIEWS**

**APPENDIX B**

**General Interview Feedback**

**Sufficient Resources**

- Overall no consensus on need for additional resources with range of comments from full support for additional position to position not required
- Councilor constituent issues are busy but manageable
- No additional resource needed for deputy mayor with portfolio role at this time
- Staff can generally support Council members within the context of their role and capacity
- Greater clarity on need for new position for Mayor’s Office

**Insufficient Resources**

- Staff capacity varies and can be inconsistent at times
- CRM not always reliable tool, some frustrations expressed and opportunities for improvement identified
- Gaps exist when there are specific new tasks to work on
- Insufficient staff support with policy and research work
- Need for government relations/communications support has increased
- Constituent issues are increasing as the city is growing

**Deputy Mayor with Portfolio**

- More work needs to be done as to how the DM role will work before resources are identified. For example – how will DM key issues be assigned?
- How will we measure the success of the DM role?
- Need more clarity on how the new role will function i.e. who takes on issues, how are they delegated?
- Clarity on roles and responsibilities (rules of engagement) to support deputy mayors with portfolio
- Supports the need for proactive information sharing
- New resource could potentially support all councilors by connecting and aligning the work of council

**Preferred Skills & Competencies**

- Policy, advisory and analytics
- Research and writing
- Communications/Engagement
- Municipal experience, knowledge and experience with government relations
- Political Liaison/impartial perspective
- Creativity and Innovation
- Ability to work in fast paced environment
- Problem solving

## **Common Themes**

### **Coordination/Connection**

- Where identified that a resource may be needed, there was an agreement that the role would be beneficial in connecting and coordinating the work of council, specifically related to DM portfolios.
- Connecting council to opportunities relevant to deputy mayor portfolios.

### **Communication**

- The need for increased/enhanced two-way communication was a theme throughout. Noting an increase in constituent activity and the need to be more responsive.
- New role could play a part in increasing awareness of council activities and initiatives and include writing support.

### **Government Relations**

- Need for increased support with government relations and advocacy efforts.
- Increasing complexity and need for this support.

### **Research & Policy**

- Resource to focus on research that supports deputy mayor portfolios.
- Research to provide background information to support motions (environmental scans, political trends/analysis etc.)

## **Key Observations & Conclusion:**

The goal of the interviews was to help determine the best fit for the new RFT staff position based on need. When asking questions specifically focused on resource gaps, there were clear themes as follows: Coordination/Connection, Communication, Government Relations, and Research & Policy. Although no consensus was reached, there was evidence of a need to increase support for key functions.