

Council Administrative Support Review

Office of the City Clerk
Committee of the Whole (Working Session)
January 18, 2023



Chronology

January 25, 2022

- Member's Resolution

June 21, 2022

- Committee of the Whole (2)

September 14, 2022

- Committee of the Whole (Working Session)

January 18, 2023

- Committee of the Whole (Working Session)

Rationale

Staff within the offices of the Councillors report to the City Clerk, however they take daily direction from the Council Members

Council office staff are City employees, however, the nature of their work is distinct from other Union and non-Union staff

Council office staff are more akin to political staff and their work is unique within the City

Council office staff are City employees, and the City has certain statutory requirements and corporate responsibilities to those staff

Rationale

Council Executive Assistants are included in the Office of the City Clerk's budget, while Council Administrative Assistants are included in the individual Council office budgets

Remuneration for Council office staff are set within the current corporate compensation structure with limited flexibility to recognize the experience and value that a staff member may have

A flexible compensation structure is important to attracting and retaining employees with the specialized skills and experience to staff a political office

Background

- At the meeting of January 25, 2022, Council adopted a Member's Resolution directing staff to report on options for the staffing of Council Member offices, including but not limited to a review of:
 - 1) Recruitment process
 - 2) Reporting structure
 - 3) Compensation model
 - 4) Appropriate budget source

Analysis and Options

- Staff conducted a survey of comparator municipalities to analyze processes and structures for Council Member staffing according to the four categories contained in the Member's Resolution, as well as the composition of staffing for comparator Council Members' offices.
- A total of eight comparator municipalities provided responses to the survey, which informed the proposed alternate options for each focus area in the review.

1) Recruitment Process

- The first area of review analyzed the process by which administrative support staff are recruited to serve in their respective Council Members' offices.
- Two-thirds of respondent municipalities indicated that their Mayor and Members of Council were directly involved in the recruitment of their office staff. Members led the interview process with the support of municipal staff.

Option 1-A (Status Quo)	Mayor and MOC involved in recruitment.
Option 1-B	Recruitment process conducted by City staff only.

2) Reporting Structure

- The second review area focused on the reporting structure between Council administrative support staff and the Mayor and MOC and/or municipal staff.
- At present, administrative support staff for the City of Vaughan take direction from the Mayor or Member of Council on a day-to-day basis, but report to the City Clerk for administrative purposes. The Clerk handles attendance management, corporate training, human resources matters, annual performance management plans and other daily activities.
- Half of respondent municipalities indicated their Council admin staff report to the Clerk, the other half report solely to their respective Member of Council.

Option 2-A (Status Quo)	Council administrative staff report to the City Clerk.
Option 2-B	Council administrative staff report to the Mayor/MOC.

3) Compensation Model

- Council administrative support staff compensation is presently determined according to a standardized salary grid, consistent with other staff employed by the City of Vaughan.
- All surveyed respondent municipalities indicated that their respective Council office staff were paid according to a standardized salary scale or grid.

Option 3-A (Status Quo)	Council office staff are compensated according to the City's salary grid.
Option 3-B	Alternative compensation model as determined by Committee.

4) Appropriate Budget Source

- Compensation and benefits for Council office staff are sourced from two separate budgets. Full-time staff are funded by the Office of the City Clerk, while part-time staff are funded from the budget for their respective Member of Council.
- In a survey of comparator municipalities, the majority indicated that all of the funds for Council office staff came from the Clerk’s budget. The cities of Hamilton and Toronto indicated that the entire Council office staff funding was sourced from their respective Members’ office budget.

Option 4-A (Status Quo)	Full-time staff are funded from the Office of the City Clerk’s budget, part-time staff are funded from Mayor/MOC office budgets.
Option 4-B	All Council administrative support staff will be transferred to and funded from the Office of the City Clerk budget.
Option 4-C	All Council administrative support staff will be transferred to and funded from Mayor/MOC office Budgets.

Council Administrative Support Staff Composition

- In addition to the four focus areas contained in the Members' Resolution, staff also surveyed comparator municipalities on the composition of their Council admin office staff.

Option 5-A (Status Quo)	The existing staff complements are maintained.
Option 5-B	Incremental increase to the staff complements of the Mayor and Members of Council to include a fulltime Chief of Staff to the Mayor and fulltime Administrative Assistants for each of the 9 Members of Council.
Option 5-C	<p>Replace the existing council administrative staffing structure which is based on a common structure and roles, with a set of staff complement options.</p> <p>Members of Council would have the option to select a combination of fulltime and parttime positions within their office staff budget. A set of Job Descriptions would be prepared with salaries against the City of Vaughan's existing salary grid, with the determination of which positions to hire left to each Member of Council based on their own needs, and the limitations of their respective office budgets. This option would also require option 4-C to be implemented, consolidating the Council office staff funding into their existing office budgets.</p>

Conclusion

- Staff have prepared a set of options for Council consideration that allow for flexibility based on the priorities and preferences of the Mayor and Member of Council for the recruitment process for council administrative staff, the source of office staff budgets, the reporting structure for council office staff, compensation model and staffing structure.
- The options contained in the report are based on best practices as determined by a survey of comparator municipalities.