



TO: GENERAL COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: 2022-2026 COUNCIL TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

WARD: ALL

PREPARED BY AND KEY CONTACT: F. BARBARO, SERVICE DESK SUPERVISOR – EXT. 4708

SUBMITTED BY: R. NOLAN, DIRECTOR OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

GENERAL MANAGER APPROVAL: R. JAMES-REID, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ACCESS BARRIE

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER APPROVAL: M. PROWSE, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

RECOMMENDED MOTION

1. That the technology services described in Appendix “A” to Staff Report IT001-22 be approved for the 2022-2026 term of Council.

PURPOSE & BACKGROUND

Report Overview

2. The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the hardware, software and service level standards recommended for provision to members of the 2022-2026 term of Barrie City Council to be provided through the Information Technology Department.
3. Technology hardware, software and related support services are provided to members of Council each term by the City to ensure they are supported with electronic tools to sufficiently execute their duties.
4. Prior to the start of each new term of Council, in 2014 and 2018 details of the technology, support and related services to be provided to the next term of Council are approved by the current term of Council.
5. On October 1, 2018, City Council adopted the recommended motion from Staff Report IT001-18 which identified the technology hardware, software and service level standards provisioned to members of the 2018-2022 term of Barrie City Council. The particulars of the technology provided to the Mayor and City Councillors is listed below:
 - a) Members of Council were issued a smart phone based on their preference and the device options available through the City’s contracted service provider. Councillors were provided a dedicated four-digit extension that automatically routed all calls to their mobile phone or voicemail. The Mayor had a dedicated four-digit extension assigned and programmed to a desk phone in the Mayor’s office.
 - b) Members of Council were deployed a tablet as their primary computing device. Tablets were equipped with integrated Wi-Fi and LTE (cellular) network connectivity.

- c) Council members were also provided a shared computer and printer located in the Councillors Lounge, while the Mayor was provided with a computer located in the Mayor's office.
 - d) Printing/Faxing/Copying - multi-function work-centre units were provided in the Mayor's office and Councillors' office and lounge at City Hall
 - e) Technical support - the City's service AskIT ticketing system was utilized to log, track and manage Council service requests
 - f) Financial reporting – the expenses associated with each Council Member's technology services were reported on a minimum of an annual basis, in accordance with the Municipal Act
6. In addition to the technology listed above and approved by City Council on October 1, 2018, a laptop computer was also provided to each member of council in late 2020/early 2021. This additional hardware was deemed necessary with the introduction of virtual City Council meetings in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, as using a single device for accessing electronic meeting documents and also for participating in a virtual meeting caused many difficulties.

ANALYSIS

7. Members of Council typically require the following technology services in the delivery of their duties as elected officials. These services need to be provided in a mobile and/or office environment – pending the preferences of each Council member.
- a) Ability to communicate by voice, email, text, messaging and other social media forums
 - b) Use of a computing device with standard office productivity capabilities (word processing, etc.)
 - c) Access to the internet
 - d) Access to committee and council documents and materials
 - e) Technical support for the technology services provisioned, and
 - f) Tracking and reporting of costs, as per the provisions of the Municipal Act.
8. Staff considered the following when identifying tools and standards that should be applied regarding the hardware, software and service levels provided to members of the 2022-2026 City Council:
- a) Council and staff feedback regarding the technology deployed during the 2018-2022 term
 - Councillors reported strong and regular usage of cell phones, tablets and laptops.
 - b) Electronic online services
 - City staff successfully manage and maintain all committee and council agendas, minutes and meetings through an electronic agenda application, accessed via <http://barrie.legistar.com>. This on-line service features full text search of legislation, staff reports, by-law status, dates, actions, and attachments. Through the Legislative Information Portal, both Council and the public can view records from 2002 to present for each meeting of City Council and its Standing Committee (General Committee), Reference and Advisory Committees, as well as the Circulation List, which contains memorandums and correspondence including agendas, minutes and other supporting documents. Having access to this on a mobile device would allow Members of Council to be paperless at Council and Committee meetings.

- The electronic agenda application (Legistar) also has an iPad app - iLegislate. As well as enabling direct access to documents online, this app also allows an elected official to add notes and mark-ups, bookmark sections for review, send questions/comments for further information, and research items. The benefit of this app is to improve the use of electronic documents and streamline the meeting process.
- c) Changes in technology from the previous term:
- While the tablets (iPads) provided have been very important for accessing electronic meeting documents, the increase of virtual meetings – including virtual City Council, General Committee, and other committee meetings, - means that using these tablet devices simultaneously for electronic document access and for operating the virtual meeting has created many difficulties. Not only are councillors unable to view electronic documents and meeting participants at the same time, but most commonly used virtual meeting applications (including Teams and Zoom) disable the device's camera when the user switches applications causing the user to disappear from view for other meeting participants when they switch screens to view electronic documents.
 - The functional limitations described above mean it is best for virtual meeting participants to have two devices for such activities – one for operating and participating in the meeting, and another for viewing electronic meeting documents.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT MATTERS

9. The City of Barrie IT Department makes every attempt to use green technology whenever possible and participates in electronics recycling programs. Any technology brought in for members of Council would be acquired and disposed of in accordance with these conditions.

ALTERNATIVES

- Alternative #1** General Committee could choose to continue with the 2018-2022 technology services, detailed in paragraph 5 for the 2022-2026 term of Council. This is not recommended due to the increase occurrence of virtual meetings which necessitate the use of two simultaneous devices for meeting participation and electronic document access.

FINANCIAL

10. There are no direct financial implications resulting from the recommendations in this report. The costs associated with the provisioning of hardware, software and communications devices are included in the annual business plan, budgeted and administered by the IT Department.

LINKAGE TO 2018-2022 STRATEGIC PLAN

11. The recommendation(s) included in this Staff Report are not specifically related to the goals identified in the 2018-2022 Strategic Plan.

APPENDIX "A"

Technology Services for the 2022-2026 Term of Council

The IT Department would be responsible for deploying, administering and supporting the following technology services for Council Members during the 2022-2026 term:

- a. Mobile and voice communications:
 - i. Members of Council would be deployed a cellular smart phone based on their preference, the standards in place through the City's existing supplier relationships, (currently iPhone 13 or Samsung S22 at the time of this report) and product availability.
 - ii. A dedicated four-digit extension within the City's telephone network would be assigned to each Councillor, with this extension automatically routing all calls to their mobile phone or voicemail.
 - iii. A dedicated four-digit extension within the City's telephone network would be assigned to the Mayor, with this extension programmed to a desk phone in the Mayor's office.
- b. Computing hardware - Members of Council would be deployed a tablet and a laptop computer, based on the standards in place through the City's existing supplier relationships, (currently iPad 10" standard models for tablets, and Lenovo T-Series for laptop computers) and product availability.
- c. Internet access – tablets would be equipped with integrated Wi-Fi and LTE or 5G (cellular) network connectivity. Computing devices deployed to Member of Council will have Wi-Fi capabilities to securely connect to the staff and public wi-fi networks at City facilities.
- d. Printing/Faxing/Copying - multi-function work-centre units would be available in the Mayor's office and Councillors' lounge at City Hall
- e. Technical support - the City's service ticketing system would continue to be used to log, track and manage Council service requests
- f. Financial reporting – the expenses associated with each Council Member's technology services would be reported at a minimum on an annual basis, in accordance with the Municipal Act