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## 2014 OPERATING BUDGET BRIEFING NOTE

### Queuing Councillor's Calls into 311

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#### Background:

At the December 11, 2013 meeting, the Budget Committee requested:

*That the Director, 311, provide a briefing note on the process of implementing a Councillor's hotline or priority line to the 311 service.*

Councillors have expressed concerns that during periods of high call volumes and longer than normal wait times their staff have to wait unacceptable periods of time to get through to 311.

#### Key Points:

- In 2012, 81% of 311 calls were answered in 75 seconds or less, with the average call answered within 38 seconds.
- Emergency Services are the only stakeholder that currently have priority status in the 311 queue (their calls move to the top of the queue). Any additional number added to this Priority Queue will impact the response time to all Emergency calls.
- As an alternate to a Priority Queue, a separate number (hotline) will require changes to the current staff scheduling model and result in shifting staff from the 311 queue to the hotline. The implications on the scheduling change would require reconfiguring the workforce management software, one or two additional FTEs during periods of high call volumes and additional costs to implement and support the new hotline.
- Without additional Customer Service Representatives (CSRs), 311 would result in longer wait times for residents due to fewer resources available to 311 as staff are assigned to this Hotline.
- The potential costs of implementing a separate hotline number specifically for Councillors would include reconfiguring the workforce management software, one or two additional Customer Service Representative FTEs during periods of high call volumes, and additional costs to implement and support the new hotline.
- During periods of high call volumes, when many Councillors are using the hotline, the results will be similar to calling 311 directly, as Councillors will have to wait behind other Councillors in the hotline.

- The public will quickly learn that the hotline is an alternate way to reach 311 and will call their Councillor to avoid a wait time. This will result in increased wait times on the hotline, creating significant inefficiencies and negatively impacting the customer experience.
- Emergency Services remain as the only stakeholder that requires a priority status in the 311 queue.
- 311 Toronto will prioritize Councillors' emails as this channel does not handle emergency requests and therefore will not have an impact on Emergency Services.

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