

Budget allow for free coffee for councillors

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Councillors will continue to have access to unlimited free coffee on the second floor of city hall after an attempt to scrap the budget item failed Wednesday.

Ward 43 Councillor Paul Ainslie (Scarborough East) was unable to convince his colleagues to pay for their own coffee and eliminate \$20,000 from a supplies budget that pays for coffee in several locations throughout the second floor.

"By reducing this are we out of debt?" Ward 7 York West Councillor Giorgio Mammoliti asked. "How much impact does it actually mean on the debt? I just think it's stupid, that's all. It's stupid."

However Ainslie maintained that councillors could afford to use a portion of their \$53,000 office budgets to buy a coffee maker.

But Mammoliti argued that Ainslie was simply picking on councillors.

"I don't mean to belabour the whole free coffee thing...but why is it politicians we're picking on?" he said.

Ainslie replied saying, "I'm not picking on politicians and I'm not picking on staff...we should be leading by example."

Mammoliti didn't buy that argument.

"Take away my milks. Take away my sugars. Take away my creams. I couldn't give a damn...we're nobody in this city," he said.

"If you want a real impact in this city, take away the creams, the sugars and the coffees on the real expenses and that's the rest of the city...leading by example means directors, it means the heads of departments; it means all of these people," he said.

In an interview Ainslie, who was drinking a cup of Tim Hortons coffee, said he wasn't surprised by the reaction to his motion.

"On one hand I was expecting it because some of the things I suggested were near to heart, to some of my colleague's hearts," he said.

Ainslie was also unsuccessful in his attempt to eliminate the \$30,000 budget for an office supply cabinet in the clerk's department where councillors can access unlimited office supplies.

However staff will report back on councillors' use of a box at the Rogers Centre, which Ainslie also requested.