Committee of the Whole

Meeting Date: **August 12, 2025**

Submitted by: **Chris Bailey, Director of Information Technology Services**

Subject: **Middlesex County AI-Powered Website Chatbot**

BACKGROUND:

The Information Technology Services (ITS) Department launched an AI-powered Chatbot "Emcee" on the County website in June 2025. The Chatbot was developed in collaboration with County departments to provide accurate, 24/7 responses to commonly asked questions. Website content was reviewed and updated to ensure that accurate and current information is readily available in response to inquiries.

ANALYSIS:

As of July 30, over 300 questions have been asked and answered by the Chatbot. Leveraging Chatbot analytics, the ITS Department has determined the most common departments/topics that have been answered. The top 5 departments since implementation are as follows:

- Planning
- Social Services
- Legislative Services
- Community Transportation
- HR (Employment Opportunities)

To ensure the Chatbot continues to deliver accurate and reliable information, questions, answers, and website content will be reviewed on an ongoing basis. Quarterly review sessions will be scheduled with each department to assess and update department-specific content. The ITS department is also developing a workflow that includes automated email notifications and follow-ups to help maintain the accuracy and relevance of the information provided.

Some of the anticipated benefits of the Chatbot include:

- Improved user experience**,** offering quick and accurate responses to resident inquiries.

- **24/7 availability**, ensuring residents have access to immediate assistance outside of regular business hours.
- **Enhanced access to information**, making it easier for residents to find details about County services.
- **Reduced call volume**, decreasing the number of inquiries to County staff regarding frequently asked questions.
- **Valuable data-driven insights**, enabling the County to identify common issues and potential service gaps.

The technology used to develop the chatbot was reviewed using the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy (Legislative Policy 8.01) and includes a disclaimer when initially loaded stating to not share personal or confidential data.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

There is a $4000 yearly licensing fee for the software used for the Chatbot. The software is part of a larger suite that can also be leveraged by the ITS Department for other projects. ITS is collaborating with local municipalities to develop and implement Chatbots for local websites as well.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC FOCUS:

This report aligns with the following Strategic Focus, Goals, or Objectives:

Strategic Priority	Goal	Objectives
Collaboration & Partnerships	Strengthen collaboration with local municipalities and regional partners to improve economic efficiency, enhance service delivery, and support regional development in alignment with community priorities	- Optimize service delivery through inter-municipal collaboration and shared services to improve efficiency and seamless operations. - Improve communication and transparency through open engagement, accessible information, and informed decision-making.
Adaptability and Agility	Modernize the County's administrative capabilities to strengthen decision-making, improve service delivery, and achieve better community outcomes	- Transform, modernize and continuously improve administrative systems and processes to increase efficiency and enhance the experience of residents and partners. - Strengthen internal administrative capabilities to ensure key support services have the necessary resources to meet community needs and support organizational growth.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Middlesex County AI-Powered Website Chatbot report be received for information.