

*Investigating the Need for Structural and Functional Reform of
Ottawa Police Service and Ottawa Police Services Board*

Summary of Survey Results Asking City of Ottawa Politicians about Improving Citizens' Access to Ottawa Police Service Records

Dr. Barry Wellar, C.M.

Professor Emeritus, University of Ottawa

President, Information Research Board

<http://wellar.ca/informationresearch/>

POLICE REFORM PROJECT **Report 7**

Ottawa, Canada
December 4, 2020

A. Introducing an Overview of Responses to Survey Questions 1-5, Ottawa Police Service (OPS) Reform Pilot Study

As journalists and activist citizens can attest, asking some politicians questions is one thing, getting them to provide timely, pertinent, informative, unambiguous answers is often quite something else.

My recent, similar experiences in that regard involving City of Ottawa politicians directly, as well as indirectly through examination of governance materials involving accountability and transparency obligations of politicians, include three related activities:

1. The transparency and accountability pilot study, [*Chronicling the Use of Transparency and Accountability as Political Buzzwords, and as Drivers Ensuring the Standard of Access to Public Records in Canada is Best Practice*](#). Eight of the reports produced to date during the course of that research involve administering surveys to mayor and councillors, City of Ottawa, and several spin-off investigations into barriers which impede citizens' access to public records;
2. Intensive examination of the terms of the City of Ottawa Code of Conduct for Politicians (<https://ottawa.ca/en/city-hall/accountability-and-transparency/accountability-framework/code-conduct-members-council-and-related-policies>); and,
3. Examination of the criteria used to select winners of the Code of Silence award which is presented annually by journalists to public agencies which are recognized for their failure to properly inform citizens. (https://caj.ca/blog/2019_code_of_silence_award_nominations)

Based on those and other governance experiences, discussions with experts in public policy processes and policing, and feedback from community activists engaged in police reform initiatives in Ottawa, elsewhere in Canada, and from the U.S., in September 2020 the Information Research Board launched the pilot study, [*Investigating the Need for Structural and Functional Reform of Ottawa Police Service and Ottawa Police Services Board*](#).

The rationale for the survey is detailed in that report. Key considerations are recalled here for the purposes of context.

1. The call to “Defund the Police”, as well as related calls about disbanding, re-organizing, downsizing, reviewing, and re-designing police service organizations and police services boards have attained a great deal of traction in communities across Canada, including Ottawa.

The basic tenet of this project is that investigating the need for police service reform logically precedes decisions about matters such as de-funding. As a result, reform is the operant guiding term for questions, comments, communications, and report titles regarding issues and concerns about Ottawa Police Service transparency, accountability, performance assessment and, top-of-list, the allocation of funds for management and operational activities.

2. As a result of the broad interest and the wide variety of issues and concerns with regard to policing, there are many different topics which are pertinent to investigations into the need for structural and functional reform of police service agencies and police services boards, and there are many different ways to undertake the investigations.

For a mix of reasons, including limited resources, and the gap in published research on access to police records at the local level, this investigation is limited in scope to Ottawa Police Service and Ottawa Police Services Board.

3. Municipal police service agencies and police service boards are part of municipal governments and, consequently, receive funding, directions, authorizations, etc., as a consequence of decisions by municipal councils. Hence, the people of interest for this phase of the police reform pilot study are politicians and in particular, members of council, City of Ottawa.
4. Informed decisions are based on information, which is derived from data. Preliminary inquiries reveal that very few citizens and, surprisingly, very few politicians encountered to date, actually have anything more than superficial knowledge of the records maintained by any municipal police force, including Ottawa Police Service.

This means that few if any non-police-affiliated people in Ottawa have more than minimal knowledge about the data collected by Ottawa Police Service, or how Ottawa Police Service transforms those data to produce the information needed to decide on such decisions as those associated with operations, analysis and evaluation of performance measures, priorities, and budget estimates.

This project is intended to change that situation by examining how to improve citizen access to police records, so that citizens can play a leading role in investigations into the need for structural and functional reform of Ottawa Police Service and Ottawa Police Services Board.

5. Consistent with the pillars that define the purpose of the Information Research Board (<http://wellar.ca/informationresearch/6Pillars.html>), the focus of this

investigation is on citizens having free, easy, timely, and direct online access to police service records, and those of Ottawa Police Service in particular.

To my knowledge, no member of any council in this region in the last near-50 years made much if any effort to enable citizens to access police records. It falls within the mandate of the Information Research Board to not only investigate why that is the case, but to offer suggestions about how that access shortfall situation can be remedied.

6. It appears likely that there is a spatial aspect to more than 90% of the operations activities of Ottawa Police Service, which makes policing among the most geographic of municipal government functions. Consequently, policing is a prime candidate to use geographic information systems (GIS) science and technology in multiple ways, including the construction of geo-based records as a product of reality-data-information-knowledge transform processes.

Conversely, therefore, citizens' investigations of the contents of OPS records can be achieved via access to spatial and non-spatial files data files, and via access to spatial and non-spatial information files. Those are two research topics in which I have been professionally engaged for many years.

7. The research design of this pilot study is based on previous, related investigations, and uses survey questions as the means to ascertain the positions of Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson and councillors regarding the need for structural and functional reform of Ottawa Police Service and Ottawa Police Services Board.

As shown in preceding pilot study reports, minimal documentation is required to explain and demonstrate the research process. Major advantages of the survey question approach include the research instrument being readily communicable to citizens in Ottawa and elsewhere, and being readily transferable to those undertaking similar investigations in other localities.

However, this is a research process, and feedback is invited on improving the research design for use by others engaging in related inquiries.

The first-round questions presented in Table 1 ask mayor and councillors about their positions on citizen's access to the records which are required to rigorously investigate the need for structural and functional reform of Ottawa Police Service and Ottawa Police Services Board.

Each of the questions deals with one or more of the considerations presented above which outline the rationale underlying the pilot study. And, each of the

questions is designed in such a way that responses and non-responses alike will feed into confirming one or more of the considerations underlying the project terms of reference.

Table 1. Questions for Ottawa Mayor and Councillors About Citizen's Access to Ottawa Police Service Records

Question 1. *In order to meet duty of care and standard of care obligations, is it prudent and/or necessary that Council explicitly adopt the principle that any reform initiative is primarily intended and is so designed to serve citizens, and to also explicitly stipulate that the principle is to be fully respected in practice by Ottawa Police Service, Ottawa Police Services Board, Members of Council and staff, and city staff?*

Question 2. *Is it necessary that an instruction be given to Ottawa Police Service to open its records to public access with reasonable invasion of privacy and confidentiality limitations rather than what amount to "cover-up restrictions"?*

Question 3. *Given that complaints are made in communities across Canada about citizens not having adequate access to police records, what steps will mayor and councillors take to provide citizens with a level of access to police records which are essential to understanding how to effectively and efficiently achieve police service reform involving such issues as transparency, accountability, performance assessment and, top-of-list, the allocation of funds for management and operational activities?*

Question 4. *Do you agree that as soon as access to records is up to speed, a basis is in place for citizens to do their due diligence and examine the records for what they reveal about needed reforms to Ottawa Police Service performance, operations, and management?*

Question 5. *Do mayor and councillors have any suggestions as to what else could be done to ensure that citizens have proper access to the records/data which are needed to effectively and efficiently participate in a police service reform initiative involving such issues as transparency, accountability, performance assessment and, top-of-list, the allocation of funds for management and operational activities?*

Links to the reports on questions 1-5 are, respectively:

Q-1. How Does Ottawa Council Ensure that a Police Reform Initiative Primarily Serves the Interests of Citizens?

Q-2. How Does Ottawa Council Ensure that Citizens Have Free, Easy, Timely, and Direct Online Access to Ottawa Police Service Records?

Q-3. How Will Council Ensure that Citizens Have Access to Records Which Define the Need to Reform the Ottawa Police Service?

Q-4. Does Access to Police Records Affect the Ability of Citizens to Decide on the Need to Reform Ottawa Police Service?

Q-5. How Do You Suggest Improving Citizens' Access to Ottawa Police Service Records?

In previous communications and reports on citizens' access to public records (*Chronicling the Use of Transparency and Accountability as Political Buzzwords, and as Drivers Ensuring the Standard of Access to Public Records in Canada is Best Practice*)

I suggested that at minimum citizens should have free, easy, timely, and direct online access to public records.

In addition, I invited suggestions from mayor and councillors that improve on my suggestions about achieving the level of access to Ottawa Police Service records which is desired by citizens.

In this pilot study, City of Ottawa politicians are again invited to suggest how the City of Ottawa could improve on my suggestion that at minimum citizens should have free, easy, timely, and direct online access to public records, including police records.

I hasten to add that concerns involving privacy and confidentiality matters have previously been discussed, and summarily dismissed.

In brief, there is no need for citizens to have access to records containing person-based identifier data in order to conduct investigations into matters of transparency, accountability, performance assessment, or the allocation of funds for management and operational activities involving Ottawa Police Service.

Further, with a current annual budget of \$360,000,000, and an ask of \$376,000,000 for 2021, it would seem to be in the vicinity of 'chump change' for Ottawa Police Service to take on the task if it remains to be done.

That is, prudence suggests that this would have been done years ago as a security precaution, so that even skilled hackers would have great difficulty gaining access to records, and be able to compromise privacy or confidentiality protocols, as well as gain entry to sensitive strategic or tactical records.

(**Note.** As the reader may be aware, the City of Ottawa has been the target of a number of hacker gambits, including one involving corporate mis-communications, and the subsequent rip-off of a considerable amount of money. Hacking is not a new 'thing', so it is logical to expect that OPS took proper anti-hacking steps years ago.)

B. Responses and Non-Responses of Mayor and Councillors to the Five Survey Questions

The record of responses and non-responses by mayor and councillors is presented in detail in the report for each question.

As a result, this report presents each question and assigns the politicians to the appropriate category of Yes, No, "F", or No Reply, and includes any text replies and comments on any text replies.

The format used is to begin with Mayor Jim Watson followed by councillors in alphabetical order.

Table 2. Responses and Non-Responses by City of Ottawa Politicians to Question 1 about Citizens' Access to Ottawa Police Service Records

Q-1. *In order to meet duty of care and standard of care obligations, is it prudent and/or necessary that Council explicitly adopt the principle that any reform initiative is primarily intended and is so designed to serve citizens, and to also explicitly stipulate that the principle is to be fully respected in practice by Ottawa Police Service, Ottawa Police Services Board, Members of Council and staff, and city staff?*

YES and **YES:** Councillors King, McKenney and Menard

NO:

"F": Councillors Deans and Kavanagh

NO REPLY: Mayor Watson, Councillors Brockington, Chiarelli, Cloutier, Darouze, Dudas, Egli, El-Chantiry, Fleury, Gower, Harder, Hubley, Kitts, Leiper, Luloff, Meehan, Moffatt, Suds, and Tierney.

Table 3. Responses and Non-Responses by City of Ottawa Politicians to Question 2 about Citizens' Access to Ottawa Police Service Records

Q-2. *Is it necessary that an instruction be given to Ottawa Police Service to open its records to public access with reasonable invasion of privacy and confidentiality limitations rather than what amount to "cover-up restrictions"?*

YES: Councillors McKenney and Menard

NO:

"F":

NO REPLY: Mayor Watson, Councillors Brockington, Chiarelli, Cloutier, Darouze, Deans, Dudas, Egli, El-Chantiry, Fleury, Gower, Harder, Hubley, Kavanagh, Kitts, King, Leiper, Luloff, Meehan, Moffatt, Sudds, and Tierney

Table 4. Responses and Non-Responses by City of Ottawa Politicians to Question 3 about Citizens' Access to Ottawa Police Service Records

Q-3. *Given that complaints are made in communities across Canada about citizens not having adequate access to police records, what steps will mayor and councillors take to provide citizens with a level of access to police records which are essential to understanding how to effectively and efficiently achieve police service reform involving such issues as transparency, accountability, performance assessment and, top-of-list, the allocation of funds for management and operational activities?*

YES: Councillor McKenney, Menard

NO:

"F": Councillors Chiarelli, Moffatt

NO REPLY: Mayor Watson, Councillors Brockington, Cloutier, Darouze, Deans, Dudas, Egli, El-Chantiry, Fleury, Gower, Harder, Hubley, Kavanagh, Kitts, King, Leiper, Luloff, Meehan, Sudds, and Tierney

REPLIES, and COMMENTS ON REPLIES, QUESTION 3

From: Barry Wellar [mailto:wellar.barry@gmail.com]

Sent: Sunday, October 25, 2020 9:38 PM

To: Rick.Chiarelli@ottawa.ca

Subject: OPS Reform Pilot Study Research Methodology

Councillor Chiarelli

I replied to your questions about the design of the Ottawa Police Service and Ottawa Police Services Board pilot study, and I now return to ask about your claimed education, training, and expertise in research methodology.

In my experience of teaching university research methods courses for about 30 years, employment as a senior research officer in the Government of Canada, qualified as an expert witness for multiple civil cases, and many dozens of published research papers, the matters you raise have nothing whatsoever to do with research methodology, and that is a matter of serious concern.

In particular, as a City of Ottawa councillor you are engaged in dealing with numerous policy, program, plan, and operations issues, many of which involve an understanding of research methodology in order to achieve informed decision-making. However, your questions suggest to me that your understanding of research methodology is far below that which I have regularly encountered for many years in academe, government, business, and in community activities.

Since you based your questions on your familiarity with research methodology, please provide information about your education, training, publications, or other productions which support your claim so that I might better appreciate how you process committee and council materials, as well as communications from me and other Ottawa residents.

Since a number of research-related issues are currently before council and area residents, I look forward to receiving your response at the earliest moment.

Thank you.

Dr. Barry Wellar, C.M., GISP
Professor Emeritus, University of Ottawa
President, Information Research Board Inc.
133 Ridgfield Crescent
Nepean, ON K2H T4
<http://wellar.ca/informationresearch/>

From: Barry Wellar [mailto:wellar.barry@gmail.com]

Sent: Monday, October 19, 2020 8:47 PM

To: 'Chiarelli, Rick'

Subject: RE: OPS Reform Survey Question 3, Need for Structural and Functional Reform of Ottawa Police Service and Ottawa Police Services Board: Moffatt

Councillor Chiarelli,

In the interests of convenience and accuracy, responses to your inquiry are incorporated in the text of your communication in **red**.

Dr. Barry Wellar, C.M., GISP
Professor Emeritus, University of Ottawa
President, Information Research Board Inc.
133 Ridgefield Crescent
Nepean, ON K2H 6T4
<http://wellar.ca/informationresearch/>

From: Chiarelli, Rick [mailto:Rick.Chiarelli@ottawa.ca]

Sent: Monday, October 19, 2020 7:21 PM

To: Barry Wellar

Subject: Re: OPS Reform Survey Question 3, Need for Structural and Functional Reform of Ottawa Police Service and Ottawa Police Services Board

Good evening Mr Wellar,

Upon further review of your previous communications, a few questions regarding your survey methodology have arisen and I would appreciate some clarifications.

As someone who has studied research methodology as it pertained to my own field of studies, I couldn't help but notice a few things that seemed inconsistent with my own experience in conducting as well as participating in other research. **I have no idea of your education, training, expertise, or experience, so that comment is not instructive. In any event, your concerns have nothing to do with research methodology.**

1. Informed consent - Previous correspondences were not identified as being surveys. Do you routinely inform participants and obtain informed consent prior to their participation in a survey? (It would appear from previous emails this is not consistently done.) **Totally not required. Politicians can answer or not answer questions, whether one or one hundred. There is a Code of Conduct which purportedly governs their behaviour, and then there is the matter of dealing with citizens in**

general and ward constituents in particular, as well as media representations, and, perhaps, other considerations which enter into decisions by politicians about engaging with citizens, other politicians, vested interests, etc. However, you are not being asked to do anything that requires me to obtain informed consent. You can as they say, just walk away and let the political chips fall where they may.

2. Use/sharing of the data. - Do you inform participants on how the data will be collected and used? **Does the word 'INVESTIGATION' which is on all pilot study reports and all emails ring any bells about the purpose of any "DATA" collected? Actually, for clarification which seems to be needed, data as in observations on a number of variables are not part of the pilot study. You and other members of council are asked several questions about a matter of public interest involving public money, which you and they can answer or not, choice is yours and theirs, obviously, and the results are posted on a website for everyone to see, including the politicians, a practice which is employed by municipal politicians across Canada, including some right here in Ottawa. Indeed, you were informed at the outset about the presence of a report which sets out the entire pilot study research process.** [Investigating the Need for Structural and Functional Reform of Ottawa Police Service and Ottawa Police Services Board.](#)

3. Code of Ethics, Protection of Privacy. - I could not find either one linked in any of your emails or on your website. Please indicate if you have either and where I can find it. **Perhaps you have confused this pilot study with some other body of work. Your concern is not a pertinent consideration, because this is public business, and does not involve private citizens in any way, shape, or form. Hence, privacy and confidentiality in municipal government, two topics that I conducted original research on more than 40 years ago, are not at issue. I repeat and underline the word public for your consideration.**

Thank you for clarifying this information,

Chantal Lebel

Director of Strategic Affairs & Communications
Office of Councillor Rick Chiarelli
City of Ottawa | 110 Laurier Ave W.
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 1J1
[613.580.2424](tel:613.580.2424) ext 12599
Chantal.Lebel@Ottawa.ca

From: McKenney, Catherine [mailto:Catherine.Mckenney@ottawa.ca]
Sent: Monday, October 19, 2020 3:38 PM
To: Barry Wellar
Cc: Loan, David
Subject: Re: OPS Reform Survey Question 3, Need for Structural and Functional Reform of Ottawa Police Service and Ottawa Police Services Board: McKenney

Hi Barry,

Thank you for your email. The question you raise is complex because the authority for management of the police is shared between the Province of Ontario and the City of Ottawa via the Police Services Board.

Many of the issues with the police fall to the province through various Acts and the most we can do is write to the Province requesting information and amendments.

Some issues, such as budget/process, should be addressed through the Police Services Board budget process and the follow-up meeting of Ottawa City Council. The changes there must be systemic - we need Board members appointed who have the drive to change the way we approach the police budget and police processes and to ensure we get answers.

Catherine McKenney
Councillor / Conseiller
Somerset Ward / Quartier Somerset
613-580-2484

From: Moffatt, Scott [mailto:Scott.Moffatt@ottawa.ca]
Sent: Saturday, October 17, 2020 11:16 AM
To: Barry Wellar
Subject: RE: OPS Reform Survey Question 3, Need for Structural and Functional Reform of Ottawa Police Service and Ottawa Police Services Board: Moffatt

Mr. Wellar,

Our previous communication has rendered your current requests as not being a priority for me.

Thanks,

Scott Moffatt
Councillor, City of Ottawa

Chair, Environment Committee
613-580-2491 | RideauGoulbourn.ca

From: Barry Wellar [mailto:wellar.barry@gmail.com]

Sent: Monday, October 19, 2020 4:48 PM

To: 'Moffatt, Scott'

Subject: RE: OPS Reform Survey Question 3, Need for Structural and Functional Reform of Ottawa Police Service and Ottawa Police Services Board: Moffatt

Councillor Moffatt,

Your reply to my communication regarding OPS Reform Survey Question 3, Need for Structural and Functional Reform of Ottawa Police Service and Ottawa Police Services Board: Moffatt is more than just childishly irrelevant, it is insulting to every citizen of Ottawa.

You and other members of council are asked a straightforward question posed by a taxpayer, City of Ottawa, and given that you and other members of council are making decisions about how to spend my property tax dollars I expect an answer which is pertinent to the question and not some responsibility-avoidance type of cop-out remark that is petulantly sophomoric.

Further, the question asked is on a matter of public interest involving in excess of \$360,000,000 (\$360 million) of taxpayer dollars or about 10% of the City of Ottawa's annual budget in 2020 and, much more important to individual citizens and their families, it also involves life and death consequences that flow from council decisions about how to spend taxpayer dollars on public safety, public health, public welfare, public transit, public housing, public recreation, public infrastructure, and any other City of Ottawa budget item which could present a more productive alternative to spending funds on Ottawa Police Service activities.

Since you may be unaware of developments in the field of police reform, or possibly, are unable to comprehend what is happening due to lack of relevant expertise on your part, there are numerous initiatives in motion in Ottawa, in Ontario, and across Canada to address the matter of police reform, including those involving the Ottawa Police Service and the Ottawa Police Services Board.

Your reply has no bearing whatsoever on question 3, which is repeated for your further consideration and that of others who read this communication:

Given that complaints are made in communities across Canada about citizens not having adequate access to police records, what steps will mayor and councillors

take to provide citizens with a level of access to police records which are essential to understanding how to effectively and efficiently achieve police service reform involving such issues as transparency, accountability, performance assessment and, top-of-list, the allocation of funds for management and operational activities?

You are paid more than \$100,000 per year, so earn your money. And, if you lack the education, training, expertise, or experience to provide informed responses to survey questions, or are afraid of offending Ottawa Police Service, then have the honesty to say so, and refrain from voting on the matter when it goes to committee or council.

As for what might be perceived as my persistence in this regard, it goes with the territory of having been inducted into the Order of Canada for reasons which are directly connected the access to police records project. The citation from The Governor General of Canada reads as follows in the event that recognition is news to you:

“Barry Wellar is a trailblazer in the field of geographic information science (GIS). Professor emeritus at the University of Ottawa, he has been a strong advocate for the field’s recognition as a legitimate domain of scientific inquiry as well as a fundamental research tool. He pioneered the use of GIS applications in public-sector planning at all levels of government, particularly within the urban context. His leadership within the field, both in academia and industry, is extensive and lauded.”

I appreciate that you may have little or no formal or even substantive informal research education, training, expertise, or experience, so I limit my remarks to commenting that it appears reasonable to suggest at least 90 % of OPS operations records and the operations records of police service agencies across Canada have a spatial component.

Consequently, leading an investigation into the need for structural and functional reform of OPS that includes examination of OPS records in general, and the massive proportion of records which have a spatial component in particular, certainly fits within the purview of my education, training, expertise, and experience, and is consistent with the receipt of numerous awards over the past 50 years, including the aforementioned Order of Canada award which is denoted by the C.M. after my name should you be unaware in that regard.

To close, I repeat the statement which addresses head-on your failure to respond in a proper manner to a request from an Ottawa taxpayer, who also engages in public interest research, such as this investigation into the need to reform Ottawa Police Service and Ottawa Police Services Board:

"You are paid more than \$100,000 per year, so earn your money. And, if you lack the education, training, expertise, or experience to provide informed responses to survey questions, or are afraid of offending Ottawa Police Service, then have the honesty to say so, and refrain from voting on the matter when it goes to committee or council."

Ms. Ferraro, please forward to Members, Ottawa Police Services Board.

Ms. Burns, please forward to Ottawa Police Service Chief Peter Sloly.

Dr. Barry Wellar, C.M., GISP
Professor Emeritus, University of Ottawa
President, Information Research Board Inc.
133 Ridgefield Crescent
Nepean, ON K2H 6T4
<http://wellar.ca/informationresearch/>

**Table 5. Responses and Non-Responses by City of
Ottawa Politicians to Question 4 about Citizens' Access to
Ottawa Police Service Records**

Q-4. *Do you agree that as soon as access to records is up to speed, a basis is in place for citizens to do their due diligence and examine the records for what they reveal about needed reforms to Ottawa Police Service performance, operations, and management?*

YES: Councillors Luloff, Menard, McKenney

NO:

"F": Councillor Chiarelli

NO REPLY: Mayor Watson, Councillors Brockington, Cloutier, Darouze, Deans, Dudas, Egli, El-Chantiry, Fleury, Gower, Harder, Hubley, Kavanagh, Kitts, King, Leiper, Meehan, Moffatt, Suds, and Tierney

REPLIES, and COMMENTS ON REPLIES, QUESTION 4

From: Chiarelli, Rick [mailto:Rick.Chiarelli@ottawa.ca]

Sent: Friday, November 6, 2020 5:08 PM

To: Barry Wellar

Subject: Re: OPS Reform Survey Question 4, Need for Structural and Functional Reform of Ottawa Police Service and Ottawa Police Services Board: Chiarelli

Mr Wellar,

Please be advised that Councillor Chiarelli is exercising the option not to participate in a survey at this point in time.

Thank you for your understanding,

Regards,

Chantal Lebel

Director of Strategic Affairs & Communications

Office of Councillor Rick Chiarelli

City of Ottawa | 110 Laurier Ave W.

Ottawa, Ontario K1P 1J1

[613.580.2424 ext 12599](tel:613.580.2424)

Chantal.Lebel@Ottawa.ca

From: Luloff, Matt [mailto:Matt.Luloff@ottawa.ca]

Sent: Monday, November 2, 2020 4:53 PM

To: Barry Wellar

Subject: Re: OPS Reform Survey Question 4, Need for Structural and Functional Reform of Ottawa Police Service and Ottawa Police Services Board: Luloff

Hi Mr. Wellar,

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to contribute to your research.

While I am not a member of the Ottawa Police Board, I want to see greater accountability and better civilian oversight for the force. I think that providing more public data is a good start. People need to understand what they are paying for. There exist significant barriers at the provincial level to police reform, but I believe council showed our commitment to being a part of the solution by unanimously approving a letter to the province asking for more powers for the Chief of Police in matters of discipline for officers found to be conducting themselves in an unbecoming manner. I believe that police reform is sorely needed and have high hopes that Police Chief Sloly will continue to work hard on his bold agenda, and I will be paying close attention as this process unfolds. Part of this needs to be the provision of publicly-accessible data.

Thank you again.

Matthew

From: McKenney, Catherine [mailto:Catherine.Mckenney@ottawa.ca]
Sent: Tuesday, November 3, 2020 12:21 PM
To: Barry Wellar
Cc: Loan, David
Subject: Re: OPS Reform Survey Question 4, Need for Structural and Functional Reform of Ottawa Police Service and Ottawa Police Services Board: McKenney

Hi Barry,

Thank you for your email.

I agree that it is essential to have public access to police records and that this is one key to supporting the public making decisions on policing. However, data by itself is often not useful to the public without expert interpretation and the ability to have questions answered. For the public to make fully informed decisions, we need complete data, forums and mechanisms for understanding that data, and expert opinions on what to do with the data.

While we're at it, Barry, I do not believe I have yet answered Question 5, so let's go to it. The question is:

Question 5. Do mayor and councillors have any suggestions as to what else could be done to ensure that citizens have proper access to the records/data which are needed to effectively and efficiently participate in a police service reform initiative involving such issues as transparency, accountability, performance assessment and, top-of-list, the allocation of funds for management and operational activities?

In response, I suggest that open-source digital data-collection and availability would be the most useful mechanism for ensuring transparency and accountability.

Thank you again for your email, Barry.

Warm regards,

Catherine

Catherine McKenney
Councillor / Conseiller
Somerset Ward / Quartier Somerset
613-580-2484

Table 6. Responses and Non-Responses by City of Ottawa Politicians to Question 5 about Citizens' Access to Ottawa Police Service Records

Q-5. *Do mayor and councillors have any suggestions as to what else could be done to ensure that citizens have proper access to the records/data which are needed to effectively and efficiently participate in a police service reform initiative involving such issues as transparency, accountability, performance assessment and, top-of-list, the allocation of funds for management and operational activities?*

YES: McKenney, Menard

NO:

"F": Watson

NO REPLY: Councillors Brockington, Chiarelli, Cloutier, Darouze, Deans, Dudas, Egli, El-Chantiry, Fleury, Gower, Harder, Hubley, Kavanagh, Kitts, King, Leiper, Luloff, Meehan, Moffatt, Sudds, and Tierney

REPLIES, AND COMMENTS ON REPLIES, QUESTION 5

From: McKenney, Catherine [mailto:Catherine.Mckenney@ottawa.ca]

Sent: Tuesday, November 3, 2020 12:21 PM

To: Barry Wellar

Cc: Loan, David

Subject: Re: OPS Reform Survey Question 4, Need for Structural and Functional Reform of Ottawa Police Service and Ottawa Police Services Board: McKenney

Note by B. Wellar: The response to question 5 is included in this response to question 4.

Hi Barry,

Thank you for your email.

I agree that it is essential to have public access to police records and that this is one key to supporting the public making decisions on policing. However, data by itself is often not useful to the public without expert interpretation and the ability to have questions answered. For the public to make fully informed decisions, we need complete data, forums and mechanisms for understanding that data, and expert opinions on what to do with the data.

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In response, I suggest that open-source digital data-collection and availability would be the most useful mechanism for ensuring transparency and accountability.

Thank you again for your email, Barry.

Warm regards,

Catherine

Catherine McKenney
Councillor / Conseiller
Somerset Ward / Quartier Somerset
613-580-2484

Councillor Shawn Menard.....Reply received and included

I suggest that open-source digital data-collection and availability would be the most useful mechanism for ensuring transparency and accountability.

From: Poirier, Ben [mailto:benjamin.poirier@ottawa.ca]
Sent: Thursday, November 12, 2020 1:32 PM
To: Barry Wellar
Cc: Deans, Diane
Subject: RE: OPS Reform Survey Question 5, Need for Structural and Functional Reform of Ottawa Police Service and Ottawa Police Services Board: Watson

Good Afternoon Dr. Wellar,

Thank you for contacting the Mayor's office. I am emailing you today to confirm the receipt of your email. Unfortunately, Mayor Watson is no longer on the Ottawa Police Service Board. That said, I have forwarded your inquiries to Councillor Diane Deans, Chair of the Board, for her review and consideration. Thank you again for reaching out. All the best.

Sincerely,

Benjamin Poirier

Communications Officer / Agent des communications
Office of Mayor Jim Watson / Bureau du maire Jim Watson
City of Ottawa / Ville d'Ottawa

Table 7 presents the responses and non-responses of each member of council to survey questions 1-5.

Table 7. City of Ottawa Council Member Responses and Non-Responses to Survey Questions 1-5 (six parts)

Member of Council	Responses and Non-Responses			
	Yes	No	F*	No Reply
Mayor Jim Watson**	0	0	1	5
Councillor Riley Brockington	0	0	0	6
Councillor Rick Chiarelli	0	0	2	4
Councillor Jean Cloutier	0	0	0	6
Councillor George Darouze	0	0	0	6
Councillor Diane Deans**	0	0	1	5
Councillor Laura Dudas	0	0	0	6
Councillor Keith Egli	0	0	0	6
Councillor Eli El-Chantiry	0	0	0	6
Councillor Mathieu Fleury	0	0	0	6
Councillor Glen Gower	0	0	1	5
Councillor Jan Harder	0	0	0	6
Councillor Allan Hubley	0	0	0	6
Councillor Theresa Kavanagh	0	0	2	4
Councillor Rawlson King**	1	0	0	5
Councillor Catherine Kitts***	0	0	0	6
Councillor Jeff Leiper	0	0	1	5
Councillor Matt Luloff	1	0	0	5
Councillor Catherine McKenney	6	0	0	0
Councillor Carol Anne Meehan**	0	0	0	6
Councillor Shawn Menard	6	0	0	0
Councillor Scott Moffatt	0	0	1	5
Councillor Jenna Sudds	0	0	0	6
Councillor Tim Tierney	0	0	0	6
Totals	15/144	0/144	9/144	120/144

* The letter "F" denotes replies which are neither Yes nor No, and which do not explicitly or implicitly express support for Yes or No.

** Mayor Watson and Councillors Deans, King, and Meehan have been council members of Ottawa Police Services Board thus far in the current term of office.

*** Councillor Kitts joined council after the pilot study commenced, but has had ample opportunity to respond to the survey questions.

As shown, only Councilors McKenney and Menard are steadfast supporters of the proposition that citizens be accorded improved access to Ottawa Police Service records in order for citizens to make informed decisions about the need for structural and functional reform of Ottawa Police Service and Ottawa Police Services Board. No member of council expressed opposition to the proposition.

The remaining 22 members of council, Mayor Jim Watson and Councilors Brockington, Chiarelli, Cloutier, Darouze, Deans, Egli, El-Chantiry, Fleury, Gower, Harder, Hubley, Kavanagh, King, Kitts, Leiper, Luloff, Meehan, Moffatt, Sudds, and Tierney respectively did not reply to most if not all the questions, and replies received from these members of council were assigned an "F" if the responses did not provide a Yes or No instruction.

In the next section the responses and non-responses of individual members of council to the five questions are combined for a council picture.

C. Summary of Responses and Non-Responses of Ottawa Council to the Five Survey Questions

With five questions, one of which involves a two-part response, and 24 members of council, there are a total of $6 \times 24 = 144$ possible replies and non-replies.

Table 8. City of Ottawa Council Responses and Non-Responses to Survey Questions 1-5

Questions	Responses			Non-Responses
	Yes	No	F*	No Reply
Q-1	6	0	4	38
Q-2	2	0	1	21
Q-3	2	0	2	20
Q-4	3	0	1	20
Q-5	2	0	1	21
Totals	15/144	0/144	9/144	120/144

As several members of a pilot study review group noted, it could strike some readers as extraordinary that only 15 of a possible 144 responses from Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson and 23 councillors favour providing citizens improved access to Police Service records in order for citizens to make informed decisions about the need for structural and functional reform of Ottawa Police Service and Ottawa Police Services Board.

And, also in that vein, questions arose about whether the results in Table 8 confirm a systemic culture of secrecy, that is, a majority of members of the current City of Ottawa council join in common cause to keep citizens out of the information loop involving city matters in general.

By way of a brief context remark, the 15 Yes responses to improved citizen access out of 144 possibles is a rate of about 10%.

Or, to re-phrase, as a general rule 22 of 24 or more than 90% of City of Ottawa politicians did not regard the survey as an opportunity to express themselves in favour of according citizens improved access to Ottawa Police Service records, which is a key means whereby citizens are enabled to make informed decisions about the need for structural and functional reform of Ottawa Police Service and Ottawa Police Services Board.

However, and for those new to information access issues, City of Ottawa, comparable numbers on the topic of citizen access to public records have been seen before, which gives substance to the concern about a culture of systemic secrecy.

Taking a step back, we have already reported from the previous pilot study survey, [*Chronicling the Use of Transparency and Accountability as Political Buzzwords, and as Drivers Ensuring the Standard of Access to Public Records in Canada is Best Practice*](#), relatively few City of Ottawa politicians expressed support for the proposition that citizens are entitled to free, easy, timely, and direct online access to City of Ottawa records, which by definition include police records.

For the purposes of comparison, it is recalled that when asked if they supported citizens having free, easy, timely, and direct online access to City of Ottawa records, only five members of council, Councillors Riley Brockington, Rawlson King, Theresa Kavanagh, Catherine McKenney and Shawn Menard signed on.

The remaining 17 members of council at that time, Mayor Jim Watson and Councillors Rick Chiarelli, Jean Cloutier, George Darouze, Diane Deans, Laura Dudas, Eli El-Chantiry, Mathieu Fleury, Glen Gower, Jan Harder, Allan Hubley, Jeff Leiper, Matt Luloff, Carol Anne Meehan, Scott Moffatt, Jenna Sudds, and Tim Tierney did not express support for the proposition. Details can be found in [*Interim Report 16. Third Survey Asking City of Ottawa Mayor and Councillors, Do you agree that citizens are*](#)

[entitled to free, easy, timely, and direct online access to the public records held by the City of Ottawa?](#)

Now, in this survey, which moves from the general to the particular by getting specific about records of interest, namely those of Ottawa Police Service, the numbers take a further nosedive.

That is, only Councilors McKenney and Menard have anything to offer.

Little of consequence emerges from the entirety of the remainder of council, 22 members in all, including Mayor Jim Watson and Councillors Riley Brockington, Rick Chiarelli, Jean Cloutier, George Darouze, Diane Deans, Laura Dudas, Eli El-Chantiry, Mathieu Fleury, Glen Gower, Jan Harder, Allan Hubley, Theresa Kavanagh, Rawlson King, Catherine Kitts, Jeff Leiper, Matt Luloff, Carol Anne Meehan, Scott Moffatt, Jenna Suds, and Tim Tierney.

D. Next Step

The next report is an analysis of mayor and councillor responses and non-responses to the survey questions, and the implications of the findings for investigations by citizens into such matters as:

- A proposed 2021 Ottawa Police Service budget of \$376 million, which represents a \$14 million increase over 2020, and about \$45 million since 2018;
- Ottawa Police Service transparency;
- Ottawa Police Service accountability;
- Ottawa Police Service performance assessment;
- Ottawa Police Service allocation of funds for management and operational activities; and,
- The efficacy of the Ottawa Police Services Board as a municipal agency in service to citizens.