

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

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

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POLICE REFORM PROJECT

Report 8

Ottawa, Canada
December 16, 2020

A. Introducing an Analysis of Responses by City of Ottawa Politicians to Survey Questions, 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, or 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. Context for Perceiving Responses in Terms of Their Importance to Citizens

Individual citizens and groups of citizens involved in common cause will have their own reasons for being interested in politicians' views about citizens' access to police records. I have selected six research topics which are widely identified as among the most pertinent to investigating the need for structural and functional reform of police service agencies and police services boards.

The overriding question at issue is which City of Ottawa politicians will assist citizens to gain proper access to the police and police services board records, so that citizens can investigate the need for reform.

The selected research topics are presented in Table 2, and the rationale for investigating each topic is briefly reviewed

Table 2. Ottawa Police Service Reform Research Topics that Require Politicians' Support in Order for Citizens to Have Proper Access to Police Records

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

1. Budget Considerations

As previously discussed in reform project reports, Ottawa Police Service consumes between 9% and 10% of the total city budget, and has been on an increasing pace dollar-wise for a number of years. In recent years the OPS budget has had increases

on the order of about \$15 million per year, that is, from \$330 million in 2018 to \$342 million in 2019 to \$362 million in 2020, to a proposed amount of \$376 million in 2021, or about \$46 million over three years.

In any prudent enterprise, and we are putting the City of Ottawa in that club, investigations are undertaken as a matter of course to ascertain if there are ways to reduce costs by doing things differently, by doing different things, by not doing some things, etc., and there are many variations on those themes.

The critical point here is that the OPS budget is taxpayers' money, and taxpayers who want to know what is happening to their money should not have to depend upon anyone in the City of Ottawa bureaucracy, including those in Ottawa Police Service, or Ottawa Police Services Board, or any member of city council, to tell them what is in the budget accounts.

Or, to re-phrase, citizens should not be separated from their money by bureaucrats or politicians, just as they are not separated from their personal bank accounts by tiers of bank employees, or by multiple, arbitrary password 'hoops'.

Further, in Ottawa there are numerous people with significant credentials in such budget-related fields as public finance, economics, econometrics, public administration, management systems, systems science, management science, information technology, computer science, operations research, and public accounting. It is prudent from a public interest point of view, and from a taxpayer right-to-know perspective, to ensure that they have ready access to OPS budget records.

Hence, if members of council agree that citizens should have free, easy, timely and direct online access to OPS budget materials, then so far, so good.

However, if politicians do not agree, or do not state whether they agree or disagree about citizens having proper access to those records, then citizens have cause for concern because at best they are in the dark about the disposition of their tax dollars, and the return on expenditure of those tax dollars.

2. Ottawa Police Service Transparency and Accountability

The City of Ottawa has a Code of Conduct, and two conditions in the Code are those of transparency and accountability. Because of the interdependence of these conditions, and in the interests of convenience and space, they are combined in this section.

The following text overviews the principles underlying the roles of transparency and accountability in the city's Code of Conduct.

“The City of Ottawa will promote accountable and transparent municipal governance guided by the following principles [underline added]:

1. Decision-making will be open and transparent.
2. Municipal operations will be conducted in an ethical and accountable manner.
3. Financial resources and physical infrastructure will be managed in an efficient and effective manner.
4. Municipal information will be accessible so that it is consistent with legislative requirements.
5. Inquiries, concerns and complaints will be responded to in a timely manner.
6. Financial oversight, service standards and performance reporting and all other accountability documents will be made available and accessible, in language that the public can understand, to increase the opportunity for public scrutiny and involvement in municipal operations.
7. Every new delegation of power or authority will have a corresponding accountability mechanism.

Definitions

Accountability – The principle that the municipality is obligated to demonstrate and take responsibility for its actions, decisions and policies and that it is answerable to the public at large.

Transparency – The principle that the municipality will conduct its business in an accessible, clear and visible manner and that its activities are open to examination by its stakeholders”

Source: <https://ottawa.ca/en/city-hall/your-city-government/policies-and-administrative-structure/administrative-policies#employee-code-conduct>

The operant term in the statement is principles, underline added.

What is not provided are details about the practices which are used to achieve the principles.

Or, to re-phrase, citizens are given a general and indicative idea of what is to be done in principle, but there is a shortage of details regarding when, where, why, and how the principles are to be achieved through practices.

Moreover, to compound the problem of what is absent from the materials, the missing details are about practices involving transparency and accountability regarding the

records that citizens must have as a proper basis for investigating the need for structural and functional reform of police service agencies and police services boards.

Returning to the citizen expertise theme note above, in Ottawa there are numerous citizens with significant credentials in such transparency-related and accountability-related fields as library science, law, social media, broadcast media, access to information legislation, records filing, records storage and retrieval, records management, archiving, records management protocols, cyber security, information technology, computer science, and social science.

It is prudent from a public interest point of view, and from a taxpayer right-to-know perspective, to ensure that all citizens, including those with relevant education, training, expertise, and experience have ready access to the full what, why, where, when, and how features describing OPS activities.

Hence, if members of council agree that citizens should have free, easy, timely and direct online access to OPS records, then so far, so good.

However, if politicians do not agree, or do not state whether they agree or disagree about citizens having proper access to those records, then citizens have cause for concern because at best they are in the dark about the contents of OPS records.

3. Ottawa Police Service Performance Assessment

Performance assessment uses various measures and analytical techniques to evaluate how well an entity is performing by comparing what it has done with what could have been done or should have been done, or comparing what the entity is doing with what it could be doing or should be doing.

Popular performance assessment techniques include cost-benefit analysis, cost-effectiveness analysis, and cost-efficiency analysis.

As for the variables and measures to include in a police service performance assessment, the following is a small sub-set of those encountered in searches of the learned, government, and popular literatures:

- consultations with communities;
- engagement with communities;
- presence in communities;
- arrest citations by type;
- arrest citations by location;
- arrest citations by personal characteristics;
- bias factor;

- carding practices;
- crime incidence rates by type;
- disciplinary rulings;
- listening to and hearing citizens;
- openness factor;
- people or property priorities;
- policy choices;
- policy priorities;
- quota practices;
- racism factor;
- results-targeting techniques;
- secretiveness factor;
- spending priorities;
- trust factor; and,
- wasteful spending.

Returning to the citizen expertise theme note above, in Ottawa there are numerous citizens with significant credentials in such performance assessment-related fields as management science, systems science, sociology, criminology, geography, planning, economics, public finance, decision sciences, operations research, library science, law, social media, broadcast media, statistics, research methods, information systems technology, computer science, social science, and public finance.

It is prudent from a public interest point of view, and from a taxpayer right-to-know perspective, to ensure that all citizens, including those with relevant education, training, expertise, and experience have ready access to the full what, why, where, when, and how features describing OPS activities.

Hence, if members of council agree that citizens should have free, easy, timely and direct online access to OPS records, then so far, so good.

However, if politicians do not agree, or do not state whether they agree or disagree about citizens having proper access to those records, then citizens have cause for concern because at best they are in the dark about the contents of OPS records.

4. Ottawa Police Service Allocation of Funds for Management and Operational Activities

OPS budgets discussed in section 1 and OPS performance in section 3 are very much topics of a moment, plus or minus several years for persons or groups of persons of a more rigorous investigative nature. However, with its budget now approaching \$400

million annually, and the near-omnipresence of OPS operations throughout Ottawa, the allocation topic is a different order of business.

That is, because of the size of the OPS budget, OPS having a presence pretty much throughout Ottawa 24/7/365, the massive number of connections and relationships within OPS, and the massive number of connections and relationships between and among OPS and other public sector and private sector entities, plans and decisions about the allocation of resources for management and operations activities could run five, ten, and 15 years or more into the future.

Further, the performance assessment aspect also has a long-term time horizon because of changes to the various environments – viral, social, cultural, technological, criminal, physical, emotional, demographic, political, institutional, financial, legal, etc., – in which any police service in Canada may find itself five, ten, or 15 years or more into the future.

Examination of the extant literature did not yield any publicly available productions by or about OPS in this regard, which does not mean they do not exist, only that I did not find any.

Nevertheless, questions about how, why, and for what purposes taxpayer funds to OPS management and operations activities are to be allocated and re-allocated in the near-term, medium-term, and long-term are best asked by citizens and answered by politicians well in advance of things becoming “past the point of no return” or “set in stone”.

Returning to the citizen expertise theme note above, in Ottawa there are numerous citizens with significant credentials in such resource allocation-related fields as forecasting, management science, systems science, trend analysis, literature searches and reviews, geography, planning, economics, econometrics, public finance, decision sciences, futures research, demographics, operations research, statistics, research methods, information systems technology, computer science, and public finance.

It is prudent from a public interest point of view, and from a taxpayer right-to-know perspective, to ensure that all citizens, including those with relevant education, training, expertise, and experience have ready access to the full what, why, where, when, and how features describing the processes of allocating funds for OPS management and operations activities.

Hence, if members of council agree that citizens should have free, easy, timely and direct online access to OPS records, then so far, so good.

However, if politicians do not agree, or do not state whether they agree or disagree about citizens having proper access to those records, then citizens have cause for concern because at best they are in the dark about the existence and contents of OPS records.

5. The Efficacy of the Ottawa Police Services Board as a Municipal Agency in Service to Citizens

Questions of interest regarding the efficacy matter include asking,

“Does the Ottawa Police Services Board have the power, the ability, the capability, the talent, the expertise, the authority, the mandate, etc., to produce desired results?”

And, those questions lead to a related ask, namely,

“Who or what specifies the desired results, that is, are they specified by the Board, by council, by individual members of council, by Ottawa Police Service, by provincial government legislation, by the provincial government of the day, by other provincial government entities, by citizens as individuals or as members of public interest groups, or by some mix of those or other interested or vested parties?”

Examination of the extant literature did not yield any publicly-available productions by or about OPSB with regard to efficacy, which does not mean they do not exist, only that I did not find any such productions. Perhaps a reader can provide a link.

In either event, for the purposes of this research, questions about the efficacy of OPSB are best asked by citizens and answered by politicians on a regular, time-sensitive basis to ensure that the Board has due regard for citizens as the primary basis by which the Board defines and pursues the desired results to be achieved by Board decisions and actions.

And, to re-visit the ever-present matter of money, since Ottawa taxpayers fund both OPS and OPSB, it follows that since they are paying the bills citizens occupy a place where it is appropriate to have first say over the desired results for which their tax dollars are expended.

Returning to the citizen expertise theme, in Ottawa there are numerous citizens with significant credentials in the efficacy domain, which includes measuring and evaluating the extent and degree to which agencies have the power, authority, capability, etc., to produce desired results as seen by citizens.

Fields of expertise include sociology, race relations, gender equity, public welfare, management science, public administration, operations research, futures research, statistics, law, planning, geography, demographics, health sciences, decision sciences, public finance, systems science, information systems, library science, political science, social media, broadcast media, and evaluation methodology.

It is prudent from a public interest point of view, and from a taxpayer right-to-know perspective, to ensure that all citizens, including those with relevant education, training, expertise, and experience have ready access to all records used to describe the degree of efficacy achieved by the Ottawa Police Services Board.

After all, and as noted above, citizens foot the bill for OPSB, so it seems logical that any politician at any level would support, indeed endorse, citizens having proper access to whatever records they wish to investigate in order to ascertain what kind of efficacy, and what kind of 'bang for the buck' they are getting, could be getting, and should be getting for their OPSB expenditures.

Hence, if members of council agree that citizens should have free, easy, timely and direct online access to OPS and OPSB records, then so far, so good.

However, if politicians do not agree, or do not state whether they agree or disagree about citizens having proper access to those records, then citizens have cause for concern because at best they are in the dark about the existence and contents of OPS and OPSB records and, consequently, the level of efficacy attained by both entities.

C. Politicians' Responses to Survey Questions as a Measure of Their Political Character and, Hence, as an Indicator of Support for Citizens Having Proper Access to OPS and OPSB Records

In the police reform pilot study, [*How Does Ottawa Council Ensure that a Police Reform Initiative Primarily Serves the Interests of Citizens?*](#), we introduced the suggestion that political character has a lot to do with how politicians vote and act on choices, and particularly on choices involving strong advocates on both sides, powerful vested interests on one side or the other, several or more degrees of complexity, and numerous re-election votes hinging on outcomes.

The issue of police reform in Ottawa and numerous other cities is one such 'political hot potato', and one which many politicians at all levels of government have wished, publicly and privately, would just go away.

However, that is clearly not happening, which makes the matter of 'character' a very important consideration as citizens look to politicians to ensure that citizens have proper

access to the records containing the evidence about needed structural and functional reform of Ottawa Police Service.

Towards that end, Table 3 presents a selection of character features which are pertinent to a police service and police services board reform initiative.

Reactions by City of Ottawa politicians to the five questions are intended to reveal which political character strengths and flaws are present around the council table for this item.

And, following from those determinations, indications are available to citizens about which politicians 'have what it takes' to ensure that citizens have proper access to the records which are required to investigate the need for structural and functional reform of Ottawa Police Service and Ottawa Police Service Board.

In terms of serving notice to Ottawa politicians about the character factor, it was introduced in the second police reform report that was posted October 18, [*How Does Ottawa Council Ensure that a Police Reform Initiative Primarily Serves the Interests of Citizens?*](#)

It is therefore the case that members of Ottawa council were apprised in an open and timely manner about how reactions to questions on a matter of current public interest could potentially serve as an indicator of political character.

Of the nine political character strengths and flaws presented in Table 3, it appears reasonable to say that six (6) of them are directly related to choices about responding and not responding to questions regarding citizens' access to public agency records.

Indeed, they can be derived from the Code of Conduct for Politicians, City of Ottawa. (<https://ottawa.ca/en/city-hall/open-transparent-and-accountable-government/integrity-commissioner/codes-conduct>).

As a result, it appears eminently reasonable to infer political character features of politicians based on their reactions to the survey questions.

The six political characteristics pertinent to this analysis are presented in Table 4.

It is noted in concluding this section that suggestions from City of Ottawa politicians and politicians in general about other ways to measure political character are invited.

It may go without saying, but it is noted that the rationale for any proposed alternative is also invited so that it might be included in a future report and made subject to discussion by citizens.

Table 3. Character Strengths and Flaws of Politicians Pertinent to the Results of an Ottawa Police Service and Ottawa Police Service Board Reform Initiative

1. Politicians who primarily serve the public interest in thought and deed, and those who do not;
2. Politicians who are beholden to vested interests, and those who are not;
3. Politicians who are in conflict of interest positions, and those who are not;
4. Politicians who march to their own drummer during council discussions, and those who do not;
5. Politicians who keep their constituents informed in a timely manner, and those who do not;
6. Politicians who openly communicate their positions on topics of public interest, and those who do not;
7. Politicians who know how to 'think outside the box', and those who do not;
8. Politicians who are easily intimidated, and those who are not; and
9. Politicians who meet or exceed standards of transparency and accountability stated in their Code of Conduct, and those who do not.

Table 4. Politicians' Character Strengths and Flaws Deemed to be Inferable from Responses and Non-Responses to the Police Reform Survey Questions

1. Those who primarily serve the public interest in thought and deed, and those who do not;
2. Those who are in conflict of interest positions, and those who are not;
3. Those who keep their constituents informed in a timely manner, and those who do not;
4. Those who openly communicate their positions on topics of public interest, and those who do not;
5. Those who know how to 'think outside the box', and those who do not;
6. Those who meet or exceed standards of transparency and accountability stated in their Code of Conduct, and those who do not.

Finally, an earlier comment is recalled that reactions by politicians to surveys might very well differ according to the survey topic, and the consequences of how the responses and non-responses are perceived.

However, that realization has nothing to do with inferring political character based the responses and non-responses to questions involving citizens' access to public records, whether police records or otherwise.

D. Using City of Ottawa Politicians' Reactions to Survey Questions as a Measure of What May be Inferred about Their Political Character

The summary tables of reactions to the survey questions by individual members of council, and by council as a whole, are presented in Police Reform Report 7, [Summary of Survey Results Asking City of Ottawa Politicians about Improving Citizens' Access to Ottawa Police Service Records](#).

Table 5 presents the positive (+) or negative (-) character assessments assigned to members of council on the basis of how they reacted to survey questions about citizens' access to Ottawa Police Service records. Again at the risk of belaboring the obvious, the research instrument is surveys, and not interviews, and hence the requirement to draw inferences. Had interviews been the research instrument, the six political character features could have been part of the interviews.

**Table 5. Political Character Assessments of Ottawa Council
Based on Results from Asking Questions about
Citizens Having Proper Access to Ottawa Police Records
(Pass = +; Fail= -)**

Politician: Mayor Jim Watson							Total
Question	1A	1B	2	3	4	5	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	Pass 0; Fail 12
Characteristic	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Politician: Councillor Riley Brockington							Total
Question	1A	1B	2	3	4	5	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	Pass 0; Fail 12
Characteristic	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	

Politician: Councillor Rick Chiarelli							Total
Question	1A	1B	2	3	4	5	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	Pass 0; Fail 12
Characteristic	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Politician: Councillor Jean Cloutier							Total
Question	1A	1B	2	3	4	5	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	Pass 0; Fail 12
Characteristic	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Politician: Councillor George Darouze							Total
Question	1A	1B	2	3	4	5	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	Pass 0; Fail 12
Characteristic	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Politician: Councillor Diane Deans							Total
Question	1A	1B	2	3	4	5	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	Pass 0; Fail 12
Characteristic	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Politician: Councillor Laura Dudas							Total
Question	1A	1B	2	3	4	5	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	Pass 0; Fail 12
Characteristic	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	

Politician: Councillor Keith Egli							Total
Question	1A	1B	2	3	4	5	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	Pass 0; Fail 12
Characteristic	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Politician: Councillor Eli El-Chantiry							Total
Question	1A	1B	2	3	4	5	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	Pass 0; Fail 12
Characteristic	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Politician: Councillor Mathieu Fleury							Total
Question	1A	1B	2	3	4	5	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	Pass 0; Fail 12
Characteristic	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Politician: Councillor Glen Gower							Total
Question	1A	1B	2	3	4	5	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	Pass 0; Fail 12
Characteristic	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Politician: Councillor Jan Harder							Total
Question	1A	1B	2	3	4	5	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	Pass 0; Fail 12
Characteristic	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	

Politician: Councillor Allan Hubley							Total
Question	1A	1B	2	3	4	5	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	Pass 0; Fail 12
Characteristic	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Politician: Councillor Theresa Kavanagh							Total
Question	1A	1B	2	3	4	5	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	Pass 0; Fail 12
Characteristic	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Politician: Councillor Rawlson King							Total
Question	1A	1B	2	3	4	5	
Grade	+	+	-	-	-	-	Pass 4; Fail 8
Characteristic	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Grade	+	+	-	-	-	-	
Politician: Councillor Catherine Kitts							Total
Question	1A	1B	2	3	4	5	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	Pass 0; Fail 12
Characteristic	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Politician: Councillor Jeff Leiper							Total
Question	1A	1B	2	3	4	5	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	Pass 0; Fail 12
Characteristic	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	

Politician: Councillor Matt Luloff							Total
Question	1A	1B	2	3	4	5	
Grade	-	-	-	+	-	-	Pass 2; Fail 10
Characteristic	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Grade	-	-	-	+	-	-	
Politician: Councillor Catherine McKenney							Total
Question	1A	1B	2	3	4	5	
Grade	+	+	+	+	+	+	Pass 12; Fail 0
Characteristic	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Grade	+	+	+	+	+	+	
Politician: Councillor Carol Anne Meehan							Total
Question	1A	1B	2	3	4	5	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	Pass 0; Fail 12
Characteristic	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Politician: Councillor Shawn Menard							Total
Question	1A	1B	2	3	4	5	
Grade	+	+	+	+	+	+	Pass 12; Fail 0
Characteristic	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Grade	+	+	+	+	+	+	
Politician: Councillor Scott Moffatt							Total
Question	1A	1B	2	3	4	5	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	Pass 0; Fail 12
Characteristic	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	

Politician: Councillor Jenna Sudds							Total
Question	1A	1B	2	3	4	5	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	Pass 0; Fail 12
Characteristic	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	

Politician: Councillor Tim Tierney							Total
Question	1A	1B	2	3	4	5	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	Pass 0; Fail 12
Characteristic	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Grade	-	-	-	-	-	-	

As shown in Table 5, there is little cause for celebration when examining the political character assessments of Ottawa council based on inferences drawn from the results of a survey asking questions about citizens having proper access to Ottawa Police Records.

Far and away the most popular Pass-Fail assessment is

Pass 0; Fail 12.

That assessment is assigned to 20 members of a 24-member council.

And, conversely, only two members of council, Councillors McKenney and Menard, received the full political character assessment of 12/12, with assessments of

Pass 12; Fail 0.

There is already substantial evidence going back decades that Ottawa Police Service has been a most successful supplicant when it comes to maintaining a very significant portion of municipal budgets in the decades before and after the formation of the "new" City of Ottawa in 2002.

Moreover, I know by personal experience that those police services ran a very tight ship back in the day when it came to keeping a lid on citizen access to public records.

We moved to Ottawa in 1972 when I joined the federal Ministry of State for Urban Affairs as a senior research officer, and in 1973 I received my one-in-a-lifetime speeding

ticket. We were on Cedarview Road heading out for a day of sledding, and purportedly going 33 mph in a 30 mph zone. Long-term residents may recall the Nepean traffic ticket quota days.

I tried to get the records on citations issued in an obvious speed trap, and the specs of the speed gun. I have a recollection of someone saying “It will be a first if you see anything”. He was right.

That tradition continues, as confirmed by numerous emails in recent years to Ottawa politicians, OPS, and OPSB, all of which are generously rated as exercises in discerning nothing when it comes to achieving access to Ottawa Police Service records.

(Note: Several dozen emails in which Ottawa politicians, OPS, and OPSB are parties are included in a matter which has been before a quasi-judicial body during the course of the pilot study. In due course conditions may permit their inclusion in the police reform pilot study as a report.)

Which brings us to the matter of political character as an instrument of change.

E. Examining the Political Character of Ottawa Council

The analysis now proceeds to Table 6 which provides a snapshot look at the reactions to questions and the inferred + or - political character of members of council.

As the reader may be aware, mayor and councillors as a group make the decision about council's level of support for citizens being provided proper access to police records, so it is appropriate to combine their 'grades' in one easy-to-read table.

What we have in Table 6 could be considered a consensus statement with ominous implications for citizens wanting proper access to Ottawa Police Service records.

That is, with 20 of 24 members of council choosing to not reply to any questions about citizen access to public records, two members replying to several questions, and only two members actually stepping up and expressing support, the survey seems to have a lot in common with the comments made about failed public inquiries in previous police reform reports. ([*Investigating the Need for Structural and Functional Reform of Ottawa Police Service and Ottawa Police Services Board*](#))

As feedback from a reviewer suggested, the lack of responses is mindful of situations wherein gangsters and politicians “take the fifth” on everything as a matter of course regardless of the questions, to the point where they do not even opine as to the day of the week or month of the year. A seeming total code of silence, you might say.

Table 6. City of Ottawa Council Member Responses and Non-Responses to Survey Questions 1-5 (six parts) and Character Inferences Based on Responses and Non-Responses

Member of Council	Responses and Non-Responses				Characteristic & Grade					
	Yes	No	Q*	No Reply	1	2	3	4	5	6
Mayor Jim Watson**	0	0	1	5	F	F	F	F	F	F
Councillor Riley Brockington	0	0	0	6	F	F	F	F	F	F
Councillor Rick Chiarelli	0	0	2	4	F	F	F	F	F	F
Councillor Jean Cloutier	0	0	0	6	F	F	F	F	F	F
Councillor George Darouze	0	0	0	6	F	F	F	F	F	F
Councillor Diane Deans**	0	0	1	5	F	F	F	F	F	F
Councillor Laura Dudas	0	0	0	6	F	F	F	F	F	F
Councillor Keith Egli	0	0	0	6	F	F	F	F	F	F
Councillor Eli El-Chantiry	0	0	0	6	F	F	F	F	F	F
Councillor Mathieu Fleury	0	0	0	6	F	F	F	F	F	F
Councillor Glen Gower	0	0	1	5	F	F	F	F	F	F
Councillor Jan Harder	0	0	0	6	F	F	F	F	F	F
Councillor Allan Hubley	0	0	0	6	F	F	F	F	F	F
Councillor Theresa Kavanagh	0	0	2	4	F	F	F	F	F	F
Councillor Rawlson King**	2	0	0	4	P	P	F	F	F	F
Councillor Catherine Kitts***	0	0	0	6	F	F	F	F	F	F
Councillor Jeff Leiper	0	0	1	5	F	F	F	F	F	F
Councillor Matt Luloff	1	0	0	5	F	F	F	P	F	F
Councillor Catherine McKenney	6	0	0	0	P	P	P	P	P	P
Councillor Carol Anne Meehan**	0	0	0	6	F	F	F	F	F	F
Councillor Shawn Menard	6	0	0	0	P	P	P	P	P	P
Councillor Scott Moffatt	0	0	1	5	F	F	F	F	F	F
Councillor Jenna Sudds	0	0	0	6	F	F	F	F	F	F
Councillor Tim Tierney	0	0	0	6	F	F	F	F	F	F
Totals	15/144	0/144	9/144	120/144						

* The letter "Q" 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 on the Ottawa Police Services Board thus far in the current term of office.

To briefly elaborate on the problems encountered during public inquiries, public commissions, public hearings, etc., even when witnesses are subpoenaed, there can be challenges to getting them to testify to the full story, to tell the truth and nothing but the truth, to provide pertinent documentation, to disclose pertinent paper and electronic files, and to be candid when giving evidence-in-chief and during cross-examination.

Moreover, politicians do not have professional accreditation, so there is no professional means available to hold them to account via civil actions that apply to planners, engineers, architects, lawyers, accountants, doctors, dentists, and others with certified credentials.

Further, current legislative instruments such as a municipal code of conduct, Ontario's Municipal Act, etc., cannot compel a municipal politician to answer questions that he or she does not choose to answer.

And, as citizens frequently learn when they attend committee meetings or community meetings involving politicians, or send emails to mayor and councilors, it is often the case that politicians simply choose to not respond. ([*Interim Report 15. Identifying Tactics Used By Politicians to Restrict Citizens' Access to Public Records*](#))

Indeed, this survey is a case in point in that regard, witness 120 No Reply decisions out of 140 potential responses, which is a No Reply 'failure to respond' rate of about 86%.

And, I hasten to emphasize, this survey is not asking members of Ottawa council to wrack their brains and wrap their minds around hypothetical relationships between laws of thermodynamics and climate change.

No, they are asked questions about a cornerstone of municipal governance, namely citizens having proper access to municipal records, and the route taken in 86% of the decision situations by Ottawa council to avoid answering is the No Reply path.

Fortunately, even the overwhelming choice by members of Ottawa council to take the No Reply path contains valuable information for citizens.

The process of turning evasive responses by politicians into positive lessons learned for citizens can be summarized as follows, and involves regarding the overwhelming choice of the No Reply option as a major heads-up to citizens.

That is, the No Reply is consistent with negative outcomes of inquiries, commissions, hearings, open houses, meetings, etc., and is very pertinent to understanding the disposition of this council on the matter of citizens' access to police records.

The body of negative comments about inquiries, hearings, and other venues failing to do a proper job were introduced early in the pilot study, with several comments being

added in subsequent reports. The last round of additional comments was added in police reform report 6. ([*Results from Asking City of Ottawa Politicians, "How Do You Suggest Improving Citizens' Access to Ottawa Police Service Records?"*](#))

Table 7 compiles some of the negative comments frequently associated with public inquiries, public hearings, and public commissions, as well as municipal council meetings, municipal committee meetings, police service board meetings, so-called Open House events, as well as community meetings hosted by politicians which are often designed to serve a vested interest, such as assisting a developer for whom the politician is in reality playing the role of a “stalking horse”.

I hasten to emphasize that the decision by members of this council to not reply is by no means new. Indeed, deciding to not reply for whatever reason has been practiced for as long as politicians have tried to avoid or evade being called to account.

In this survey, 86% of the decisions are of the Implicit rather than explicit nature, because opting for No Reply is an evasive way to avoid committing to anything or anyone, and keeping all options open until the politician develops a position or, perhaps, is told what position to take by a vested interest, for example.

We examined the topic of politicians playing the evasive game in a previous 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*](#), and dedicated one of the reports to a discussion of tactics used by politicians and their agents to avoid or evade answering requests for data, information, records, etc. ([*Interim Report 15. Identifying Tactics Used By Politicians to Restrict Citizens' Access to Public Records*](#))

The comments in Table 7 and associated comments about failed inquiries, commissions, etc., can be used by citizens for such strategic political purposes as:

- Framing their presentations to politicians so that citizens are not “fobbed off” willy-nilly by politicians who are not interested in actually listening to and comprehending what is said by citizens;
- Informing politicians in certain terms that this is not the citizens’ first rodeo, so to speak, and that it is advisable for politicians to by-pass grandstanding, playing for the cameras, and “blowing smoke” while attempting to run out the clock because the citizens are playing the long game and are not going anywhere until they get the answers to which they are entitled given that politicians are employees of citizens; and,

- Serving as a guide so that prepared citizens can work to ensure that the outcome of a particular event involving access to police records serves the interests of citizens and is not just another entry to Table 7.

Table 7. A Selection of Comments Frequently Used to Characterize Inquiries, Hearings, Meetings, Surveys, etc. Which Failed to Effectively Respect and Serve the Public Interest

- “Same old, same old”;
- “Another sell-out by politicians”;
- “All talk and no action”;
- “*Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*”;
- “Re-arranged the deck chairs on the Titanic”;
- “All that time and money for nothing”;
- “Layers of jargon mean no transparency”;
- “A total sham”;
- “They were bought and paid for”;
- “All photo-op, no substance”;
- “Accountability is just a buzz word”;
- “Mushy terms of reference mean mushy outcomes”;
- “Just a stalling tactic”;
- “Heavy on promise, light on performance”;
- “Strong beginning, weak ending”;
- “All start, no finish”;
- “Ran out of gas on day one, running on fumes ever since”;
- “A total cave-in to vested interests, nothing for citizens”
- “Déjà vu all over again”;
- “Another trip to nowhere on the taxpayer dollar”;
- “The cover-up continues”;
- “It was designed to reveal nothing, and succeeded”
- “The lawyers did very well.”

Source: [*Results from Asking City of Ottawa Politicians, "How Do You Suggest Improving Citizens' Access to Ottawa Police Service Records?"*](#)

F. Implications of Council's Lack of Political Character for Initiatives to Improve Citizens' Access to Police Records

If Ottawa citizens had sufficient access to police records to conduct investigations important to citizens, or if Ottawa council favoured ensuring that citizens had such access, then much of this pilot study would be moot.

However, neither of those 'ifs' is the case, and as the previous section discusses it appears fair and accurate to say that a large majority of members of Ottawa council lack the political character to bring about the voting shift needed to change things.

And that situation heightens the significance of lack of political character when it comes to effecting change in Ottawa and elsewhere to improve citizens' ability to access police records.

As for citizens' access to police records elsewhere, informal feedback indicates that Ottawa is far from unique. That is, police records seem to have enjoyed a free ride in many municipalities across Canada and abroad when it comes to these records being closed to or free from scrutiny by citizens.

And, further in the political character vein, informal feedback reveals that the Ottawa pilot study could be a model for studies elsewhere. The research questions of interest include investigating the relationship between the political character of politicians and the access which citizens have to police records.

In the case of the City of Ottawa, for example, access to police records seems to rank as bottom-of-the-barrel among politicians and within the bureaucracy, as does declared support by municipal politicians, so the question arises:

How many members of Ottawa council with substantive, pro-citizen political character will it take to shift the voting balance to ensure that citizens have a level of access to police records which is sufficient to enable them to properly investigate the need for structural and functional reform of Ottawa Police Service?

There are a number of other research questions to be asked and answered, but in terms of the big picture that may be a key, pragmatic question in designing an agenda to ensure that citizens have free, easy, timely, and direct online access to Ottawa Police Service records.

And, at the risk of belabouring the obvious, it is again necessary to observe that in the case of Ottawa the emphasis on political character cannot be over-stressed.

In brief, the record is already abundantly clear that it will require municipal politicians of substantive political character to oblige Ottawa Police Service and any other anti-disclosure entities to grant citizens easy, free, timely, and direct online access to agency records.

At this point, and because there appears to be very little written on this topic, it may be instructive to recall the political character features presented in Table 4. As indicated, politicians demonstrating desired political characters are those who:

- First and foremost serve the public interest in thought and deed;
- Are not caught in conflict of interest positions;
- Keep their constituents informed in a timely manner;
- Openly communicate their positions on topics of public interest;
- Know how to 'think outside the box';
- Meet or exceed the standards of transparency and accountability stated in their Code of Conduct.

Gaining access to secretive government agencies at any level can be a hard slog to begin with, and is not necessarily rendered any easier at the municipal level despite repeated claims that "it is the level of government closest to the people".

And, in the case of Ottawa politicians choosing and acting to ensure citizens have free, easy, timely, and direct online access Ottawa Police Service records in support of a citizens' reform investigation, that is an unlikely prospect because a majority of the current council cannot meet even the easy or 'soft' political character features involved with the five survey questions.

Or, to re-phrase, if 22 of 24 members of the current Ottawa council cannot meet even the minimum political character threshold required to support the citizen access level involved in this survey, then whatever will they do if things get rough, mean, combative, etc.?

Several questions illustrative of a contentious and even hostile future when politicians are "caught between a rock and a hard place" come to mind.

What will politicians do if push comes to shove about major structural and functional police service reforms?

What will politicians do if push comes to shove about cutting substantial funds from the Ottawa Police Service budget in advance of investigations into the need for reforms, structural, functional, or otherwise?

What will politicians do in tight financial times if they are required to significantly cut funding in general in advance of investigations into the need for reforms?

What will politicians do in tight financial times if they are required to significantly reallocate funds in general in advance of investigations into the need for reforms?

What will politicians do if vested interests decide to play “hardball” when it comes to allocating scarcer resources?

What will politicians do if a number of legal issues arise regarding public access to police records?

What will politicians do if advocates get aggressively demonstrative?

What will politicians do if face-to-face lobbying intensifies?

Despite those unknowns and uncertainties, there is an exceedingly important lesson to be learned from this initial round of questions.

That is, the results of the survey inform citizens that only two members of Ottawa council have the strength of political character needed to ‘right the ship’, and that is done by supporting citizens’ quest for the kind of access to police records which is required to robustly investigate the need for structural and functional reform of Ottawa Police Service.

As shown, by drawing inferences from the reactions to survey questions about citizens’ access to police records, it is ascertained that only two of 24 members of Ottawa council, Councillors McKenney and Menard, measure up when it comes to the following features of political character previously presented in Table 4:

1. Primarily serve the public interest in thought and deed;
2. Are not in conflict of interest positions;
3. Keep their constituents informed in a timely manner;
4. Openly communicate their positions on topics of public interest;
5. Know how to ‘think outside the box’; and,
6. Meet or exceed the standards of transparency and accountability stated in their Code of Conduct.

As for the remaining 22 members of council, no evidence is found that any of them has a deep, thoughtful, sustained interest in the topic of citizens’ access to Ottawa Police

Service records, much less any confirmable intention of actually doing anything to improve the situation.

Moreover, no one beyond councillors McKenney and Menard gave a strong, compelling indication of supporting the idea of investigating the need for structural and functional reform of OPS, even if aspects of the OPS model are 10, 20, or 30 or more years past their best before date.

“Don’t know, Don’t care” might describe that attitude, which does not speak well of the political character of these 22 members of Ottawa council.

Disappointing as that finding may be, however, it is still instructive for citizens to have that kind of forewarning about the political character of any politician if it limits forming ill-advised, over-expectations about any council member’s support of citizens having the required access to police records.

Further in that regard in practical terms, council members seeking to ingratiate themselves with citizens in general, and constituents in particular, could be held to explaining their survey results, and, specifically, to providing substantive, verifiable evidence which counters the results regarding the survey questions and the inferences drawn about their political character.

That exercise in itself could be a significant test of the education, training, expertise, and experience which each councillor has at her or his disposal in discussions about how to ensure that citizens have free, easy, timely, and direct online access to all records pertinent to their investigations.

And now, after examining the implications of Ottawa council’s lack of political character, section G takes a brief side trip to a City of Waterloo council deliberation which is in sharp contrast to the evasive No Reply conduct of 22 of 24 members of Ottawa council.

G. City of Waterloo Council: A Municipal Government from another Planet, or a Political Body with Positive Political Character?

On the one hand, we have the City of Ottawa council being assessed as ‘bottom of the barrel’ regarding its lack of support for citizens having sufficient access to Ottawa Police Service records to investigate whether there is need for structural and functional reform of the agency.

And, on the other hand, there is City of Waterloo council, which took an initiative which puts Ottawa council to shame for its backwardness.

On December 7, Waterloo council considered a motion regarding reallocation of police funds, and on December 8 this headline and story appeared in KitchenerToday:

Waterloo council votes unanimously to support call for reallocation of police funds – Council will call on upper-levels of government to review legislation around the police budget

Relative to the timid, indeed seriously reluctant modus operandi of 22 of 24 members of Ottawa council, Waterloo council members are 'out of sight' ground-breakers when it comes to at least considering the merits of reallocating Waterloo Regional Police Service funds.

And that means, connecting the dots, the possibility of structural and/or functional changes to Waterloo Regional Police Service.

And, again connecting the dots, what we have in the City of Waterloo process is the essence of the survey questions that were put to Ottawa council and were accorded an 86% No Reply rate.

The bottom line, then, is that politicians on Waterloo city council have a publicly-open collective mind about publicly-open discussions to consider reallocating funds as part of a police reform initiative, which is precisely the essence of the survey administered to Ottawa politicians.

What we have, in brief, is a major contrast in the City of Waterloo and City of Ottawa council positions regarding the common issue of police service reform, and that contrast bears repeating.

On the one hand, Waterloo council unanimously says "Let's take a look at police service reform."

And, on the other hand, the vast majority of members of Ottawa council apparently cannot entertain even the thought of providing citizens proper access to Ottawa Police Service records so that citizens can inform themselves about investigating the need for structural and functional reform of OPS.

Long story short, City of Waterloo council could very well be seen to be from another planet, because it appears fair to say that its positive political character is diametrically opposed to the negative political character which seems to be aptly descriptive of Ottawa council on matters involving OPS reform.

H. Ottawa Police Services Board: Part of the Problem or Part of the Solution in Citizens' Quest for Improved Access to Ottawa Police Service Records?

During the course of preparing this report, a number of issues arose which call for re-designing the examination of the Ottawa Police Services Board.

One matter of particular concern is that as a result of contentious budget deliberations, the Board is increasingly seen and critically regarded as a promoter and enabler of Ottawa Police Service, rather than a unit of governance which has a first and foremost duty to citizens and taxpayers, and not to a police agency.

As a result, consideration is being given to a separate report examining the OPSB as a facilitator of or a barrier to citizens obtaining improved access to Ottawa Police Service records

I. Next Steps

In addition to considering a report on Ottawa Police Services Board, feedback on previous pilot study reports and consultations about this report point to the possibility of several more police reform research reports.