



2022

# Clerk's Office Service Delivery Review



FINAL Draft Report: April 28, 2022

# Clerk's Office Service Delivery Review

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ..... 2**

**PROJECT OBJECTIVE ..... 4**

**PROJECT SCOPE ..... 5**

**METHODOLOGY ..... 6**

**FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES..... 7**

**COMMENDATIONS..... 11**

**FINDINGS..... 12**

**RECOMMENDATIONS..... 13**

**CONCLUSION ..... 14**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT ..... 14**

# Clerk's Office Service Delivery Review

## REFOCUSING FUTURE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Municipalities are under immense pressure to improve service in customer facing processes. This pressure comes both from the public, municipal councils, and internal staff.

In 2021, the Town of Tecumseh (the Town) engaged KPMG consultants to conduct an organizational review to identify opportunities that would lead to more efficient and cost-effective delivery of municipal services both, legislated and discretionary. This detailed review involved an evaluation of all departments and operations including the organizational structure, overall needs, and staffing levels specifically as it relates to the Town's service delivery requirements and in consideration of municipal best practices. The report dated June 24, 2021 provided recommendations with respect to the structure of the Town's Municipal Clerk's Office (the Clerk) but did not go into specifics. It did identify some areas that should be transferred to other departments but recommended that a detailed review of the Clerk's Office be undertaken before such transfers occurred and before the Clerk's Department structure was finalized. As such, WSCS Consulting Incorporated was engaged to undertake a full Service Delivery Review (SDR) of the Clerk's Office and all its current services.

WSCS undertook interviews, system walkthroughs, documentation reviews involving Town staff, Council and management as well as a survey of the local municipalities. We also analyzed data and performance measures to understand the results of the various processes and identify areas of improvement. We wish to acknowledge that we

received good cooperation from all staff and note that they are knowledgeable, and very committed to delivering services to council, their colleagues and above all to the community at large.

The Town's Clerk's Office provides a wide range of services, some of which do not fall into typical Clerk's Services (**FIGURE 3**) and are impacting the ability to provide the core services. In the past, there appears to be a tendency for the Clerk's Office to take a more active role in some Council/Committee initiatives than was intended. Because staff manage Committee meetings, the Clerk's Office often will take the lead in terms of research and program development but instead of 'passing it on' to the appropriate department, continue to operate/support these programs. This is not sustainable and is impacting the timeliness of many important Clerk's Office responsibilities such as records management.

As such, the fundamental recommendation is that the Clerk's Office should refocus on the core services: Council/Committee support, bylaws, elections management, vital statistics, records management. The remaining programs/services should be transferred to the appropriate departments, outsourced or reconsidered. Insourcing of legal services may provide some service and financial benefits to the Town and should be considered.

Refocusing on core services would allow for a redefined organization with two main lines of business: (1)

Council/Committee Support and (2) Legislative Services and Policy. As part of the Town's Customer Service Strategy, this new organizational structure would allow for frontline service delivery support from the existing complement. Coupled with the new organizational structure, job descriptions should be developed with clear roles and responsibilities.

In order to better manage workload and performance, a comprehensive business plan for the Clerk's Office should be developed on an annual and multi-year basis. This should be aligned with the Town's Strategic Plan that clearly articulates these roles, expected performance and metrics. Performance management and associated succession/training program needs to be put in place to allow for growth and accountability.

There is a need to move to a LEAN culture, one built on trust where staff are empowered to suggest and implement changes, lead, and manage their own improvement projects. Most staff were excited about the potential to make changes for the sake of future efficiencies in service delivery. The staff expressed optimism that through this service delivery review, recommendations would result in process improvements that enhance their work and offer greater job satisfaction. Staff expressed a keen interest and desire to execute their roles effectively and to provide a high level of customer responsiveness. We noted many technological challenges in this review but also note that the Town has recently adopted a Digitization Strategy which should address many issues. In some cases, it is advisable that these issues be dealt with before services are transferred from the Clerk's Office to other departments. This will ensure that the non-value added activities are not simply 'passed on' but resolved.

We have made some specific recommendations for shared services and common approaches/technology with other municipalities and Essex County. The modernization of services need to look to these opportunities to better leverage knowledge, improve customer service, reduce duplication which will ultimately reduce overall costs for all partners.

The key to the future success of the Clerk's Office and the Town as a whole requires new approaches. A renewed Clerk's Office will likely result in reduced staff turnover and improved employee and customer satisfaction.

We commend the Town for undertaking this review. We are confident that the recommendations in this report will provide a path forward to a high performing organization. The report is in the hands of management and Council to determine what to implement and the appropriate time frame.

## PROJECT OBJECTIVE

The objectives of the Clerk's Office Service Delivery Review were identified as follows:

1. Identify opportunities for improved effectiveness in delivery of Clerks services, cost reduction and efficiency reflecting on best practices in other organizations.
2. Optimization of existing resources, including human and technological.
3. Explore shared services within the Town and other organizations
4. Continued ability to meet legislative requirements.

5. Advancing records management across the organization and better use of current technology.
6. Identify new and/or improved use of technology to minimize staff time spent on non-value added activities.
7. Advise on the recommended Clerk's Office organizational structure recommended in the Town's 2021 Organizational Review.



FIGURE 1: SERVICE DELIVERY REVIEWS - KEYS TO SUCCESS

## PROJECT SCOPE

We did consider the “KPMG Report” in the furtherance of our work in respect to the review of the Town of Tecumseh Clerk's Office. WSCS Consultants undertook the field work in support of our review:

1. **Project Initiation:** Met with the Clerk's Office Service Delivery Review Steering Committee to clarify expectations, refine lines of inquiry, and develop a subsequent work program for the engagement.
2. **Scope Limitation:** It is important to note that the scope of this review was limited to Clerk's Office. However, some corporate service areas were reviewed as they affect these services including the Information Technology Service Review, the Digital Strategy, financial reporting, and customer service.
3. **Management Consultations:** Individual confidential interviews were conducted with the Chief Administrative Officer and all members of the Senior Management Team.
4. **Council Consultations:** Conducted confidential interviews with all Council Members.
5. **Staff Consultations:** Conducted confidential interviews with all members of the Clerk's Department as well as several former staff members who are currently in other Town Departments.
6. **External Consultations:** Conducted a confidential interview with Tecumseh's external legal counsel. Met with the Perry Group to discuss the digital strategy and areas of overlap with respect to specific processes related to Clerk's Office Services.
7. **Surveys –** Undertook a Survey with the Windsor/Essex Municipal Clerks (including both the County of Essex and the City of Windsor).
8. **Review of Current Service Delivery Model:** Developed an inventory of services and processes through a series of meetings and process mapping sessions with staff.
9. **Documentation Review and Analysis:** Undertook a comprehensive examination of documentation supplied by the Clerk which included by-laws, policies, agendas, minutes, financial information, Terms of Reference, standard operating procedures, etc. Undertook analysis of data and financial results based upon available information.
10. **Opportunity Identification:** Identified potential opportunities to achieve the most efficient and operationally effective approach to service delivery and address the ten (10) key questions.
11. **Lean Six Sigma White Belt Training:** Delivered Lean Six Sigma White Belt Certification training to seven (7) staff members which included some of the senior management team and Clerks staff.
12. **Interim Findings Presentation:** Presented the high level overview to outline the interim findings was conducted with the Clerk and the consulting team.
13. **Interim and Draft Final Report & Presentation:** Presented an initial findings and draft final report to the Steering Committee on February 23, 2022 and April 3, 2022 to elicit feedback and additional opportunities.
14. **Final Report & Presentation:** Developed and presented a draft report with recommendations for the Steering Committee in March, 2022. Final report and Council presentation to occur in April, 2022.

## METHODOLOGY

Our methodology included a combination of documentation reviews, consultations, interviews, system walkthroughs, benchmarking, and data analysis (Figure 2). This work was undertaken over a four-month period commencing October 2021 with an interim report delivered to in February 2022. Final report to be completed in April, 2022.

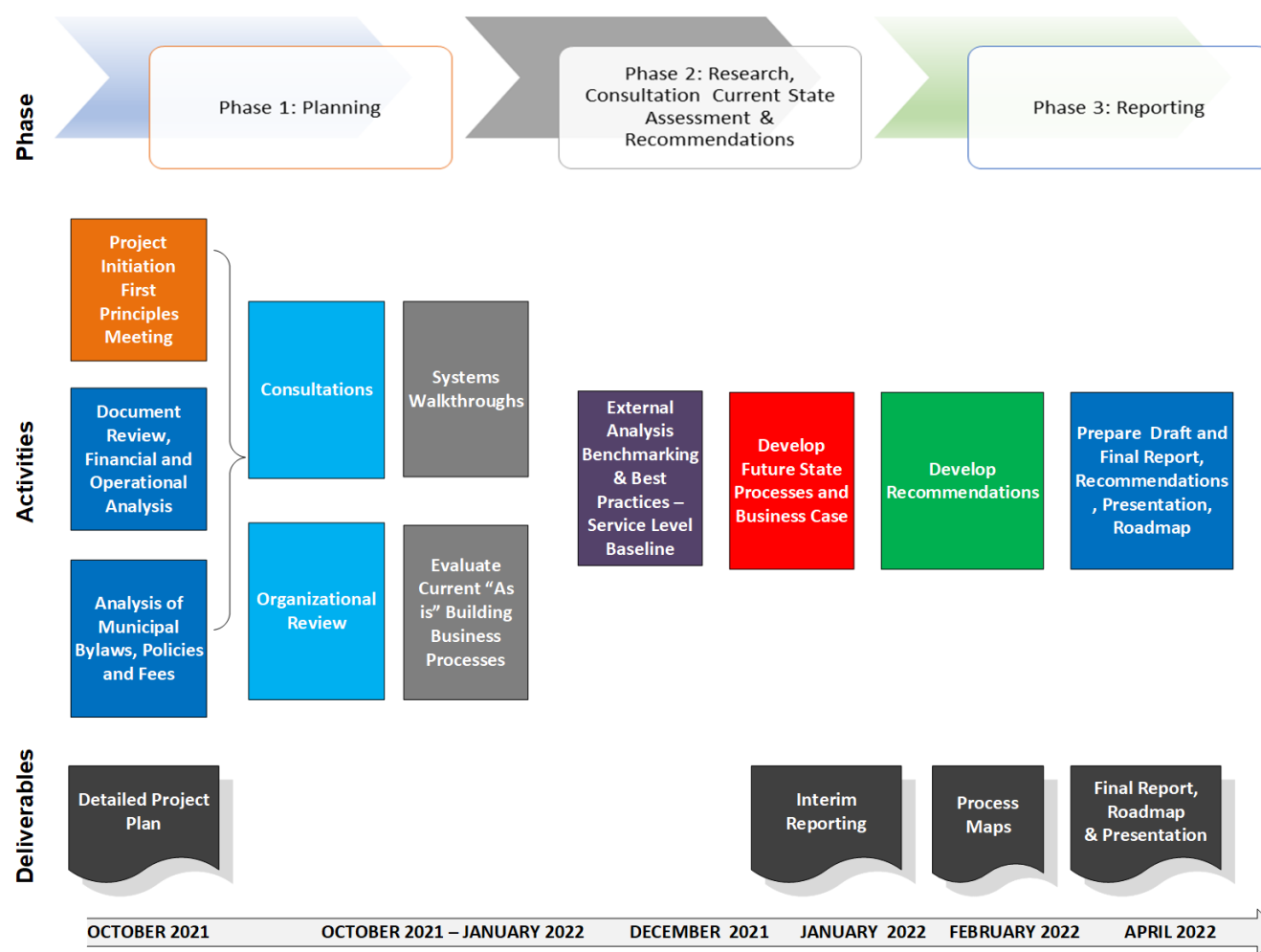


FIGURE 2: PROJECT METHODOLOGY

# FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

## CLERK'S OFFICE – SERVICE PROFILE

FIGURE 3 provides an analysis of the services provided by the Town of Tecumseh's Clerk's Office in comparison to the traditional 'core' or legislated services. We are of the opinion that the discretionary services and those that are traditionally delivered by other departments are impacting the Clerk's Office ability to deliver the core services. These

should be transferred, outsourced or eliminated altogether to allow for improved service and response time. This report includes recommendations to transfer some services to other departments (eg. Crossing Guards, Animal Control Programs), outsource (eg. Animal Licensing) or reconsider current services (eg. Golden Age Club, Snow Angels).



FIGURE 3: CLERK'S OFFICE CORE SERVICE ANALYSIS



## CLERK'S OFFICE – STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS (SWOT) ANALYSIS

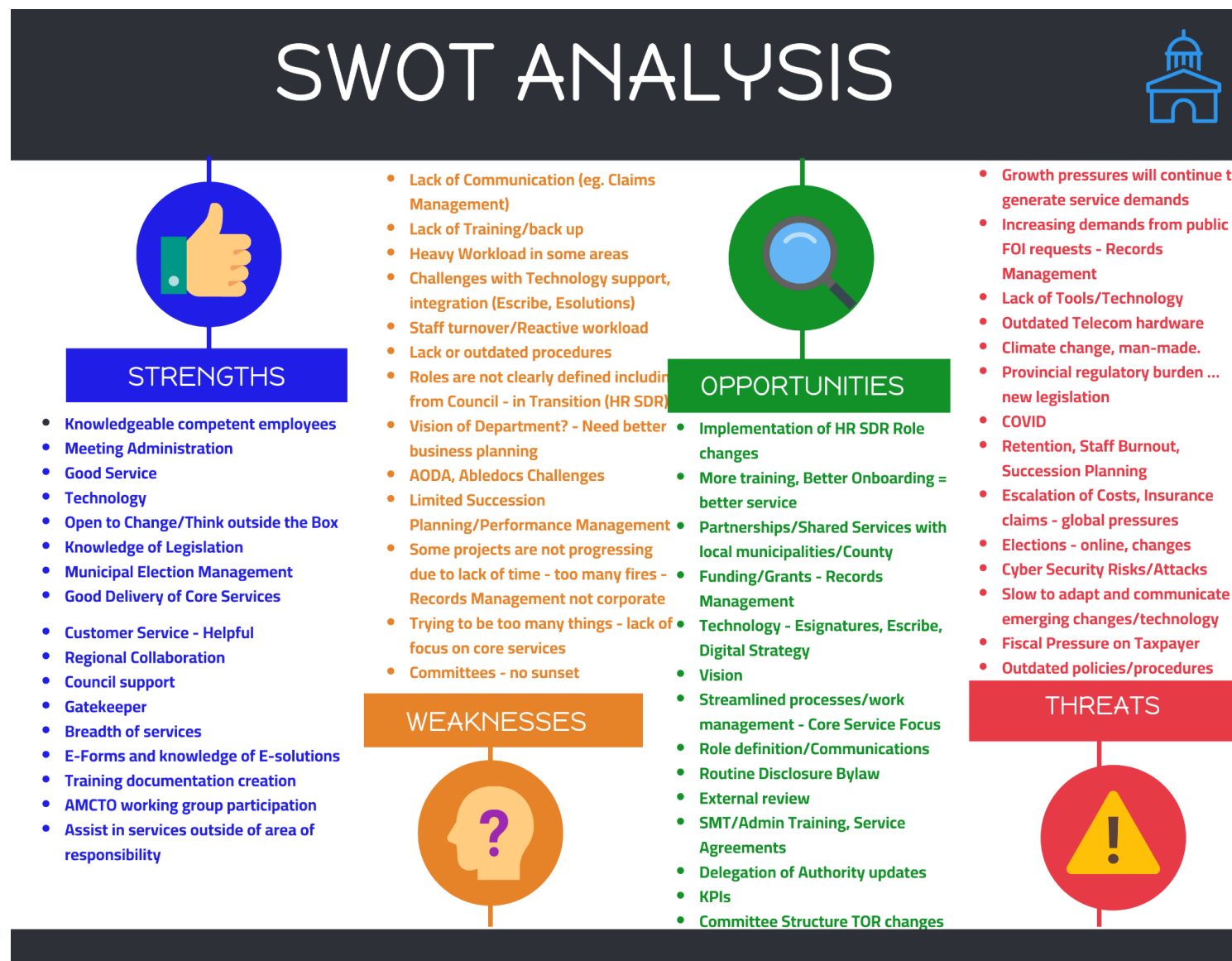


FIGURE 4:SWOT ANALYSIS

At the outset of the project, we undertook a SWOT analysis (FIGURE 4) involving staff and the SDR Steering Committee

which assisted us in formulating our inquiries, plan our process analysis and focus for the review.

## THE 10 CRUCIAL QUESTIONS

For each service performed by the Clerk's Office, we assessed in terms of the 10 Crucial Questions for Service Delivery

Reviews (Figure 5). These questions provided for both internal and external view of the services and how they currently perform in relation to the expectations from the Town's stakeholders.

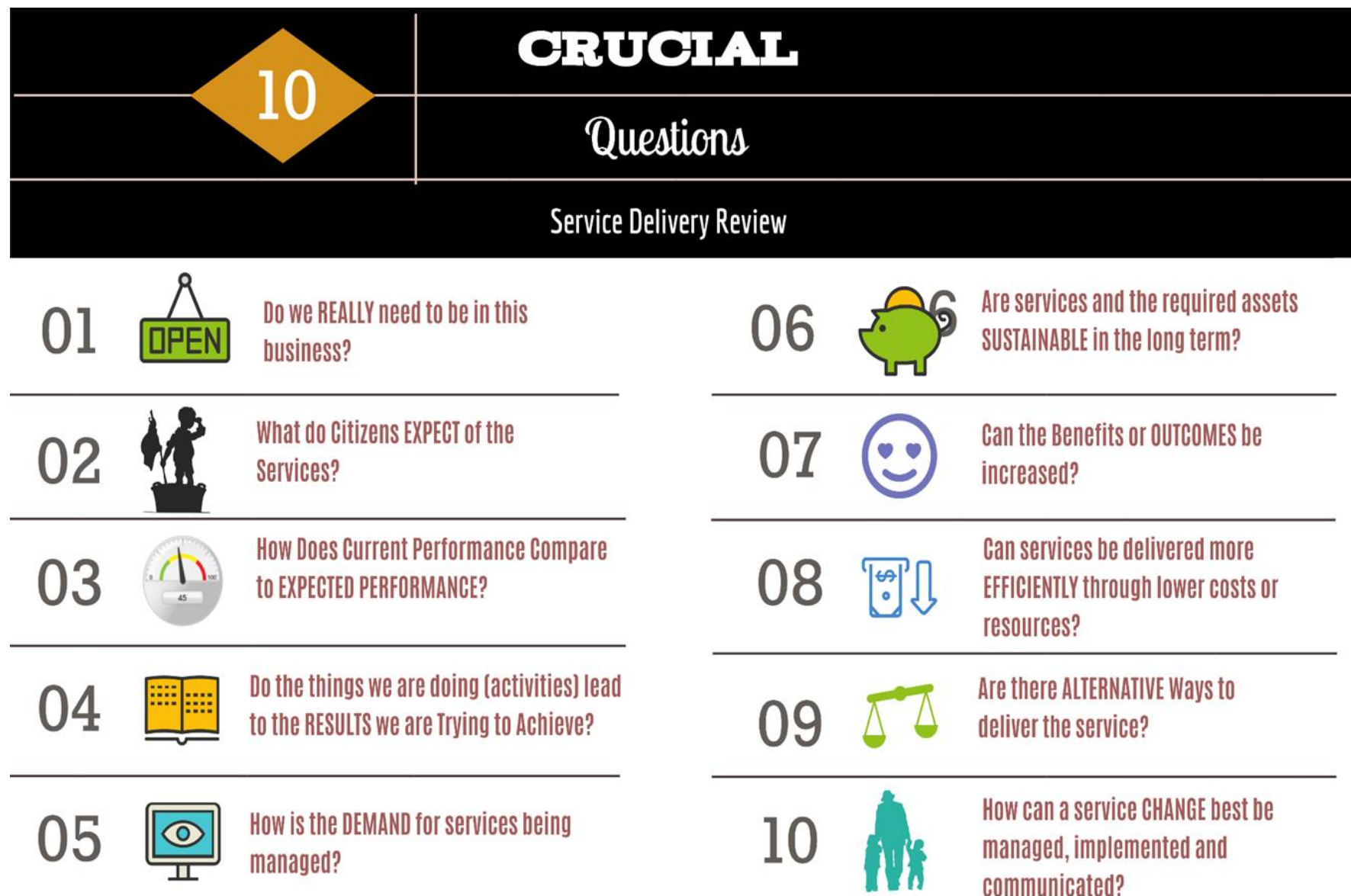


FIGURE 5: 10 CRUCIAL QUESTIONS

In assessing services and processes, WSCS utilized LEAN Six Sigma (LSS) methodologies which **focus on the customer** with the view **to eliminating non-value-added activities (waste)** and decreasing variation in services which lead to service expectation gaps. As will become evident in this report, we found that there are many opportunities for the Town to improve its customer services and reduce cycle time and cost of delivering those services. This will not come without a concerted effort and some investment. It will also require a change management strategy and corporate oversight.

FIGURE 6 provides a high-level summary of our findings where there are opportunities for improvement. It is imperative for Council, staff and management to understand that these findings are in no way meant to indicate that the Town Clerk's Office is not doing a good job. It is apparent that staff have done their absolute best with the tools, training and resources available.

To be sustainable, the Clerk's Office needs to focus on core services, transfer responsibilities to departments that better aligns with their mandate, modernize and eliminate the non-value-added activities to improve operations, services at a reduced cost. That is the essence of Lean Six Sigma – to continuously strive for excellence.

In summary, this report identifies 26 high level recommendations as shown in FIGURE 7. Detailed service level recommendations. Many of the opportunities require a 'one-time' investment in people, technology and planning but ultimately, savings will result.

Opportunities have been grouped into the following categories:

1. **Technology and Processes** – Leveraging technology to increase knowledge and capacity for change. In particular, the implementation of a customer portal for licenses, applications. Documented standard operating procedures and training.
2. **Organization** – Ensuring adequate, trained, human resources and change management strategies are in place for success supported by a solid performance management framework including succession planning.
3. **Customer Service** – Strategy to better serve the customers and eliminate errors at the front end, streamline on the back end.
4. **Policies, Planning and Reporting** – Updated policies, improved business planning, key performance indicators to measure success, time tracking and regular reporting to make evidence-based decisions.
5. **Service Delivery** – Focusing on core services means transferring services to departments with the specific expertise and accountabilities for the service. Exploring efficiencies through different service models, outsourcing, shared services to improve the customer experience while reducing costs through elimination of duplication of effort.

## COMMENDATIONS



While many of our findings in this report focus on areas for improvement, the Town's Clerk's Office has many commendations that will set it up for success:

1. The Town is led by strong management with a supportive CAO and Council. It has had many positive changes over the last couple of years. Both staff and management are eager to make continuous improvements and embrace change.
2. Digitization Strategy and IT Service Delivery Review provides a framework to move forward on streamlined, online services which will not only help the current processes, but will allow for transformation along with transference of non-core services.
3. The Town has invested in technology with many opportunities to expand the utilization of its current software. For example, eScribe is a good agenda management product with many customer service attributes. Resolving some issues and expanding the use will be beneficial for both staff and Council.

4. The financial system, Vadim, provides a solid foundation for many applications and tracking as well as document management. However, it has been identified to transition to a new ERP. This may take some time so progress should not stop as it may take several years before transitioning. It is underutilized. Modules such as iCitizen Vadim, licensing and bylaw would allow for the one stop shop and a customer portal.
5. The staff are knowledgeable, dedicated, competent and have a desire to change. There is no doubt that the Clerk's Office is respected. Staff care for the community, want to serve Council and all customers in a timely manner. In fact, they go above and beyond in many areas such as assisting the Golden Age Club, Snow and Leaf Angels, Animal Services among others.
6. The Clerk's Office received particular praise with respect to the management of Elections.
7. The Organizational Review set the stage for changes in roles and organizational structure of the Clerk's Office shifting the focus to core services. It provides a good framework to move forward with better aligned services.
8. The extensive work done on training for Accessibility will provide a good start for improved processes and accountability. The staff should be commended on the amount of work they have put into assisting departments and others to meet the AODA legislative requirements.

## FINDINGS



## CLERK'S OFFICE SDR FINDINGS



## 1. Technology &amp; Processes

- Good use of Election Management Technology
- Some staff have inadequate (slow) technology
- Required to use personal cell phone
- Escribe - Office 365 /Laserfiche challenges, underutilized modules/licenses.
- Non integrated Systems - some unsupported
- VADIM underutilized (eg. Dog licensing, OPEN Vadim)
- Paper Manual processes/many spreadsheets - time consuming processes (eg. Spay/Neuter)
- Online forms appear to be e-services but back end is not linked - duplication of effort
- Limited online payment options.
- Lack of Built in Workflow, encrypted site.
- Lack of documentation/SOPs



## 2. Organization

- Well respected knowledgeable staff
- Unclear Roles lead to a lack of ownership and delegation of accountabilities. Staff need to have clear performance expectations, goals and ability to act on their projects.
- Transition phase from Organization review changes have contributed to the confusion. No clear path or vision of the Clerk's office responsibilities.
- Not focused on Core Services
- Limited Succession Planning
- Staff turnover - training ground impacting workload
- Burnout and morale impacted by lack of structure/workload
- Performance Management Program is not sufficiently formalized, Limited growth opportunities
- Time not tracked against activities so fees may not be commensurate with cost nor allow for assessment of value or fees.
- Documentation, training and SOPs would support staff lacking - staff do their best.



## 3. Customer Service

- Customer Strategy in Transition
- E-Solutions forms give the appearance of online submissions.
- Website is not customer centric - Need strategy
- No Citizen request portal for real time tracking and monitoring (online request goes to email, CityWorks inconsistent utilization.
- No Customer Service Strategy
- No online customer portal for payments (eg. iCitizen VADIM)
- Response time appears to be a challenge - not tracked effectively, no booking system or integration.
- Website is slow, instructions are not comprehensive - results in incomplete applications - Should include comments about availability (eg. Snow and Leaf Angels - volunteer availability)
- Internal/external communications are not streamlined - appear to be divided across departments (eg. Waste Calendar, Public Notices)
- Licensing forms need quick links
- Online forms are not error proofed.
- Limited live links to social media.



## 4. Policies, Planning &amp; Reporting

- Vision and Business Planning for the Clerk's Office is not well articulated leading to a lack of direction and performance management. KPIs need expansion and reporting against plans.
- Primarily reactive work planning with the exception of Agenda Management and Elections.
- Policy Development and Research has landed in the Clerk's Office for 'non-Clerk' services (eg. Rodent Abatement).
- Policies are outdated, mixed with procedures - need to be refreshed.
- No regular policy review process.
- Procedural Bylaw does not reflect current governance model.
- Golden Age Club - nature of relationship goes beyond Clerk's Service



## 5. Service Delivery

- Non-traditional Clerks Services impacting workload (eg. Waste Management Calendar, Golden Age Club, Snow and Leaf Angels, Rodent Abatement, Animal and Taxi Licensing, Fire Alarm Registration) and ability to focus on core services.
- Administrative Monetary Penalties not in place - impacting compliance and enforcement across the Town.
- Opportunities for additional shared services with other municipalities - shared technology, records management approach
- Legal Services not coordinated - May be some savings by bringing in house
- Marriage Licensing primarily manual and duplication - possible software solutions.
- Possible outsource Animal Licensing, Wedding Solemnizations).
- Risks associated with personal/confidential information (eg. paper storage)

FIGURE 6: SDR FINDINGS

## RECOMMENDATIONS



## CLERK'S OFFICE SDR RECOMMENDATIONS



## 1. Technology &amp; Processes

1.1 Request IT to review speed issues and their root causes to address latency/service issues raised during the review.

1.2 Review the personal cellphone use 'policy/practice' and the impacts on ability to access corporate records.

1.3 Following implementation of Office 365, request review with Escribe to address issues (with IT) and implement additional modules - participation portal prior to election.

1.4 Review Laserfiche licenses and long term plan as part of the Records/Information Management Project. Possible use of a claims management system (eg. ClearRisk)

1.5 Implement software to support back end online processes (eg. Vadim licensing, municipal law and ICitizen or explore "middle ware" to manage various applications.

1.6 Dedicate staff to create SOPs for all Clerk core services.



## 2. Organization

2.1 Following transfer of 'non-core Clerks office services, redefine roles with a responsibility matrix into two streams: (1) Council and Committee Support (2) Legislative Coordination and Policy (lower left quadrant).

2.2 Consider new performance management framework aligned with an annual/multi-year business plan.

2.3 Implement time tracking for key activities to gain an understanding of pressures. This will be particularly important with new initiatives and fee setting.

2.4 Consider a business case process and SMT decision prioritization matrix for Council/Committee directives.

2.5 Develop a comprehensive training needs assessment/succession plan for all Clerks staff aligned with the new core service focus and performance management framework.



## 3. Customer Service

3.1 Work with the new Customer Service team to create a one stop tracking of customer requests and responses within one database and work order management.

3.2 Consider utilizing a booking system (eg. ActiveNet) for customer appointments for Clerk's Services to better manage expectations and workload.

3.3 Transfer the responsibility of online forms to the Customer Service Team/IT within the Digital Strategy. Move to common look and feel and ensure that the forms have 'error proofing'. Preferable that all requests go through a portal with one customer database and ability to pay for multiple services with one transaction.

3.4 Clarify internal and external communication responsibilities with the new Customer Service Team. This team should create a strategy and communication plan with timelines and departmental responsibilities (eg. public notices, waste management calendar).



## 4. Policies, Planning &amp; Reporting

4.1 Create a Clerks Office business plan aligned with the Strategic Plan with a Corporate prioritization matrix for assessing 'new' initiatives. The plan should include all core service initiatives with performance metrics.

4.2 Create a Policy Review Framework with the view to refresh policies once each term of Council. Consider a 'policy analyst' role, shared with CAO. Move procedures out of policies to allow more flexibility for continuous improvement and assigned resources.

4.3 AODA requires a strategy and policy review. Lead should remain in Clerks Office with revitalized approach to service and training.

4.4 Updates to Procedural Bylaw is needed to reflect current governance model.

4.5. GAC relationship requires review, agreement. Community Services to ensure oversight and alignment with Town policies. Financial oversight should rest with Finance.



## 5. Service Delivery

5.1 Transfer animal licensing, crossing guard responsibilities to Community Safety and outsource Animal licensing.

5.2 Transition non-Clerk services to appropriate departments (upper right quadrant).

5.3 Consider implementation of Administrative Monetary Penalties as a better mechanism for enhanced compliance and enforcement of bylaws and licensing.

5.4 Consider share services for software, AMPS and records management approach.

5.4 Consider insourcing legal services to reduce costs, time and coordination efforts.

5.5 Partner with other municipalities to digitize marriage licensing.

5.6 Outsource animal licensing, Cat Spay/Neuter/Intake Programs and wedding solemnizations - eliminate the broker role.

5.7 Take the lead on document and records management - across the organization as a key priority.

FIGURE 7: SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the Town of Tecumseh's Clerk's Office has had several years of unrest that has impacted services and employee satisfaction. This deep dive revealed many foundational problems, most of which are legacy, procedure, process, or software issues. To some degree, it is surprising that it has not seen more issues but some of the findings in this report require immediate attention. First and foremost, the staff need to be relieved of many non-Clerk related duties so that they can concentrate on the core services and successfully complete significant projects. It is clear that the Clerk's Office has taken on initiatives based upon the relationship with Committees as opposed to strategic direction. The result is one of reactive workload with significant volume. In some cases, the services should be outsourced or stopped altogether.

Recent years has seen many positive changes at the Town and this review should provide a foundation for some improvement to processes and services in the Clerk's Office. In the fullness of time, the organization should transition to one with two streams:

Legislative Services/Council/Committees and Clerks Services through a coordination role whose primary responsibility is records management and vital statistics. Administrative Monetary Penalties will need to have a champion as well as policy development. These initiatives will only be successful if the non-core Clerk's services are transferred to the appropriate department or, in some cases, outsourced, discontinued, or absorbed by community groups.

Technology will also play a key role in success. The staff need new tools to be able to respond to needs of Council and the community. The demands on the municipal sector are growing and it needs to be better prepared, more proactive approaches are needed.

The Town's leadership knows that 'time is now' to transform its culture into one that is LEAN and focuses on the customer. Adding more staff resources without proper process and procedures is not the answer. It must do things differently to get better results. The Clerk's Office needs to develop a business plan with goals, objectives and assigned resources to key projects. This starts with a more modernized, integrated planning and performance framework where staff and managers are held accountable for results.

The recommendations in this report are just a start. The Town's Clerk's Office must be steadfast in improvements, and it must embrace change with a new mission and solid values. Many tough decisions are ahead and the WSCS Consulting Team is confident that the recommendations as identified in this report is a positive step in that direction.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We wish to express appreciation to the Town of Tecumseh's Council, staff, the Clerk's Service Delivery Review Steering Committee, Senior Management, external legal counsel, local municipal partners, and the County of Essex for their participation, cooperation, and assistance throughout the project.