Introduction

The County of Oxford (the County) issued a Request For Proposals (RFP) requesting consulting support for the Services that Work Project, a service delivery review designed to examine the effectiveness, efficiency and value of each County service. The RFP also requested recommendations or changes in services, programs and resources, including whether specific services should be expanded, reduced, discontinued or delivered in an alternate manner.

The specific deliverables of the RFP were to produce:

1. Finalized service profiles
2. Recommendations for prioritization of services for review
3. A work plan for completion of the project
4. Specific recommendations with regards to changes in services, programs and resources, including whether specific services should be expanded, reduced, discontinued or delivered in an alternate manner
5. Quantification of financial implications of opportunities identified during the project
6. Identification of impacts for operations and service delivery resulting from recommendations, including clearly defined service levels
7. A package of service delivery standards and KPI for programs and services

Munro Strategic Perspective was initially engaged to provide consulting support to the Services that Work Project [STW] for Wave 1 and extended for Waves 2 and 3 to be conducted in 2015.

This report contains the findings and recommendations from Wave 1of Services That Work.

The results and recommendations are the product of the combined collaborative effort of the staff and leadership of the County of Oxford, guided by Melinda Munro of Munro Strategic Perspective.

Method and approach

Service Inventory

The service inventory for the County of Oxford was created using the Municipal Reference Model (MRM).[1] The MRM is a business reference model that enables public sector organizations to view their service offerings independent of departmental or financial structure. It

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[1] The MRM is intellectual property owned by the Municipal Information Services Association of Canada and made available for use by the public sector.

enables organizations to see the true cost and resource requirements of services, as well as see where similar clients may be receiving allied services that could be better integrated. It also creates visibility for citizens about the services they pay for and receive. Finally, the service inventory also acts as a form of internal control, ensuring that all activities done and resources deployed in a municipality are directed towards the overall goals defined by Council and the community.

The diagram below illustrates the impact of the MRM in decoupling services from the organizational structure of a municipality.

Service Inventory Schematic
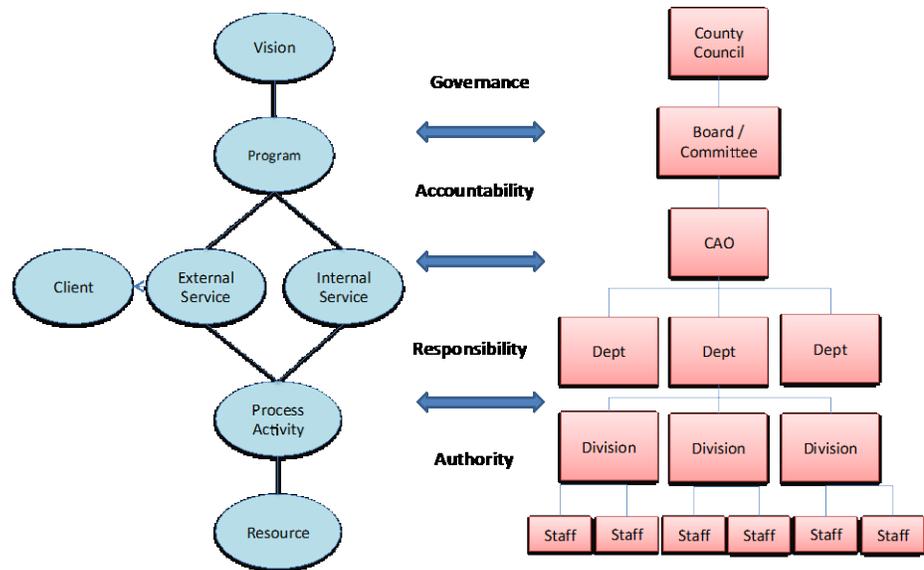
Using the MRM, staff groups were led through a process of identifying the work they do, organizing that work by service and creating service profiles that contain resource and strategic information about the services delivered by the County.

The result is an inventory of 58 services grouped across five programs that capture the work of the County. The full inventory is set out in Appendix A to this report.

Service Financial Allocations

After completion of the service inventory, the existing County financial information from 2011 through 2018 was allocated by service for Wave One services only. This process improves the visibility of the expenses and revenues by service, enabling management to see

where services are growing slower or faster or experiencing shifts in resource deployment that can be masked when financial information is viewed by the department or division. It can enable better decision making with respect to resource deployment, sharing services and setting fees.

The method used to allocate the financial information by service was to identify the key drivers of expenses and revenues by service (staff, building footprint, physical resources, clients, etc.) and allocate the existing cost accounts by percentage while reconciling to the total existing budget for the group of services being reviewed. Senior management and finance staff members were engaged in this process using a tool developed by Munro Strategic Perspective and adapted for ease of use by staff of the County.[2] The results for Wave 1 can be seen in Appendix B. The insights gleaned from the results will be discussed further below.

Results Based Accountability™ Performance Indicators

Key Performance Indicators (KPI) were developed for all services in the inventory using the framework of Results Based Accountability™ (RBA). The RBA framework was developed specifically for use in the public and not-for-profit sectors and it focuses on the desired outcomes of services, not just the inputs and outputs of a service. The schematic below illustrates how RBA balances four questions in creating and utilizing KPIs for decision-making:

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[2] Matthew Buis and David McRoberts deserve enormous credit for the work they did on the financial allocation tool. The result places the County on the leading edge for service-based financial visibility in Ontario.
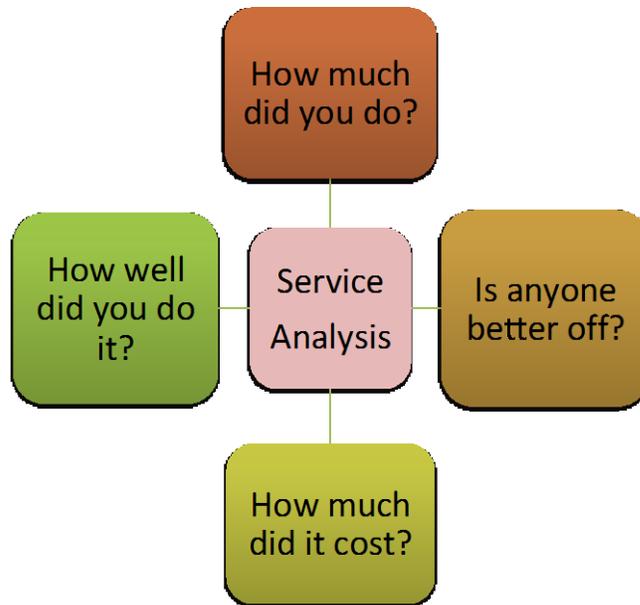
Management staff from all Wave 1 services were engaged in identifying KPIs for the services. The KPIs were selected using a process created by Munro Strategic Perspective for identifying useful, relevant and cost effective metrics in each category. Wherever possible, existing metrics were identified and classified using the RBA framework above in order to maximize the cost effectiveness of the process. Additional metrics were identified for services in order to fill out the RBA framework, particularly metrics that answer the question: "Is anyone better off?". Metrics selected were then defined using a Data Dictionary developed by Munro Strategic Perspective to ensure continuity and comparability of data over time. These metrics are both an internal control and a tool for continuous improvement for the County. In July, County Council approved a recommendation from STW that RBA form the basis for metrics to be used in County budget business plans going forward.

The list of metrics identified through STW Wave 1 are attached as Appendix C and listed by service. The KPIs range from low-level process metrics to high-level strategic metrics and will be used for different purposes in ongoing management of the services. The data for the metrics is not reported here except where used to support insights or recommendations. In some cases the KPI has been identified but the data collection methodology and process have yet to be formalized.

Service Analysis

The service analysis phase of Wave One included several steps:

- Appreciative Inquiry Interviews with senior management, Project Team and Ad Hoc Committee
- Day in the Life visits in all services including interviews with front line staff and some clients
- Review of all legislation related to Wave 1 services
- Review of key documents provided about Wave 1 services including audits, council reports, service standards, budgets, letters of understanding and best practices reports from other levels of government or peers
- Review of information provided by specific peer municipalities of the County as identified by Senior Management and Munro Strategic Perspective

The insights from this review will be discussed in each service section respectively.

Service Improvement Opportunities

Throughout each stage of the Wave 1 service review, opportunities for improvement were identified for analysis. They may have arisen from staff comments, management insights, data analysis, financial analysis, best practice or peer reviews. Each Service Improvement Opportunity (SIO) was catalogued and key information identified in order to determine the viability of the opportunity and to prioritize the opportunities for implementation based on their complexity, likelihood of support, cost and benefit. The criteria for prioritizing SIOs were chosen and weighted by the Senior Management Team. The criteria are set out below:

- Community Impact
- Cost Impact
- Chance of Success or Failure
- Capacity (Human or Physical Resources)
- Timing
- Strategic Alignment
- Council Priority

The complete list of SIOs is attached as Appendix D to this report. SIOs related to a specific group of services are listed within the corresponding section of this report.

Stakeholder Engagement

The engagement of community and area municipality stakeholders is

being conducted by the staff of the County of Oxford. Their results will be reported to Council at an appropriate time in future.

The next sections of this report will be organized by the department which is the owner for the delivery of the service. While this somewhat contradicts the effort to create a service inventory that is decoupled from departmental structure, it still acknowledges that each service must have an owner regardless of the fact that it may require the participation of multiple departments to ensure delivery.