

## PFCC Decision Report

<b>Report reference number:</b> 105/19
<b>Classification:</b> Not protectively marked
<b>Title of report:</b> Publication Protocol
<b>Area of county / stakeholders affected:</b> Countywide - Southend, Essex and Thurrock
<b>Report by:</b> Darren Horsman (AD Communications and Public Engagement) <b>Date of report:</b> 1 July 2019 <b>Enquiries to:</b> Darren Horsman (AD Communications and Public Engagement)

### 1. Purpose of the report

The purpose of this report is to gain approval of the revised Publication Protocol. This includes agreement of published information which should be subject to an extra layer of scrutiny prior to publication.

### 2. Recommendation

That the PFCC approves the proposed Publication Protocol attached at Appendix 1.

### 3. Benefits of the proposal

The Publication Protocol provides a more transparent and clearer line of accountability for the publication of material and allows for a more comprehensive transparency section on the PFCC website. Following previous discussions at SMT, the proposed protocol introduces a two stage sign off process for the publication of material on certain pages on the PFCC website and an additional accuracy check on the publication of decision reports. It also establishes a process for quarterly dip sampling of published information to ensure that this is still accurate and that new information is being published in a timely manner.

### 4. Background and proposal

The Publication Process was discussed by SMT in December 2018, again in January 2019 and again in May 2019. Following the first two discussions the action

plan attached at Appendix 2 was developed to tighten the publication processes, provide clarity of accountability and centralise publication rights.

New functionality has now been added to the PFCC's website which allows certain pages to be locked down so a two stage sign off is required prior to material being publically visible. This also creates an auditable trail for those pages with this additional sign off. As this new level of sign off creates significant additional steps in the approval process and restricts the normal way a page would be updated, it is proposed that this is only used for key areas of the website rather than for all pages. This will provide accountability at an appropriate level while ensuring the overall publication process is timely and efficient.

A new transparency page on the PFCC website links to all of the information identified within the Specified Information Orders relating to the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, Essex Police and the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner. This provides a single location for members of the public to access a complete set of information.

## **5. Alternative options considered and rejected**

Alternative options were considered including centralising the publication of all items on the website to a single person and remaining with a distributed model of publication without any checks. These two options are not recommended as they either do not provide sufficient control of the publication process or create a single point of failure within a highly bureaucratic process that needs to be robust and efficient. In contrast, the proposed solution uses new technical functionality to provide greater reassurance and maintain both the resilience and efficiency of the system.

## **6. Link to Strategic Objectives**

The proposals set out in this report contribute to the delivery of the Police & Crime Plan and the Fire & Rescue Plan by providing greater transparency to the public, therefore promoting confidence in the force and service and in the role of the Commissioner. The proposal also supports the Commissioner in fulfilling his statutory obligations around the publication of information, as set out in the Freedom of Information Act and Specified Information Orders.

## **6. Operational implications**

There are no operational implications arising for either Essex Police or the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service as a result of this decision.

## **7. Financial implications**

The development of the new functionality on the website cost £1,353.

## **8. Legal implications**

This proposal will provide greater reassurance that we are meeting our publication obligations under the Specified Information Orders as well as assisting in responding appropriately to requests made under the Freedom of Information Act.



**Publication**

Is the report for publication?

YES

NO

If 'NO', please give reasons for non-publication (Where relevant, cite the security classification of the document(s). State 'None' if applicable)

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If the report is not for publication, the Chief Executive will decide if and how the public can be informed of the decision.

**Redaction**

If the report is for publication, is redaction required:

1. Of Decision Sheet?	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Of Appendix?	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>
	NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

If 'YES', please provide details of required redaction:

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Date redaction carried out: .....

<p><b><u>Treasurer / Chief Executive Sign Off – for Redactions only</u></b></p> <p>If redaction is required, the Treasurer or Chief Executive is to sign off that redaction has been completed.</p> <p>Sign: .....</p> <p>Print: .....</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Chief Executive/Treasurer</b></p>
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**Decision and Final Sign Off**

I agree the recommendations to this report:

Sign: Jane Gardner

Print: JANE GARDNER

PFCC/Deputy PFCC

Date signed: 3 JULY 2019

I do not agree the recommendations to this report because:

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.....  
.....

Sign: .....

Print: .....

PFCC/Deputy PFCC

Date signed: .....

