

## PFCC Decision Report

**Report reference number:** 001/21

**Classification:** Not protectively marked

**Title of report:** Public Perception Survey

**Area of county / stakeholders affected:** Countywide

**Report by:** Kirsty Smith (Commissioning Officer)

**Date of report:** 11 January 2021 (received 17 March 2021)

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### 1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1. To seek approval for the allocation of up to £83,600 over 2 years (£41,800 per annum) to Social Market Strategic Research (SMSR) Ltd in the form of a standard contract from the Community Safety Fund for the provision of an ongoing public perception survey.

### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1. Approve the allocation of up to £83,600 over 2 years (£41,800 per annum) from the Community Safety Fund to SMSR to deliver an ongoing public perception survey.

### 3. Benefits of the proposal

- 3.1. Gathering data on public views and experiences of policing and criminal justice in Essex provides valuable insight that can be utilised by Essex Police and the PFCC in reviewing and designing community engagement initiatives and service provision. For instance, the data gives the PFCC an indication of how victim services are used and can help to identify where there are gaps in provision, areas of good practice, or unmet need.
- 3.2. SMSR is the existing provider of this service and was the successful bidder through a fair procurement process. SMSR demonstrated strong experience and knowledge in market research within the criminal justice sector.
- 3.3. SMSR also provides flexibility in supporting the delivery and development of the survey. This has already been demonstrated during the Coronavirus pandemic,

with additional COVID-related questions being added to the current survey without any cost or difficulty.

- 3.4. SMSR being both the current provider and the successful bidder has also meant there is no break in service or data collection. This provides a continual stream of data that will enable the production and scrutiny of longitudinal trend information.

#### **4. Background and proposal**

- 4.1. The aim of the public perception survey is to seek to understand, on an ongoing basis, the public's views and experiences of policing and criminal justice services in Essex. This will provide information about the service provided to victims, including their engagement with the police, specialist support agencies, community safety and their experiences of the wider criminal justice system. It will also provide insight into the reasons and drivers of particular views and perceptions. The outcomes will allow the Police and the PFCC to ensure compliance with the Victims' Code and improve the services delivered and commissioned.
- 4.2. The contract with SMSR commenced in 2017 (contract reference: 2017/002) for a period of 3 years. The contract expired in April 2020. A Single Tender Action was completed to extend this contract in order for arrangements to be made to re-procure the survey. A full tender was completed by the PFCC and Essex Police in September 2020.
- 4.3. The new specification was similar to the previous service, to ensure continuity of service and analysis of data. The provider will deliver:
- An electronic version of the raw data to enable the commissioners to undertake bespoke analysis and interrogation
  - Descriptive analysis of the results presented in an easily understood and accessible way
  - Results available and presented on a quarterly basis and analysed at a county and district level, with annual confidence intervals of less than 4% per district
  - Quarterly reports that are clearly presented in an easy to understand format and accessible and relevant to a range of senior stakeholders. Quarterly reports are to include:
    - o A presentation of quantitative results
    - o A presentation and visualisation of descriptive statistics including geographic or demographic variations and trends
- 4.4. The contract term is 31 October 2020 to 30 October 2022.
- 4.5. The full value of the contract is £167,200 over 2 years (£83,600 per annum). Essex Police and PFCC split the cost equally and therefore the PFCC allocation is £83,600 over 2 years (£41,800 per annum)

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

- 5.1. A decision to cease this survey would reduce the ability of the force and PFCC to identify and respond to perception information of residents on the activities of the Police and services commissioned by the PFCC.

## **6. Police and Crime Plan**

- 6.1. The public perception survey gives the PFCC insight into the views of Essex residents about local policing and criminal justice activity which can help review existing activity and inform future systems and processes.
- 6.2. The proposal also aligns with the commitment made to communications and engagement within the Police and Crime Plan, whereby the PFCC commits to “Giving the public a voice in local policing so they feel they are heard, feel able to come forward and report crime and anti-social behaviour and have confidence in the way that the police protects them.”

## **7. Police operational implications**

- 7.1. Essex Police contributes to this contract on a 50:50 basis and uses the information to review the effectiveness and impact of its community engagement activity.

## **8. Financial implications**

- 8.1. The PFCC will provide £41,800 per annum for the next two years from the Community Safety Fund to SMSR. This allocation is matched by Essex Police.
- 8.2. This tender was completed in line with 7f Procurement procedures.

## **9. Legal implications**

- 9.1. All legal obligations are identified within the contract, drafted on the PFCC's behalf by the 7 Force Procurement team.

## **10. Staffing implications**

- 10.1. There are no staffing implications arising from this report.

## **11. Equality and Diversity implications**

- 11.1. The contract seeks to gain the views of Essex residents. The provider monitors and reports on key demographic and geographic information of respondents to ensure the views of a representative group are used to inform future planning.
- 11.2. The survey will engage a representative sample of the public of Essex. A representative sample includes but is not limited to:
  - Clear demographic and geographic representation of the landscape of Essex.
  - Traditionally less heard groups such as ethnic minorities, and those with disabilities (physical, learning, and sensory).

- Victims of crime and various cohorts defined by the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime

**12. Risks**

12.1. There are no risks identified with the award of this contract. The current supplier was successful in bidding for the contracted service through an open and transparent procurement process.

**13. Governance Boards**

13.1. This decision has followed an open, transparent and thorough procurement process evaluated by representatives of Essex Police and the Essex PFCC.

**Report Approval**

The report will be signed off by the PFCC Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer prior to review and sign off by the PFCC / DPFCC.

Chief Executive / M.O.

Sign:



Print: P. Brent-Isherwood

Date: 17 March 2021

Chief Finance Officer / Treasurer

Sign:



Print: Julia Berry

Date: 17 March 2021

**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)

.....None.....

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

2. Of Appendix?

YES

NO

NO

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

.....N/A.....  
.....

Date redaction carried out: .....

**Treasurer / Chief Executive Sign Off – for Redactions only**

If redaction is required, the Treasurer or Chief Executive is to sign off that redaction has been completed.

Sign: .....

Print: .....

**Chief Executive/Treasurer**

**Decision and Final Sign Off**

I agree the recommendations to this report:

Sign:  .....

Print: Roger Hirst

**PFCC**

**Date signed: 18 March 2021**

I do not agree the recommendations to this report because:

.....  
.....  
.....

Sign: .....

Print: .....

**PFCC/Deputy PFCC**

**Date signed: .....**