

PFCC Decision Report

Please ensure all sections below are completed

Report reference number: 048 - 22

Classification (e.g. Not protectively marked/restricted):

Title of report: Short term communication support

Area of county / stakeholders affected: Countywide

Report by: Darren Horsman

Chief Officer: Darren Horsman

Date of report: 10/03/2022

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1. Executive Summary

This report seeks to gain agreement for the provision of short-term communication support to backfill for a member of staff being on a short-term secondment to Essex County Fire and Rescue Service.

2. Recommendations

The PFCC agrees to reallocate £40,000 from the PFCC's office salary costs for short-term communication support to back fill for the Communications and Engagement Manager who is currently on a short-term secondment to Essex County Fire and Rescue Service.

3. Background to the Proposal

The PFCC's Communication and Engagement Manager was seconded to Essex County Fire and Rescue Service in January 2022 for a nine-month period. The

external recruitment process to back fill this position for the nine months was ultimately unsuccessful, however, this only became clear in early January.

Given the lead in time to recruit and vet potential candidates it is proposed that rather than go out to recruit again a range of short-term support is secured to support the Communications and Engagement Team and ensure the PFCC's Communication and Engagement Strategy can be delivered.

4. Proposal and Associated Benefits

The key strategic deliverables within the PFCC's Communications and Engagement Strategy for the remaining period of the secondment are largely focused on listening to the public and partners through a programme of external engagement and developing engaging content to help the public understand the work undertaken by the Commissioner.

Work has been reallocated within the Communications and Engagement team and it is proposed that short term resources are secured to help develop content aligned to the PFCC's strategic plans. This would be split between a number of suppliers specialising in written, video or social content.

5. Options Analysis

The Commissioner could decide not to take up this option but instead to go out to recruit a short-term replacement, however, given the timelines involved in recruitment this option is not recommended. The Commissioner could also decide not to commit this funding but instead to reduce the communication activity undertaken by their office. This option is not recommended as it would materially affect the delivery of the Commissioner's strategic priorities and make it harder for the public to have a say in policing and fire and rescue services within the county.

6. Consultation and Engagement

Discussions around the proposal have been undertaken with communication colleagues across the county to explore other alternatives, we have also discussed the options within the Communications and Engagement team, at the Commissioners Senior Management Team and with HR.

7. Strategic Links

Delivery of the Commissioner's Communications and Engagement Strategy is aligned to delivery of both the Police and Crime Plan and Fire and Rescue Plan. His proposal will ensure that the strategy is delivered and plays its part in engaging with communities across Essex, hearing their concerns and wants and clearly setting out the actions the Commissioner is undertaking as their elected representative.

8. Police operational implications

There are no operational policing implications.

9. Financial implications

This support will cost £40,000 which will be reallocated from the existing staffing budget within the PFCC's office budget. £30,000 is available to be reallocated from the 2022/23 staff budget (equivalent to six months budget of the Communications and Engagement Manager) and £10,000 from the 2021/22 underspend (of which £15,000 relates to three months budget for the Communications and Engagement Manager). The funding will be used to contract a range of suppliers to provide bespoke content.

10. Legal implications

There are no legal implications beyond the normal contracting of services.

11. Staffing implications

This will provide additional support for the Communications and Engagement Team while a member of that team is undertaking a secondment.

12. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion implications

There are no direct equality and diversity implications from this decision.

13. Risks and Mitigations

This decision will mitigate against the risk that the PFCC will be unable to deliver against their agreed Communications and Engagement Strategy.

14. Governance Boards

This proposal has been discussed at the PFCC's Senior Management Team on the 15th of March.

15. Links to Future Plans

This proposal is related to the delivery of the Commissioner's Communications and Engagement Strategy.

16. Background Papers and Appendices

Appendix 1 – Communications and Engagement Strategy 2021-2024

Report Approval

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

Chief Executive / M.O. Sign: 

Print: Darren Horsman - Deputy MO

Date: 14.4.2022

Chief Finance Officer Sign: 

Print: Janet Perry

Date: 14 April 2022

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 NO 2. Of Appendix? YES NO

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

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Date redaction carried out:

Chief Finance Officer / 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 / Chief Finance Officer

Decision and Final Sign Off

I agree the recommendations to this report:

Sign: 

Print: Roger Hirst

PFCC

Date signed: 21 April 2022

I do not agree the recommendations to this report because:

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Sign:

Print:

PFCC/Deputy PFCC

Date signed: