

PFCC Decision Report

Report reference number: 051-23

Classification: Not protectively marked

Title of report: Interim arrangement for “myRJ” case management system 2022-23

Area of county / stakeholders affected: Countywide

Report by: Emma Goddard (Restorative and Mediation Service Manager)

Chief Officer: Greg Myddelton (Strategic Head of Partnerships and Delivery)

Date of report: 17th April 2023

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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. This report outlines the case for the Essex Restorative and Mediation Service (ERMS) to make a payment to Ivstitia of £8,250 for the use of the “myRJ” case management system (CMS) between November 2022 and November 2023. This will ensure the service maintains access to a case management system whilst a procurement and information security process supported by 7F Commercial takes place in relation to the service’s future CMS.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That the PFCC approves the allocation of £8,250 from the PFCC’s 2023-24 RJ Fund to Ivstitia for the provision of the “myRJ” case management system from November 2022 until November 2023.
- 2.2. That the PFCC signs the Service Level Agreement attached at Appendix 1 to cover the agreement between the PFCC and Ivstitia for the period 1st November 2022 – 31st October 2023.

3. Background to the Proposal

- 3.1. The previous contract between the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and Ivstitia for access to the “myRJ” system came to an end in November 2022. ERMS has therefore been using “myRJ” on a rolling monthly basis since then.
- 3.2. In September 2022, a decision report (136-22) was submitted regarding a renewal with Ivstitia for a further three-year contract for the “myRJ” system, which has been used by the Essex Restorative and Mediation Service (ERMS) since 2016.
- 3.3. Feedback on decision sheet 136-22 requested confirmation as to whether a procurement process should be followed before renewal and ERMS sought advice from 7F Commercial on this point. Following discussion, it was advised that, due to the value of the contract, a limited procurement process should be undertaken prior to renewal.
- 3.4. On 24th November 2022, the ICT Category Manager for 7F Commercial confirmed that he would need to engage with ICT and Information Security in relation to a system review. This review remains ongoing.
- 3.5. Ivstitia has requested that ERMS enters into an arrangement for an interim period to cover the use of the “myRJ” system whilst the procurement process is undertaken. Ivstitia has produced a Service Level Agreement (attached at Appendix 1) to cover the period 1st November 2022 – 31st October 2023 which should be signed by the PFCC and Ivstitia.

4. Proposal and Associated Benefits

- 4.1. It is proposed that ERMS enters into a fixed-term arrangement with Ivstitia for the use of the “myRJ” case management system from November 2022 to November 2023 at a cost of £8,250. Having an interim one-year agreement with Ivstitia for access to “myRJ” will reduce any risk of disruption of the service and cessation of access to and processing of case information for ERMS staff and volunteers.
- 4.2. Making an arrangement until November 2023 also allows time for the IT and procurement process to be undertaken and resolved. Should the outcome of that process recommend that ERMS switches to any alternative system, this would also allow time for all cases to be migrated to the new system and a training plan for ERMS staff and volunteer teams to be enacted.

5. Options Analysis

- 5.1. The PFCC could choose not to agree to this fixed-term agreement and to continue on a rolling monthly basis. This risks the provider revoking access or increasing costs. This would have a significant and disruptive impact on the delivery of the ERMS.

6. Consultation and Engagement

- 6.1. Discussion has been undertaken with the Strategic Head of Partnerships and Delivery as well as ERMS's team of paid staff and volunteers and there is support for the proposal to continue with "myRJ" until at least November 2023.

7. Strategic Links

- 7.1. The Police and Crime Plan 2021-2024 commits to "*promote and expand the use of Restorative Justice across the county as a proven method to aid recovery for victims and reduce reoffending*". This proposal allows the service to manage cases efficiently and to share information securely between staff and volunteers.
- 7.2. The Police and Crime Plan 2021-2024 also commits to "*Invest in those who volunteer for the roles embedded in the PFCC's Office, including Restorative Justice Volunteers, to ensure they feel skilled, valued and appreciated*". The case management system allows volunteers access to the technology they need to perform their roles to a high standard.

8. Police operational implications

- 8.1. An efficient Restorative Justice service means that more referrals can be processed and managed by the service, the majority of which come from Essex Police. An efficient and effective ERMS has the potential to result in a reduction in workload for Essex Police officers, as RJ can reduce the escalation of issues and is proven to improve victim satisfaction and reduce re-offending.

9. Financial implications

- 9.1. The PFCC allocates £8,250 from the 2023-24 RJ budget to Ivstitia for one-year access to the "myRJ" case management system. The cost of a CMS is already factored into the annual ERMS budget, as has been the case since the "myRJ" system was first procured in 2016.

10. Legal implications

- 10.1. This agreement will be subject to a separate SLA (attached at Appendix 1), similar to one that was previously in place for the service's use of the CMS between 2016 and 2022.

11. Staffing implications

- 11.1. The "myRJ" system provides an effective and efficient process for staff and volunteers to log, monitor and share ERMS case information. Approval of this decision report will ensure continued access to the system until November 2023.

12. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion implications

- 12.1. All victims of crime are entitled to access Restorative Justice to aid their recovery from the harm they have experienced. Anyone can be a victim of crime and the Essex Restorative and Mediation Service seeks to make itself as accessible as possible, encouraging and facilitating referrals from a wide range of partners including Essex Police, local authorities, housing associations and the Probation Service, as well as promoting self-referrals through a dedicated website, publicity activities, and marketing materials. The service tracks demographic information on referrals to monitor how well it achieves its goal of making RJ available to all.
- 12.2. The “myRJ” system is securely accessible from any location with internet access and therefore enables staff and volunteers to access the software on their personal or work computers for their ease of use.

13. Risks and Mitigations

- 13.1. This is a one-year agreement. There is a small risk that the ERMS will be subject to early exit fees if the service no longer requires access to “myRJ” prior to the conclusion of this period. However, it is not anticipated that this is a realistic prospect.
- 13.2. Failure to have a CMS in place creates a risk to the effective and efficient delivery of RJ. It would limit the service’s ability to track and monitor cases and share relevant information with staff and volunteers.

14. Governance Boards

- 14.1. This proposal has been subject to discussion at the RJ Strategic Group and with a representative of the PFCC’s Senior Management Team.

15. Links to Future Plans

- 15.1. This proposal contributes to plans and strategies including the Police and Crime Plan, the PFCC’s RJ Pledge, and various local criminal justice and community safety strategies and plans. It also allows ERMS to remain in line with changing national policy around Restorative Justice.

16. Background Papers and Appendices

Appendix 1 - Service Level Agreement (SLA) between Ivstitia Limited & Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex

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: P. Brent-Isherwood

Date: 21 April 2023

Chief Financial Officer

Sign: 

Print: Janet Perry

Date: 02 June 2023

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:

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.

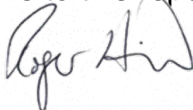
Sign:

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: 09/06/2023

I do not agree the recommendations to this report because:

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.....

Sign:

Print:

PFCC/Deputy PFCC

Date signed: