

## PFCC Decision Report

**Please ensure all sections below are completed**

**Report reference number:** 195-23

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

**Title of report:** Public Perception Survey Contract Extension

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

**Report by:** Darren Horsman

**Chief Officer:** Darren Horsman

**Date of report:** 01/12/2023

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### 1. Executive Summary

To seek approval for the allocation of £41,800 from the Community Safety Fund to Social Market Strategic Research (SMSR) Ltd for the extension of their contract to deliver an ongoing public perception survey. The original contract was agreed in decision report 001-2021.

### 2. Recommendations

That the Commissioner agrees to extend the contract with SMSR agreed through decision report 001-2021 for a further year from October 2023 to October 2024 and authorises the Monitoring Officer or Deputy Monitoring Officer to sign the contract extension form attached at annex a on their behalf.

### 3. Background to the Proposal

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.

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. Through decision report 001-2021 the Commissioner agreed to a two-year contract with the option for a further two single year's extension.

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

3.1. The initial contract term was 31 October 2020 to 30 October 2022 and this extension covers 31 October 2023 to 30 October 2024. No decision report was done for the 2022-2023 extension.

3.2. The full value of the contract is £83,600 per annum. Essex Police and PFCC split the cost equally and therefore the PFCC allocation is £41,800 per annum.

#### **4. Proposal and Associated Benefits**

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.

SMSR is the existing provider of this service having secured the contract through a fair procurement process in 2021. This decision report is for a 12 month extension to the existing contract.

SMSR being both the current provider will mean that 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.

## **5. Options Analysis**

The Commissioner could have decided to alter the way they seek the public views or stop doing this at all. A decision to cease this survey would reduce the ability of the force and PFCC to identify and respond to public opinion on the activities of the Police and services commissioned by the PFCC.

The option of changing the survey or approach to seeking the public's views was discussed at the Commissioner's Senior Management Team and the decision was taken to extend the contract for a further year and allow for any revision to align with the new Police and Crime Plan after the 2024 election.

## **6. Consultation and Engagement**

Senior leaders within Essex Police were engaged prior to making this decision as were the lead officer in the performance management unit. They all strongly supported the extension of this contract.

## **7. Strategic Links**

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.

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."

## **8. Police operational implications**

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.

## **9. Financial implications**

The PFCC will provide £41,800 for 2023-24 from the Community Safety Fund to SMSR. This allocation is matched by Essex Police. Once this payment has been made there will be £1,512 remaining in the 2023-24 Community Safety Fund.

## **10. Legal implications**

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

## **11. Staffing implications**

There are no direct staffing implications.

## **12. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion implications**

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.

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

## **13. Risks and Mitigations**

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.

## **14. Governance Boards**

This decision was discussed by the Commissioner's Senior Management Team in July 2023.

## **15. Links to Future Plans**

This is not linked directly to any future plans.

## **16. Background Papers and Appendices**

Appendix A – Contract Extension

**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: .....11/01/2024.....

Chief Finance Officer

Sign: 

Print: Janet Perry

Date: 9 January 2024

**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 Chief Finance Officer 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: 19/01/2024

I do not agree the recommendations to this report because:

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

Sign:

Print:

**PFCC/Deputy PFCC**

Date signed: