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Police and Crime  
Commissioner  
for Warwickshire

## Decision Application WPCC20022

### OPCC Website development

<b>Application Date:</b>	12 May 2017	<b>Name of Applicant:</b>	Neil Tipton
<b>Application Decision Reference: WPCC20022</b>			
<b>1. Summary of the application</b>			
<p>The OPCC website is now three years old and was originally developed to support the work of the previous Commissioner. As such it does not fully reflect the structure of the current Police and Crime Plan and has a number of back-end developments which, due to changes in the mechanisms used to engage with the public and other changes within the OPCC, are now redundant or difficult to configure in order to support a revised site structure.</p> <p>The website therefore requires some development work to remove these legacy sections and implement a streamlined structure which supports the new Police and Crime Plan. A general design refresh can also be implemented at minimal cost at the same time, ensuring the website continues to reflect developments in presentation and is fully accessible on mobile devices. It will also help to underline visually the transition to a new PCC and the delivery of the new Police and Crime Plan.</p> <p>Following negotiation with the supplier, the OPCC can take advantage of design work undertaken for the other PCC's websites to keep costs to a minimum, while still enjoying an upgraded site and unique identity.</p>			
<b>2. Background information:</b>			
<p>The current OPCC website was launched in 2014, with the supplier chosen through an open tender process. The site is well-designed and overall functions well, however several aspects of the original build now require modification in order to restructure the site and place greater emphasis on the work to deliver the police and crime plan.</p> <p>When the site was commissioned, it was built with a user-registration system in place that would allow registered users to easily submit and track messages to the OPCC, as well as making any Freedom of Information requests and complaints. It could also generate 'community alerts' for users, highlighting content on the website which matched their stated interests on registration and alerting them when new</p>			

such content was added. In practice however, this system was seldom used by the public, with relatively few registrations and virtually no logins from registered users after their initial subscription. In addition, the categories used for tagging content were aligned with the first PCC's Police and Crime Plan and are in many cases no longer equivalent or relevant.

This legacy underlying site structure and the largely defunct messaging system is not something that can be altered without the input from the supplier, hence the need to approve a small amount of further spending on website alterations.

Since designing the original Warwickshire OPCC website, the supplier has won further work to design similar sites for the West Mercia and Cumbria OPCCs to an updated page template design. A modified version of these page templates can be adapted for use on the Warwickshire OPCC site, helping to reduce costs and also ensuring the website remains compliant with the latest standards in responsive web design (for compatibility with mobile phones and tablets). By default, this will also create a visual distinction between the 'old' and 'new' versions.

Since the original site was built, there have also been developments with the Wordpress software with which it is created. A new 'Content builder' module gives greater flexibility to modify page layouts without the need to ask the supplier to modify page templates. This will be built into the revised version of the site.

Further discussions with the supplier to refine the scope of the required changes has also resulted in a 20% reduction of the initially quoted price.

### **3. Whether additional information/report is attached to support this decision application**

**NO**

### **4. Expected benefits (non financial)**

An improved and easier-to-use website would present the Commissioner's work in a more accessible and transparent way and would improve the presentation on mobile devices – one of the primary ways the public now views the site.

The removal of legacy back-end components and the integration of the latest content management system plugins, plus a revised structure, will make the site easier and quicker to update, providing some efficiency savings. The removal of the user registration/messaging system will also remove a potential duplicate route for contacting the OPCC, which has caused some issues previously in the management of responses to correspondents.

A streamlined site structure which is correctly aligned with the Police and Crime Plan would allow for better showcasing of the work of the office and increased transparency through an improved and easier to navigate Freedom of Information Publication Scheme.

**5. Impact of not approving the application**

The structure of the current website would remain difficult to modify and adapt to better reflect the current Police and Crime Plan, as the back-end would not benefit from an upgraded interface and the removal of legacy features, limiting the scope for change and complicating ongoing site updates.

The increasing number of users who solely access the website via mobile devices would continue to see a limited portion of the home page and other landing pages within the site, making finding information more difficult. There would also be ongoing difficulties with the management of multiple and sometimes duplicate routes for correspondence.

**6. Costs**

**Capital:** *Exempt from disclosure under S.43 (commercial interests) of the FOIA*

**7. Savings:**

This is a capital investment for which there are no immediately identified savings, however the implementation of a Content Builder module should reduce the need for future template changes, for which a fee would otherwise be charged by the supplier.

**8. Equality and Diversity Implications:**

None identified. The revised site will be equality and impact assessed prior to re-launch.

**9. Treasurer's comments**

There is no specific budget provision for this work in 2017/18, however, the costs could be financed from the savings arising from the Deputy PCC vacancy, if upgrading of the web site is the preferred option. The saving generated in April would offset this cost, however there is little 'contingency' within the 17/18 PCC office budget and any future 'one-off' spending would also need to be fully financed, given the work the PCC wishes to undertake this year.

It appears that value for money has been ensured, by the supplier utilising work undertaken for other OPCC's web design services to drive down costs. There may be other opportunities throughout the year to utilise any underspending on the minor revenue budgets that do exist for IT related equipment, services and other costs in 17/18 ranging from £500 to £2000, but this is uncertain at this stage of the year given that we are currently only in period 2. However, this will be kept under review throughout the year through the monthly budget monitoring process.

**10. Legal/Monitoring Officer comments**

One of the key responsibilities of the PCC is to communicate and engage with the public. An effective, professional and user friendly website is critical to achieving this aim.

The provider was awarded the original contract following a competitive tendering process and has agreed to reduce costs for this new work following negotiation.

This website upgrade in my opinion is critical to the work of the PCC and represents good value for money.

The OPCC's Contract Regulations (issued under the Corporate Governance Scheme), requires contracts of less than £5,000 to be let with a supplier best able to provide value for money and a supplier already in the purchasing system. Both these criteria are met, as is the requirement to record and retain the reasons for selection, through the publication of this decision notice.

**Decision of the Police and Crime Commissioner**



**PCC Signature:**

**Date of Decision: 15 May 2017**