

Report Reference Officer Decision to Renew The Pan Essex Counter Fraud Data Matching and VIPER Contract

Date: 04/08/22

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Executive Summary:

This report details the decision to renew the existing partnership Pan Essex Counter Fraud Data Matching and the Vulnerable Intelligent Persons Emergency Response (VIPER) with incumbent supplier Vigilant Applications Limited for the past period of five years.

The contract renewal is for a period of five years with a costs to Tendring District council totalling £20,532.

The fees and charges provide value-for-money when compared with IT industry market rates for specialist data- matching services.

A key qualitative consideration has been the very significant and real strategic cyber security risks surrounding the renewal of this contract, together with the potential for catastrophic Council reputational loss should an information data breach occur.

The contract renewal is funded through existing council budgets and external funding. The procurement route is a direct award through the HealthTrust Europe LLP Framework Agreement and accords with the Council's Budget and Policy framework.

Background:

Tendring District Council has been part of the Essex partner consortium that led to the contractual tender and development of the Pan Essex Counter Fraud Data Matching service led by Chelmsford City Council in 2017. The tendered contract was awarded to Vigilant Applications Ltd for a period of five years.

Subsequently in 2018, our Council proposed and led the original principle of the development of a Vulnerable Intelligent Persons Emergency Response - subsequently named VIPER – that re-utilises the Vigilant counter fraud data platform/ service to identify and report on all persons affected by an emergency planning incident BUT specifically to identify, focus specialist services and safeguard vulnerable persons from harm during a civil emergency.

The VIPER concept was subsequently adopted as a project by the Essex Online Partnership (EOLP) and a subsequent report to the Essex Chief Executives' Association (including Essex Fire and Rescue and Essex Police) was agreed 18 July 2018. VIPER was subsequently designed and adopted by a multi-agency team and contractually included within the overarching Pan Essex Counter Fraud Data Matching contract through a contractual addendum. VIPER became operational in November 2019. Since that time VIPER has gone from strength to strength and is now the 'go to' Essex partner civil emergency planning and response system.

This short report and officer decision proposes that the Council, renew the Managed Service contract with Intergence Services Limited for a further three (3) years with the option to extend for a further two (1+1) years.

Reasons for the decision:

The continuation of the Managed Network Support contract will offer many benefits, including:

- 1. A trusted technology support partner.** Vigilant have proven and continue to prove: their technical specialist expertise and capabilities in this specialist technology area of data-matching. Additionally, they have proven experience of securely managing/handling personal, personal sensitive and health data.
- 2. Value for Money.** This contract was openly tendered by Chelmsford City Council on behalf of Essex partners five years ago. At that time their tendered bid was significantly lower than all others received. The fees and charges provided for the next five year period offer value-for-money when compared with IT industry market rates. By year four of the contract the counter fraud service had identified Essex-wide savings of over £4 million.
- 3. Partner ethos.** They have demonstrated their willingness to work alongside Essex partners from a perspective of ongoing development, training and education.
- 4. Business Continuity.** Minimal service disruption and business continuity risk to a highly complex range of IT Essex partner support services.

All of the above factors sign-posted Essex partners to conclude that renewal of the Pan Essex Counter Fraud Data Matching and VIPER contract for a further five years with the incumbent supplier is the correct decision - crucially, delivering this contractual service element within existing budget during difficult financial circumstances with a highly knowledgeable and trusted partner.

A key qualitative consideration has been given to the very significant and real strategic cyber security risks surrounding the renewal of this contract, together with the potential for catastrophic Council reputational loss should we suffer a large loss of data or cybersecurity breach. Vigilant Apps Ltd has a strong reputation for safeguarding and managing personal, personal sensitive and including health data in this regard.

Financial Summary:

The new five year contract will be funded through both existing budgets and external funding.

The contract renewal partnership costs for Tendring District council total £20,532 over the five year period is

Data Matching Year 1	Data Matching Years 2-5	VIPER Year 1	VIPER Years 2-5	Total
£1,461	£2,304	£9,167	£7,600	20,532

Legal:

This proposed investment is in accordance with the Council's Budget and Policy framework. The partner procurement route will be through the HealthTrust Europe LLP Framework Agreement which is fully compliant with the Council's Procurement Procedure Rules.

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