

## DECISION MAKING MEETING

**23 September 2020, 09:15 - TEAMS**

### **Attendees**

David Lloyd (Commissioner)  
David Gibson (Deputy Commissioner)  
Chris Brace (Chief Executive)  
Amie Birkhamshaw (Director of Strategy)  
Ian Rooney (CFO)  
Nigel Atkins (Senior Communications Officer)  
Gavin Miles (Deputy Chief Executive)

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### **AGENDA**

1. Minutes of Meeting of 16 September 2020
  
2. Website accessibility

## DECISION MAKING MEETING

**16 September 2020, 13:00 - TEAMS**

### **Attendees**

David Lloyd (Commissioner)  
David Gibson (Deputy Commissioner)  
Chris Brace (Chief Executive)  
Amie Birkhamshaw (Director of Strategy)  
Ian Rooney (CFO)  
Nigel Atkins (Senior Communications Officer)  
Gavin Miles (Deputy Chief Executive)

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## MINUTES

### **1. Minutes of Meeting of 16 September 2020 Approved**



DMM Draft Minutes  
1st September amenc

### **2. Volunteers Strategy Refresh**



20200910 Volunteer Strategy  
Strategy DMM.docx 2020 - 2025; Final v4.1

**Draft discussed and comments made for incorporation or research. The office is invited to comment to author with a view to consulting in 2 weeks. AB to approve final draft for consultation.**

- 3. Northchurch Road Safety Fund Proposal DL advised for transparency that he used to be county councillor for this division and is a firend of the current county councillor, but no pecuniary or other interest in the topic. The works proposed are not within current policy for this fund, but it had previously been deferred and not rejected for further discussion with the county council. That having taken place**

**the proposal is approved but comment back that this type of project involving highway works that are really the purview of the highway authority should not be put forward for this fund in future.**



DMM Northchurch  
RSF 201819 Bid Sept 2

<b>MEETING</b>	<b>Decision Making Meeting</b>																
<b>DATE</b>	23 September 2020																
<b>TITLE OF REPORT</b>	Website compliance with Digital Accessibility regulations																
<b>SUBMITTED BY</b>	Nigel Atkins, Communications Manager, OPCC																
<b>PURPOSE OF REPORT</b>	Outlining the requirement and a solution for Herts OPCC website to comply with the Public Sector Bodies Accessibility Regulations 2018 with a deadline of 23 September 2020																
<b>DECISION(S) REQUIRED</b>	To agree purchase of software plug-in programme for website																
<b>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS</b>	<table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: center;">2020/2023</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Expenditure</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Licensing of Recite Me plug in for 36 months</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£5,940 +vat</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fluid installation cost</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£180</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total</b></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>£6,120 +vat</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p style="text-align: center;">Or alternatively</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: center;">2020/21</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Expenditure</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Licensing of Recite Me plug in for 12 months</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£2,500 +vat</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fluid installation cost</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£180</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total</b></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>£2,680 +vat</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	2020/2023	Expenditure	Licensing of Recite Me plug in for 36 months	£5,940 +vat	Fluid installation cost	£180	<b>Total</b>	<b>£6,120 +vat</b>	2020/21	Expenditure	Licensing of Recite Me plug in for 12 months	£2,500 +vat	Fluid installation cost	£180	<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,680 +vat</b>
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<b>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</b>	Any websites not adhering to new measures face enforcement action under the Public Bodies Accessibility Regulations 2018.																
<b>EQUALITIES IMPACTS</b>	Potential breach of Equality Act 2010 and Disability Discrimination Act.																
<b>FREEDOM OF INFORMATION EXEMPTION SECTION IF APPLICABLE</b>	<i>n/a</i>																

## INTRODUCTION

- i. The Commissioner is asked to consider purchasing a licensing agreement for a software plug-in programme to make the Hertfordshire OPCC website comply with the Public Sector Bodies Accessibility Regulations 2018. Existing websites should be compliant by 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2020.
- ii. The regulations cover ensuring all public sector website services and content can be used and understood by the widest possible audience. This includes those with disabilities and impairments such as blindness, deafness, dyslexia, mobility issues and learning difficulties.
- iii. Our website currently does not meet the required Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.1) which have been introduced since it was designed.
- iv. The proposed plug-in called Recite Me could be installed quickly and easily on our site and offers improved the functionality and features we are required to meet. Recite Me was identified by our website builders Fluid Studios as the programme that would work the best with our website.

## BACKGROUND

- v. Sample testing of public sector websites, such as ours, to ensure compliance to the new regulations is being conducted by the Government Digital Service, part of the Cabinet Office. Failures to comply can also be reported by members of the public.
- vi. Herts OPCC is legally responsible for our website meeting the accessibility requirements. Enforcement action can be taken by The Equality and Human Rights Commission. The EHRC can use their legal powers against offending organisations, including investigations, unlawful act notices and court action. The regulations are covered by the Equality Act 2010 and Disability Discrimination Act.
- vii. Basic compliance to the WCAG 2.1 regulations involves a test of over 300 criteria on each website. There are full details on the [government website here](#) and key parts include allowing people to use:
  - use a keyboard instead of a mouse
  - change browser settings to make content easier to read
  - use a screen reader to 'read' (speak) content out loud
  - use a screen magnifier to enlarge part or all of a screen
  - use voice commands to navigate a website.
- viii. There are two methods available to give an historic website the new accessibility features required.
  1. Redesign a new website from scratch. Fluid Studios have estimated it would cost between £15-20,000 to make a new Herts OPCC site
  2. Purchase a licence for a plug-in which works in conjunction with the current website.
- ix. Recite Me has been identified as the most relevant plug-in for our needs. Our website designers Fluid Studios recommended it. It is also used by many small to medium-sized public sector bodies across the UK, such as District and Borough Councils and other PCC offices.

- x. The plug-in works by superimposing an additional user menu of buttons over the existing website. Users can then adjust the website to suit their disability. For example, text can be read out loud, magnified, altered in colour and translated into different languages.
- xi. Recite Me is also used by the [Herts Constabulary website](#). To view how it works click on the cog info graphic on the home page, which is above the red and green circles in the right-hand corner of the home screen.
- xii. Recently both the Complaint Resolution Team and TESA in the office have independently raised with me the requirement for our website to meet the new regulations. Moving forward compliance will be assessed by CoPaCC when assess when awarding transparency certification to Herts OPCC.

#### **PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION(S) AND RATIONALE**

- xiii. There is the option to purchase a one year or three licence at a cost of £5,940 +vat or £2,500 +vat respectively. The longer contract offers better value for money per year and as Recite Me is cloud based it could be used on our new website if we have it redesigned in the intervening period.
- xiv. Herts OPCC has a public sector equality duty to be proactive in making our website accessible to all members of the public.
- xv. As there are no plans to redesign the Herts OPCC website before the next PCC elections in May 2021 at the earliest, it is recommended we purchase the plug-in to ensure compliance with the regulations.