



Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority

Decision Report

Report reference number: 017-24

Government security classification: Not protectively marked

Title of report: Water and Waste Water Supply and Billing Services (2024 – 2027)

Area of county / stakeholders affected: Service wide

Report by: Sarah Rogers (Environment Officer)

Date of report: 4th July 2024 (submitted for approval 24th July 2024)

Enquiries to: Karl Edwards (Director of Corporate Services)

1. Purpose of the report

This report requests approval to award a contract to Wave Utilities for the supply of water and waste water, including the Bureau Service from LASER, to the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority. It is proposed that this contract will commence by September 2024, subject to contract signature, and is a three-year contract with an optional two-year extension.

2. Recommendations

The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner is requested to:

1. Approve contract award to Wave Utilities for the supply of water and waste water services to building assets owned by the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority, commencing by September 2024, subject to contract signature. This is a three-year contract with an estimated contract value of [REDACTED]. There is an optional two-year extension to this contract, bringing the estimated total contract value to [REDACTED].
2. Approve the appointment of LASER's bureau service for water and waste water services at a cost of [REDACTED] per supply per annum. This equates to a total value of [REDACTED] per year across the estate portfolio.

3. Provide an electronic signature for the call-off contract order form for water and waste water services as specified under framework reference Y22013, subject to satisfactory review by the Monitoring Officer. The draft contract is attached at Appendix C.

3. Benefits of the proposal

The Authority participated in a mini competition under the LASER framework for the supply of water and waste water services to Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority assets, in collaboration with and led by 7 Force Commercial. This has been of benefit to the Authority owing to economies of scale from a combined water volume and minimising the resources required to carry out a procurement process. 7 Force Commercial selected a public sector framework procurement route which was chosen as market research suggests that the maximum market saving can be achieved via a framework. The proposed water and waste water supplier has demonstrated a strong understanding of the estate portfolio and access requirements for water meter exchanges.

In conjunction with this, the Authority will benefit from the LASER water bureau service, which validates all water and waste water invoices. This also provides a reporting platform for access to water consumption across the estate portfolio. The framework management that LASER will provide will bring protection to the performance within the contract.

The Authority will remain with the business default retail supplier should this contract not be agreed.

4. Background and proposal

In 2017, the water market deregulated for England and Wales, giving businesses the opportunity to choose their water supplier. The aim of the deregulation was to drive competition within the market, with estimated savings of between 3% and 5%, and to improve water efficiencies for businesses. Since this time, the Authority has remained with the business default retail suppliers, which are currently Wave Utilities and Castle Water.

This procurement process was led and evaluated by LASER, which was instructed by 7 Force Commercial. This new contract will permit the installation of automatic meter reading devices to support our water consumption monitoring and bring potential water efficiencies and financial savings.

5. Alternative options considered and rejected

There are alternative framework providers that could have been used for the 7 Force mini competition, such as the Crown Commercial Services (CCS) Water, Wastewater and Ancillary Services 2. The CCS framework was considered by 7 Force Commercial since it is the largest public procurement organisation in the U.K. and therefore has a large collective purchasing power. However, 7 Force Commercial favoured the LASER framework over CCS due to its good working relationship and performance as an incumbent supplier for the 7 forces for energy services. It is also understood by 7 Force Commercial that CCS works in an environment which lacks transparency and data provision to 7 forces, as seen under the national Collaborative Law Enforcement Programme (CLEP).

Owing to economies of scale in terms of resources and minimal water consumption at some of the Authority's assets, it was not deemed beneficial to carry out a standalone procurement process for the supply of water and waste water to building assets owned by the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority.

6. Strategic priorities

This tender process was undertaken in collaboration with 7 Force Commercial, and therefore aligns with two of the key priorities of the Fire and Rescue Plan:

- To collaborate with our partners.
- To make best use of our resources.

7. Operational implications

There are no operational implications arising from this report.

8. Financial implications

The Authority is aware that there are two elements to a water and waste water invoice; wholesale and retail charges. Wholesale charges vary geographically across the county and are subject to increase every April throughout the duration of the contract, as determined by the wholesaler.

Procurement of a service when using any framework is subject to a fee. This fee will be recovered through supply billing at [REDACTED] Whilst this does seem high, this includes the start to end procurement process on our behalf and equates to the Authority's low water consumption in proportion to the number of water supplies across the estate portfolio.

The service has put forward the following budget proposals for fiscal year 2024/25:

[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

The proposed contract cost for both water and wastewater services is as follows:

[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

The Authority understands that water and waste water charges are subject to water consumption across the estate portfolio.

Awarding this contract is estimated to provide a cost saving of [REDACTED] per annum. This is based on the current annual expenditure which has been estimated at [REDACTED] using estimated default rates.

LASER's bureau service for water and waste water services across the estate portfolio will be invoiced annually at a cost of [REDACTED] per annum to the Authority, equating to [REDACTED] per supply per annum.

9. Legal implications

This contract has been procured by Kent County Council, the owners of the LASER framework, as a mini competition in accordance with Public Contracts Regulations of 2015 (PCR 2015), as amended.

10. Staffing implications

There are no staffing implications arising from this report.

11. Equality and diversity implications

The actions being taken will not have a disproportionate impact on individuals with protected characteristics (as defined within the Equality Act 2010), when compared to all other individuals, and will not disadvantage people with protected characteristics.

Race	N	Religion or belief	N
Sex	N	Gender reassignment	N
Age	N	Pregnancy & maternity	N
Disability	N	Marriage and Civil Partnership	N
Sexual orientation	N		

12. Risks

There are no risks arising from this report.

13. Governance Boards

This decision report was approved at the ECFRS SLT Strategic Meeting on 30th April 2024. As a result, this decision report was progressed to the PFCC's Strategic Board meeting on 13th June 2024.

14. Background papers

Appendix A – 7 Forces Ranking and Results Report

Appendix B – Regulation 84 Report

Appendix C – Draft Call-Off Contract Order Form – The Procurement and Supply of Water Supply and Sewerage Services under Framework Reference Y22013

Decision Process (17-24)

Step 1A - Chief Fire Officer Comments

(The Chief Fire Officer is asked in their capacity as the Head of Paid Service to comment on the proposal.)

I agree with the recommendation

.....
.....

Sign:



Date: 02/07/24

Step 1B – Consultation with representative bodies

(The Chief Fire Officer is to set out the consultation that has been undertaken with the representative bodies)

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Step 2 - Statutory Officer Review

The report will be reviewed by the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority's ("the Commissioner's") Monitoring Officer and Chief Finance Officer prior to review and sign off by the Commissioner or their Deputy.

Monitoring Officer

Sign:



Print: P. Brent-Isherwood

Date: 7 August 2024

Chief Finance Officer

Sign:



Print: Neil Cross

Date: 02/07/24

Step 3 – 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)

Subject to redaction, as set out below

If the report is not for publication, the Monitoring Officer will decide if and how the public can be informed of the decision.

Step 4 – 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: 09/08/2024

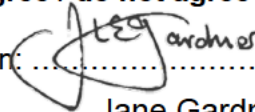
If redaction is required, the Chief Finance Officer or the Monitoring Officer are to sign off that redaction has been completed.

Sign:  Print: Darren Horsman - Deputy MO

Date signed: 18.9.2024

Step 5 - Decision by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner or Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner

I agree / do not agree the recommendations to this report:

Sign:  (DPFCC)
Print: Jane Gardner

Date signed: 08/08/2024