

WRS Board: 16th February 2023

Update on progress of the automation project

Recommendation **Members are asked to note the report.**

Introduction

At the first meeting of 2022/23, members agreed to create a reserve of £150,000 from last year's underspend to fund the implementation of automation of data entry for customers, enabling a range of services to be addressed by the client entering data in forms on the WRS website, which would then upload directly into our IDOX Uniform back-office system. This includes the automation of payments for Licensing, so our host authority Bromsgrove District Council will collect fees for the 6 partners and pass money back to the other 5. Officers agreed to provide a short progress report at each Board meeting between then and the actual implementation of the project.

Report

Progress on selecting a final suitable system has been concluded. The wider management team and IT support team met and evaluated all three potential providers. The capability of the products was reviewed, and we considered what was shown in both demonstrations and discussions alongside feedback from multiple local authority users of the various systems.

As a result of these discussions the decision was made to procure through the Government portal framework and direct award to Victoria Forms.

Victoria Forms are a well-known established organisation with a wealth of expertise in this field and have experience of producing a similar set up in another well know regulatory shared partnership. Out of all the potential providers Victoria Forms met the specification to the highest level and the management team are confident that they can deliver the outcomes required within our proposed timescales.

A list of the priority forms (based on submission volumes, complexity and value that can be gained by improving submissions) were provided to the supplier and work has already commenced. An initial project meeting was held in January and the first test form has already been produced for initial checking and testing by the team.

Alongside the wider automation project officers have also been discussing the implementation of electronic ID Cards in the taxi trade for both safeguarding and enforcement measures. As there is

only one supplier on the market for this technology the procurement process has been followed and discussions have taken place with the development team to discuss the design, objective and testing requirements for the ID cards before a roll out date is agreed.

Contact Point

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