

ORIGINATOR: Chief Finance Officer

DECISION NO. 2020/16

REASON FOR SUBMISSION: To give consent to the use of electronic signatures for 7 Force Procurement, policy documents and other decision notices during the COVID 19 pandemic.

SUBMITTED TO: The Police and Crime Commissioner

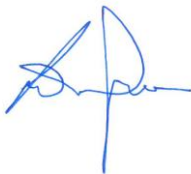
SUBJECT: Electronic signatures for decision making during COVID 19 situation

SUMMARY: To operate procurement as per the Scheme of Governance and Consent but with the flexibility to use the delegated individuals' responsible electronic signatures.

RECOMMENDATION: To confirm approval to use electronic signatures for contract completions, policy documents and other decision-making papers due during COVID 19 pandemic. Approve the process to amend the scheme of governance and consent to take account of the temporary measures in place in the event of future situations.

OUTCOME/APPROVAL BY: PCC/CHIEF EXECUTIVE/CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER
(Delete as appropriate)

The recommendations as outlined above are approved.



Signature

Date 08/04/2020

DETAIL OF THE SUBMISSION

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The pandemic COVID 19 has meant that the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Commissioner himself are following Government guidance and working from home.
- 1.2 However, this has meant that the physical signing of documents has not been feasible in this ongoing period.
- 1.3 Therefore, the use of electronic signatures, if appropriate, alongside email consent means that business as usual can continue and agile decision making can be in force at this time.

2. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The only other option available is for the relevant officers and the Commissioner physical signing documents either at the workplace or by post.
- 2.2 This option has been discounted as too time consuming, would delay decision making and goes against current Government advice.

3. FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Financial implications will arise from not adopting this process and delaying necessary contract completions and changes to policies to ensure business as usual. In addition, any necessary emergency measures can be operational at the earliest opportunity if this approach is adopted.
- 3.2 In the event of any delay this may result in penalties from some organisations.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

- 4.1 Some risks of electronic signatures include forgery and as with traditional paper- and-ink signatures, forgery or identity theft is a real risk for electronic signatures. To reduce this risk, electronic signatures should be kept secure. There is also the possibility that a person could alter a digitally-signed document after it is signed. The risk of this kind is not limited to electronic signatures. As with traditional paper-and-ink agreements, both parties should keep their own copies of what was agreed, just in case.
- 4.2 This is only meant to be a temporary measure until the Government restrictions are lifted and should not be seen as business as usual. This should only be reserved for the current pandemic and any other national emergencies which mean physical access to the office is restricted.

ORIGINATOR CHECKLIST (MUST BE COMPLETED)	PLEASE STATE 'YES' OR 'NO'
Has legal advice been sought on this submission?	Yes
Has the PCC's Chief Finance Officer been consulted?	Yes
Have equality, diversity and human rights implications been considered including equality analysis, as appropriate?	Yes
Have human resource implications been considered?	Yes
Is the recommendation consistent with the objectives in the Police and Crime Plan?	Yes
Has consultation been undertaken with people or agencies likely to be affected by the recommendation?	Yes
Has communications advice been sought on areas of likely media interest and how they might be managed?	No
In relation to the above, have all relevant issues been highlighted in the 'other implications and risks' section of the submission?	Yes

APPROVAL TO SUBMIT TO THE DECISION-MAKER (this approval is required only for submissions to the PCC).

Chief Executive

I am satisfied that relevant advice has been taken into account in the preparation of the report, that the recommendations have been reviewed and that this is an appropriate request to be submitted to the PCC.



Signature:

Date 08/04/2020

Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer)

I certify that:

- a) there are no financial consequences as a result of this decision,
OR
- b) the costs identified in this report can be met from existing revenue or capital budgets,
OR
- c) the costs identified in this report can be financed from reserves
AND
- d) the decision can be taken on the basis of my assurance that Financial Regulations have been complied with.

Signature:



Date: 08/04/2020

PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION: *Information contained within this submission is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and wherever possible will be made available on the OPCC website. Submissions should be labelled as 'Not Protectively Marked' unless any of the material is 'restricted' or 'confidential'. Where information contained within the submission is 'restricted' or 'confidential' it should be highlighted, along with the reason why.*