

DMPC Decision – PCD 2032

Title: Home Office Grant Variation National Police Chief’s Council (NPCC) Drones Programme grant Beyond Visual Lines of Sight 2025/26.

Executive Summary:

The National Police Chiefs’ Council (NPCC), hosted by the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), continues to deliver its National Drones Programme, including development of Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS) capabilities.

The Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) approved the request by the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) to accept Home Office grant funding for this purpose, with an annual limit of up to £5.00m (PCD 1382 refers). A grant agreement for £2.33m in 2025/26 exists, and the Home Office has now approved an in-year grant award of a further £2.77m, taking the total 2025/26 grant to £5.10m, broken down as follows:

- £2.33m original 2025/26 allocation.
- £2.77m additional in-year grant.

This paper seeks approval to accept up to £5.10m of Home Office funding to continue the NPCC Drones Programme during 2025/26.

This additional funding will enable the NPCC Drones Programme to accelerate delivery of BVLOS capability, enhance national coordination, and meet agreed Key Performance Indicators and deliverables set by the Home Office.

Recommendation:

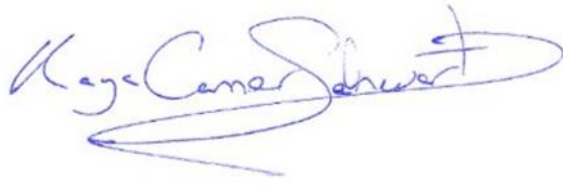
The Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime is recommended to:

1. Approve the acceptance of the Home Office grant allocation for 2025/26, totalling £5.10m, including the additional £2.77m awarded through the grant variation.

Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime

I confirm I have considered whether or not I have any personal or prejudicial interest in this matter and take the proposed decision in compliance with the Code of Conduct. Any such interests are recorded below.

The above request has my approval.



Signature

Date 08/04/2026

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE TO THE DMPC

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. In 2022/23, the NPCC implemented the development of a Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS) capability for police drone operations. At the time, drone operations were limited by technological capability and a restrictive safety framework requiring an operator to maintain visual line of sight. A BVLOS capability enables longer deployment with reduced operational burden and cost.
- 1.2. The MPS sought approval to bid for and accept Home Office funding for the programme in 2022/23 and up to £5.00m per annum in subsequent years. This was approved under PCD 1382, and the Home Office has funded the programme every year since 2022/23.
- 1.3. The NPCC Drone Programme has evolved from its initial funding phase (2022–2026) into a broader national capability programme under Scheme 143: Police Use of Drones – Future Capabilities.
- 1.4. The programme continues to focus on delivering BVLOS capability across policing in England and Wales through:
 - National governance frameworks.
 - Standardised procurement.
 - Training and operational guidance.
 - Central coordination of expertise.
- 1.5. For 2025/26, the Home Office initially awarded £2.33m of funding but has awarded an additional £2.77m bringing the total to £5.10m.
- 1.6. A revised Grant Agreement has been issued, including:
 - Updated financial breakdowns (capital and resource).
 - Key performance indicators (KPIs).
 - Delivery expectations aligned with Home Office objectives.

2. Issues for consideration

- 2.1. The development of BVLOS capability remains central to transforming police drone operations, removing the requirement for continuous visual line of sight, and enabling extended deployment durations, reduced operational resource requirements, and lower costs compared to traditional air support.
- 2.2. Enhanced drone capability supports improved evidential capture, reduced risk to officers, increased operational efficiency, and lower environmental impact compared to helicopters.
- 2.3. The additional Home Office funding is critical to scaling the programme nationally, meeting delivery timelines, and supporting innovation and capability development.

- 2.4. The NPCC Drone Programme supports national policing but delivers direct benefits to London through the MPS, and BVLOS capability will enhance response to crime and incidents, improve victim outcomes, increase public confidence, and support prevention and detection of high-harm offences

3. Financial Comments

- 3.1. The NPCC Drone Programme is fully funded by up to £5.10m of Home Office grant funding, including the FY2025/26 £2.77m uplift, and the revised Grant Agreement includes updated funding totals, defined capital and resource allocations, and delivery-linked KPIs.

4. Commercial Comments

- 4.1. There are no commercial implications.

5. Legal Comments

- 5.1. Under paragraph 4.8 of the MOPAC Scheme of Consent and Delegation, the DMPC has delegated authority to approve “bids for grant funding made and all offers of grant funding; and/or, where appropriate, a strategy for grant giving.”
- 5.2. The acceptance and provision of Grant Agreements to support this function are legal under Schedule 3, paragraph 7 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, which provides that:
 - a. 7(1) The Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime may do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the exercise of the functions of the Office.
 - b. 7(2) That includes entering into contracts and other agreements (whether legally binding or not).

6. GDPR and Data Privacy

- 6.1. The MPS is subject to the requirements and conditions placed on it as a 'State' body to comply with the European Convention of Human Rights and the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018. Both legislative requirements place an obligation on the MPS to process personal data fairly and lawfully in order to safeguard the rights and freedoms of individuals.
- 6.2. Under Article 35 of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Section 57 of the DPA 2018, Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA) become mandatory for organisations with technologies and processes that are likely to result in a high risk to the rights of the data subjects.
- 6.3. Currently, no personal data is processed within the programme scope. Should this change, Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs) will be completed.

7. Equality Comments

- 7.1. MOPAC is required to comply with the public sector equality duty set out in section 149(1) of the Equality Act 2010. This requires MOPAC to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations by reference to people with protected characteristics. The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 7.2. An initial equality screening indicates no adverse impacts on protected groups. As the programme develops, further assessments will be undertaken where necessary.

8. Estate Implications

- 8.1. The programme will continue to operate within existing MPS estate arrangements. No additional property requirements have been identified.

9. Environmental Implications

- 9.1. The programme supports environmental objectives by:
- Reducing reliance on helicopters.
 - Promoting sustainable technology use.
 - Following appropriate waste disposal guidance for drone equipment.

10. Background/supporting papers

- MPS Paper - NPCC Drone BVLOS Programme 2025/26.
- Revised Grant Agreement (FY2025/26).
- Grant Variation Notice.
- PCD 1382.

Public access to information

Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and will be made available on the MOPAC website following approval.

If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the decision it can be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods should be kept to the shortest length strictly necessary.

Part 1 Deferral:

Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? NO

If yes, for what reason:

Until what date:

Part 2 Confidentiality: Only the facts or advice considered as likely to be exempt from disclosure under the FOIA should be in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a **Part 2** form –No.

ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION	<i>Tick to confirm statement (✓)</i>
Head of Unit: The Chief Finance Officer and Director of Corporate services has reviewed the request and is satisfied it is correct and consistent with the MOPAC's plans and priorities.	✓
Legal Advice: The MPS legal team has been consulted on the proposal.	✓
Equalities Advice: Equality and diversity issues are covered in the body of the report.	✓
GDPR/Data Privacy GDPR compliance issues are covered in the body of the report.	✓
Drafting Officer Stephen Kalyango has drafted this report in accordance with MOPAC procedures.	✓
Director/Head of Service: The Chief Finance Officer and Director of Corporate Services has reviewed the request and is satisfied it is correct and consistent with the MOPAC's plans and priorities.	✓

Chief Executive Officer

I have been consulted about the proposal and confirm that financial, legal and equalities advice has been taken into account in the preparation of this report. I am satisfied that this is an appropriate request to be submitted to the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kendall", is centered within a light gray rectangular background.

Signature

Date 07/04/2026