

Subject: TOEX Capabilities Environment & TOEX Data Platform

Originator: D/C/Supt Doug Blackwood - TOEX Director and DCI Patrick Thompson - TOEX Technical Lead

Decision no. 41/2026

Reason for submission: For Decision

Submitted to: Colin Sutton - Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk

Summary:

The Tackling Organised Exploitation (TOEX) Programme operates two distinct technical workstreams.

One is referred to as the Capabilities Environment and is concerned with the delivery of applications which can be accessed by police officers and police staff (both within and external to TOEX) to complete specific policing tasks. Non-exhaustive examples include automated transcription of suspect interviews, the machine translation of mobile device extractions, the enhancement of accessibility options across policing data, or the visualisation of network analysis across various datasets.

The other workstream is referred to as the Data Platform and is concerned with the storing, modelling, manipulation, visualisation, and holistic use of multiple policing data sets towards TOEX thematic work.

Both technical workstreams require ongoing technical expertise across architecture, development and testing alongside ongoing service management.

Whilst the TOEX Programme directly employs technically literate staff, supporting expertise has been provisioned through previous financial years from Simpson Associates who have provided support across both TOEX Programme technical workstreams.

This decision report requests approval to extend an existing compliant G Cloud contract to Simpson Associates to ensure continued technical support to both services outlined above. The proposed extension is permitted within the original contractual terms and procurement framework provisions.

Recommendation:

Seeking approval / authorisation for a one-year extension to an already compliantly awarded G Cloud agreement (7F-2026-I679) to Simpson Associates to maintain and develop ongoing capabilities for the TOEX Capabilities Environment and the TOEX Data Platform.

Outcome/approval by: Colin Sutton – Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk

The recommendations as outlined above are approved.

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Colin Sutton', with a stylized flourish underneath.

Date: 24/09/2026

Detail of the submission

1. Objective:

- 1.1 Approval for a one-year extension to the existing compliant G Cloud 14 contract with Simpson Associates

2. Background:

A high-level overview of the associated work is noted below for each workstream.

2.1 TOEX Capabilities Environment (CE)

The CE is a TOEX owned Microsoft Azure cloud environment.

This cloud environment sits outside of established Constabulary infrastructure; accordingly, it is not aligned to a @[constabulary]. police.uk domain.

This cloud environment acts as the platform upon which multiple developed applications are hosted.

Each of these applications has a defined policing use case.

- 2.2 At the time of writing this submission, there are twelve deployed applications in the environment which are being accessed by over 6,000 registered officers and staff across all 43 English and Welsh Constabularies, the National Crime Agency and Police Scotland.
- 2.3 At the time of writing, these applications have been accessed over 69,446 times and have delivered evidenced savings opportunities to policing in excess of £754 million.
- 2.4 Qualitative feedback demonstrates the positive investigative feedback the use of these tools has realised in addition to a calculated saving of over 116,000 hours of officer and staff time saved.
- 2.5 As the CE is provisioned outside of existing policing ICT structures, and is expressly designed to process policing workloads, it requires a high-level technical governance and a robust architecture and service management wrap-around to ensure that it can stand up the scrutiny of processing policing data up to and including OFF-SEN level marking.
- 2.6 At the time of provisioning the CE, there was no functioning central national body which allowed for the delivery of such architecture, applications development and ongoing servicing of technical products as described and provided by the TOEX Programme through the CE.
- 2.7 Since the CE was provisioned, it is noted that the Police Digital Service (PDS) has created a similar environment, however, a period of engagement with PDS and the NPCC National Data and Analytics Office (NDAO) identified that the financial implications of merging the two platforms was not viable, whilst maintaining both

platforms in parallel allowed for operational resilience and enhanced delivery options across policing.

- 2.8 Subsequent engagements with PDS in Q1 of the 2026 calendar year resulted in confirmation of the CE as a national policing system by PDS.
- 2.9 Policing and the Home Office's confidence in the CE resulted in TOEX being commissioned to deliver the national application to support OP BEACONPORT, law enforcement's response to Baroness Casey's review into group-based child sexual abuse and exploitation (CSAE).
- 2.10 To date, TOEX have contracted resources from Simpson Associates to assist in the delivery of the CE. Simpson Associates are a data transformation and data engineering company who are a Microsoft gold partner and experts in Azure delivery.
- 2.11 Simpson Associates have worked with the TOEX Programme since 2021 and have been instrumental in the realisation of the CE and its smooth roll-out to multiple constabularies and Regional Organised Crime Unit teams.
- 2.12 Resources from Simpson Associates have worked "hand in glove" with both the TOEX Programme technical resources and with TDCOM (contracted cyber assurance resource) to provision the architecture and Azure structures that make up the operational structures of the CE. They have also provisioned the full-time service desk and ongoing security monitoring and reporting structures which surround the CE and its hosted applications.
- 2.13 Simpson Associates have been a crucial part of delivering the legitimacy of the CE, ensuring that it remains objectively secure and updated to receive the latest Microsoft updates and thus, when taken together with the assurance work completed by TDCOM, can be accepted as a suitable environment for handling policing workloads.
- 2.14 To date, the skills brought by Simpson Associates to the TOEX Programme have assisted the Programme in delivering policing's first independently cloud hosted environment that offers secure access to operational applications which have, to date, saved UK policing over £754 million and deliver improved investigative and intelligence outcomes.

2.15 TOEX Data Platform

The TOEX data platform resides within the wider Azure tenancy associated to Norfolk & Suffolk Constabularies.

Whilst the overarching delivery of Azure services to Norfolk and Suffolk remains the responsibility of Norfolk & Suffolk ICT, the bespoke data platform delivered by the TOEX Programme has benefitted greatly from the data engineering and Azure architecture specialists from Simpson Associates.

- 2.16 Staff from Simpson Associates have been appropriately vetted and have been given relevant administrator permissions to work and deliver support to the TOEX Programme's data aspirations within the Norfolk and Suffolk Azure environment.
- 2.17 To date, the combined work of Simpson Associates resources alongside Programme technical staff has provisioned a UK first platform whereby multiple previously siloed data sets have been brought together, modelled, and the outputs shared in real time with nine Constabularies to provide strategic insight into Violence Against Women and Girls and missing persons thematic threat in addition to providing bespoke operational outcomes across county lines and CSAE risk areas.
- 2.18 In the last year, over 70 officers and staff from across the Athena consortium of forces have accessed the products hosted via the Data Platform with feedback such as: "We have got Scan Assist. First time I used it I found a 13-year-old not on CE radar who clearly should have been." (West Mercia Superintendent) being received.
- 2.19 Most recently, the Data Platform has been used in Norfolk to assist in the delivery of OP STEADFAST (the force's review of its response towards missing children).
- 2.20 TOEX innovate regularly within the data platform, including experimenting with novel data science techniques and processes. An example of this saw the Data Platform being used to create the algorithm now deployed in the CE via the ICE application.
- 2.21 More recently, testing of prioritisation algorithms for use against OP BEACONPORT, law enforcement's response to Baroness Casey's review into group-based child sexual abuse and exploitation (CSAE), have been conducted within the TOEX Data Platform, enabling proactive operational taskings to be passed to the TOEX operational teams.
- 2.22 Simpson Associates engagement makes these work products successful due to their knowledge of contemporary architecture and ability to assist in experimentation in new techniques, many of which would not have been possible had the Programme relied solely on Norfolk & Suffolk ICT staff.

3. Areas for consideration:

- 3.1 It is relevant to note that the entirety of the TOEX budget is grant funded centrally by the Home Office's Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Team.
- 3.2 Norfolk Constabulary's association to the TOEX Programme is primarily one of hosting for functions such as payroll, HR, systems access, and office space provision. Norfolk Constabulary acts as the conduit to hold the Home Office grant to then enable spending towards TOEX Programme costs.
- 3.3 The work noted above is entirely funded from the TOEX grant and is not a draw on Constabulary funds.

4. Other options considered:

- 4.1 The technical work of the TOEX Programme has delivered over £754 million in savings to operational policing over the last 30 months with multiple technical workstreams in progress. This delivery, as noted above, is intrinsically linked to established relationships to both Simpson Associates and TDCOM.
- 4.2 As this funding settlement period covers a one-year period only, it is accepted that the ongoing delivery plan would be adversely affected in efforts to identify alternative delivery partners.
- 4.3 Whilst annual “cliff edge” grant funding is often precarious, TOEX’s position of providing the primary technical structure to OP BEACONPORT, in addition to the evidenced high volumes of use across all technical workstreams indicates that funding agreements for financial year 2027-28 will be supported and an option to extend the existing agreement is appropriate.

5. Strategic aims/objective supported:

- 5.1 Having noted that the TOEX Programme is a national policing provision, hosted by Norfolk Constabulary, it is also noted that the operational and technical workstreams of the TOEX Programme align to Norfolk’s 2025-2029 Police and Crime Plan (accepting these may change under the leadership of the new PCC).
- 5.2 Priorities include:
 - a. Reducing serious violence, especially in the Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) space
 - b. Bringing offenders to justice
 - c. Enhancing policing through technology
 - d. Improving conviction rates...are all positively impacted by Programme delivery
- 5.3 At a national level, in addition to the work linked to the national group-based CSE enquiry, the Programme is part of the government’s child sexual exploitation taskforce, it operates a cross border / cross region response to organised exploitation thematic investigations and provides the first (and only) cloud platform hosting multiple applications to all of policing across England and Wales.

6. Financial and other resource implications:

- 6.1 Cost of existing contract which runs until 31 March 2027 - **£2,048,600** – this is already in train.
- 6.2 Cost of extending this contract from 1 April 2027 to 31 March 2028 - **£2,390,600.**

7. Carbon Emissions and Other Environmental Implications:

Carbon Emissions

7.1 The estimated impact on our carbon emissions that must be reported under current statute from this proposal is:

Emission Categories:	Increase in tCO ₂	Saving in tCO ₂
Scope 1 – Fuel – Building Heating	0	0
Scope 1 – Fuel – Transport	0	0
Scope 2 – Electricity	0	0

Environmental Implications

7.2 The CE is a cloud-hosted platform, hosted within Microsoft's UK South data centre. This is a necessary function of delivering operational services to all policing in England and Wales.

7.3 It is acknowledged that the context of data centres and their environmental impact is of contemporary concern. It is noted that none of the applications currently hosted within the CE leverage generative Artificial Intelligence, the primary driver of environmental concern.

8. Other implications and risks:

8.1 All financial risks for Programme spending are held by the Home Office CSE team, to whom the TOEX Programme are accountable.

8.2 Chief Constable Paul Sanford remains the TOEX Data Controller; however, this position is considered to be finite and will cease when the Programme leaves Norfolk Constabulary hosting to the impending National Police Force structure. The Programme is being considered for inclusion in the initial movements associated with the police reform programme.

Originator checklist (must be completed)	Please state 'yes' or 'no'
Has legal advice been sought on this submission?	No
Has the PCC's Chief Finance Officer been consulted?	No
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?	Yes
Have sustainability and environmental factors been considered? (e.g. biodiversity, employee commuting, business travel, waste and recycling, water, air quality, food and catering and estates construction)	NA
In relation to the above, have all relevant issues been highlighted in the 'other implications and risks' section of the submission?	Yes

Is this report a Confidential Decision?

No

If Yes, please state reasons below having referred to the [PCC Decision Making Policy](#)

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: 23/09/2026

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: 29/09/2026

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.