

REQUEST FOR DEPUTY MAYOR FOR FIRE AND RESILIENCE DECISION – DMFD214

Title: LFC Procurement of a Staff Survey Platform

Executive summary:

This report requests the approval of the Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience (the Deputy Mayor) to authorise the London Fire Commissioner (LFC) to commit revenue expenditure, up to the amount set out in part two of the report, for the purposes of procuring a staff survey platform for three years, with the option to extend by one year. The maximum expenditure would be for the amount set out in part two of the report, over the maximum four-year contract term.

The LFC has an existing contract for a staff survey platform, awarded in November 2020, which comes to an end on 25 November 2023. A longer contract term offers the continuity needed for staff familiarity, upskilling and access to results; and offers clearer data trends. It minimises back-end systems integration and administration time, eliminating considerable staff time associated with any change in provider.

The London Fire Commissioner Governance Direction 2018 sets out a requirement for the LFC to seek the prior approval of the Deputy Mayor before “[a] commitment to expenditure (capital or revenue) of £150,000 or above as identified in accordance with normal accounting practices”.

Decision:

That the Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience authorises the London Fire Commissioner to commit revenue expenditure of up to the amount set out in part two of the report for the procurement of a staff survey platform for three years, with an option to extend by one year.

Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience

I confirm that I do not have any disclosable pecuniary interests in the proposed decision.

The above request has my approval.

Signature:



Date:

23/10/2023

PART I – NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE TO THE DEPUTY MAYOR

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. Report LFC-23-091 to the London Fire Commissioner (LFC) explains that, on 25 November 2023, the current contract with Culture Amp for LFC's survey platform expires. The existing two-year contract, awarded in November 2020, was extended by a year. The LFC proposes to procure a three-year contract (with the option to extend by one year) for a survey platform, with a total contract value not exceeding the value set out in part two of the report.
- 1.2. Culture Amp's current costs, set out in part two, are lower than similar leading global survey providers may charge. A higher maximum spend for the total four-year contract is proposed to accommodate for the realities of inflation and higher operating costs. However, all efforts will be made to achieve a similar annual rate through price negotiation within the procurement process.
- 1.3. This represents value for money compared to paying for single surveys, given the size of LFB (5,700 staff); the capability for continual use of the platform; and the functions and quality of data it provides, as set out in this report.
- 1.4. His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) recommended in the 2018-19 inspection that the LFC needs a consistent approach to staff feedback, which results in improvements being made. Regular surveys are part of the LFC Communications and Engagement Strategy 2023-26.
- 1.5. The LFC's operational model is driven by data, meaning LFB staffing, resources and response are data-driven by the communities the LFC serves. By using an advanced survey platform, the LFC now has data-driven solutions for the people and skills space, with data that underpins decision-making. The LFC also uses the survey to track staff opinion on existing areas of improvement, such as leadership; inclusion; and bullying, harassment and discrimination. The survey platform provides targeted data down to watch and team levels, to pinpoint areas of focus with multiple demographics. Therefore also equipping managers with data relevant to their fire stations and departments to act on results and make improvements. London Fire Brigade (LFB) would continue to deliver this level of service when a new platform is procured.
- 1.6. A three-year contract (with the option to extend by one year) is proposed to provide essential continuity of service, and avoid multiple changes in provider. Continuity offers staff familiarity with the platform functions, enabling them to access and drill down into their local data to make local improvements. Integrating new survey platforms into LFB systems is time-consuming for multiple teams, and includes multiple procurement processes. Platform changes disrupt access to survey results for staff, and don't allow easily comparable trends to build over time on key improvement plans. This creates difficulty in tracking organisational and local improvements.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1. The LFC's objective is to secure approval of expenditure for the procurement of a staff survey platform that delivers targeted, action-focused surveys. The term of the contract would be for three years, with the option to extend by one year, a total of four years.
- 2.2. The objective of regular surveys is to make LFB a better place to work for all staff, through both central and local improvements based on staff views.
- 2.3. The Culture Amp survey platform, and similar market-leading platforms, provide the following benefits to the LFB
 - improved participation through multiple ways to take surveys (via email, Microsoft Teams, web-

based banners, QR codes, and on external or personal devices)

- single sign-on direct access for all staff, and continuous access to targeted data
 - relevant data for staff via targeted results for departments, boroughs, fire stations, watches and teams through demographics that reflect LFB's structure and employee data (grade/rank, length of service, etc)
 - algorithms that identify question areas where improvements will have the biggest impact on a range of factors – for example, engagement or leadership
 - key event trend analysis
 - promoting local action through an action-planning function that links to relevant inspirations or ideas to make improvements in specific question areas
 - ongoing use and full LFC platform administration to have as many surveys as desired
 - customer success coaching to get the best out of the platform; design surveys; and help analyse results.
- 2.4. The LFC's current survey model is an annual baseline survey to track a range of key improvement plans associated with HMICFRS and the Culture Review. The model also includes one or two in-year pulse surveys; these focus on tracking specific central commitments arising from the baseline survey results.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1. The LFC and the Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience (the Deputy Mayor) are required to have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) when taking decisions. This in broad terms involves understanding the potential impact of policy and decisions on different people, taking this into account and then evidencing how decisions were reached.
- 3.2. It is important to note that consideration of the Public Sector Equality Duty is not a one-off task. The duty must be fulfilled before taking a decision, at the time of taking a decision, and after the decision has been taken.
- 3.3. The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership (but only in respect of the requirements to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination), race (ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality), religion or belief (including lack of belief), sex, and sexual orientation.
- 3.4. The Public Sector Equality Duty requires decision-takers in the exercise of all their functions, to have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct
 - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
 - foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 3.5. Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard to the need to:
- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected

characteristic where those disadvantages are connected to that characteristic

- take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it
 - encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- 3.6. The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.
- 3.7. Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard to the need to:
- tackle prejudice
 - promote understanding.
- 3.8. Surveys give valuable insight into how particular staff groups with protected characteristics feel on a range of topics at work. This data helps shape organisational design and interventions; and informs LFC leads where issues are so they can be addressed.
- 3.9. An Equality Impact Assessment was conducted during proposals for regular surveys using a survey platform, as described in this report, in 2020. The platform enables staff data to be assessed by a range of characteristic demographics, such as ethnicity, sex, religion, disability, neurodiversity, and caring responsibilities. Therefore, providing greater insight on how certain groups feel on a range of topics that impact them at work, including bullying, harassment and discrimination, enables positive change.

4. Other considerations

Workforce comments

- 4.1. A longer contract offers continuity and familiarity for staff in how to use the platform and understand its results. When the current platform was introduced, training sessions were delivered for all staff and specific groups. Switching between multiple providers will require more workforce training and upskilling, including upskilling LFB platform administrators to deliver.
- 4.2. Changes in providers will also result in a significantly increased workload to integrate new platforms into LFB systems. With finite resources, this would involve major effort. This time would be better spent driving central and local improvements.
- 4.3. Representative bodies are consulted on, and contribute to baseline survey questions. They are also presented with the results, and offered support in drilling down into any particular data set or demographic.

Sustainability comments

- 4.4. To ensure sustainability, all strategies, policies and projects originating from LFB should be analysed under the Sustainable Development Impact Assessment (SDIA) process. An SDIA has been completed; this supports LFB to avoid or minimise environmental impact, and to take opportunities to improve social and economic outcomes in London through the service LFB provides.

Procurement comments

- 4.5. This requirement will first be tendered using the Crown Commercial Services G-Cloud 13 framework agreement, which has survey platform services available. If the service requirements do not match

the framework, an open tender to all suppliers will be undertaken for the services.

- 4.6. Collaboration with the GLA has been investigated. The LFC was advised that there are no suitable contracts in place offering the services required that the LFC can use for this procurement. The LFC welcomes future collaboration opportunities across the GLA, with market-leading employee experience platforms to offer insight, joined-up thinking, consistency and efficiencies.

Conflicts of interest

- 4.7. There are no conflicts of interest to declare from those involved in the drafting or clearance of this decision.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1. The LFC has an existing contract for the provision of a survey platform, which comes to an end on 25 November 2023. The existing contract is funded through departmental revenue budget under Leadership, People Services.
- 5.2. This report seeks authority for the necessary expenditure to procure a survey platform for three years, with options to extend by one year. The maximum expenditure would be for the amount set out in part two of the report, over the maximum four-year contract term.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1. This report seeks approval to commit expenditure of money set out in part two of the report to secure the provision of a staff survey platform.
- 6.2. Under section 9 of the Policing and Crime Act 2017, the LFC is established as a corporation sole with the Mayor appointing the occupant of that office.
- 6.3. Under section 327D of the Greater London Authority Act 1999, as amended, the Mayor may issue to the LFC specific or general directions as to the manner in which the holder of that office is to exercise his or her functions.
- 6.4. By direction dated 1 April 2018, the Mayor set out those matters for which the LFC would require the prior approval of either the Mayor or the Deputy Mayor. In particular, paragraph (b) of part two of the said direction requires the LFC to seek the prior approval of the Deputy Mayor before “[a] commitment to expenditure (capital or revenue) of £150,000 or above is identified in accordance with normal accounting practices”. The proposed expenditure exceeds this financial threshold; accordingly, prior approval from the Deputy Mayor will be sought.
- 6.5. General Counsel for the LFC has advised that:
 - the proposed contract must be procured in accordance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015
 - having in place a staff survey to better understand staff needs will enable the LFC to make continuous improvements, and ensure personnel remain efficient and effective.

Appendices and supporting papers:

Appendix 1 – Report LFC-23-091 – LFC Procurement of a Staff Survey Platform

Public access to information

Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI Act) and will be made available on the GLA website within one working day of approval.

If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the decision (for example, to complete a procurement process), it can be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods should be kept to the shortest length strictly necessary. **Note:** This form (part one) will be published either within one working day after approval or on the defer date.

Part 1 Deferral:

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

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

Is there a Part 2 form? YES

ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:

Drafting officer to confirm the following (✓)

Drafting officer

Richard Berry has drafted this report with input from the LFC and in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

Assistant Director/Head of Service

Niran Mothada has reviewed the documentation and is satisfied for it to be referred to the Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience for approval.

✓

Advice

The Finance and Legal teams have commented on this proposal.

✓

Corporate Investment Board

A summary of this decision was reviewed by the Corporate Investment Board on 23 October 2023.

✓

INTERIM CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER:

I confirm that financial and legal implications have been appropriately considered in the preparation of this report.

Signature:



Date:

23/10/2023