

## REQUEST FOR DEPUTY MAYOR FOR FIRE DECISION – DMFD240

### Competency Frameworks

#### Executive summary:

This report requests the approval of the Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and the Fire Service (the Deputy Mayor) to authorise the London Fire Commissioner (LFC) to commit revenue expenditure of up to £744,646 over three years, for the purposes of initiating a competency framework project and establishing a project team (internal London Fire Brigade staff resource). The competency framework will support staff in understanding the knowledge, skills and behaviours expected, alongside the associated learning and training required for them to demonstrate competence in their role. It will also provide an overview of their status in relation to this. The project team will carry out the next phase of planning work and will support the development and implementation of an interim learning and training dashboard.

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 Planning, Regeneration, and the Fire Service authorises the London Fire Commissioner to commit expenditure of up to £744,646 for internal London Fire Brigade staff resource to initiate the competency framework project and establish a project team to carry out the next phase of planning work and support the development and implementation of an interim learning and training dashboard.

#### 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:

31/07/2024

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

### **Decision required – supporting report**

#### **1. Introduction and background**

- 1.1 Report LFC-24-048 to the London Fire Commissioner (LFC) sets out the background for the request for authority to commit expenditure in order to introduce competency framework for London Fire Brigade (LFB) staff. The report explains that LFB's Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) sets out that the LFC "will enable our people to be the best they can be, to serve you better," achieved with the following:

*"Organisational Learning Model – We will improve our ability to learn together and develop so we have the right skills to meet your needs."*

- 1.2 Introducing competency frameworks forms part of an organisational learning model. It helps staff understand what they need to learn and develop in, and to have the right knowledge, skills and behaviours, to meet community needs. It forms the basis for introducing career pathways and the associated competency management platform introduces an improved training system to support staff.
- 1.3 Competency frameworks will act as a control measure for risks contained in the LFC risk register; and will address recommendations made by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services. These risks and recommendations, along with further detail on the strategic alignment, are provided in the business case (appended to Part Two of this report).

#### **2. Objectives and expected outcomes**

- 2.1 The objective of this project is to introduce competency frameworks for all roles in LFB, so that staff are provided with the knowledge, skills and behaviours required for their role, using a competency management platform.
- 2.2 Competency frameworks and an associated competency management platform are expected to have the following outcomes:
- Corporate assurance by enabling individuals, line managers and LFB to manage skill validation (including licences to operate for operational staff) and availability. Supporting LFB values: learning, integrity and service.
  - Line managers will have visibility of individuals' competence, enabling them to put measures in place to support individuals and give them the opportunity to improve and be confident in their role. Supporting the LFB values: equity, learning and teamwork.
  - Staff will understand what training and learning they are required to complete to be competent in their role. Supporting the LFB values: courage, equity, learning, integrity, learning, service and teamwork.
  - Improved appraisal conversations about performance, as the individual and manager are clear what is required to be competent in role and what learning and training needs to be completed. Supporting the LFB values: equity, learning and service.
  - Managers will have an enhanced understanding of staff skills gaps in their team; and therefore be able to monitor progress, highlight areas of risk and request additional training or support where appropriate. Supporting the LFB values: equity, learning and service.
  - The Learning and Professional Development department will have improved visibility of any skills gaps within the organisation; and be able to make decisions and necessary modifications to the

training schedule/plan based on the data and reporting from the competency management platform. Supporting the LFB values: equity, integrity, learning and service.

- Competency frameworks support the understanding and embedding of the LFB values: courage, equity, learning, integrity, service and teamwork.

## 2.3 LFB considered three options (as set out in report LFC-24-048):

Option one: Implement via a phased approach (a suite of reports, a more interactive dashboard, then the final solution).

Option two: Move straight to building an internal Information and Communications Technology (ICT) developed platform (option 2a); or move straight to procurement of an external solution via a full tender or call-off arrangement (option 2b).

Option three: Do nothing.

## 2.4 The preferred option is to implement competency frameworks via a phased final solution.

## 2.5 The objective of the competency framework project is to introduce competency frameworks for all roles in LFB, so that staff are provided with the knowledge, skills and behaviours required for their role using a competency management platform.

## 2.6 A procurement process for an external solution (either solely or in collaboration with other Fire and Rescue Services or other GLA organisations) and internal ICT-developed platform will take time. Following a period for data cleansing and the creation of a specification (outlined as part of option one) it would be up to 12 months before a final internal platform could be implemented; and 12 to 24 months for an external platform (dependent on integration challenges). Moving straight to a final solution means it would be a significant amount of time before staff experienced any benefit from the project.

### Costs and funding

## 2.7 Funding for the project has been secured via approved departmental and programme investment proposals as part of the 2024-25 budget round. The funding amounts to £1,049,000 over three years. A breakdown of the funding, and the costs up to the decision gateway point, is provided in table 1. The deficits shown in 2025-26 and 2026-27 are expected to be funded from a carry-forward of the 2024-25 surplus budget secured as part of the Culture Transformation Programme. In the event this is not available, the deficit will be funded from departmental slippage or an investment request to draw on reserves.

**Table 1 - Funding and costs up to the decision gateway**

Item	2024-25 £	2025-26 £	2026-27 £	Total £
<b>Funding by source:</b>				
L&PD Departmental budget	220,000	233,000	233,000	686,000
Culture Transformation Programme budget	363,000	TBC	TBC	363,000
<b>Total funding</b>	<b>583,000</b>	<b>233,000</b>	<b>233,000</b>	<b>1,049,000</b>
<b>Cost estimate (up to gateway)</b>	<b>204,302</b>	<b>266,179</b>	<b>274,164</b>	<b>744,646</b>
<b>Surplus/(deficit)</b>	<b>378,698</b>	<b>-33,179</b>	<b>-41,164</b>	<b>304,354</b>
<b>Cumulative surplus/(deficit)</b>	<b>378,698</b>	<b>345,519</b>	<b>304,354</b>	<b>304,354</b>

## 2.8 Additional costs are expected to be incurred following the decision gateway in April 2025. These are expected to be funded in part or in full from the carry-forward of surplus from the 2024-25 funding. In the event of a funding deficit, investment growth will be sought as part of the 2026-27 budget process. The additional costs that could be incurred following the gateway have been the subject of a high-level estimate, in respect of both an internally developed and externally procured system; and

can be found in appendix 6 of the business case. Those indicative additional costs are not in scope for this report.

### 3. Equality comments

- 3.1 The LFC and the Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and the Fire Service (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, in particular, 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, in particular, 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, in particular, to the need to:
  - tackle prejudice
  - **promote understanding.**
- 3.8 Having a single platform which displays individual competency within an organisational

competency framework will promote equality in LFB. Staff will have consistent up-to-date skills information and be afforded the opportunity to effectively progress their learning journey.

3.9 The platform is expected to improve the LFB's training needs analysis and the understanding of the development needs across the workforce. Thereby, having a positive impact on protected groups with improved access to professional development across the workforce.

3.10 An equality impact assessment (Part One of Report LFC-24-048, appendix 3) has identified a potential negative impact on people with neurodiversity, through the implementation of a new IT platform and their experience of it. Engagement with the LFB Learning Support team and Equality Support Groups (the Disability Working Group and the Neurodiverse Support Group) will take place to ensure the impacts on staff groups are considered as part of the platform development or procurement process. The following principles will also be considered during the platform research and development stage to ensure they are available to users:

- not too many steps to access information
- background colour/font size and colours
- compatibility with assistive technology
- ensuring staff have the software they need
- plain English/straightforward language used (standard LFB terms used)
- simple navigation
- accessible user guide
- web accessibility tools.

#### **4. Other considerations**

4.1 Implementing competency frameworks and a supporting platform demonstrates LFB is taking necessary steps to mitigate potential areas of risk, and ensuring LFB staff remain effective and efficient in service delivery.

4.2 The project is a sizeable change project, impacting the staff across the whole of LFB. Advice from the Transformation team is to resource a Change Manager post as part of the project. This post will help support a successful delivery and is included as part of the business case (see Part Two, appendix 1).

4.3 Representative bodies and the equalities support groups will be engaged throughout the life cycle of the project. They will be important in ensuring all staff groups see the benefit of introducing competency frameworks and an associated platform.

4.4 Implementing a platform in a phased approach (option 1) provides greater opportunity for engagement and full change management methodology to be adopted.

##### *Sustainability comments*

4.5 There are no sustainability implications arising from this report.

4.6 The Sustainable Development Impact Assessment checklist has been completed. The checklist will be reviewed throughout the life cycle of the project, to ensure the sustainability implications are considered at all stages.

### *Procurement comments*

- 4.7 There are currently no procurement implications arising from this report.
- 4.8 Procurement implications will arise if an external competency platform is recommended at the decision point gateway in April 2025.
- 4.9 Implementation with the recommended phased approach gives greater opportunity for procurement implications to be considered; a detailed specification to be generated; and the Procurement team to plan the required work.

### *Conflicts of interest*

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

## **5. Financial comments**

- 5.1 This report seeks authorisation to commit revenue expenditure of up to £744,646 over three years to initiate the competency framework project and establish a project team.
- 5.2 The £744,646 expenditure is split across three years as follows: £204,302 in 2024-25; £266,179 in 2025-26; and £274,164 in 2026/27.
- 5.3 Funding is included in LFB's 2024-25 budget as set out in Table 1, above. Based on the estimated expenditure this will result in a budget surplus of £378,698, which will be reported on as part of the 2024-25 Financial Position reports. There will then be a deficit against the agreed funding of £33,179 in 2025-26 and £41,164 in 2026-27, which will be included as part of the budget process for future years and updated in the November Budget Submission to the Mayor.
- 5.4 There are no direct financial implications for the GLA.

## **6. Legal comments**

- 6.1 This report seeks approval to commit expenditure of up to £744,646 to initiate the competency framework project, and establish a project team to carry out the next phase of planning work; and support the development and implementation of an interim learning and training dashboard.
- 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. 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.
- 6.3 Section 1 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 states that the LFC is the fire and rescue authority for Greater London.
- 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.
- 6.5 Paragraph (b) of Part 2 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 as identified in accordance with normal accounting practices". The Deputy Mayor's approval is accordingly required for the LFC to expend the monies requested in this report as the expenditure exceeds that threshold.
- 6.6 When carrying out his functions, the LFC is required to "have regard" to the Fire and Rescue National Framework prepared by the Secretary of State (Fire and Rescue Service Act 2004, section 21).

- 6.7 The production of an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) is a requirement of the Fire and Rescue National Framework. In line with guidance from the National Fire Chiefs' Council, the LFC refers to the IRMP as a CRMP.
- 6.8 The statutory basis for the actions proposed in this report is provided by sections 7 to 9 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004. The LFC must secure the provision of personnel, services and equipment necessary to efficiently meet all normal requirements for firefighting, road traffic accidents and other emergencies. Those sections also make specific duty to secure the provision of training for personnel.
- 6.9 These comments have been adopted from those provided by the LFC's General Counsel Department in report LFC-24-048 to the LFC.

### **Appendices and supporting papers:**

Appendix 1 - Report LFC-24-048 – Part One of report LFC-24-048, including Appendix 3 – Equality Impact Assessment.

## 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 1) 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

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

✓

### Assistant Director/Head of Service

Luke Bruce 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.

✓

### Mayoral Delivery Board

A summary of this decision was reviewed by the Mayoral Delivery Board on 22 July 2024.

✓

## INTERIM CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER:

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

### Signature:

*Anna Casbolt*

### Date:

22/07/2024

Anna Casbolt on behalf of Enver Enver