

REQUEST FOR DEPUTY MAYOR FOR FIRE DECISION – DMFD251

Headquarters Parking Provision – Lease Renewal for 98-118 Southwark Bridge Road

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, up to the amount set out in Part 2 of this decision, to secure senior operational officer parking for officers based at LFB HQ, 169 Union Street, London, SE1 0LL.

The LFC wishes to negotiate and agree a reversionary lease with Galliard (Southwark) UK Limited (the landlord), to protect continuity of senior operational officer parking provision (in respect of LFB headquarters) at 98-118 Southwark Bridge Road, London, SE1 0EF. The current lease, due to expire in April 2025, does not benefit from security of tenure. There is a risk the LFC would be required to vacate if a new lease agreement is not in place.

The provision of 28 parking spaces supports London Fire Brigade's (LFB's) operational capacity and capability to effectively deploy senior officers to incidents. This provision enables the service delivery commitment in LFB's Community Risk Management Plan; and delivers on the Mayor of London's priority of ensuring the safety and security of London.

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 revenue expenditure, up to the amount set out in the Part 2 report, to secure senior operational officer parking for officers based at London Fire Brigade headquarters, 169 Union Street, London, SE1 0LL.

Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and the Fire Service

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

The above request has my approval.

Signature:



Date:

27/01/2025

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

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 Report LFC-24-096 to the London Fire Commissioner (LFC) explains that London Fire Brigade (LFB) headquarters (HQ) at Union Street currently benefits from 85 parking spaces, provided by three separate parking areas in the vicinity. Parking provision consists of the following:
- Southwark Bridge Road car park, which provides 28 parking spaces via a lease agreement with Galliard (Southwark) UK Limited. The current lease was granted in April 2020, for five years. That parking provision is the subject of this decision.
 - Sawyer Street, which provides 40 car-parking spaces (six of which have electric vehicle (EV) charging facilities); 10 motorcycle spaces; and a bicycle storage area. This is owned by the LFC on a leasehold basis that expires in 2196, and has a peppercorn (nil) rent. Sawyer Street is for the sole use of LFB.
 - Ewer Street, which provides 17 parking spaces linked to the lease of Union Street HQ offices. This parking provision will cease in March 2027, when the Union Street lease expires. The following should be noted:
 - The lease for LFB HQ, at 169 Union Street, expires on 18 March 2027. Options are being considered, and feasibility studies are ongoing, to support the future location of a new LFB HQ. However, a final decision is not expected until spring 2025. It has already been determined that an interim HQ premises will be required for approximately two years after the Union Street lease expires. Communications are ongoing with the Union Street landlord, Brockton Everlast, regarding options for the LFC to extend the current lease to March 2029.
 - To ensure operational incidents are managed and controlled appropriately, LFB operates a flexible duty system rota. This ensures sufficient senior operational officers are available for deployment. Over 200 senior officers are based across LFB's estate, with approximately 100 of these based at LFB HQ. These officers are mobilised in line with their specialist attributes; and are expected to arrive at an incident within 30 minutes. The current requirement for car-parking provision at LFB HQ was recently subject to review, in liaison with LFB Central Operations. LFB would generate a saving by not renewing the lease for parking provision at Southwark Bridge Road; however, it would mean a 32 per cent reduction of senior officer parking. This would present a risk to effective deployment, and thus to meeting LFB policy and process in respect of incident management.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1 The current lease for the Southwark Bridge Road car park expires in April 2025. It does not have security of tenure as defined in the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954, and there is no automatic right to renew. Without a new lease, the landlord may insist on LFC ceasing use of the car park, until a new lease is formally negotiated and terms agreed. Negotiating and putting a new lease in place takes, on average, approximately six months. Sanderson Weatherall, managing agents to the LFC, advises that the demand for parking provision near Union Street is high in relation to supply.
- 2.2 The proposed lease value, as detailed in Part 2 of this report, has been benchmarked against comparable car-parking evidence within a one-mile radius of Union Street. Most of this evidence relates to single-use spaces, the main parking provision within this area. Therefore, proportionate adjustments have been made to reflect the requirement for 28 spaces, to achieve best value. As the current lease falls outside security of tenure, this permits a more flexible negotiating position on

behalf of the LFC, and the opportunity to renew the lease based on a new term. This provides flexibility to address the circumstances around emerging plans in respect of a new LFB HQ.

- 2.3 The landlord has confirmed they are open to starting negotiations on a renewing the lease, subject to negotiation, terms and contract. The proposed terms in respect of negotiating a reversionary lease are presented in Part 2 of this decision.
- 2.4 The risk remains that mutually agreeable terms within the proposed budget cannot be negotiated with the landlord. In this case, the LFC will have no option but to vacate when the lease expires in 2025. In these circumstances, alternative provision could be sought on the open market. To mitigate this risk, Part 2 of this report presents the proposed approach, budget and key terms to inform negotiation for future agreement.

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 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 A full Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken. The Inclusion team determined that no changes are necessary due to the robust equality considerations mentioned. However, the team also noted that actions had been outlined to ensure the equitable engagement of those with protected characteristics. These actions will be reviewed in six months to ensure alignment with the legal requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

4. Other considerations

Workforce comments

- 4.1 Without continued parking provision, there is the risk of a detrimental impact on the LFC's operational capacity and capability to mobilise senior officers to operational incidents from LFB HQ. The recommendation to enable a reversionary lease to be negotiated and put in place, to secure continued provision, is considered a critical mitigation of this risk. If mutually agreeable terms within the proposed budget cannot be negotiated, a further corporate position must be agreed to support the LFC's commitments under the Community Risk Management Plan.

Sustainability comments

- 4.2 There has been a review of sustainable benefits. Parking spaces at Southwark Bridge Road car park do not have any EV charging points; however, in the context of the proposed lease renewal terms, it is unviable (from both a landlord's and a tenant's perspective) to invest £400,000 to increase electrical capacity to the site to support this. It is acknowledged that EV facilities are limited across the car parks supporting LFB HQ. However, a cost-benefit analysis for the remaining LFB HQ lease term renders any investment an unviable option. A full Sustainable Development Impact Assessment has been completed and approved by the Sustainable Development team, with no significant sustainability impacts identified.

Procurement comments

- 4.3 The requirement to secure continued parking provision for senior operational officers will be met through negotiation of revised terms in respect of an existing lease agreement and a procurement process is not anticipated.

Conflicts of interest

- 4.4 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 decision requests approval to commit revenue expenditure, for the LFC to progress negotiations and agree Heads of Terms for a new lease with Galliard (Southwark) UK, to ensure continuity of senior officer parking provision for LFB HQ in accordance with the proposed terms, as set out in Part 2 of this decision.

5.2 Part 2 of this decision contains detailed financial information to support this request.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1 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. Under section 327D of the GLA Act 1999, as amended by the Policing and Crime Act 2017, 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.
- 6.2 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.
- 6.3 Paragraph (b) of Part 2 of that 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”.
- 6.4 The statutory basis for the actions proposed in this report is provided by sections 7 and 5A of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 (FRSA 2004). Under section 7 (2)(a) of the FRSA 2004, the LFC has the power to secure the provision of personnel, services and equipment necessary to efficiently meet all normal requirements for firefighting. section 5A of the FRSA 2004 allows the LFC to procure personnel, services and equipment they consider appropriate for purposes incidental, or indirectly incidental, to their functional purposes. Provision of suitable parking facilities to enable emergency response by officers falls within this remit.
- 6.5 These comments have been adopted from those provided by the LFC’s General Counsel Department in report LFC-24-096 to the LFC.

Appendices and supporting papers:

Appendix 1 – Report LFC-24-096 to the LFC

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

Niran Mothada has reviewed the documentation and is satisfied for it to be referred to the Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and the Fire Service 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 20 January 2025.

✓

CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER:

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

Signature:



Date:

20/01/2025