

REQUEST FOR DEPUTY MAYOR FOR FIRE DECISION – DMFD268

Resolution of outstanding outsourced discrimination, bullying and harassment cases, and ongoing support to the Professional Standards Unit

Executive summary:

The London Fire Commissioner (LFC) seeks authority to commit revenue expenditure of the amount set out in the accompanying part two report. This is to cover costs for the completion of ongoing investigations by London Fire Brigade's (LFB's) existing external support service. Approval for an extension to the existing contract, and a new three-year contract to provide external support to LFB's Professional Standards Unit, is also required.

The LFC 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, of the amount set out in the accompanying part two report. This is to cover costs for the completion of ongoing investigations by London Fire Brigade's existing external support service. Approval for an extension to the existing contract, and a new three-year contract to provide external support to London Fire Brigade's Professional Standards Unit, is also required.

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:

21/07/2025

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

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. Report FC-25-042y to the London Fire Commissioner (LFC) provides a detailed overview of the request for additional funding to support London Fire Brigade's (LFB's) Professional Standards Unit (PSU). This decision paper provides a summary of that report.
- 1.2. In November 2022, the Independent Culture Review of LFB was published. Following this, LFB procured CMP Solutions (CMP) to provide advice, and undertake investigations into concerns of bullying, harassment and discrimination by its staff.
- 1.3. In January 2024, LFB established the PSU to undertake this work, with continued support from its external provider to investigate more complex cases. The service was also contracted to provide an independent reporting line for staff to report issues.
- 1.4. Previous requests for funding have been approved under DMFD187, DMFD199, DMFD212 and DMFD246. The total funding approved to date is £2,321,399.
- 1.5. Costs for CMP services depend on the volume and complexity of issues. They have now exceeded the amount authorised in the last decision paper.
- 1.6. Approval is now requested to: extend the contract with CMP to complete its outstanding investigations; and procure a new contract with an external provider to support the PSU's work.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1. Extending the contract with CMP will ensure the completion of three current investigations, and one complex historical investigation. CMP will also continue to provide the following services until a new supplier is procured:
 - a mediation service
 - the facility to undertake complex or specialist investigations
 - an independent dedicated telephone line and email address for staff to report issues
 - a Professional Workplace Investigator training course, and an in-house Hearing Manager training course.
- 2.2. Procuring a new three-year contract with an approved supplier will provide the following services to support the PSU:
 - an independent dedicated telephone line and email address.
 - an estimated 10 hours per month for hourly rate for calls with advisers and mediation services
 - two Professional Workplace Investigator training courses
 - two in-house Hearing Manager training courses
 - the facility to undertake complex or specialist investigations.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1. Under the public sector equality duty, it is required to identify the likely potential impacts, both positive and negative, of the decision on those with protected characteristics. (The relevant protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.) It is also required to set out how these duties are being addressed.
- 3.2. Work to procure an external service provider to complete current cases, and undertake new matters regarding concerns about behaviours, contributes to LFB's delivery of its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. This is done by providing an external service that considers, amongst other matters, issues of alleged discrimination and unfairness. The Equality Act 2010 will be a relevant consideration when awarding any new contract, following a compliant procurement process.

4. Other considerations

- 4.1. LFB's historic case review, and the continuation of external services to support the PSU, allow LFB to continue meeting the recommendations set out in the Independent Culture Review of LFB.
- 4.2. The intention to undertake and complete this work has been communicated to LFB's staff, representative bodies and equality support groups.
- 4.3. LFB secured the contract with CMP using the Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation (ESPO) procurement framework. This contract ran from 6 March 2023 to 31 March 2025.
- 4.4. A further contract extension has been awarded to CMP within the terms of the ESPO framework. This runs from 1 April 2025 for an estimated period of six months. This decision paper seeks retrospective approval for this extension.

Conflicts of interest

- 4.5. 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 cost to cover existing service commitments to CMP is estimated at £182,073 above the previously approved funding.
- 5.2. A further six-month extension of the CMP contract is also set out, at a cost of £230,890. Estimated costs associated with a new three-year contract are set out in the accompanying part two report.
- 5.3. The additional funding request to cover existing commitments and the six-month extension will be funded from underspends in the Culture Transformation Programme. These have been identified through closing of the 2024-25 accounts, and are to be held in an earmarked reserve for 2025-26.
- 5.4. Funding for the new three-year contract will be met from within the Community Risk Management Programme (CRMP) budget from 2026-27, as set out in LFB's Medium Term Financial Strategy within its 2025-26 Budget Report. The cost of this contract will be prioritised from within the funding available for CRMP work as part of the budget process for 2026-27. This decision will have no impact on the LFB's predicted budget gap for future years.

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.
- 6.2. 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.
- 6.3. 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 for Fire and Resilience (the Deputy Mayor). Paragraph (b) of Part 2 of 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 proposed expenditure exceeds this financial threshold; accordingly, prior approval from the Deputy Mayor will be sought.
- 6.4. In accordance with Section 5A Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 (FRSA 2004), the LFC, being a ‘relevant authority,’ may do ‘anything it considers appropriate for the purposes of the carrying- out of any of its functions.’
- 6.5. This report seeks prior authority of the Deputy Mayor to commit expenditure above £150,000 for the purposes of the extension of the contract with CMP until the retender of the externalised service, the costs of the new contract and retrospective authority for the costs incurred which exceeds the current prior approval threshold.
- 6.6. The procurement of future external services will need to be conducted in accordance with procurement law and the LFB Procurement Standing Orders. Officers must ensure that appropriate contractual documentation be put in place and executed by chosen service provider and the LFC before the commencement of the attendant services.

Appendices and supporting papers:

Appendix 1 – Report LFC-25-042y - Resolution of outstanding outsourced discrimination, bullying and harassment cases and ongoing support to the professional standards unit.

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

Chandru Dissanayeke 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 14 July 2025.

✓

CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER:

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

Signature:



Date:

14/07/2025