

Contingent Labour New Call Off Contract

Report to: **Date:**

Investment & Finance Board.....	26 June 2025
Commissioner's Board	9 July 2025
Deputy Mayor's Fire Board.....	22 July 2025
London Fire Commissioner	

Report by: Sarah Martin – Head of People and Operations

Authorising Head of Service: Sally Hopper, Director for People

Report classification:

For decision

For publication/Not for publication: For Publication

Values met

Service

PART ONE

Non-confidential facts and advice to the decision-maker

Executive Summary

The LFB's current temporary contingent labour contract with Reed Talent Solutions is due to expire on the 30 September 2025. The procurement process is being led by TfL/GLA collaborative and has taken longer than anticipated, challenges such as turnover of the leadership team, has led to there being insufficient time to conduct a full procurement process. This has been mitigated by TfL appointing a permanent team in October 2024, dedicated to the project. A new short term contract for the provision of temporary contingency labour is being sought until the procurement exercise is completed for the period up to 30 September 2027, this would mean issuing a new call- off under the existing framework agreement with the Reed Talent Solutions for 1 year plus 1 year extension period to align with the rest of the GLA group.

The aim of the short term arrangement is to ensure LFB have a contingent labour staffing provision during the procurement process for a longer term contract. Should a decision be taken not to grant this contract LFB would have no temporary staffing service provision, this would affect the current agency workers and impact on service continuity in areas of LFB where agency workers have placements. In addition, the brigade does not possess any in-house temporary contingent labour supply expertise to manage the recruitment of agency workers and thus would have no means to source contingent workers when needed.

For the London Fire Commissioner

The LFC agrees that a short term contract for a temporary contingent labour Reed Talent Solutions for a period of one year and extension period of one year into in accordance with the arrangements set out in Part Two of this report.

1 Introduction and background

- 1.1 London Fire Brigade (LFB) entered into a contract with Reed Talent Solutions on 29 August 2021 following a collaborative procurement with the TfL/GLA Group, this contract is due to expire on the 30 September 2025. The GLA Collaborative Recruitment Services framework duration was 3 + 1 years commencing 30 September 2021, with a final framework completion date of 30 September 2025. It is possible for LFB and each of the collaborative members to make call off arrangements to continue this service, within the original scope of the framework before it expires. LFB along with collaborative members will benefit from having the same service provision at no extra cost as the Reed Talent Solutions has agreed to keep the pricing at the current framework rate, providing a saving on market rates.

- 1.2 A new competitive tendering process for a new framework agreement for the provision of temporary contingent labour service started in February 2024. The project has, once again, been led by TfL on behalf of itself and the London Fire Commissioner (LFC), Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC) and Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation (OPDC). The Pan GLA procurement involves the establishment of a framework agreement with a single supplier.
- 1.3 The TfL/ GLA Group procurement process has taken longer than anticipated, challenges such as turnover of the leadership team has led to there being insufficient time to conduct a full procurement process. to include, an assessment of the GLA collaborative requirements, conduct market engagement, benchmarking and agree the route to market options. This has been mitigated by TfL appointing a permanent team in October 2024, dedicated to the project. The market engagement exercise is now complete, TfL/GLA Group held a meeting on Tuesday 17 June 2025 and provided the collaborative members with an update on the current procurement process.
- 1.4 The LFC's view is to seek a short term contract under the existing framework for the provision of temporary contingency labour until the procurement exercise is completed. All members within the GLA collaborative are also seeking a short term contract for the same reason.
- 1.5 LFB are committed to reducing its reliance on agency staff and where there are vacancies in the establishment these will be filled with permanent employees.
- 1.6 Any new agency hires, or placement extensions, must be requested by the line manager through the established vacancy control panel (VCP) and Directors will be issued with a quarterly report on temporary staff to review and challenge their heads of services to ensure we are only using these resources where absolutely necessary and ensuring value for money (vfm). These processes are additional step in monitoring the levels of agency hires which should lead to a decrease in LFB temporary labour over time, thus reducing expenditure. Notwithstanding the above, there will be a need to use temporary staff and the contract aims to fulfil the hire of staff for this requirement.

2 Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1 A short terms contract for the provision of temporary contingency labour until the procurement exercise for a new framework agreement is completed is sought for the period 1 October 2025 up to 30 September 2027.
- 2.2 To issue a new direct call off with Reed Talent Solutions for one year plus one year under the existing framework agreement will align with the rest of the GLA group.
- 2.3 Should the decision be taken not to grant a new short term contract, the arrangements for temporary contingency labour supply within LFB will finish on the 30 September 2025. This will have an impact on current agency workers and any new future hires. From September 2025, the LFC will need to make alternative arrangements to start a new procurement and this may present a delay in hiring new temporary staff.
- 2.4 The Brigade does not possess any in-house temporary contingency labour supply expertise to manage the recruitment of agency workers.

2.5 Without the temporary labour supply service, the Brigade would not have the means to source contingency workers when needed.

3 Values Comments

3.1 The LFC notes the Fire Standards Board requirements around adopting and embedding the Core Code of Ethics at an individual and corporate level. Following extensive engagement, the LFC has introduced Brigade values which build on and do not detract from the Code of Ethics.

3.2 Service is the value which is most aligned with this paper. Through the continuous supply of contingent labour, we are able to deliver various critical services which benefit the public.

4 Equality Comments

4.1 The LFC and the Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and the Fire Service 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.

4.2 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.

4.3 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.

4.4 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.

4.5 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.

4.6 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.

4.7 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.

4.8 An EIA is currently being reviewed by the EIA team, and it has been found that there is negative impacts relating to caring responsibilities, pregnancy, maternity and disability. This is down to the discretion of the agency and the rights the workers have under the agency. We are currently assessing whether a mitigating action plan is necessary and completing a full EIA to show due regard.

5 Other Considerations Workforce Comments

5.1 A continued provision of temporary contingency labour supply at the point that the existing contract ends, 30 September 2025.

5.2 The subject matter of this report is a request for an interim contract to be put in place for the supply of temporary labour to the London Fire Brigade from 1 October 2025.

5.3 The recommendation within this report does not require prior staff side consultation. Staff side will however be provided with a copy of this report in advance of the Deputy Mayor's Fire Board on 22 July 2025.

6 Sustainability comments

6.1 TfL is a signatory to GLA Group Responsible Procurement Policy and therefore will comply by adopting the same approach as the LFB would if it were the lead on this Procurement.

6.2 The Good Work Standard sets the benchmark the Mayor wants every London employer to work towards and achieve. Organisations able to meet or working towards the Good Work Standard criteria are encouraged to apply for accreditation and recognition as leading employers from the Mayor.

6.3 Expectation that the successful provider will engage with Micro and SME businesses via the second-tier supply chain, will pay all temporary worker and own employees in accordance with the National Minimum Wage and the Living Wage, incorporating the London Living Wage where applicable and will comply with the GLA group anti-slavery policies and not engage in any modern slavery or unlawful practices.

- 6.4 LFC expects all workers in its supply chain to be provided with fair employment conditions. The Supplier shall ensure that exploitative zero hours contracts are not used in the supply chain, or in any other employment practice that exploits people working in our supply chain.
- 6.5 The supplier is expected to adopt and demonstrate their commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion in line with the GLA Group Responsible Procurement Policy.

7 Procurement comments

- 7.1 The original framework was conducted by TfL under the Public Contracts Regulation 2015 using a competitive procedure with negotiation. The duration was 3 plus 1 years and allows collaborative members to make individual call off arrangements within the original scope of the framework.
- 7.2 The framework will expire on the 30 September 2025 and therefore any new call off contracts need to be finalised and signed before the framework expiry. Any new call offs will still be governed under the Public Contracts Regulation 2015. The framework still meets LFC needs and there are no further amendments to the call off required.
- 7.3 The sourcing options considered have been discussed in paragraph 1.3. In addition to these options LFC also considered the option to procure their own temporary labour supplier. This option was counterproductive as it would require additional procurement resources, higher risk of system integration cost and internal resource to manage.
- 7.4 Reed have confirmed that they will retain the current framework pricing for the new call off term. Internal benchmarking confirms these rates still offer value for money.
- 7.5 The LFC call off contract term aims to align with the other GLA collaborations members of one year with an option to extend for up to 1 additional year. This will offer a final end date of 30 September 2027.

8 Communications comments

- 8.1 There are no new or amended policies that will impact service provision to be communicated.

9 Financial comments

- 9.1 The report seeks approval to create an interim contract with Reed Talent Solutions for the provision of temporary contingency labour covering up to two years, upon expiry of the current agreement in September 2025. The contract with Reed will be a new call off contract for one year with an option to extend for up to one additional year (1+1), which will enable a full procurement process to be conducted in the meantime.
- 9.2 All costs related to the interim contract will be solely funded by the LFC revenue budget. The amounts are set out in Part Two of this report.

- 9.3 The interim contract will be funded through staff vacancies/turnover, and that agency staff spend will be monitored against funding available as part of regular financial position reporting to ensure a sustainable position in year.
- 9.4 The level of agency staff will be managed through processes established by LFC, such as the vacancy control panel (VCP). This process is an additional step in monitoring the levels of agency hires which could lead to a decrease in LFB temporary labour over time, thus reducing expenditure.
- 9.5 Should a decision be taken not to grant an interim contract LFB would have no temporary staffing service provision, this would impact on service continuity in areas of LFB where agency workers have placements. In addition, the brigade does not possess any in-house temporary contingent labour supply expertise to manage the recruitment of agency workers and thus would have no means to source contingent workers when needed.

10 Legal Comments

- 10.1 This report seeks approval to commit expenditure of money set out in the part 2 of the report for the purpose of entering into contract for the supply of temporary staff.
- 10.2 Under Section 9 of the Policing and Crime Act 2017, the London Fire Commissioner ('the Commissioner') is established as a corporation sole with the Mayor appointing the occupant of that office.
- 10.3 Section 327D of the Greater London Authority Act 1999, as amended, the Mayor may issue to the Commissioner specific or general directions as to the manner in which the holder of that office is to exercise his or her functions.
- 10.4 By direction dated 1 April 2018, the Mayor set out those matters for which the Commissioner would require the prior approval of either the Mayor or the Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and Fire ('the Deputy Mayor'). In particular, paragraph (b) of Part 2 of the said direction requires the Commissioner 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.
- 10.5 The report confirms the new contract with Reed Talent Solutions will be procured under the terms of existing and accessible framework agreement set up by the GLA collaborative members which was procured following an open procurement exercise in accordance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015.
- 10.6 Ensuring the LFC has access to temporary staff, as and when needed, will enable the Brigade to operate both efficiently and effectively.

List of appendices

Appendix	Title	Open or confidential*
1	Initial EIA	Open

Part two confidentiality

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

Is there a Part Two form: Yes