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| Zack Polanski AM Chair of the Fire CommitteeCity Hall Kamal Chunchie Way London E16 1ZE | The London Fire Commissioner is thefire and rescue authority for LondonDate: 8 September 2025     |

Dear Chair,

Thank you again for the Fire Committee’s time and interest at the 1 July session on my priorities as London Fire Commissioner (LFC). The below outlines the actions being taken by London Fire Brigade (LFB) that respond to the recommendations within the Committee’s follow-up letter dated 28 July.

**Recommendation 1: By November 2026 LFB should either: (i) carry out an analysis of its performance against the 19 fire standards; or (ii) conduct a self-assessment of its performance against the HMICFRS 2025-27 inspection framework. LFB should share the findings of this assessment with the Fire Committee by the end of 2026.**

A programme is underway which will enable LFB to determine current levels of compliance against the Fire Standard Board’s 19 fire standards. Each standard has been assigned a lead responsible for this evaluation using the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) implementation tool. To ensure the rigour of these findings, each compliance check will be subject to scrutiny through the Brigade’s Risk and Assurance Board. LFB would be happy to share the findings with the Committee once this has been completed.

**Recommendation 2: LFB should share the findings of the review of LFB’s HR function once complete and update the Committee on progress towards implementing any recommendations annually (ahead of the Committee’s Q&A with the Commissioner and Deputy Mayor).**

I welcome the Committee’s continued scrutiny of the progress and improvements that have been made within our People Services department. In the Committee meeting, I spoke of Sally Hopper’s role as the new Director of People to keep the operations of her department under review and identify where improvements could be made, which I would expect from all LFB directors as part of carrying out their business as usual. As a new director, Sally may have some best practice from her experience in previous roles that she considers LFB would benefit from implementing once she has time to settle into her role, which is what I referred to during the Committee meeting. However, there are currently no plans for this to take the form of a formal review with recommendations to report to the Committee.

LFB has been subject to a number of formal reviews which provided recommendations relevant to LFB’s HR function. This included the Independent Culture Review of London Fire Brigade published in November 2022 and the subsequent Independent Review of People Services undertaken by Dr Jenny Simnett. In March 2023, His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) also published its ‘Values and culture in fire and rescue services’ report which made a further 35 recommendations, many of which were relevant to LFB’s People Services department, which we report progress on through our website. These reviews and their recommendations have informed the transformation of LFB’s People Services department that has taken place in recent years which has contributed to the improvements in culture recognised by the Committee and HMICFRS.

As highlighted in the HMICFRS inspection report published last year, there are still areas where the People Services department can continue to improve, and work is underway to address those which we will continue to update the Committee on as part of our regular reporting against HMICFRS recommendations. However, we do currently intend to initiate another review of People Services with formal recommendations to report against.

**Recommendation 3: In your term of Commissioner, we encourage you to explore how LFB could establish a structured, research-led approach to innovation and risk management. The Committee would welcome progress updates on this annually (ahead of the Committee’s annual Q&A meetings with the Commissioner and Deputy Mayor).**

As I mentioned to the Committee, I see continual innovation at the Brigade and utilising the power of new technologies like artificial intelligence as a key priority as LFC. I believe both will be vital in tackling a fast-changing and complex risk environment and ensuring that limited resources are used as effectively as possible. To reaffirm what I said during the session, I am committed to working with stakeholders including academia, regulators and businesses to achieve this, and would be happy to provide a progress update to the Committee in advance of the annual question and answer session with myself and the Deputy Mayor.

I look forward to updating you on the Brigade’s progress on these recommendations in due course.

Yours sincerely,

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**Jonathan Smith**

London Fire Commissioner