

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR DEPUTY MAYOR FOR FIRE DECISION – DMFD281

Procurement of mobile telephony service

Executive summary:

London Fire Brigade (LFB) is seeking approval to procure a mobile telephony service to support the operational and administrative requirements of the London Fire Commissioner (LFC). The current contract will expire on 23 January 2026.

LFB currently has an aggregated mobile telephony contract with the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS). LFB does not propose to pursue an equivalent contract to replace it. Based on its requirements, and on feedback from the Crown Commercial Service and the MPS, LFB has concluded that this approach would not result in any cost savings.

LFB expects the proposed procurement to deliver significant benefits, including continuity of service; improved cost efficiency; and enhanced operational resilience. By securing a robust and reliable telephony service, LFB aims to maintain effective communication channels, which are critical for its emergency response and day-to-day operations.

The London Fire Commissioner Governance Direction 2018 sets out a requirement for the London Fire Commissioner 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 Two report, for the purpose of entering into a new contract for the provision of mobile telephony services.

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:

18 December 2025

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

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. Report LFC–25-094 to the London Fire Commissioner (LFC) provides a detailed overview of the proposal. This is a summary of that report.
- 1.2. London Fire Brigade (LFB) requires a mobile telephony service to maintain effective communication across its operations. The current contract will expire on 23 January 2026. LFB considers that a new procurement process is necessary to secure a service that meets operational needs and delivers value for money.
- 1.3. In January 2022 the Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience (Deputy Mayor) authorised the LFC to extend a prior mobile telephony contract by one year; and to commit expenditure to procure a mobile telephony service for up to three years from March 2023 (DMFD144 and LFC-0612).
- 1.4. LFB reports that it is heavily and increasingly reliant on over 3,600 mobile data-connected devices for its communications. This includes over 2,000 devices with data-only connections; and over 1,600 devices with voice SMS and data connection. Mobile data-connected devices include 4G-enabled devices to support staff with hybrid working; 4G-connected tablets in all front-line fire appliances; and specialist communication links in the Command Support Unit.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1. LFB is seeking authority to procure a new mobile telephony services contract, with the intention of having it in place ahead of the current contract's expiry on 23 January 2026. This will ensure that essential mobile voice and data services are available to the LFC, past the end of the current contract.
- 2.2. LFB proposes that the new contract will run for three years, with options to extend by a further two years in one-year increments (three years, plus one year, plus one year).
- 2.3. LFB's current mobile telephony contract with Telefónica (O2) was procured as part of a Crown Commercial Service (CCS) aggregation exercise that included the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS). LFB reports that the LFC decided to proceed with an LFB-only procurement because:
 - the CCS has communicated that it lacks the capacity to carry out an aggregation exercise
 - LFB explored with the MPS whether an aggregation without CCS support would be feasible; however, the MPS timeline and requirements are not suitable for LFB
 - the MPS has confirmed that it will not be part of an aggregation.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1. LFB reports that it has not undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment in relation to this procurement. This is because a new mobile telephony contract will have no impact upon any persons with a protected characteristic (see 3.3, below). If the procurement is authorised, LFB expects existing established communication mechanisms to continue, underpinned by a new contract.
- 3.2. The LFC and the Deputy Mayor are required to have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) when taking decisions. The public sector equality duty requires the identification and evaluation of the likely potential impacts, both positive and negative, of the decision on those with protected characteristics.

- 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. 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.
- 3.5. 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.
- 3.6. 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.
- 3.7. 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.
- 3.8. 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. Other considerations

- 4.1. LFB reports that it will use the CCS Mobile Voice Data and Services framework to run a compliant procurement process, based on the final Statement of Requirement Options set out in LFC-25-094 Part 1.
- 4.2. LFB's procurement strategy included benchmarking work to consider costs – including the potential switching costs associated with moving from the incumbent to alternative providers. LFB reports that the outcome of its benchmarking supports the decision to retain the incumbent supplier, who is considered to offer the best value for money among the available framework options.

- 4.3. LFB will involve its Procurement and Commercial team in the procurement, so that the selected solution meets technical and security standards; and supports the LFC's business continuity and cyber resilience objectives.
- 4.4. LFB reports that it has not completed a Sustainable Development Impact Assessment. This is because the re-procurement of a standard telephony contract does not introduce any significant sustainability impacts. LFB does not plan any wider workforce consultation in relation to this procurement.

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 report seeks authority to enter into a new contract for the provision of mobile telephony services by up to five years, upon expiry of the current agreement in January 2026. The services provided by the contract will satisfy ongoing requirements for mobile communications to support both frontline and enabling activities.
- 5.2. All costs related to the new agreement will be solely funded by the LFC revenue budget. The amount is set out in Part Two of this report. There is sufficient budget cover for the contract across all years. This is an ongoing requirement, and a contract to provide these services has been operational for a number of years.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1. The LFC's General Counsel's Department have confirmed the following.
- 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. Under section 327D of the GLA Act 1999, as amended by the Policing and Crime Act 2017, the Mayor may issue to the Commissioner specific or general directions as to the manner in which the holder of the 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 Commissioner would require the prior approval of either the Mayor or the Deputy Mayor.
- 6.4. 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 as identified in accordance with normal accounting practices". The Deputy Mayor's prior approval is accordingly required.
- 6.5. The statutory basis for the action proposed in this report is provided by section 5A of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, under which the LFC, being a 'relevant authority', may do 'anything it considers appropriate for the purposes of the carrying out of any of its functions'.
- 6.6. LFC officers have confirmed that the proposed procurement routes for the telephony services are compliant, transparent and competitive, as it was established through a fully regulated, open competition under the PCR 2015/PA23 with pre-agreed, benchmarked pricing and terms.
- 6.7. The LFC may delegate the authority to the Assistant Director of Procurement and Commercial to enter into a contract under Part 4, Paragraph 1.1 of the LFC's scheme of governance.

Appendices and supporting papers:

LFC-25-094 Procurement of Mobile Telephony Service – Part 1

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

Daisy McLachlan 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.

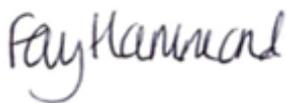
✓

Mayoral Delivery Board:

A summary of this decision was reviewed by the Mayoral Delivery Board on 15 December 2025.

CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER:

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

Signature

Date

18 December 2025