

REQUEST FOR DEPUTY MAYOR FOR FIRE DECISION – DMFD297

Contingent labour contract

Executive summary:

London Fire Brigade (LFB) uses temporary agency and specialist staff (known collectively as contingent labour) to maintain critical services and operational resilience. LFB is seeking approval from the Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and the Fire Service (the Deputy Mayor) to spend resource funding, up to the amount set out in part 2, on a new contract for contingent labour, for up to five years.

LFB is part of the GLA Group and uses the Group's shared-services arrangement to procure contingent labour. In 2025, LFB received approval from the Deputy Mayor to extend its contract by up to two years (see [DMFD274](#)). The first year will end in September 2026; LFB does not intend to extend this.

LFB has completed market analysis and proposes to replace the shared-services contract with a direct supply contract, via a compliant public-sector procurement framework. LFB reports that its proposed approach will ensure continuity of supply, and support ongoing workforce requirements, while reducing its use of contingent labour.

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 part 2, for a five-year contract (two years, plus three one-year extensions) for contingent labour.

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: 10 August 2026

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

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. London Fire Brigade (LFB) uses contingent labour (i.e. temporary workers, agency staff and specialist contractors on fixed-term contracts) to cover vacancies; provide specialist skills; and meet short-term resource requirements. LFB is part of the GLA Group and uses the Group's shared-services arrangement to procure contingent labour.
- 1.2. In 2025, the Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and the Fire Service (the Deputy Mayor) approved LFB extending its contract, under the shared-services arrangement, by up to two years (see [DMFD274](#)) while it completed a market review. The first year will end in September 2026; LFB does not intend to extend this.
- 1.3. LFB's analysis (set out in part 2) suggests that it will be more cost-effective to replace this shared-services contract with a direct-supply contract for contingent labour. This would be procured via a compliant public-sector framework. LFB reports that its proposed approach will ensure continuity of supply, and support ongoing workforce requirements, while reducing its use of contingent labour.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1. LFB's objective is to award a compliant contingent labour contract that delivers value for money.
- 2.2. LFB and the GLA collaboration group have analysed and benchmarked the available options. Following this, LFB's preferred approach is to procure its own contingent labour contract through the ESPO MSTAR4 public sector procurement framework. This is in line with the London Fire Commissioner's (LFC's) requirement for contingent labour only. LFB expects that this approach will be commercially robust; meet its operational requirements; and provide optimal value, quality and supplier performance.
- 2.3. LFB has introduced stronger controls on agency recruitment; and, through these, reduced the size of its agency workforce from 131 people in December 2024 to 76 in May 2026. LFB expects its agency use to continue reducing, through workforce planning and demand management; however, contingent labour remains necessary to meet LFB's short-term and critical resourcing needs.
- 2.4. LFB proposes to let a new contract from 1 October 2026 for two years (with the option for three one-year extensions). LFB reports that this contract term will enable flexibility; and support potential collaboration opportunities with the Metropolitan Police Service and the GLA collaboration group.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1. 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 (see paragraph 3.3).
- 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 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. 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. LFB reports that its Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) screening (included as appendix 2) has identified potential negative impacts for agency workers, in relation to caring responsibilities, pregnancy/maternity and disability. This is primarily due to differences in entitlement and support, compared to directly employed staff. However, LFB's screening concluded that a full EIA is not required at this stage.

4. Other considerations

Procurement considerations

- 4.1. LFB recommends a procurement via the ESPO MSTAR4 framework, an established public sector framework that enables a compliant award. LFB reports that this approach will:
- provide an efficient and legally compliant route to market, in line with its technical and operational requirements
 - avoid unnecessary procurement delay
 - deliver value for money.

- 4.2. LFB's current call-off contract includes an option to extend for a further 12 months, expiring on 30 September 2027. LFB does not intend to use the extension, as the ESPO MSTAR4 framework is due to expire on 10 April 2027. Any new call-off contract must be awarded before this date.
- 4.3. LFB expects to award a new contract, starting on 1 October 2026. All call-offs under the framework remain subject to the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. The framework continues to meet the LFC's requirements; and no material amendments to the standard call-off terms are anticipated.
- 4.4. The total contract value and projected cost profile is detailed in LFC-26-061 part 2. This is based on the LFC's projected requirement for an average of 100 contingent workers per day; and an assumed annual uplift of 5 per cent on day rates.

Sustainability considerations

- 4.5. LFC-26-061 sets out how the successful provider in this procurement must ensure that all workers employed in LFB's supply chain have fair terms and conditions. For example, the successful provider must abide by relevant GLA Group policies on pay and conditions, anti-slavery and responsible procurement.

Conflicts of interest

- 4.6. 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 approval to create a contract to provide LFB with contingent labour for a period covering up to 5 years, upon expiry of the current agreement in September 2026. All costs related to the contract will be solely funded by the LFC revenue budget. The total amount being sought for up to 5 years is set out in DMFD297 part 2.
- 5.2. The contract will be funded through existing departmental budgets, which are already being used to cover spending on agency staff. LFB will monitor spending on agency staff against available funding as part of:
 - its regular financial position reporting, to ensure a sustainable position in-year
 - project governance, where the business case specified a need for agency workers.
- 5.3. LFB will manage the level of agency staff through processes including its vacancy control panel. LFB reports that this additional step, in monitoring its levels of agency hires, has already led to a significant reduction in its use of agency workers, and overall cost to LFB.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1. The LFC's General Counsel's department has confirmed the following in report LFC-26-061.
- 6.2. This report seeks approval for LFB to commit spend, up to the amount set out in part 2, to enter a contingent labour contract. Ensuring that the LFC has access to temporary staff, as and when needed, will enable LFB to operate efficiently and effectively.
- 6.3. 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.

- 6.4. Under section 327D of the Greater London Authority Act 1999, as amended, 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.
- 6.5. 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. In particular, paragraph (b) of Part 2 of the 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 is identified in accordance with normal accounting practices”. The proposed expenditure exceeds this financial threshold.
- 6.6. LFC-26-061 confirms the new contract with a supplier will be procured under the terms of the existing and currently accessible framework agreement (ESPO MSTAR4 framework), which was procured following an open procurement exercise in accordance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015.

Appendices and supporting papers:

Appendix 1 - LFC-26-061 Contingent labour contract

Appendix 2 - LFC-26-061a Equalities Impact Assessment initial screening form

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.

✓

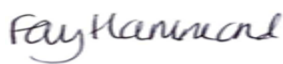
Mayoral Delivery Board:

A summary of this decision was reviewed by the Mayoral Delivery Board on 10 August 2026.

CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER:

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

Signature



Date 11 August 2026