

Request for Deputy Mayor for Fire decision – DMFD300

Personal protective equipment contract extension

Executive summary:

London Fire Brigade (LFB) needs a reliable supply of compliant firefighter personal protective equipment (PPE); and the associated maintenance, repair, laundering and logistics services required to support approximately 5,000 operational firefighters. LFB currently receives PPE and associated managed services through a contract with Bristol Uniforms Ltd. This expires in October 2026.

LFB is seeking approval from the Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and the Fire Service to commit revenue expenditure (up to the amount set out in part 2) to maintain the provision of PPE and associated managed services for two years (until 14 October 2028).

LFB reports that continuity in PPE provision will maintain firefighter safety and operational resilience. It will also give LFB time to access the replacement national PPE framework.

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 to procure Personal Protective Equipment and associated managed services for two years, until 14 October 2028.

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 September 2026

Part 1 – Non-confidential facts and advice

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 LFB has a contract with Bristol Uniforms Ltd for personal protective equipment (PPE) for firefighters, and associated managed services. This contract expires in October 2026. It was signed after a collaborative procurement with other fire and rescue services, to create a National Specialist PPE Framework.
- 1.2 Kent and Medway Towns Fire Authority is leading a competitive tendering process on behalf of the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC), for a new national framework agreement to provide firefighter PPE and associated services. This process was expected to replace the existing National Specialist PPE Framework by April 2026. However, the new national framework has been delayed.
- 1.3 LFB expects the PPE provider, selected under the new national framework, to need approximately 14 months to complete wearer measurement; manufacture garments; and fully implement replacement PPE. LFB is therefore seeking approval to maintain the current PPE provision for two years (until 14 October 2028), while the new framework is established.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1 LFB's objective is to ensure firefighter PPE and associated managed services (maintenance, repair, laundering and logistics services required to support approximately 5,000 operational firefighters) continue to be provided whilst replacement arrangements are established and implemented. This is critical to maintain firefighter safety and LFB's operational resilience.
- 2.2 LFC-26-072 states that failure to maintain provision of PPE and associated managed services would significantly impact the London Fire Commissioner's (LFC's) ability to discharge statutory firefighting responsibilities and maintain emergency response capability across London.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1 The LFC, and the Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and the Fire Service (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 LFC-26-072 reports that this proposal relates solely to the continuation of an existing service with no material change to scope or service delivery. LFB considers that the original Equality Impact Assessment remains applicable to this procurement and no further assessment is required.

4. Other considerations

Procurement comments

- 4.1 The LFC first received approval to participate in a collaborative procurement for the provision of firefighter PPE in January 2015. The resulting eight-year contract, with Bristol Uniforms Limited, started on 15 October 2018 and will end on 14 October 2026.
- 4.2 The new national framework agreement to provide firefighter PPE and associated services has been delayed. LFB is seeking approval to maintain current PPE provision through its existing supplier for two years (between October 2026 and October 2028). LFB reports that this will:
- ensure continuity of service
 - support LFB's review of its PPE provision and requirements
 - provide time for replacement arrangements to be implemented and for LFB to access them.
- 4.3 Conversely, replacing the incumbent contractor at this stage would incur significant transition risk, service disruption and additional cost.

Sustainability comments

- 4.4 LFC-26-072 states that this procurement does not introduce any significant new sustainability impacts. LFB will maintain the original environmental, ethical sourcing and social value commitments and requirements throughout the delivery of this contract extension. LFB's Sustainable Development

team will input new specifications, commitments and requirements into the upcoming PPE renewal contract.

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 LFB is seeking approval to spend up to the amount set out in part 2, to procure a two-year contract extension to provide PPE for firefighters. Costs will be incurred in financial years 2026-27, 2027-28 and 2028-29. The funding source is the procurement department's protective clothing budget.
- 5.2 LFB will monitor the number of units of new PPE it purchases through regular financial position reporting.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1 The LFC's General Counsel's department has 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 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. 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 as identified in accordance with normal accounting practices".
- 6.4 The Deputy Mayor's approval is accordingly required for the LFC to authorise the spend for maintaining the PPE provision. This is because it has an estimated cost exceeding £150,000. The spend is fully set out in part 2 of the report.
- 6.5 The arrangements proposed are consistent with the LFC's duty, under section 7 (2)(a) of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, to secure the provision of personnel, services and equipment necessary to efficiently meet all normal requirements for firefighting.
- 6.6 The proposed publication of a notice is deemed low risk. This is on the basis that the proposed modification is necessary to ensure continuity of supply, whilst the replacement procurement solution is procured and implemented. LFB acknowledges that residual risk exists in relation to this contract extension. Notwithstanding this, and due to the delays in the NFCC framework and the issues set out in LFC-26-072 (in relation to market capacity, logistics and long manufacturing lead times), LFB considers that the proposed course of action is the most compliant route to resolve the issues identified.
- 6.7 LFB procurement has confirmed that the most appropriate mechanism for securing this contract extension is through Regulation 72(1)(c) of the Public Contracts Regulations (PCR) 2015. This regulation provides a 'safe harbour' for contract modifications in situations where:
- the need for modification has been brought about by circumstances that a diligent contracting authority could not have foreseen
 - the modification does not alter the overall nature of the contract

- the price does not rise by more than 50 per cent of the value of the original contract or framework agreement (the precise figures are contained in part 2).

6.8 The LFC's General Counsel notes that Procurement supports the extension of the current contract for a period of two years and is compliant with the PCR 2015.

Appendices and supporting papers:

LFC-26-072 To Maintain the Provision of Personal Protective Equipment for Firefighters and Associated Services (Fully Managed Service) – part 1 v2

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 Dissanayake 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.

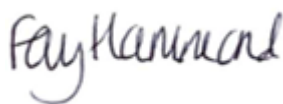
✓

Mayoral Delivery Board:

A summary of this decision was reviewed by the Mayoral Delivery Board on 21 September 2026.

Chief Finance Officer

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



Signature

Date 22 September 2026