

MDA No.: 1727

Title: Letter to Mayor – Arson Offences in London

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 At the Fire Committee meeting on 3 June 2025, the Committee discussed arson offences in London and resolved that:

Authority be delegated to the Chair, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, to approve any output arising from the meeting.

- 1.2 Following consultation with the party Group Leaders, the Chair of the Fire Committee is asked to agree the letter to the Mayor regarding arson, as attached at **Appendix 1**.

2. Decision

- 2.1 **That the Chair of the Fire Committee, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, approves the letter to the Mayor on arson offences in London.**

Assembly Member

I confirm that I do not have any disclosable pecuniary interests in the proposed decision and take the decision in compliance with the Code of Conduct for elected Members of the Authority.

The above request has my approval.

Signature:



Printed Name:

Zack Polanski AM, Chair of the Fire Committee

Date:

27 June 2025

3. **Decision by an Assembly Member under Delegated Authority**

Background and proposed next steps:

- 3.1 The terms of reference for this investigation were agreed by the Chair, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, on 19 May 2025 under the standing authority granted to Chairs of Committees and Sub-Committees. Officers confirm that the report and its recommendations fall within these terms of reference.
- 3.2 The exercise of delegated authority will be formally noted at the Fire Committee's next appropriate meeting.

Confirmation that appropriate delegated authority exists for this decision:

Signature (Committee Services):



Printed Name: Diane Richards

Date: 27 June 2025

Financial Implications: NOT REQUIRED

Note: Finance comments and signature are required only where there are financial implications arising or the potential for financial implications.

Signature (Finance): Not required

Printed Name: N/a

Date: N/a

Legal Implications:

The Chair of the Fire Committee has the power to make the decision set out in this report.

Signature (Legal): 

Printed Name: Rory McKenna Monitoring Officer

Date: 30.06.25

Email: Monitoringofficer@london.gov.uk

Supporting Detail / List of Consultees:

Anne Clarke AM (Deputy Chairman), Susan Hall AM and Hina Bokhari OBE AM

4. Public Access to Information

- 4.1 Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the FoIA, or the EIR and will be made available on the GLA Website, usually within one working day of approval.
- 4.2 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.
- 4.3 **Note:** this form (Part 1) will either be published within one working day after it has been approved or on the defer date.

Part 1 - Deferral:

Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? NO

Part 2 – Sensitive Information:

Only the facts or advice that would be exempt from disclosure under FoIA or EIR should be included in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a part 2 form? NO

Lead Officer / Author

Signature: Philippa Goffe

Printed Name: Philippa Goffe

Job Title: Senior Policy Adviser

Date: 27 June 2025

Countersigned by Executive Director:

Signature:



Printed Name: Helen Ewen

Date: 27 June 2025

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Zack Polanski AM
Chair of the Fire Committee

Sir Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London

(Sent by email)

30 June 2025

Dear Sadiq,

Arson incidents across London

On behalf of the London Assembly Fire Committee, I am writing to express our deep concern about the significant and sustained increase in arson incidents across the capital over the past three years.¹ This has consequences not only for property and infrastructure, but also for Londoners' sense of safety and wellbeing.

As the data in the appendix to this letter shows, with the exception of four boroughs (Barnet, Camden, Newham and Tower Hamlets), arson incidents increased across London between 2022 – 2024. As the Fire Committee, we are keenly aware of the challenges posed across the whole of London. We have heard that action to reverse this trend needs to be strategic and coordinated.² The GLA is uniquely well positioned for this in London. We also heard from Charlie Pugsley, LFB Deputy Commissioner, of the extensive, and ongoing, engagement taking place across London with LFB borough commanders.³ It is vital therefore that the GLA's coordinating role builds upon that work.

To this end, we are calling on you to provide increased support for a pan-London, data-led collaborative response. We make two recommendations:

¹ The Met Police recorded 6,411 arson incidents in London between 2022 and 2024. See: International Fire and Safety Journal, [Arson offences in London rise by 28% with Greenwich worst affected](#), 25 March 2025

² London Assembly Fire Committee, [3 June 2025 Meeting transcript](#), June 2025, p. 13

³ London Assembly Fire Committee, [3 June 2025 Meeting transcript](#), June 2025, p. 22

Recommendation 1: The Mayor should convene LFB, London Boroughs and the Met to create an 'Arson Task Group'. This group should be established with a remit to develop partnerships between organisations, assess emerging risks across London and create cross-collaboration to tackle the rise in arson across London in localised and specific ways.

Recommendation 2: The GLA should consolidate data and analysis on arson and work with London Boroughs to create heat maps for each borough, mapping where hot spots are for arson offences to help inform risk prevention work.

Given the alarming increase in arson in London, including new and emerging threats posed by geopolitical instability manifesting itself on the streets of London, we hope you will take the necessary action to protect Londoners from this devastating problem.

The Committee would welcome a response to this letter by 25 August 2025. Please send your response by email to the Committee's Clerk, Diane Richards (Diane.Richards@london.gov.uk).

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Zack Polanski". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Zack Polanski AM
Chair of the Fire Committee

Appendix One: Table to show arson offences, by Borough, between 2022 – 2024⁴

	2022	2023	2024	2022 vs 2024 (% Change)
Barking and Dagenham	50	44	70	40.00%
Barnet	65	67	60	-7.69%
Bexley	59	61	97	64.41%
Brent	65	66	88	35.38%
Bromley	87	80	111	27.59%
Camden	55	42	49	-10.91%
Croydon	94	112	107	13.83%
Ealing	57	65	75	31.58%
Enfield	79	99	83	5.06%
Greenwich	85	128	141	65.88%
Hackney	50	66	58	16.00%
Hammersmith and Fulham	43	34	49	13.95%
Haringey	45	80	81	80.00%
Harrow	19	45	22	15.79%
Havering	73	74	87	19.18%
Hillingdon	84	86	134	59.52%
Hounslow	81	88	104	28.40%

⁴ London Assembly Research Unit analysis based on data from the Metropolitan Police Freedom of information request, [Arrests and charges for arson offences from 2022 to 2024](#)

Islington	57	51	68	19.30%
Kensington and Chelsea	22	20	30	36.36%
Kingston upon Thames	25	24	32	28.00%
Lambeth	61	64	86	40.98%
Lewisham	70	72	83	18.57%
Merton	33	36	34	3.03%
Newham	92	63	78	-15.22%
Redbridge	59	53	74	25.42%
Richmond upon Thames	22	38	38	72.73%
Southwark	63	102	75	19.05%
Sutton	43	49	86	100.00%
Tower Hamlets	85	76	71	-16.47%
Waltham Forest	39	45	49	25.64%
Wandsworth	56	64	69	23.21%
Westminster	33	48	68	106.06%
Non MET police force	0	0	3	
Unknown/Not Recorded	43	45	70	62.79%
Total	1894	2087	2430	28.30%