

The London Fire Commissioner and London Fire Brigade

Philippa Goffe and Matthew Honeyman

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Overview

The London Fire Commissioner (LFC) is a functional body of the Greater London Authority. The LFC runs the London Fire Brigade, serving as both London's fire and rescue authority and its chief fire officer.

This paper provides key information on the governance, funding and strategy of the LFC, including work to transform the organisation following the 2017 Grenfell Tower fire.

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Contents

1	The London Fire Commissioner and London Fire Brigade.....	6
1.1	Overview.....	6
1.2	Mayoral powers	7
1.3	National context.....	8
	Government role	8
	Fire reform white paper.....	8
	National Fire Chiefs Council	9
2	Challenges.....	9
2.1	Grenfell Tower Inquiry	9
	Phase 1 report	10
	Phase 2 report	10
2.2	His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services	12
2.3	Independent Culture Review	14
	Response to the review’s publication	14
	Advisory Panel	16
3	Transformation	16
3.1	Community Risk Management Plan	17
	Key performance indicators	17
4	Funding.....	18
4.1	LFC budget.....	18
4.2	Financial challenges	18
	Net zero commitments	19
	Training resource deficit	19
5	Scrutiny of the LFC and LFB	20
5.1	Mayor and Deputy Mayor	20
5.2	Fire Committee	20
5.3	Other Assembly work.....	21
	Other formats and languages	22

1 The London Fire Commissioner and London Fire Brigade

1.1 Overview

London Fire Brigade (LFB) is the largest fire and rescue service in the UK and among the largest in the world. It deals with a range of serious incidents, notably fires in residential and non-residential buildings, wildfires, terrorist incidents, flooding, road traffic collisions and other incidents where Londoners are in need of rescue.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, LFB officers took on extra responsibilities driving ambulances to aid the London Ambulance Service, and joining multi-agency teams to prepare the deceased for collection.

As an organisation, as of April 2024 it employed over 5,800 people made up of firefighters, control officers and fire rescue staff (non-operational). LFB is one of very few fire and rescue services in the UK whose firefighters are all full-time. A breakdown by occupational group is set out below.

Table 1: Number of LFB staff by occupational group as of April 2024¹

Occupational group	Staff numbers
Operational – firefighters	4,702
Control – staff in the emergency call centre	116
Fire Rescue staff – non-operational staff	1,009

The London Fire Commissioner (LFC) is a statutory role established as a corporation sole² under the [Policing and Crime Act 2017](#). The LFC serves both as London's fire and rescue authority (FRA), and its chief fire officer; and it runs LFB. There is no formal legal separation between the LFC and LFB. The LFC is responsible for providing London's fire and rescue service, as defined principally in the [Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004](#).

The role of LFC was established in its current form on 1 April 2018, replacing the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority. Jonathan Smith is the current LFC, having been appointed in May 2025. Jonathan Smith attended a meeting of the London Assembly Fire Committee on 1 July 2025, his first day as Commissioner.³ At this meeting, he stated that his priorities for his commissionership were renewing commitments on culture and professionalism right across the organisation, so that:

¹ This information was provided by LFB to the London Assembly in April 2024.

² The definition of a corporation sole can be found [here](#).

³ London Assembly Fire Committee, [What Should the New London Fire Commissioner's Priorities Be? – Panel Three](#), 1 July 2025

“when people think of the LFB, they think of the very best fire and rescue service [FRS] in the UK, if not Europe. [...] The only way we meet that challenge is by delivering an FRS that we can all stand behind and [which] reflects the particular needs and challenges of London and Londoners.”⁴

1.2 Mayoral powers

The LFC is a functional body of the Greater London Authority (GLA). It is one of five functional bodies, alongside Transport for London, the Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime, and the three Mayoral Development Corporations.

The Mayor must appoint an LFC and hold them to account for the exercise of their functions.⁵ The Mayor has the power to require the LFC to resign, or to suspend them from duty.⁶ Since these arrangements were introduced in 2018, the Mayor has required the incumbent Commissioner to stand down on one occasion, Dany Cotton QFSM, who brought forward a planned retirement in 2019.

The Mayor also has powers to set the LFC budget and approve the LFC’s key organisational strategy, as well as a general power to issue guidance and directions to the LFC regarding the performance of their role. The Home Secretary can direct the Mayor to revise guidance or directions if they believe the Mayor’s guidance or directions are inconsistent with national policy.⁷

The Mayor can delegate elements of his oversight role over the LFC to a Deputy Mayor for Fire. The Mayor created this role in 2018 and was held by Baroness Fiona Twycross from then until May 2024. In this period the role has been combined with other duties in relation to London’s resilience and was therefore titled Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience. In May 2024, the Mayor announced that [Jules Pipe CBE](#) would take on the role as Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and the Fire Service; this appointment was subject to a London Assembly confirmation hearing.⁸ The Deputy Mayor for Fire is supported by the GLA’s Fire unit.

In 2018, the Mayor used his general power of direction to issue the LFC Governance Direction, which set out the role of the Deputy Mayor for Fire in relation to LFC decision-making. It includes requirements for the LFC to seek the Deputy Mayor’s consent for significant financial decisions and senior officer appointments, and to consult the Deputy Mayor on a range of other decisions.

⁴ London Assembly Fire Committee, [What Should the New London Fire Commissioner’s Priorities Be? – Panel Three](#), 1 July 2025

⁵ GLA Act 1999, [section 327A](#). The Commissioner is both an individual and the body responsible for fire and rescue in London.

⁶ GLA Act 1999, [sections 327C](#) and [327D](#) (inserted by the Policing and Crime Act 2017)

⁷ GLA Act 1999, [section 327E](#)

⁸ It was also announced that David Bellamy, the Mayor’s Chief of Staff, would replace Baroness Twycross as Chair of the London Resilience Forum.

1.3 National context

Government role

The Home Office includes fire and rescue services in its remit and is responsible for legislation that applies to them. The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 sets out the responsibilities of FRAs, which includes the LFC. There are four key responsibilities for FRAs that they must ensure that they make provision for, including:

- extinguishing fires in their area
- protecting life and property in the event of fires in their area
- rescuing and protecting people in the event of a road traffic collision
- rescuing and protecting people in the event of other emergencies.

The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 also gives the Government responsibility for producing the [Fire and Rescue National Framework](#) which outlines the Government's high-level priorities and objectives for FRAs in England. The National Framework's priorities for FRAs are to:

- identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue-related risks their areas face, make provision for prevention and protection activities, and respond to incidents appropriately
- work in partnership with their communities and a wide range of partners locally and nationally to deliver their service
- be accountable to communities for the service they provide.⁹

The National Framework requires the LFC (and all FRAs) to produce a community risk management plan (CRMP).¹⁰ The LFC's plan serves as the primary organisational strategy for LFB. The National Framework also requires publication of an annual statement of assurance and a number of financial plans. In London, the CRMP and other Framework documents must be approved by the Mayor before publication, and the Mayor must consult the Assembly before granting his approval.¹¹

Fire reform white paper

The then Government consulted on a [fire reform white paper](#) in May 2022 to seek views on its ideas for reform, building on lessons from independent inspection, concerning national reports and the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.¹² Three key areas were identified in the white paper as needing improvement: people, professionalism and governance.¹³

⁹ Home Office, [Fire and Rescue National Framework for England](#), May 2018

¹⁰ The Framework uses the term 'Integrated Risk Management Plan', but FRAs, including the LFC, generally use the alternative term 'Community Risk Management Plan' for this document.

¹¹ Home Office, [Fire and Rescue National Framework for England](#), May 2018

¹² Home Office, [Reforming Our Fire and Rescue Service](#), May 2022

¹³ Home Office, [Reforming Our Fire and Rescue Service](#), May 2022

The then Government published its [response to the consultation](#) in December 2023. It set out some key aims under the three areas:

- people – building on existing progress to provide effective leadership of the sector and building capability; review with FRAs and unions how firefighter pay is determined
- professionalism – create a professional body of fire professionals, a college of fire and rescue and a statutory code of ethics
- governance – encourage a single point of accountability for FRAs via directly elected mayors or police, fire and crime commissioners; give chief fire officers operational independence.¹⁴

Plans for legislation in this area, however, were not included in the King's Speech in November 2023 and have not been publicly progressed by the subsequent Labour Government. It is therefore unlikely that the proposed legislative changes will be introduced in the near future.

National Fire Chiefs Council

The National Fire Chiefs Council brings together the operational leadership of the UK's fire and rescue services to provide co-ordinated professional, operational and technical leadership of the sector, advising and supporting central and local government, and other stakeholders. It provides tools, guidance and resources to help FRAs to improve, adapt and standardise.

It publishes a suite of [national operational guidance](#)¹⁵ which FRAs are expected to follow but it has no statutory role or authority over FRAs.

2 Challenges

LFB has faced a number of challenges in recent years which have had a significant impact on how it operates in London as well as having a national impact for the Government and all fire and rescue services.

2.1 Grenfell Tower Inquiry

The Grenfell Tower fire occurred on 14 June 2017. A fire broke out in the 24-storey Grenfell Tower block of flats in North Kensington which spread rapidly via inflammable cladding on the outside of the Tower. 72 people died and over 70 people were injured.

¹⁴ Home Office, [A Profession we can all be proud of – Reforming our Fire & Rescue Service Government consultation response to the Fire Reform White Paper](#), December 2023

Phase 1 report

The [Grenfell Tower Inquiry](#) (GTI) was set up by the Government shortly after the fire. It published its Phase 1 report, which focused primarily on what happened on the night of the fire and how LFB responded, in October 2019. The report identified that the cladding installed on the Tower failed to comply with Building Regulations and that it actively promoted the fire.¹⁶

The report stated that LFB's preparation and planning for a high-rise fire was "gravely inadequate"; and that incident commanders were not aware of the potential dangers of inflammable cladding and lacked training for evacuation of residents.

The Phase 1 report made recommendations directed at LFB, other fire and rescue services, other emergency services, Government, and owners and managers of residential buildings. There were 46 recommendations in total, with 29 of these aimed directly at LFB. The report highlighted some serious issues for LFB and for fire and rescue services more generally, as well as failings in the building itself. It identified that LFB was overwhelmed by the unprecedented nature of the fire on the night and that institutional failures meant that the overall response to the disaster was not good enough.

The Mayor has published regular updates on LFB's progress with implementing the recommendations. The Mayor's 33rd report, published in March 2024, stated that all of the recommendations aimed at LFB had now been implemented. The report stated: "completion of the final recommendation this month is a significant milestone in the Brigade's continuing transformation journey and demonstrates the commitment made to delivering improvements in response to the fire."¹⁷

Phase 2 report

The Inquiry's Phase 2 report, its final report, was published on 4 September 2024.¹⁸ It examined the causes of the fire, including how Grenfell Tower came to be in a condition which allowed the fire to spread in the way identified by Phase 1. The report contained 58 recommendations, of which thirteen were related to firefighting. Not all of these recommendations directly impacted LFB.¹⁹ Criticisms of LFB in the Phase 2 report included:

- Its failure to integrate the control room into the organisation effectively
- Its failure to ensure adequate training for control room staff in handling Fire Survival Guidance²⁰ calls
- Its failure to learn from previous incidents
- That LFB tended to adopt an insular approach and not learn from others
- A need for more streamlined and less bureaucratic management

¹⁶ Grenfell Tower Inquiry, [Grenfell Tower Inquiry: Phase 1 report](#), October 2019

¹⁷ GLA, [Mayor's 33rd progress report on GTI Phase 1 report recommendations](#), March 2024, p3

¹⁸ Grenfell Tower Inquiry, [Newsletter](#), November 2023

¹⁹ Grenfell Tower Inquiry, [Grenfell Tower Inquiry: Phase 2 Report](#), September 2024

²⁰ Fire Survival Guidance is the advice and guidance given by control room officers to persons who are directly affected by fire, heat or smoke and cannot leave their premises. See: LFB, [Fire Survival Guidance- Policy Number 0790](#), October 2020

- Direct criticism of LFB leadership, specifically a “chronic lack of effective management and leadership, combined with an undue emphasis on process.”²¹

The Phase 2 report contained three recommendations. These were that the Government should ask His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) to inspect LFB as soon as reasonably possible to assess:

- its arrangements for assessing and training its incident commanders
- its arrangements for collecting, storing, and distributing risk information
- Control’s operational effectiveness.²²

On 4 September 2024, the LFC issued an official response to the Phase 2 Inquiry Report which stated that LFB would “set out an action plan, detailing our response to each recommendation, in due course. This will be developed following consultation and in collaboration with the Grenfell community and our Community Forum.”²³ LFB then published its response to the recommendations from the Phase 2 report in October 2024, which outlined the work it was doing to meet the 13 specific recommendations addressed to LFB.²⁴

Issues considered by Phase 2, particularly on building safety, have to some extent been addressed in actions taken by the Government, the Mayor, the LFC and others, since the Grenfell Tower fire. The Government commissioned an independent review of building regulations and fire safety, led by Dame Judith Hackitt, which was published in 2018.²⁵ Subsequently, Parliament passed the [Fire Safety Act 2021](#) and the [Building Safety Act 2022](#). The Government also provided funding for the remediation of high-rise buildings, such as the remediation of unsafe cladding, with parts of the remediation programme managed by the GLA; LFB is not involved in this.

LFB’s work has been affected by ongoing changes to the building safety regime. A large number of residential buildings in London have been moved to a ‘simultaneous evacuation’ strategy in the event of a fire as a result of identified safety issues, in many cases deploying a ‘waking watch’.²⁶ LFB carried out inspections of high-rise residential premises across London as part of the national Building Risk Review programme, in addition to its own inspection programme. LFB is also providing support to the work of the new national Building Safety Regulator, which became fully operational in April 2024.²⁷

The London Assembly Fire Committee [met on the 10 September 2024](#) to examine the Phase 2 report’s findings and recommendations.²⁸ On the 5 November 2024, the

²¹ Grenfell Tower Inquiry, [Grenfell Tower Inquiry: Phase 2 Report](#), September 2024

²² Grenfell Tower Inquiry, [Grenfell Tower Inquiry: Phase 2 Report](#), September 2024

²³ LFB, [London Fire Brigade's Response to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 Report](#), September 2024

²⁴ LFB, [Response to 'The London Fire Brigade' Recommendations - Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 Report](#), October 2024

²⁵ Dame Judith Hackitt, DBE FREng, [Building a Safer Future: Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety: Final Report](#), May 2018

²⁶ LFB is not responsible for determining the evacuation strategy for buildings or use of a waking watch. For data see: Questions to the Mayor, [Waking Watches and London's Boroughs](#), (Reference 2024/1082), 15 March 2024

²⁷ For more information see: [Health and Safety Executive, About the Building Safety Regulator](#)

²⁸ London Assembly Fire Committee, [Agenda and minutes](#), 10 September 2024

Committee [wrote to the Mayor](#) supporting calls from the LFB to ensure funding is provided to carry out recommendations made in the report.²⁹

2.2 His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services

The Government extended the remit HMICFRS to include FRAs in 2017. It examines FRAs in three main areas: effectiveness, efficiency and how well it looks after its people. HMICFRS has produced three full inspection reports on LFB, and a number of more focused or thematic reports. All three full inspection reports made recommendations for change.

The [first full inspection report](#) on LFB, covering 2018-19, was published in December 2019 and identified that LFB required improvement in all three key areas. It identified the following as a 'cause of concern' (which are more serious issues and require an action plan to be developed with follow-up monitoring by HMICFRS until sufficiently addressed):

- a backlog of training for staff on risk-critical skills
- refresher training for emergency vehicle drivers
- new incident commanders not getting the training they need
- LFB not providing regular incident command training and reassessment.

In the [second full inspection report](#), for 2021-22, HMICFRS was graded as 'requires improvement' for each of the three themes. The report highlighted 44 areas for improvement covering a wide range of issues, from the risks faced in the delayed delivery of fire prevention activity, to continued concern over a toxic work culture, including bullying and discrimination. The 44 areas for improvement included those that had not yet been addressed following LFB's first full inspection. HMICFRS also raised two further causes for concern in respect of:

- LFB not prioritising home fire safety visits (HFSVs) – a key part of LFB's preventative work – on the basis of risk
- cultural issues, including bullying and discrimination, and LFB values and behaviours not being demonstrated by senior leaders.

²⁹ London Assembly Fire Committee, [Assembly calls for funding to ensure Grenfell safety legacy](#), November 2024

Matt Parr CB, the then HM Inspector said:

“There is a different atmosphere in the London Fire Brigade, and a leadership which recognises the scale of its challenges and is determined to improve. However, this has not yet been matched by wide scale improvements and a conspicuously better service to the public of London.”³⁰

In December 2022, following the 2021-22 report and the subsequent publication of an Independent Culture Review (see below), HMICFRS placed LFB into the Engage process. This is an enhanced level of monitoring which provides additional scrutiny and support from across the sector. HMICFRS stated this was done in the light of cumulative evidence of unacceptable behaviour within LFB, including discrimination and bullying, adding to its initial cause for concern.

HMICFRS confirmed LFB had exited Engage in March 2024.³¹ Andy Cooke, HM Chief Inspector said:

“I am reassured by the plans London Fire Brigade has in place to continue making improvements. The brigade will be inspected again this summer, when we will assess its progress to make sure the people of London are getting the service they deserve from their fire and rescue service.”³²

The [third full inspection report](#) for 2023-2025 was published on 29 November 2024.

HMICFRS changed its inspection approach for 2023-2025 inspection, assessing LFB against the characteristics of good performance, and expanding the previous four-tier system of graded judgments to five – introducing a new grade of “adequate”.

The inspection found that LFB was outstanding in one area, good in five areas, adequate in four areas, required improvement in one area and was inadequate in no areas. These areas were:

- Outstanding: Responding to major and multi-agency incidents
- Good: understanding the risk of fire and other emergencies; preventing fires and other risks; responding to fires and other emergencies; making best use of resources; making the FRS affordable now and in the future
- Adequate: Protecting the public through fire regulation; promoting the right values and culture; getting the right people with the right skills; ensuring fairness and promoting diversity
- Requires improvement: Managing performance and developing leaders.

HM Inspector Lee Freeman stated that there were “significant improvements” in the performance of LFB since the January 2022 inspection and praised its improved understanding of risk and continued quick response to fires. He added that LFB “still needs to improve in some areas to provide a consistently good service across the brigade”. Recommendations for further improvements included:

³⁰ HMICFRS, [London Fire Brigade still has much to do](#), 27 July 2022

³¹ HMICFRS, [LFB removed from enhanced monitoring](#), 6 March 2024

³² HMICFRS, [LFB removed from enhanced monitoring](#), 6 March 2024

- ensuring that risk-based inspection programme work is appropriately prioritised by staff,
- doing more to recruit a more diverse workforce,
- continuing to build staff trust and confidence in processes designed to deal with poor behaviour.

2.3 Independent Culture Review

In August 2020, trainee LFB firefighter Jaden Matthew Francois-Esprit took his own life. Following his death, his family shared their concerns that he was bullied because of his race. An internal investigation into the support available to Jaden Matthew Francois-Esprit recommended a wider, external review of LFB's culture.³³ As a result, the LFC commissioned an Independent Culture Review of LFB.

Nazir Afzal OBE was appointed to lead the Review in November 2021, and with a team of seven experts, gathered evidence over 10 months of people's experience of the working environment and wider culture at LFB.³⁴ The [Independent Culture Review of LFB](#) was published on 25 November 2022. The review made 23 recommendations.

Nazir Afzal OBE stated that the review found evidence "that supports a finding that LFB is institutionally misogynist and racist".³⁵ It found "dangerous levels of ingrained prejudice against women and the barriers faced by people of colour spoke for themselves."³⁶ It was very critical of LFB's People Services and Nazir Afzal stated that LFB "needs to do more to protect its own people and give them the help they need to experience dignity in the workplace and be able to thrive in a job they love."³⁷

Response to the review's publication

In response to the publication of the review, then Commissioner Andy Roe announced immediate action as part of a long-term programme to improve the LFB culture. He said:

"There is no place for discrimination, harassment and bullying in the Brigade and from today it will be completely clear to all staff what behaviour isn't acceptable and what the consequences will be. I am deeply sorry for the harm that has been caused. I will be fully accountable for improving our culture and I fully accept all of the 23 recommendations."³⁸

The Mayor said:

"The details published today of institutional misogyny, racism and discrimination are abhorrent. Londoners, including firefighters and other staff, have been let down by those who should have supported them have every right to be angry, as I am. I appointed Andy Roe as a reforming commissioner and I fully supported him in

³³ LFB, [Reviewing our Culture](#), 27 July 2021, p3

³⁴ Nazir Afzal OBE, [Independent Culture Review of London Fire Brigade](#), November 2022, pp1-3

³⁵ Nazir Afzal OBE, [Independent Culture Review of London Fire Brigade](#), November 2022, p78

³⁶ Nazir Afzal OBE, [Independent Culture Review of London Fire Brigade](#), November 2022, p78

³⁷ Nazir Afzal OBE, [Independent Culture Review of London Fire Brigade](#), November 2022, p79

³⁸ LFB, [London Fire Commissioner takes immediate action in response to culture review](#), 25 November 2022

commissioning this review. We both agree that all of its recommendations and findings must be acted upon with urgency and conviction to rebuild public trust and the confidence of LFB staff and firefighters who have been failed for far too long.”³⁹

Actions taken by LFB in response to the review included:

- independent staff complaints service introduced⁴⁰
- new, in-house Professional Standards Unit (PSU) established
- historic review of discrimination, bullying and harassment cases from the last five years
- a new support hub for staff launched
- posters and leaflets about accepted behaviours at work and how to access support put up at all LFB locations
- establishment of an advisory panel on culture with an independent chair
- independent review of People Services
- launch of new “Brigade values”.

In April 2025, the London Assembly Fire Committee published its report [Action and Ambition: London Fire Brigade’s culture](#) which commended LFB for making progress on the issues identified in Nazir Afzal OBE’s report and praised the outgoing LFC, Andy Roe, for making culture change a “key pillar” of his leadership.⁴¹ However, the Committee also found that LFB’s PSU had not been able to handle the volume of complaints it received in a timely fashion and lacked sufficient independence. The report also identified areas in which strong messages about challenging misconduct and building a workforce which is representative of the communities the LFB serves could be supported by further ambition and action to deliver.

Key recommendations in the report included:

- LFB should assure the independence of the complaints and investigations element of the PSU by creating a new independent Standards Commissioner responsible for oversight of the PSU.
- As part of LFB’s commitment to transparency and openness it should continue to survey its workforce at least annually, and publish the findings of the surveys.
- LFB should publish a new strategy for attracting and retaining more diverse candidates into the service.⁴²

On 23 July 2025, the LFC updated the London Assembly Fire Committee that LFB would be introducing a new Independent Chair of Professional Standards. This post is “independent from LFB reporting structures to introduce additional scrutiny and provide advice and

³⁹ Mayor of London, [Mayor Statement on LFB Culture Review](#), 25 November 2022

⁴⁰ The independent complaints service was an initial response to the review, later replaced by the Professional Standards Unit.

⁴¹ London Assembly Fire Committee, [Action and Ambition: London Fire Brigade’s culture](#), April 2025

⁴² London Assembly Fire Committee, [Action and Ambition: London Fire Brigade’s culture](#), April 2025

assurance to the Commissioner and Deputy Mayor on a range of critical matters relating to culture, behaviour and conduct.”⁴³ On 11 November 2025, Niran Mothada was announced as the new Independent Chair of Professional Standards.

Advisory Panel

Following the publication of the Independent Culture Review, the LFC established an Advisory Panel to provide support and challenge LFB’s response to the report. The Advisory Panel is not a decision-making body. It is made up of representatives from:⁴⁴

- the Home Office
- HMICFRS
- NFCC
- Local Government Association
- GLA
- London boroughs
- community representatives
- trade unions.

The first meeting of the Advisory Panel was held on 3 October 2023. The LFC appointed Martin Forde KC, a senior lawyer, as an independent Chair for a two-year period.⁴⁵

The Advisory Panel’s role is to:

“support the Commissioner’s mission to ensure the LFB is trusted to serve and protect London and in making the required changes to the culture of the LFB; to help quality assure and improve LFB’s thinking and plans; advise on proposed action to address programme risks; provide feedback on measures being used to monitor progress; advise on the development of new strategies for LFB; and provide assistance where expertise and resources permit.”⁴⁶

3 Transformation

In response to the GTI Phase 1 report recommendations and those made by HMICFRS, LFB initiated a transformation programme, with a new Transformation Delivery Plan (TDP) developed in 2020 and a Director of Transformation appointed.

⁴³ LFC, [Correspondence from the London Fire Commissioner Office](#), 23 July 2025

⁴⁴ LFB, [Establishment of an Advisory Panel following Culture Review and appointment of an Independent Chair](#), 23 August 2023, pp3-4

⁴⁵ LFB, [Establishment of an Advisory Panel following Culture Review and appointment of an Independent Chair](#), 23 August 2023, p5

⁴⁶ LFB, [Establishment of an Advisory Panel following Culture Review and appointment of an Independent Chair](#), 23 August 2023, p3

In January 2023, the LFC published a new CRMP, which replaced the TDP as the key strategy setting out how LFB would be transformed.

3.1 Community Risk Management Plan

LFB developed its new CRMP during 2021 and 2022. Public consultation on the draft CRMP took place from 30 May to 25 July 2022.⁴⁷ Thereafter, the Mayor approved the LFC's proposed plan.

The LFB published the CRMP, [Your London Fire Brigade 2023-2029](#), on 1 January 2023. This is the key organisational strategy setting out the overall direction for service delivery and how LFB will address the risks London faces. The new plan is seeking to embed and drive forward the transformative work that is under way at LFB. The CRMP was published together with the following documents (among others):

- [Delivery Plan 2023-29](#) (updated February 2023)
- [Assessment of Risk](#) (April 2022)
- [Measuring Our Success 2023-29](#) containing key performance indicators (KPIs) (May 2022).⁴⁸

The CRMP incorporates LFB's transformation changes and the plans for their delivery for the duration of the Plan. It includes information on LFB's vision, culture, and risk assessments, before setting out "how we intend to achieve our purpose over the coming years". The CRMP goes on to set out four 'strategic pillars' and eight 'commitments', which were developed in response to feedback from consultation and engagement with Londoners.⁴⁹

Key performance indicators

The CRMP includes a set of KPIs for LFB, with annual targets set for each of the KPIs. Measures include:

- levels of public satisfaction and trust with LFB
- the diversity of LFB workforce
- response times for emergency incidents
- the amount of time spent by firefighters on preventative work
- the number of deaths and injuries from fire
- the number of fires
- completion levels for training in management skills and responding to terrorist incidents
- firefighter injuries

⁴⁷ LFB, [Your London Fire Brigade – How we consulted](#), 7 September 2022, p1

⁴⁸ LFB, [Your London Fire Brigade 2023-2029](#), 1 January 2023

⁴⁹ LFB, [Your London Fire Brigade 2023-2029](#), 1 January 2023, p5

- proportion of HFSVs targeted at at-risk Londoners
- reduction in carbon emissions.

Data on the KPIs is reported through the London Datastore and can be found [here](#) alongside quarterly financial and performance reports.

4 Funding

4.1 LFC budget

The LFC's budget is set by the Mayor as part of the annual GLA Group budget, on which the London Assembly is consulted. The LFC is funded by grants from the Home Office and resources allocated by the Mayor as part of the budget process. It is up to the Mayor to decide how much funding to allocate to fire and rescue as part of allocations to the GLA priorities.

The Mayor has proposed LFC funding of £557.3 million in 2026-27, an increase of £25.4 million from the previous year.⁵⁰ Funding from the GLA provides the majority of LFB's funding. In 2026-27, total gross revenue expenditure for the LFC is budgeted at £664 million, of which nearly 80 per cent is for staffing costs.

4.2 Financial challenges

A number of issues were outlined in relation to LFB's budget proposals during the 2026-27 Mayoral budget process:

- The LFC 2026-27 budget submission shows a budget gap of £12 million for this fiscal year. This has reduced from the £18 million budget gap estimated for 2026-27 in the 2025-26 Budget, as the result of £6 million of savings and cost reductions.
- LFB's total reserves are on a downward trajectory from £105.6 million in March 2023 to a forecast £31.3 million by March 2027 and £34.3 million by March 2029.⁵¹
- The LFC's allocation for the annual pay award for firefighters in the draft budget was two per cent.⁵² The pay award is determined nationally and is still to be finalised by the [National Joint Council](#) in negotiation with the Fire Brigades Union.
- Pension costs are budgeted at £18 million in 2026-27, while government grant funding totals £16.1 million, leaving a £2 million shortfall.⁵³

⁵⁰ LFC, [Budget Submission 2026-27](#), November 2025

⁵¹ P.34, FY 2023/24 – Q4 Finance Position Report & Provisional Outturn [London Fire Brigade].

P.34, LFC Quarter 4 2023-24 Financial Position Report and Provisional Outturn ; 2025 – 2028: 4.70, LFC Budget Submission 2025-26, P.13, LFC Budget Submission 2026-27, 21 November 2025.

⁵² LFC, [2024/25 Budget Submission](#), 24 November 2023, p7

⁵³ LFC, [Budget Submission 2026-27](#), November 2025, p11

Net zero commitments

LFB set a goal of achieving net-zero carbon by 2030 in its draft Budget submission in November 2023, with emissions dropping by an additional 1.5 per cent from the 2020-2021 baseline.⁵⁴ Initiatives to achieve this include the Carbon Net Zero Strategy, the introduction of the first carbon zero fire station, and an approved electrical infrastructure project for increased capacity at fire stations.

Mostaque Ahmed, Director of Corporate Services at LFB, told the Assembly's Budget and Performance Committee: "We realise that this [the target of net zero by 2030] is an ambitious target and funding is a challenge and we will keep looking for every opportunity to achieve that."⁵⁵ The Climate Budget identifies £19 million of climate-related capital expenditure between 2026–27 and 2028–29 for the LFC, with £9.6 million planned for 2026–27.⁵⁶ The planned expenditure focuses on projects that reduce carbon emissions and improve environmental performance through fleet decarbonisation (transitioning to electric and low-emission vehicles), property improvements, and IT and operational initiatives. There are currently £269 million of unfunded climate budget measures between 2026-27 and 2029-30.

In June 2024, LFB secured £22 million from the Mayor's Green Finance Fund⁵⁷ to upgrade electrical capacity at 55 fire stations, supporting EV charging infrastructure.⁵⁸

In February 2025, former LFC Andy Roe wrote to the Budget and Performance Committee about challenges facing the Brigade achieving sustainability is the availability of suitable technology, particularly in areas such as zero-emission firefighting vehicles and station power infrastructure.⁵⁹

Training resource deficit

In its 2024-25 budget, LFB allocated £20 million from its Fire Safety Improvement Reserve to support an extended training programme for firefighters over the next two years.⁶⁰ The LFC told the Budget and Performance Committee on 8 January 2024: "we are going back to a place where that [firefighter training] has now changed to 15 weeks."⁶¹

LFC funded the Modern Firefighting & Training from the Fire Safety Improvement reserve for the first two years of its inception until the end of 2025-26. According to the 2026-27 Budget Submission, this:

"amounted to £20 million in total across these two financial years respectively. However, this source of funding was never sustainable in the long term and therefore a resolution on longer-term funding still needs to be found and is predominantly the

⁵⁴ LFC, [2024/25 Budget Submission](#), 24 November 2023, p75

⁵⁵ London Assembly Budget and Performance Committee, [Meeting transcript](#), 8 January 2024, p27

⁵⁶ LFC, [Budget Submission 2026-27](#), November 2025, p61

⁵⁷ The Green Finance Fund (GFF) is an internally managed debt facility that uses GLA assets to finance environmental projects within the GLA Group and strategic partners.

⁵⁸ Mayor of London, [The Green Finance Fund](#), [accessed 21 January 2026]

⁵⁹ LFC, [Relocation of fire stations](#), 28 February 2025

⁶⁰ LFC, [2024/25 Budget Submission](#), 24 November 2023, p2

⁶¹ London Assembly Budget and Performance Committee, [Meeting transcript](#), 8 January 2024, p15

reason why the budget gap currently remains without further funding sources or greater savings to be found.”⁶²

5 Scrutiny of the LFC and LFB

5.1 Mayor and Deputy Mayor

Scrutiny of the LFC and LFB is carried out by a range of bodies. As discussed above, the Mayor has a duty to hold the LFC to account and has set out requirements for the involvement of the GLA in the LFC decision-making processes. Scrutiny and assurance work on behalf of the Mayor is primarily led by the Deputy Mayor for Fire (see section 1.2 for further discussion of this role).

The Deputy Mayor chairs the Deputy Mayor’s Fire and Resilience Board, which meets monthly to scrutinise LFB performance reports and consider proposals for significant LFC decisions. The Board also holds ‘deep dive’ sessions to consider major issues and priorities. Decisions requiring approval from the Mayor or Deputy Mayor are also considered by the GLA’s Corporate Investment Board.

5.2 Fire Committee

The London Assembly is required by statute to establish a single-purpose fire and emergency committee.⁶³ In March 2018, the Assembly established the [Fire, Resilience and Emergency Planning \(FREP\) Committee](#), which was succeeded in May 2024 by the Fire Committee. The Committee reviews the LFC’s priorities and objectives, and makes recommendations. Its remit includes:

- any actions and decisions of the Mayor and/or Deputy Mayor for Fire in relation to the GLA’s fire duties and responsibilities
- any actions and decisions of the LFC
- any actions and decisions of an officer of the LFC
- any other matters which the Assembly considers to be of importance to fire and rescue in Greater London.

The Committee holds question-and-answer sessions with the Commissioner, as well as undertaking scrutiny work on specific topics. Issues considered or to be considered by the Fire Committee in 2025-26 include:

- arson in London
- priorities for the new LFC

⁶² LFC, [Budget Submission 2026-27](#), November 2025, p10

⁶³ GLA Act 1999, [section 327H](#). The current arrangements were introduced by [schedule 2](#) of the Policing and Crime Act 2017.

- fire contaminants and firefighter health
- mental health and wellbeing of firefighters.

The Fire Committee also has a role as a statutory consultee on major LFC strategies and other documents. It must be consulted before the Mayor gives approval for the LFC to publish its CRMP, annual Statement of Assurance, Efficiency Plan, Reserves Strategy and Medium-Term Financial Strategy. The FREP Committee made recommendations for the content of LFB's most recent CRMP, *Your London Fire Brigade*, which were reflected in the final version.

5.3 Other Assembly work

The Assembly also scrutinises the LFC and LFB in its Plenary meetings, the most recent of which specifically for the LFC and LFB was held on 13 February 2025. This included questions on key priorities for the LFB, fitness of firefighters, engagement with Londoners, and lithium-ion batteries in e-scooters.^{64, 65} The next Plenary meeting focused on the LFC and LFB is scheduled for 5 February 2026.

The Assembly's Budget and Performance Committee scrutinises the LFC, alongside the other GLA functional bodies. The Committee reviews quarterly financial and performance reports from the LFC. It also examines the LFC's budget proposals annually as part of its scrutiny of the Mayor's budget.

⁶⁴ London Assembly Plenary, [Question and Answer Session: Fire and Rescue Services in London](#), 13 February 2025

⁶⁵ London Assembly Plenary, [Question and Answer Session: London Fire Commissioner and Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience](#), 8 February 2024

Other formats and languages

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Chinese

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The London Assembly
City Hall
Kamal Chunchie Way
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Enquiries 020 7983 4000