MDA No.: 1899

Title: Fire Committee's letter regarding the arson attacks in London in March to May 2026

1. Executive Summary

1.1 At the Fire Committee meeting on 15 September 2026, the Committee discussed the arson attacks in London in March to May 2026 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 Lead Members, the Chair of the Fire Committee is asked to agree the letter to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government regarding the arson attacks in London in March to May 2026, 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 Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government regarding the arson attacks in London in March to May 2026, as attached at Appendix 1.**

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: **Anne Clarke AM, Chair of the Fire Committee**

Date: **26 October 2026**

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 17 August 2026 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: 23 October 2026

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: Rebecca Arnold, Deputy Monitoring Officer

Date: 27 October 2026

Email: Monitoringofficer@london.gov.uk

Supporting Detail / List of Consultees:

Hina Bokhari OBE AM (Deputy Chair), Susan Hall AM and Zack Polanski 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: Rebecca Storer

Printed Name: Rebecca Storer

Job Title: Senior Policy Adviser

Date: 23 October 2026

Countersigned by Executive Director:

Signature: 

Printed Name: Helen Ewen

Date: 27 October 2026

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Anne Clarke AM
Chair of the Fire Committee

The Rt Hon Angela Rayner MP
Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government
(Sent by email)

28 October 2026

Dear Secretary of State,

Arson attacks targeting London's Jewish community

I am writing following the London Assembly Fire Committee's 15 September 2026 meeting on the arson attacks that targeted London's Jewish community between March and May this year. This included the appalling 23 March attack that destroyed four frontline Hatzola ambulances providing essential urgent medical care in North West London.

At the meeting, we heard from Mark Gardner MBE, Chief Executive of the Community Security Trust (CST) and Yanky David from Hatzola Northwest about their firsthand experiences of the attacks and their aftermath. We thank them for sharing their experiences with the Committee, and for the work they do to keep Jewish Londoners and the wider community safe.

Fire as a weapon

During these attacks, fire was used as a weapon of hatred and division, sowing fear and putting lives in danger. We heard from Mark Gardner and Yanky David that the impact of these and other recent antisemitic attacks on London's Jewish community has been immense and unprecedented, with Mark telling us that "It felt to the entire Jewish community that everybody was at risk of attack."[1]

Appalling as these attacks were, we heard that the response from the London Fire Brigade (LFB) showcased partnership working at its best. Both Hatzola and the CST praised LFB's operational

[1] London Assembly Fire Committee, Transcript panel one, 15 September 2026, p.1

response to the attacks and its ongoing engagement work with the Jewish community in London.[2] In particular, they highlighted LFB's proactive outreach to Jewish communities, the speed with which it responded to suspected arson attacks and provided reassurance, and the vitally important mass-casualty exercises it conducts to prepare for future incidents.[3] It is clear to see the strength of the relationship that has been built between LFB and community organisations like Hatzola and CST over time, and the positive impact that this has had on the ability of all parties to respond effectively when incidents occur. We were also pleased to hear that LFB has a commitment to continuous training and education on antisemitism.[4]

LFB's national security role

However, the nature of these attacks also raises wider questions about the current and future national security threats that LFB must be prepared for. The London Fire Commissioner told the Committee that the national security picture facing LFB is "more complicated than it has ever been".[5] As the nation's capital and the centre of government, we heard that London faces a level of national security risk that is not seen in any other part of the country.[6] Given continuing international instability, the demands placed on LFB in this area are only likely to grow.

In light of this, LFB has developed a range of specialist capabilities and has taken on additional national responsibilities beyond its regional remit. For example, Patrick Goulbourne KFSM, Assistant Commissioner for Operational Resilience and Control, told us that LFB provides security advice to other fire services nationally through the National Interagency Liaison Officer (NILO) network.[7] NILOs are highly trained officers with security clearance, who Patrick told us are "absolutely key" to the UK's response to terrorist attacks.[8] LFB has sole responsibility for training NILOs across every fire and rescue service in the UK, as well as the British Transport Police, the HM Coastguard, the ambulance service and the military.[9]

Funding for LFB

Despite these responsibilities, LFB currently receives no additional Government funding for its national security role. The Commissioner told us that:

> "there are particular pressures on us as the LFB, being the fire and rescue service for the capital of the UK, and we do not at the moment attract central Government funding for that responsibility. We are holding at the moment national responsibilities, not just for London, which we have to absorb in our current budget at the moment."[10]

We are aware that the Commissioner and the Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and the Fire Service have written to you recently highlighting that LFB will need additional resourcing in the

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[2] London Assembly Fire Committee, Transcript panel one, 15 September 2026, p.2-3
[3] London Assembly Fire Committee, Transcript panel one, 15 September 2026, p.3
[4] London Assembly Fire Committee, Transcript panel two, 15 September 2026, p.7
[5] London Assembly Fire Committee, Transcript panel two, 15 September 2026, p.8
[6] London Assembly Fire Committee, Transcript panel two, 15 September 2026, p.8
[7] London Assembly Fire Committee, Transcript panel two, 15 September 2026, p.8
[8] London Assembly Fire Committee, Transcript panel two, 15 September 2026, p.9
[9] London Assembly Fire Committee, Transcript panel two, 15 September 2026, p.15
[10] London Assembly Fire Committee, Transcript panel two, 15 September 2026, p.8

medium and longer term if it is to continue to meet the national security demands placed on it.[11] The Commissioner told us that LFB has asked for £10 million direct Government funding to reflect the security responsibilities it has as London's fire and rescue service.[12]

The evidence we received demonstrates that LFB has an effective model for responding to terror incidents and engaging with the communities affected by them. But as the level of risk increases, LFB must continue to invest to be prepared for the scale and complexity of new threats. Without dedicated funding, there is a risk that LFB will be unable to continue to deliver the effective response that London's communities, and all those who live, work or visit the capital, deserve. We therefore support the Commissioner's call for direct Government funding for LFB 's national security activity. This would recognise the additional responsibilities that LFB undertakes on behalf of the UK as a whole, as well as the unique security risks facing London as the nation's capital.

Recommendation: As requested by the London Fire Commissioner, the Government should provide the London Fire Brigade with £10 million funding in 2027-28 in respect of its national security remit.

The Committee would welcome a response to this letter by 28 December 2026. Please send your response by email to Diane.Richards@london.gov.uk.

Yours,



Anne Clarke AM
Chair of the Fire Committee

[11] London Assembly Fire Committee, Transcript panel two, 15 September 2026, p.2

[12] London Assembly Fire Committee, Transcript panel two, 15 September 2026, p.10