

# Shared Information Service with GLA – extension of existing contract

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**Report to:**

Investment & Finance Board  
Commissioner's Board  
Deputy Mayor's Fire and Resilience Board  
London Fire Commissioner

**Date:**

21 July 2022  
3 August 2022  
31 January 2023

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**Report by:**

Chief Information Officer

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**Report classification:**

For decision

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**For publication**

I agree the recommended decision below.



**Andy Roe**  
London Fire Commissioner

**Date** This decision was remotely  
signed on 07 April 2023

# PART ONE

## Non-confidential facts and advice to the decision-maker

### Executive Summary

This paper seeks to invoke the provision for a two-year extension to the current contract (approved as LFC-0128 in February 2019) which provides information services to the GLA and LFB, and which the LFC provides to the GLA as a shared service. The current contract expires in March 2023 but has the option for a two-year extension. Following discussion with the GLA, it is agreed that an extension to the current contract would be the best approach to allow time for flexible working to embed further and to determine whether this has any impact on the services provided under the contract. The shared service agreement between the LFC and the GLA has no end date so does not need to be renewed but can be terminated with six-month notice on either side. The decision by the GLA to extend the contract, along with identifying the funding, is subject to a Mayoral Decision (for which there is a parallel governance process running).

### Decisions

#### For the London Fire Commissioner

In support of a corresponding Mayoral decision by the GLA, that the LFC agrees to extend the existing contract for Information Services with Idox Software Ltd for two years, as provided in the original contract, approves expenditure as set out in the in Part Two of this report and delegates authority to the Assistant Director Procurement and Commercial to effect and sign the extension agreement.

### 1 Introduction and background

- 1.1 This report seeks approval to extend an existing contract for two years for an Information Service which is be delivered as a shared service with the Greater London Authority (GLA), and for the expenditure required. The contract was let to Idox Software Ltd, after competitive tendering.
- 1.2 In 2018, the GLA agreed to a shared service arrangement whereby the LFC would procure and manage a contract for an Information Service for the benefit of both organisations. The Mayor approved the arrangement on 13 July 2018 and the London Fire Commissioner (LFC) approved [LFC-0078 – October 2018] that the Director of Corporate Services initiate procurement action and to finalise and execute a shared service agreement with the GLA under S401A. In February 2019 [LFC-0128], the LFC agreed to accept the successful tender for the provision of a shared Information Service from the supplier – Idox Software Ltd. – for the value set out in the confidential Part 2 report.
- 1.3 The original contract was for four years, and governance approvals (GLA and LFC) only secured approvals for funding for four years, and not for two further years extension allowed by the contract.

## 2 Objectives and expected outcomes

2.1 The GLA originally outsourced its information services in 2012. A new contract, managed as a shared service by the LFC, was put in place in 2019. The contracted information services, available to all staff within the GLA and LFB, includes:

- Provision of an enquiry service (covering a range of activities from profiling to literature searching).
- Access to full text books, journals and newspapers.
- Training to strengthen information literacy.
- Production of fortnightly alert bulletins, highlighting new policy announcements, reports, official statistics, publications and research articles across a range of policy subject areas.
- Supply of a weekly information bulletin covering all policy areas relevant to the GLA.
- Access to social/urban affairs databases to enable GLA users to carry out their own searches for research articles.

2.2 The LFB's well-established knowledge management function (within the ICT Business Intelligence Team) provide contract service management in relation to the provision of information services under the contract. The Brigade gets full access to the Information Services.

2.3 The cost of the four-year contract, which is fully covered by the GLA, is set out in the confidential Part 2 report and is funded from the GLA's Information Services budget in the Intelligence Unit. Where the LFB or GLA draw off additional services from the contact, these will be met directly by the LFB or GLA (respectively) from existing budgets (e.g. for books, publications and journals).

2.4 The LFC was able to negotiate a mid-contract saving (via a contract variation) which saw the costs reduced by the value set out in the part 2 report. The estimated cost is estimated at the value set out in the Part 2 report, making the total for the two-year extension.

2.5 The LFB will continue to have responsibility for managing the contract and for administering the day-to-day services for the benefit of both the LFB and GLA. The LFB will not be making any money from providing this service.

2.6 GLA officers are in agreement that this extension should be implemented and are running a parallel governance process to secure a matching Mayoral Decision.

## 3 Equality comments

3.1 The LFC and the Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience are required to have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) when taking decisions. This in broad terms involves understanding the potential impact of policy and decisions on different people, taking this into account and then evidencing how decisions were reached.

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 The equality impact assessment for the original shared service and contract is still applicable and indicates that the proposals in this report will not have a disproportionately adverse effect on any persons with a particular characteristic.

## **4 Other considerations**

### **Workforce comments**

- 4.1 No staff side consultation is proposed on this report.

### **Sustainability comments**

- 4.2 There are no specific sustainability implications arising from this proposal.

### **Procurement comments**

- 4.3 The Director of Corporate Services initiated the original tendering process which was carried out by LFB Procurement, with TfL procurement staff, supported by officers from the LFB Information Management team and GLA Intelligence Unit.

- 4.4 As set out in the original report/decision (LFC0078) in 2018, an OJEU tendering exercise was undertaken. The procurement process involved the GLA whose officers jointly assessed tenders received. The LFC agreed to award a contract as set out in report LFC-0128 in February 2019. That contract was for four years, with the option of a two-year extension.

### **Communications comments**

- 4.5 The opportunity will be taken to communicate the full range of information services available to Brigade staff, including those available under the contract. ICT staff will work with communications department colleagues to ensure that the service is communicated to staff via the established internal communication channels, including Hotwire and Yammer.

## **5. Financial comments**

- 5.1 This report requests approval to extend an existing contract by a further two years for a shared information service with the GLA, with the Brigade acting as the contract manager. The cost of the contract will continue to be met by the LFC and reimbursed by the GLA. The cost incurred by the LFC to manage the contract and any additional services that are requested will be contained within existing resources.
- 5.2 The cost in staff time for the management of the contract by the LFC is equivalent to the estimated value of the additional services received from the service. LFC officers will work with the GLA to ensure the accounting treatment for this is presented correctly.

## **6. Legal comments**

- 6.1 Section 401A of the GLA Act 1999 permits the GLA and the functional bodies to provide professional technical and administrative services to one another, or for them to delegate the discharge of such functions between themselves. The Information Service described in this report fall within the ambit of s 401A.
- 6.2 The Mayor must consult with the London Assembly before entering into any such arrangement involving the GLA; this role has been delegated to the GLA Scrutiny Committee, as permitted under section 54(a) of the GLA Act and paragraph 2.6 of this report indicates that this consultation has taken place.
- 6.3 Administrative arrangements between public bodies that are in the public interest and that do not involve the placing at a competitive advantage or disadvantage of any particular private sector commercial supplier generally fall outside EU public procurement rules, particularly if the activity in question is performed on a cost recovery basis, as is the case here in respect of the shared service agreement between the LFB and GLA.
- 6.4 If there were any employees wholly or mainly assigned to the Information Service currently performed at the GLA those employees would automatically transfer to the LFC under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 ("TUPE") upon delegation of those functions to the LFC. GLA have informed LFC that there are no employees wholly or mainly assigned to the functions/services transferring so it is considered that TUPE will not apply.
- 6.5 The original procurement was undertaken in accordance with the GLA's and the LFB's public procurement obligations and EU procurement law (as applicable at the time) and the proposed extension will be undertaken both in accordance with our legal duties and in accordance with the GLA and Commissioner's procurement standing orders and policies.

# List of appendices

Appendix	Title	Open or confidential*
	None	

## Part two confidentiality

Only the facts or advice considered to be exempt from disclosure under the FOI Act should be in the separate Part Two form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

**Is there a Part Two form:** YES