

Training for Leading Fire Fighters in SFJ Level 2 in carrying out Fire Safety Checks

Report to:	Date:
Investment & Finance Board.....	31 August 2023
Commissioner's Board	13 September 2023
Deputy Mayor's Fire and Resilience Board.....	26 September 2023
London Fire Commissioner	

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For decision

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PART ONE

Non-confidential facts and advice to the decision-maker

Executive Summary

This business case relates to the ambition for the LFB to train 950 supervisory leaders (Leading Firefighters - LFF) in a new nationally developed Level 2 Skills for Justice (SFJ) Fire Safety Check qualification over a 4-year period. This includes existing LFFs in post plus a succession plan for 120 new LFF per year over this 4-year period.

The Grenfell Inquiry Phase One report executive Summary Part V recommendation 2.26 B and K, and the HMICFRS report 2019 identified the need for the LFB to improve Fire safety knowledge across the Fire Station staff.

This business case is key to supporting the Brigade's delivery of Fire Safety Checks (the main deliverable of the corporate KPI for 'time spent on Protection activities'), by providing this qualification to our Leading Firefighters in both the acquisition phase and CPD via dedicated DaMOP package.

Appendix 1 is the full business case. Within this appendix the 4 options are discussed with analysis of the relevant Costs, Benefits, Disbenefits and Risks. Each option is further analysed regarding timescales and speed to benefit. Furthermore, the business case defines the project team structure, dependencies and key milestones to be considered.

Appendix 2 is the Equality Impact Assessment which returns a score of medium risk. No major issues are identified regarding the Equality Act and associated protective characteristics. The main considerations are for use of gender-neutral language, neuro diversity friendly materials and a flexible approach to delivery to support individual's needs such as caring.

Appendix 3 details the finances across the 4-year delivery timeframe. The costings assume an indicative price of [REDACTED] per place on the training course. The spreadsheet also factors in the further costs of administration and Continuous Professional Development (CPD).

Appendix 4 contains the questions raised during both the Change Group and Investment & Finance Boards. The areas raised have been addressed in this report.

The recommended option 4 will cost [REDACTED], with the full costs being met by the central government protection grant uplift fund, the purpose of which is to improve Fire Safety nationally.

The recommended decision is option 4 which encompasses:

- Adopt the NFCC agreed national standard
- Delivery of 950 SFJ Level 2 courses over a 4-year period.
- Ongoing delivery as part of the LFF development programme
- A CPD regime managed through DaMOP

This option enables us to fully fund a 4-year delivery programme along with a CPD package for ongoing maintenance of skills. The other options did not afford the LFC a fully funded programme accounting for attrition rates as well as promotions considered in succession planning.

Recommended decisions

For the Deputy Mayor

The Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience authorises the London Fire Commissioner to commit Protection uplift grant funding expenditure of [REDACTED] for the purpose of delivering Level 2 Fire Safety Checks Level 2 Skills to 950 LFF's plus an associated CPD package.

This LFC decision will only be taken after further consultation with the Greater London Authority's finance and legal advisers and Corporate Investment Board.

For the London Fire Commissioner

The London Fire Commissioner agrees that [REDACTED] be allocated from the Protection up lift fund for the purpose of delivering 950 Level 2 Fire Safety Check Level 2 Skills to LFF's plus an associated CPD package.

1 Introduction and background

- 1.1 Currently Fire Station staff carry low risk Fire Safety Checks (FSC) with minimal training and limited formal qualifications.
- 1.2 During 2021/22 several internally designed LFB packages were delivered to Fire Station staff in the principles of carrying out Fire Safety Checks. These packages did not meet any nationally recognised qualification, as there was not yet a clear standard.
- 1.3 A LFB commitment within the current Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) programme 5 states a commitment to "Enable our people to be the best they can be to serve you better". Item 3 refers to training operational staff at fire stations and up skill them in Fire Safety knowledge to a professional level.

- 1.4 During 2022 a pilot was run for operational staff to get staff formally qualified in a SFJ Level 3 Fire Safety qualification. 156 fire station staff passed the level 3 qualification across all ranks up to and including Station Officers. 44 of these operational staff were LFF. A national review of the Level 3 Fire Safety qualification took place, and it was decided this did not fully provide operational staff with the practical skills required to carry out a Fire Safety Check.
- 1.5 Working in conjunction with other Fire and Rescue services, National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and Skills for Justice, it was decided that this sector required a level 2 fire safety check qualification which meets the fire service national occupational standards and the new NFCC competence framework.

2 Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1 This qualification will enable leading fire fighters to carry out the fire safety checks in line with the national occupational standards for their role, in line with the NFCC Competency Framework. This will help to ensure that all fire safety checks are carried out to the same standard.
- 2.2 The funding secured via the central government Protection Uplift Fund will pay for the initial courses and the associated CPD package.
- 2.3 950 LFF's will receive the training over a 4-year period.
- 2.4 The training aligns with the Commissioner's goal to upskill operational staff in fire safety and is part of the CRMP.
- 2.5 This training will support the organisational aspiration to ensure that Fire Station directorate meets the KPI of 5% for protection activities as part of the wider efficiency agenda.

3. Conclusions

Options

- 3.1 The recommended option is option 4.

The full costs of the initial training and CPD development will be met by the central Government - Protection Uplift Fund. This funding sits outside of the LFB budget and is additional funding.

Option One (Nil cost)

Do nothing

By not delivering this qualification to LFF's we are not training our LFF's to the agreed national standards to enable them to carry out Fire Safety Checks. This would not support an objective analysis of performance through the business assurance / QA framework.

Option 2

To up skill 356 Lead Fighters with the Level 2 SFJ Fire Safety Check qualification. The LFB already has 144 staff of different supervisory management role operational on station with the level 3 fire safety qualification. This option would only train the existing LFF's based at Fire Stations and does not account for succession planning or a CPD package.

Option 3

950 LFF's will be training in the Level 2 SFJ Fire Safety Checks Qualification but no CPD package will be developed to ensure ongoing maintenance of skills.

Option 4

To upskill 950 LFF with the Level 2 SFJ Fire Safety as well as the development of a CPD package, which will be managed through the current DaMOP framework. This will provide standardisation of the process in line with other fire and rescue services. Due to this the LFB will be able to put in place a robust quality assurance programme to ensure Fire safety Checks are completed to the correct standard.

4. Equality comments

- 4.1 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.
- 4.2 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.
- 4.3 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.
- 4.4 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.
- 4.5 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 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.
- 4.6 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.
- 4.7 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
- 4.8 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) was conducted in consultation with the Inclusion Team and Equality Support Groups, identifying positive impacts on pregnancy & maternity, race, sex and disability groups. All other protective characteristics are assessed as neutral with the overall risk as medium. Use of a modular approach to training design will support individuals with caring issues with an ambition to deliver the programme online as well as face to face. Virtual reality technologies will be used to support individuals with a preferred visionary learning style . A full EIA is attached as Appendix 2.

5 Other Considerations

Workforce comments

- 5.1 Informal early consultation has taken place with representative bodies (FBU). Furthermore, detailed discussions will take place during the design and rollout of the process. RBs will be offered a place on the project board to support collective agreement on all aspects of the project.
- 5.2 In consultation with both the Establishment and Performance Team and Learning & Professional Development delivery of this qualification will need to be delivered over a 4-year period. This will reduce the impact on Fire stations for the release of the LFF's to attend the course.

Sustainability comments

- 5.3 This report does not introduce any new sustainability impacts. To ensure sustainability, all strategies, policies, and projects originating from the LFB should be analysed under the Sustainable Development Impact Assessment (SDIA) process. The SDIA process supports the Brigade to avoid or minimise environmental impact and take opportunities to improve social and economic outcomes in London through the service we provide.

Procurement comments

- 5.4 A procurement request has been submitted to support this project and a specification is being developed. Once the specification has been developed then the Professional Services Category team will consider the route to market which will deliver a compliant contract solution. This will likely be using an existing framework and collaboration opportunities will be reviewed at this point. If there is not an applicable framework, then a compliant procurement will be run by the Professional Service category. A governance report will be required at the point of award.

Communications comments

- 5.5 A communications plan will be developed to support roll out of this new training. Internal communications will be under the People and Skills theme - ensuring our people have the right skills, are organised effectively and are operating in a safe and professional workplace culture. External communications will highlight this as an example of our work to serve and protect London through increasing the amount of protection work taking place on stations.

6 Financial comments

- 6.1 Costs associated with the successful delivery of the recommended option (Option 4) are projected at [REDACTED] over a 4-year period.
- 6.2 An indicative cost of [REDACTED] has been identified for each of the 950 LFF targeted through the training, at a total cost of [REDACTED]. Assuming a profile of 238 LFF per year, then annual costs of [REDACTED] are projected from 2024/25 through to 2027/28. In addition [REDACTED] costs are associated with the development of the CPD offer and Babcock costs to get the programme up and running. It is anticipated that [REDACTED] of this will be incurred in the current financial year, with the programme targeted to go live from 1st April 2024.

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29 onwards
Programme / CPD development	125,000	25,000	0	0	0	0
Annual cost of course delivery	0	166,250	166,250	166,250	166,250	100,000
TOTAL Indicative Cost	125,000	191,250	166,250	166,250	166,250	100,000
					815,000	

6.3 The total cost of [REDACTED] projected through to 2027/28 is assumed to be funded from the Protection Uplift Fund. It is envisaged that beyond that period the course will become part of the standard training programme for LFFs and therefore the indicative annual costs of [REDACTED] beyond the initial 4 year roll out will require to be considered as part of training budget planning in the longer term.

6.4 Detailed calculations are available in Appendix 3.

7 Legal comments

- 7.1 This report seeks approval to commit [REDACTED] on training firefighters.
- 7.2 Under section 9 of the Policing and Crime Act 2017, the London Fire Commissioner ('the Commissioner') is established as a corporation sole with the Mayor appointing the occupant of that office.
- 7.3 Section 327D of the Greater London Authority Act 1999, as amended, the Mayor may issue to the Commissioner specific or general directions as to the manner in which the holder of that office is to exercise his or her functions.
- 7.4 By direction dated 1 April 2018, the Mayor set out those matters for which the Commissioner would require the prior approval of either the Mayor or the Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience ('the Deputy Mayor'). In particular, paragraph (b) of Part 2 of the said direction requires the Commissioner to seek the prior approval of the Deputy Mayor before "[a] commitment to expenditure (capital or revenue) of £150,000 or above is identified in accordance with normal accounting practices...". The training identified in this report exceeds this financial threshold, accordingly, prior approval from the Deputy Mayor will be sought.
- 7.5 Section 1 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 states the Commissioner is the fire and rescue authority for Greater London. Under sections 7 to 9 of the 2004 Act, the Commissioner must secure the provision of personnel services and equipment necessary to efficiently meet all normal requirements for firefighting, road traffic accidents and other emergencies. Those sections also make specific duty to secure the provision of training for personnel.
- 7.6 The proposed training will ensure the LFC's personnel will remain effective and efficient in discharging the core functions of the Fire and Rescue Service.

List of appendices

Appendix	Title	Open or confidential*
1	Business case	open
2	EIA	open
3	Financial Analysis	confidential
4	LFB Governance Boards Feedback	open

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: No