

Productivity and Efficiency Plan

30 April 2025

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Appendix 1: Productivity & Efficiency Survey – Annex A

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Delivering productivity and efficiency improvements is a key consideration for the London Fire Commissioner's (LFC) strategic planning as set out in the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP). It is also an integral part of the process to deliver a balanced budget each year to invest in the capabilities needed to serve and protect London. This work continues outside of those published plans and reports to ensure continuous improvement is delivered.

The LFB had identified a particularly challenging financial position as part of its budget process for 2025-26, which it managed to close through additional Mayoral funding and by agreeing a significant number of efficiencies and savings totalling £28 million, without reducing the number of fire stations, appliances, firefighters or its regulatory capabilities. The final LFB budget for 2025-26 was published on 31 March 2025 ([LFB Budget 2025-26](#)).

This plan sets out the context of the LFB's current financial position alongside what efficiencies have been identified so far and further plans. It sets out broader information on the underlying assumptions and areas of focus within the LFB that help frame the work to identify and progress further productivity and efficiency improvements.

2 Efficiency and Productivity Plan

2.1 Budget

For the last financial year 2024-25 the LFB agreed a budget with a financing requirement of £495.1 million. This included ensuring the 2 per cent efficiency target was met. As part of the published Final Budget Report for 2024-25 the LFB set out total budget reductions of £18.9 million including savings, efficiencies and further income and this could be categorised as follows;

- £3.7 million departmental savings
- £7.0 million forecast operational vacancy margin
- £1.0 million additional FRS vacancy margin
- £2.7 million targeted rolling review of all business areas
- £4.5 million review of earmarked reserves

LFB agreed the budget for 2025-26 on the 31 March 2025. That budget set out a balanced position for 2025-26 of £536.4 million and included over £28 million of savings as disclosed in paragraph 1.1.

Despite pressures in developing transformational change through the delivery of the CRMP and significant investment in Modern Firefighting and Training, LFB has achieved a balanced budget primarily through a range of savings, efficiencies and increased income, supplemented by time-limited draws on reserves.

A summary of that budget position is set out below.

The table below sets out the proposed revenue budget for the financial year 2025-26 and financial forecasts for a further two financial years.

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
	£'m	£'m	£'m
Corporate Services	87.1	83.2	87.1
Preparedness and Response	391.3	401.0	408.4
People	8.9	8.6	8.8
Transformation	3.5	4.5	4.1
Prevention, Protection and Policy	42.9	46.6	47.3
Communications	3.2	4.0	4.2
Saving yet to be identified	0.0	(18.0)	(16.7)
Net Service Expenditure	536.9	529.9	543.2
Capital Financing	17.5	25.3	32.1
Interest Receivable	(1.5)	(1.5)	(1.5)
Net Expenditure	552.9	553.7	573.8
Transfer to / (from) Reserves	(16.5)	2.0	0.7
Financing Requirement	536.4	555.7	574.5
Un-ringfenced Government Grants	4.4	4.4	4.4
Retained Business Rates	300.2	305.9	311.1
Council Tax Collection Fund Surplus / (Deficit)	0	0	0
Council Tax Requirement	231.8	245.4	259.0

Whilst the work to identify significant cost reductions creates a balanced budget in 2025-26, it must be noted that in future years the budget includes structural challenges that must be met with further savings and/or increased income. The table above identifies a budget gap of £18 million in 2026-27 and £16.7 million in 2027-28. A large proportion of the gap in 2026-27 is due to the substantial increase in investment in operational training/modern firefighting, which was funded by the LFB's use of the Fire Safety Improvement reserve in the first two years up to and including 2025-26; discussions will continue with central and local government about sustainable funding for this important capability. The Investment and Finance Board will continue to oversee work on delivering existing savings commitments and identifying further savings.

Further information on LFB's Budget for 2025-26 can be found in the appendix 1.

2.2 Precept

As part of his Final Budget the Mayor of London allocates funding from retained business rates and council tax to the Greater London Assembly's (GLA) functional bodies, including LFB.

These are the funds which the Mayor has the ability to apply and reallocate across the GLA Group at his discretion, subject to the Assembly's consideration of the Mayor's council tax proposals.

The Mayor's final draft budget was approved without amendment by the GLA on 25 February 2025. As part of that budget the Mayor increased the fire element of his precept by £4.98 (Band D) in 2024-25 – equivalent to the monetary impact of a 2.99 per cent increase on the 2024-25 non-police precept – which is below the maximum 3 per cent allowed before a referendum is required under the draft council tax referendum principles for 2025-26 for equivalent fire and rescue authorities in England.

2.3 Efficiency

As part of the published Final Budget Report for 2025-26 LFB set out total budget reductions of £28.2 million including savings, efficiencies and further income. These savings are set out in the below table.

Savings	2025-26 £'000	Comments
Existing Departmental Savings (from prior year's budget process)	5,483	These are savings put forward by departments in the previous year's budget planning round that come into effect from 2025-26.
New Departmental Savings (initial 2025-26 budget process)	4,476	These are new savings put forward by departments as part of this year's budget planning round.
Total Departmental Savings	9,959	This is the initial total level of savings put forward by departments as part of the usual planning round. The rows below are the additional savings following an in-depth financial review, consideration of programmes by the Performance, Risk and Assurance Board (PRAB) and prioritisation by Directors and Commissioner.
Additional Departmental Savings 2025-26	5,645	These are additional savings put forward by directors, mostly staff-related but also include some non-staff savings. Savings in FRS staff costs, which are subject to consultation, are included here, although there may be some further staff impacts depending on outcomes of the 'Process efficiencies' and 'Data management' workstreams noted below. Taking the latter into account, we currently estimate the full year impact of all proposed FRS staff reductions to be around £6m, with the impact in 2025-26 to be around £4 million due to timings of when savings will be realised.
Financial Review / Cross Cutting	9,630	This is made up of savings through: - Vacancy Control Panel (£3 million); - Reduction in operational overtime through measures including lower sickness levels and absence management (£3 million); - Contracts Review (£2 million); - Process efficiencies (£1 million); and - Data management review (£0.6 million).
Reduction in Training Inflation	1,100	This relates to target reduction in costs.
Net Reduction against previous assumptions in CRMP Programmes	1,856	This follows assessment and prioritisation through the Performance, Risk and Assurance Board of programme budgets in 2025-26.
Total Budget Review Proposals	18,231	
Total (Departmental + Budget Review Proposals)	28,191	

We continue to strengthen our processes around business cases which improve our resource allocations and delivery of value for money. This has particularly occurred through cross-departmental initiatives between Finance and Transformation colleagues. The Investment and Finance Board is now supported with a Change Group that scrutinises business cases and new expenditure proposals prior to their submission to the Board. The Board also reviews existing expenditure through a rolling programme of 'deep dive' reviews.

We are also focusing on cost avoidance measures as well as cashable savings, e.g. Property/Technical Support Services have taken steps to limit cost increases in areas facing substantial inflationary pressures, notably energy (by reducing usage, generating renewable energy and fixing contract prices through collaborative purchasing arrangements).

2.4 Productivity

The Brigade has continued to make good progress on productivity and this is reported within the external inspection from His Majesties Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire & rescue Services (HMICFRS) "The brigade has a good understanding of how productive its firefighters are, by setting clear targets and using technology well to monitor this."

Furthermore under 'innovative practice' the inspectorate reported: "Improved use of technology enables the efficient monitoring of firefighter productivity. The fire station performance dashboard enables the brigade to monitor the productivity of staff at fire stations against a range of performance measures. These include:

- percentage of time spent on prevention and protection work;
- percentage of time spent on training;
- percentage of time spent on other station routines; and
- percentage of time spent attending and travelling from incidents

The brigade reports on firefighter productivity in its community risk management plan, 'Your London Fire Brigade'. This had led to the brigade being able to improve firefighter productivity.

2.4.1 Community Risk Management Plan

In 2022 we worked with Londoners to create our Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) called *Your London Fire Brigade*. It describes how we'll better engage, protect, learn from, and represent London's communities over the coming years. *Your London Fire Brigade* meets our requirement under the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England to produce an integrated risk management plan. One of the most important things this plan does is reflect our Assessment of Risk in London and what we will do to help reduce and respond to that risk.

The CRMP includes a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which allows us, the public and stakeholders to understand our progress against the commitments in the CRMP. We have retained a number of the KPIs from the 2017 London Safety Plan. We have made some significant changes to how we measure performance. We have a new metric to measure community satisfaction, which is key to supporting our commitment to work with communities to improve services. We also introduced measures of quality as well as activity. And, we have a new set of KPIs looking at training, wellbeing and diversity of our staff.

This set of KPIs enables us to better understand and improve our productivity across a range of disciplines. The targets for 2025-26 have been published here: [CRMP KPI Targets](#)

2.4.2 Overtime

LFB experienced significant additional demand for overtime, in particular Pre-Arranged Overtime (PAO), undertaken by operational staff, in the 2022/23, financial year. To reduce this demand, a plan to reduce reliance on PAO was agreed by the LFC in March 2023 and published here: [PAO Planned reduction](#)

That plan includes the following actions to improve effectiveness and utilisation of our resources, supporting operational resilience and financial sustainability:

- Priority Crewing Guidance
- Training as a Watch
- Formalised operational demand forecasting and financial controls
- Increase the number of firefighters trained to drive fire appliances
- Reduce operational staff sickness
- Reduction of operational average vacancy margin

Of these initiatives, the most impactful has been the introduction of priority crewing guidance and a weekly meeting of officers to match resources to anticipated risk has resulted in a significant reduction in demand for overall overtime including PAO in 2023 and 2024.

In 2022-23, we had an overspend on operational overtime of around £12.5 million (excluding National Insurance), the largest component of which was due to PAO. The outturn position for 2023-24 was an overspend of £6.8 million, a reduction of £5.7 million, and the forecast overspend at Q3 was for £7.7 million, a reduction of £4.8 million from 2022-23. Further actions to reduce the residual overspend (built into 2025-26 savings targets) includes reviewing sickness absence and light duties, addressing skills and training gaps, and filling vacancies.

2.4.3 Home Fire Safety Visits

Our Home Fire Safety Visit (HFSV) strategy incorporates a new triage and out of hours process, as well as new content and delivery training. This approach means that we can identify and respond to those most at risk, whilst still offering a service to those with lower risk factors. This includes the online home fire safety checker, which is part of LFB's aim to make best use of resources whilst making services more accessible to Londoners. The new approach sees LFB triage HFSV referrals and identify vulnerable Londoners by utilising multiple platforms, highlighting the tool as a key resource for fire safety in the home guidance.

2.4.4 Automatic Fire Alarms (AFAs)

From 29 October 2024 LFB implemented a non-attendance policy to AFAs in commercial premises such as offices and shops during the hours of 07:00 – 20:30 hours, based on an analysis of risk. LFB will continue to attend AFAs in residential accommodation, premises where people will be sleeping and grade 1 and grade 2 listed buildings, as well as schools and nurseries. LFB expect this to lead to substantial reductions in unnecessary mobilisations each year, freeing up firefighters' time for more productive activities (as well as cutting travel costs and putting downward pressure on overtime and standby moves).

2.4.5 Sickness

Action continues to be taken in reducing both short term and long term sickness absence.

2.4.6 Educating Young People

Following a review of all youth activities, a new structure for youth work was introduced in line with the 2022-23 academic year and was reviewed ready for the start of the 2023-24 academic year. This coincided with a full-scale review and evaluation of the Youth Services offer, to ensure that the youth schemes meet the needs of young people across London.

2.4.7 Charging

LFB introduced a charging policy for repeated attendance to calls to persons shut in lifts. This resulted in a reduction of around 10,000 calls per year improving productivity.

2.4.8 Productivity Improvement

We are continually looking to improve productivity and efficiency, and have the following targets set for key activities;

Prevention activity – 12% of available time during dayshift (increased from 10% in 2023-24). The actual in this area was 13.68% in 2024-25 (an increase from 11.95% in 2023-24).

Protection activity – 3% of available time during dayshift (to be increased to 4% in 2025-26). The actual in this area was 3.38% in 2024-25 (an increase from 2.87% in 2023-24).

Incidents – There is no target for this area, though the percentage of time spent attending and travelling to incidents increased in 2024-25 to 10.8% compared with 10.3% in 2023-24.

Across these three key activities since 2022-23 we have seen a productivity improvement of 10% on prevention activity, a 23% improvement on protection activity and a 3% improvement on incidents.

LFB has faced a number of challenges in recent years and is currently prioritising training, skill maintenance and cultural awareness. Nevertheless, fire fighters now carry out targeted and specific visits to triage lower risk premises to enable Inspecting Officers to focus on higher risk premises and increases our reach into the business community. The Brigade has also introduced training as a watch which is focussed on more efficient release of staff and increasing capacity for training. This has enabled the roll out of additional training on new breathing apparatus and will support new acquisition training for the introduction of Positive Pressure Ventilation (PPV). The roll out of Microsoft 365 to stations is anticipated to improve efficiency and officers are considering how that can be measured.

2.4.9 How productivity is measured

LFB has a long-established electronic station 'diary' system that records the time invested in key activities undertaken by all watches at all stations (408 watches). The categories of data recording span:

- Incident response
- Training
- Community safety and engagement
- Operational readiness

As part of our Productivity Strategy development, we are considering what other steps are needed to capture and improve productivity, which will include the sector wide utilisation survey.

2.4.10 Tasks undertaken by operational firefighters, and outcomes targeted

Firefighters undertake a wide variety of tasks, and these are captured in our station diary system. They include:

- Prevention: Operational staff total minutes spent per month during day shifts (09:30 - 20:00) on Community Fire Safety (CFS) activity, Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSV), Community Engagement and Visual Audits;
- Protection: Operational staff total minutes spent per month during day shifts (09:30 - 20:00) on Fire Safety Check visits, Outside Duty visits, Alleged Fire Risk, Article 31 re-visits and Sheltered Housing Joint Visits;
- Incidents: The time attending incidents is calculated using appliance status from VISION (LFB's mobilising system) and includes "Immediately available by radio" following incidents;
- attendance at incidents;
- core skills training and additional training in a number of categories to acquire and maintain operational and functional competence;
- community safety work and home fire safety visits to drive down risk in high-risk communities and reduce the number of incidents;
- community engagement and events to increase trust and further understanding of our role and the services we offer, to hear from seldom heard communities so that we better understand how to work with them to reduce their risk;
- 72Ds, visual audits and hydrant inspections to both identify risk reduction opportunities and also inform their operational readiness and site specific tactics.

The following additional tasks have been introduced at stations to improve efficiency further:

- Mandatory annual fitness testing;
- Level one assurance activity;
- Station Delivery Plans, and increased community engagement.

3 Assumptions and Supporting Information

3.1 Collaboration

3.1.1 How collaboration is measured

The Procurement route is monitored in our contract register and Procurement strategy form. We seek collaboration routes for all Procurements. We collaborate with GLA partners, National Fire Chief's Council (NFCC) partners, The Blue Light Commercial Organisation, Crown Commercial Service (CCS) and a range of other framework providers. We also collaborate with wider partners for example via membership of the London Anchor Institutions Network which includes public, private and third sector organisations.

Regular and productive procurement activity, collaboration and value are generated through sharing joint pipelines and targeting opportunities with the procurement hub, which is used where there is tangible value and benefit to be gained.

LFB also collaborate with other 'blue light' services which was commented on by HMICFRS stating "London Fire Brigade is outstanding at responding to major and multi-agency incidents.

All fire and rescue services must be able to respond effectively to multi-agency and cross-border incidents. This means working with other fire and rescue services". Furthermore, HMICFRS also said,

"We were pleased to see the brigade meets its statutory duty to collaborate. It routinely considers opportunities to collaborate with other emergency responders. The brigade has established links with the National Police Air Service to make sure the brigade can view real-time images taken by police helicopters of fires in tall buildings. The brigade has also collaborated internationally in the development of the National Inter-agency Liaison Officer programme for overseas partners, including NATO. Collaborative work is aligned to the priorities and commitments in the brigade's CRMP. For example, the brigade is part of the Greater London Authority procurement board and IT group. Collaborations with the Greater London Authority include contracts for temporary labour and recruitment. The brigade comprehensively monitors, reviews and evaluates the benefits and results of its collaborations. The brigade manages proposed projects through business case submission to make sure there are stronger links between resourcing and CRMP priorities. Notable results include collaboration between the brigade and the Metropolitan Police Service in sharing the same mobile phone provider. The brigade told us this has saved £200,000 per year. The actual costs of each collaborative procurement are monitored by the brigade against estimated costs."

3.1.2 Collaboration with other organisations

Shared premises

LFB shares its Headquarters space in Union Street with a range of other organisations, notably including the GLA, the Local Pension Fund Authority (LPFA) and the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC). We continue to investigate site sharing opportunities with the London Ambulance Service and Metropolitan Police Service.

We have also extensively explored opportunities to merge the estate with other emergency services. Most recently with the "One Public Estate" programme. We remain open to these opportunities, but so far have been unable to identify a project that is a strategic fit across the respective organisations.

Control rooms

LFB received funding in 2018 for a Collaborative Contact and Response (CCR) programme with the London Ambulance Service (LAS) and the Metropolitan Police. This was a high-level scoping initiative and it identified five programmes as part of the high level design.

Two of these were to reduce frequent callers and demand placed on services by people with mental ill-health whose needs were better met by other service providers and were not relevant for LFB. This may need to be reconsidered as there is an increasing trend in calls received from people in distress.

Control room estate

This explored the sharing of premises, focussing on the need for additional capacity for LAS control. However, LAS needed more space than we could provide, and the costs of the building work needed to use what space was available at LFB's London Operations Centre (LOC) made the idea unfeasible. To optimise the capacity at the LOC, the Brigade's Incident Command training team has relocated there. This allows incident commanders to gain vital exposure to Control rooms when training and exercises are now supported by Control staff which provides them with an insight into decision-making on the incident ground. A command

unit is also based at the LOC and command unit staff will begin to attend the LOC to train with Control staff on a regular basis.

Tri-service communication

This work related to the installation of the Multi Agency Incident Transfer (MAIT) system which will automate the sharing of information between the three emergency service control rooms in real time. The LFB is committed to establishing a data solution between the three emergency service Control rooms and implementing the MAIT solution where LFB will connect to a hub delivered by the MPS. Connectivity to other fire control rooms is also underway to enable incident sharing with 'buddy' control rooms and other control rooms during extreme call demand.

Emergency Services Co-ordination Centre

This was set up in 2019 but a review of benefits led to it being closed down in 2022 by the Metropolitan Police, who were the lead agency. Currently there are no plans to re-establish this function, as the objectives can be met through other arrangements. The Brigade continues to work with London Emergency Service Control rooms and has delivered a range of resilient agreements to support major incidents, enhanced information sharing, testing and exercising as well as planning for local and national outages such as the BT 999 failure.

The Control team has improved recruitment over the last three years to broaden our staff group to ensure it better reflects the communities we serve. We have worked with our local councils to embed ourselves in their recruitment schemes, redesigned our application process to test for skills to ensure they align to control officer role and introduced development pathways for control room officers to progress their career with LFB Control. Results have seen our employment of underrepresented groups rise to 18% of all control staff.

The Control team has actively been using data to support the efficient running of the control room. A data dashboard was launched last year which provides an overview to managers of current call volume and target call answering statistics. This information allows managers to balance Control room staff between the control room providing staff periods for training within every working day ensuring our staff are suitably and sufficiently trained.

The Control team has also improved the way it manages change with the introduction of initiatives such as a monthly newsletter and the introduction of a Change governance board which considers the impact of all changes and ensures early engagement and clearer communications with staff.

Treasury Management and internal audit

LFB also has shared service arrangements for the delivery of its Treasury Management Function by the Greater London Authority (GLA), and its internal audit function by MOPAC. LFB is also part of the GLA Group to deliver Collaboration which includes a cross functional body agency staffing contract and in 2024-25 had a joint procurement with the Metropolitan Police on a mobile phone contract which resulted in significant savings (£189,000 per annum).

3.2 Transformation Plans

3.2.1 How transformation is measured

LFBs corporate performance measures have been designed to demonstrate the effectiveness of its transformation activity. These measures include its response attendance times; incidence of fires, deaths and injuries; community satisfaction; different aspects of prevention and protection activity; and training, safety, composition and wellbeing of staff. Delivery of its transformation portfolio and effectiveness of its risk management measures is monitored monthly.

3.2.2 Transformation projects and programmes

The LFB's latest Community Risk Management Plan demonstrates its commitment to reduction of risk in the community and also serves as its corporate strategy, setting out its strategic ambition over the next seven years. It sets out eight commitments, each of which is translated into a programme of change. There are detailed plans which underpin that strategy in four phases.

The Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) is now fully embedded into the annual budget planning cycle (Inclusive of outline business cases that go through an internal challenge process) prior to finalising the budget. Full business cases are then required before a project can proceed which includes the identification of potential cost savings. Business cases are developed in line with the four phases of delivery of the CRMP.

The primary goals of the CRMP are to be community-focussed and service-led; with the expectation that efficiencies will be found wherever possible, as each initiative is developed. The fourth pillar Adding Value sets out the Brigade's intention to improve workforce productivity and drive efficiencies that support value for money services, enabling re-investment into front-line delivery.

Any financial pressures identified for subsequent phases will need to be considered as part of LFB's budget process for future years. As part of achieving a balanced budget for 2025-26 the scope of transformation projects and programmes were reviewed which resulted in some programmes being de-scoped, paused or ceased entirely. This process identified a number of cost savings. Future year investment for 2026-27 onwards will be re-assessed as part of the budget cycle, post-Spending Review in terms of affordability and potential long-term impacts.

3.2.3 Charging policies

LFB's powers to charge are limited to cost recovery. LFB's Budget Report for 2024-25 set out the rate used for special service charges, which also covers charging for Shut in Lifts and Automatic Fire Alarm Call Outs. The Special Service charge is currently set at £430.07 for the 2024-25 financial year and will increase in line with a review of fees and charges for 2025-26.

The LFB introduced a charging policy for repeated attendance to calls to persons shut in lifts. This resulted in a reduction of around 10,000 calls per year. LFB has suspended this policy as we believe that the remaining calls usually include life risk and charging could deter calls that we would want to attend. LFB would consider reintroduction of cost recovery in these circumstances if calls increased significantly. The LFC introduced cost recovery for repeated attendance at calls to automated fire alarms, but the statutory limitations on the circumstances in which charges could be raised made this uneconomic.

LFB is also working to increase Income Generation for 2025-26 onwards, including extending the water team function to offer a hydrant inspection service to private landlords and third-party accident cost recovery. The LFB also generates income under the MFB Act which will continue to be reviewed in light of inflationary impacts.

3.3 Asset Management and Investment in Technology

3.3.1 Equipment and appliance checks and inventories

Equipment inventories are carried out at change of watch each day and are recorded on the electronic inventory system. This system is being upgraded to use appliance tablets so it can be completed more effectively and efficiently.

3.3.2 Record defects

Driver checks are carried out at change of watch and all defects are reported directly to the maintenance contract provider. The defects are prioritised into those that require immediate attention as the vehicle cannot be driven; those that are non-critical and can be repaired within five days of reporting and those which are minor, and repairs can be deferred until the next planned maintenance event.

There is a separate process for reporting defects in operational equipment, which uses our purchase ordering system. If the equipment item is critical to operational delivery, it will be reported by telephone to the contract supplier as a Category A item and will receive a response within 2 to 4 hours.

LFB has also agreed the procurement of a new equipment management system. This system will enable the Brigade to manage its operational equipment more effectively and efficiently. This will result in the mitigation of significant health and safety risks, more efficient maintenance processes and the replacement of redundant existing systems. It is anticipated that the new system could enable a reduction in the equipment budget, logistics costs and vehicle mileage.

3.3.3 New technology to be utilised by the service and where old systems have been replaced

From an efficiencies perspective LFB has extended the use of appliance-based devices for data capture on site for risk assessment and recording, an inventory application and a system for recording Home Fire safety checks. LFB has in place a Fire Survival guidance application providing real time data at incidents and providing access to data captured from the recently deployed High Rise data portal. LFB has also made available to staff, on their personal devices, a shift booking system, which has significantly reduced the administrative burden of this process.

There are several initiatives in development, including recording hydrant inspections and an inflight project to improve the way we use data for workforce planning.

The Brigade is also working to modernise a range of its tools to improve productivity of staff time, which has included wider roll out of Office 365, the trialling of Microsoft Co-Pilot, a planned new HR & Payroll system, and a new Finance System which went live for LFB on 8 April 2025.

3.3.4 Investment in new appliances, fleet and support vehicles

Following extensive public consultation LFB published the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) in 2022 which confirmed the commitment to reducing impact on the environment and stated the target of aiming to reach net zero carbon by 2030.

Current investment in new technology on new appliances involves the introduction of electric or hybrid propulsion systems. As part of its published budget submission to the Mayor in November 2024 LFB, set out funded and unfunded work areas to meet that ambitious timetable to decarbonise the estate and fleet.

LFB also has a net carbon zero 2030 strategy which will require continued investment.

3.4 Resourcing

3.4.1 How is Resourcing measured

At the corporate level there are several performance measures for value from resources. These include time spent on prevention activity, time spent on protection activity, percentage of high-risk home fire safety visits, attendance standards, incidence of fire, injuries and deaths.

Throughout the external audit process a value for money opinion is provided by Ernst & Young and also through the external review by HMICFRS, LFB are measured against eleven key areas. The gradings under each of the eleven areas is "Outstanding", "Good", "Adequate", "Requires Improvement" and "Inadequate". Under the areas of "Making best Use of Resources" and "Making the FRS affordable now and in the future" the brigade received a "Good" rating.

3.4.2 Retained duty system

LFB has explored the benefits of introducing a retained duty system. The LFC considers this not to be a cost effective nor efficient approach to resourcing within London.

3.4.3 Changing the length of day and night shifts.

In December 2010 LFB and Fire Brigades Union (FBU) agreed on a new shift pattern for front-line firefighters of two 10½-hour day shifts then two 13½-hour night shifts followed by four days off.

An LFB report published in March 2012 stated that the shift changes have improved safety in the city. Compared with the 12 months prior to the shift changes, the 12 months following saw firefighters able to spend more time on training, community safety work, and home safety visits (including the free fitting of smoke alarms). Consideration of any future changes would be discussed with the FBU.

3.5 Procurement

3.5.1 How procurement is measured

Contracts, procurement activity and commercial change process are measured in terms of budgets. These are then monitored against the expected objectives, targets and budget outcomes by the relevant budget holders. We are in the process of moving to a more sophisticated benefits outcomes model which has been developed by Transport for London (TfL). This is included within one of the workstreams as a project for the procurement team being developed as part of our current transformation project.

In terms of outcomes, these are measured by monitoring the contracts and liaising with the client department. For key strategic contracts, each aspect of the contract is reported in our Procurement monthly reports by our category managers and key procurements are part of corporate projects. A wider review and refresh of our reporting dashboards is being developed within the procurement improvement project.

For 2025-26 there is a targeted £2 million reduction of contracted spend through review of existing contracts when they are due to be renewed and this is incorporated into the 2025-26 budget.

3.5.2 Collaboration with partners/use of national frameworks delivering regional contracts in areas such as PPE, uniforms and specialist vehicles

We review the potential to collaborate with all procurements. We contribute to the GLA Procurement collaboration remit through inclusion on the GLA Procurement Board and related working groups. We are currently collaborating with GLA contracts such as temporary labour and recruitment. There are also some core areas which are an agreed focus for collaboration such as Printing, Consultancy, Travel and office equipment. We have a role in National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) boards and projects, and our structural Firefighting PPE is provided through a national NFCC framework which we directly supported the procurement process on. We will continue to directly support the next iteration of this contract through the national

project by input into the specification and tender documentation. We also use a further range of frameworks provided by other organisations such as the Crown Commercial Service (CCS). We do not use specialist vehicles frameworks as our equipment and vehicles procurement is provided as an outsourced managed service through our consolidated vehicle and equipment contract.

3.5.3 Outline what cost savings have or will be made as a result of these methods

Each project is monitored individually either by the project teams and the client departments that hold the budget. As part of the current department procurement improvement and transformation project, we are planning to further review and enhance our processes with the plan to align with the GLA/TfL benefit realisation process which has is continually developing. The move to a new Finance and Purchasing system will complement this process through further digitisation and support in its success.

Each Procurement has an estimated cost monitored against an actual cost and targets. This detail is recorded by our category teams in our contracts register and set out in the relevant procurement award reports.

There have been a number of instances where cost avoidance has been captured through these practices, totalling £1.3 million in 2024-25 through the introduction of improved KPI measurement against contract, the removal of excess equipment and improvement asset disposal, alternative leasing arrangements rather than purchasing in respect of extreme weather vehicles and extending exemptions to driver training on appliances.

3.6 Local Initiatives

The Brigade has a long-standing history of delivering child and youth engagement, intervention, and education schemes which contribute to making London a safer city by working with its young people across all aspects of prevention including fire, water and road safety, alongside anti-social behaviour and the consequences of actions, to drive and forge safer, stronger, healthier and cohesive communities.

The schemes are aimed mainly at primary and secondary school age children and young people, but can cover a broad cross-section of youth, including into early years with visits to nurseries and children's centres. All youth programmes delivered by the Brigade are attended by a wide range of participants and provide the opportunity to increase awareness of the Brigade amongst diverse communities.

The Brigade's children and youth programmes include a central core offer of the Education Team delivering safety education into primary schools; a blue-light collaboration project 'Safety First' delivering safety education into secondary schools; Fire Cadets offering long term engagement to young people living or attending schools in all London boroughs; Fire Setting Intervention Scheme (FIS) delivering one-to-one fire safety education where concerns have been raised around fire setting and fire play behaviour and youth projects supporting local boroughs to devise and deliver bespoke projects to for specific needs.

Following a review of all youth activities, a new structure for youth work was introduced in line with the 2022-23 academic year, which was then reviewed, evaluated and embedded at the start of the 2023-24 academic year in September, to ensure that the youth schemes on offer meet the needs of young people across London.

In support of the CRMP, the Brigade has introduced Borough Risk Management Plans. These are co-produced with the local community and include detailed actions to be taken locally by the Borough Commander and their team to address the particular risks within individual

boroughs and protect people and places vulnerable to each type of risk. These plans have been in place since April 2023 and will be refreshed annually. Station plans with more detail about the activities of station-based staff are being produced by stations this year.

3.6.1 Fire Cadets

The development of LFB Fire Cadets from a four-borough pilot in 2013 to every London Borough in 2020 has been a big success. Fire Cadets was funded by securing external funding, fixed term contracts, and utilising underspends to deliver its objectives.

In March 2019, LFB secured £1.1 million funding from the Mayor and GLA to open up Fire Cadets unit in all remaining 15 London Boroughs so that from April 2020 all London Boroughs would have a Fire Cadets unit.

Each Fire Cadets evening requires a minimum attendance of 4 adults for 4 hours. One adult is covered by a salaried FRSC Fire Cadets Coordinator, leaving a requirement of an additional 3 adults to cover minimum safeguarding numbers. Had LFB hired FRSB members of staff to cover this requirement, it would result in 324 hours per week at a rate of £29 per hour (based on 2024-25 pay rates). For 27 units delivering across 30 weeks of the year, this would equate to £281,880 per annum for unit delivery only.

On average volunteers also support staff at community events 10 times per year for 5 hours per event, per Fire Cadets unit (270 events per annum). If LFB sent FRSB staff to cover this commitment, we would on average require 3 people, resulting in 4050 hours at a rate of £29 per hour. This would equate to £117,450 to staff all community events across the year.

Therefore, by utilising volunteers, we have saved the Brigade approximately £399,330 per annum, covering unit based delivery and community events across the city.

4 Conclusion

- 4.1 The Brigade continues to work on improving productivity and efficiency.
- 4.2 The Brigade is meeting the efficiency and productivity targets set in agreement with the National Fire Chiefs' Council and the Home Office and the actions in this plan are intended to enable the Brigade to continue to meet those targets as a minimum in the years to come.

Appendix 1: Productivity & Efficiency Survey – Annexe A

The efficiency table below was provided by the Home Office as an annex to the requirements set out as part of the Productivity and Efficiency Plan for 2025-26.

It is important to note that the financial year to which the efficiencies relate to are assumed as an ongoing efficiency, unless otherwise re-stated in a future year.

Due to the on-going commitment of the Brigade to find efficiency savings to fund further investment, it can be seen from the tables below that efficiency savings as a percentage of non-payroll budget are 9.08 per cent in 2023-24, 5.10 per cent in 2024-25 and 26.37 per cent in 2025-26.

BUDGET (£000)			
Revenue Expenditure	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
Direct Employee	378,592	421,877	441,219
Indirect Employee	52,785	57,263	56,743
Premises	47,831	48,757	50,760
Transport	18,546	19,808	19,715
Supplies and Services	35,304	40,037	43,304
Capital Financing	11,524	16,000	17,477
Other	-13,925	-31,972	-10,737
Total	530,657	571,768	618,482
Income	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
Actual Received from Precept	-445,800	-494,253	-536,400
Local Government Finance Settlement			
Other Grants	-32,628	-26,256	-25,793
Income Raised Locally	-52,229	-51,260	-56,288
Total	-530,657	-571,768	-618,482

RESERVES (£000)					
	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028
General Reserves	17,300	15,652	17,400	19,400	20,100
Earmarked Revenue Reserves	67,364	29,852	11,400	11,400	11,400
of which MRP reserve					
Earmarked Capital Reserves	205				
Other Reserves					
of which revenue					
of which capital					
Total	84,869	45,504	28,800	30,800	31,500

Appendix 1: Productivity & Efficiency Survey – Annexe A

EFFICIENCY DATA (£000)

	Actual 2023-24		Actual 2024-25		Forecast 2025-26	
Opening Revenue Expenditure Budget (Net)	445,800		494,253		536,400	
Less Total Direct Employee Costs	378,592		421,877		441,219	
Non Pay Budget	67,208		72,376		95,181	
Efficiency Target (2% of non-pay budget)	1,344		1,448		1,904	
Efficiency Savings	Recurrent	Non-recurrent	Recurrent	Non-recurrent	Recurrent	Non-recurrent
<u>Direct Employee</u>						
Reduction in Prevention/Protection/Response Staff			476	0	8,166	0
Reduction in Support Staff	2,000		430	0	6,125	0
<u>Indirect Employee (e.g. training, travel etc.)</u>						
All Indirect Employee Costs			17	0	1,012	0
<u>Premises</u>						
Utilities			0	0	200	0
Rent/Rates			0	0	0	0
Other Premises Costs			0	0	603	0
Shared Premises			0	0	0	0
<u>Transport</u>						
Fleet			92	0	97	0
Fuel			0	0	399	0
Other Transport Costs			0	0	9	0
<u>Supplies and Services</u>						
National Procurement Savings			0	0	0	0
Local Procurement Savings	1,800		1,692	0	3,703	0
Other Technology Improvements			40	0	2,047	0
Decreased Usage			946	0	2,742	0
<u>Capital Financing</u>						
Revenue Expenditure Charged to Capital						
Net Borrowing Costs						
<u>Other</u>						
Departmental Savings (Cross Cutting)	2,300					
Other Savings 2 (Please Specify)						
Other Savings 3 (Please Specify)						
Total Efficiency Savings	6,100		3,693		25,103	
Efficiency Savings as a Percentage of Non-Payroll Budgets	9.08%		5.10%		26.37%	
Efficiency Savings Target	2.00%		2.00%		2.00%	
Over/(Under)	7.08%		3.10%		24.37%	

Appendix 1: Productivity & Efficiency Survey – Annexe A

INCOME						
£000						
	Actual 2023-24		Actual 2024-25		Forecast 2025-26	
	Recurrent	Non-recurrent	Recurrent	Non-recurrent	Recurrent	Non-recurrent
Income generated from charging policies	42,897	2,191	43,989	2,847	47,288	232
Income generated from trading operations	6,170	8,200	4,564	1,048	5,982	1,286
Income generated from shared premises	0	0	0	0	0	0
Income generated from interest on investments	5,227	0	2,557	0	1,500	0
Income generated from other sources	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	54,293	10,392	51,110	3,895	54,770	1,518

Note – BSR recharges, Secondments and one-off insurance claims are shown as non-recurrent.