

Productivity and Efficiency Plan

30 April 2026

Table of Contents

Productivity and Efficiency Plan	1
1 Introduction	3
1.1 Background	3
2 Reflection on 2025/26	3
2.1 Budget 2025/26 Challenge.....	3
2.2 Delivering on Agreed Savings for 2025/26	6
3 Efficiency and Productivity Plan	6
3.1 Budget 2026/27	6
3.2 Precept	7
3.3 Efficiency	8
3.4 Productivity	9
3.4.1 Community Risk Management Plan	10
3.4.2 Overtime	10
3.4.3 Home Fire Safety Visits.....	11
3.4.4 Automatic Fire Alarms (AFAs)	11
3.4.5 Sickness	11
3.4.6 Charging	11
3.4.7 Productivity Improvement	12
3.4.8 How productivity is measured	12
3.4.9 Tasks undertaken by operational firefighters, and outcomes targeted	12
3.4.10 LFC Reflections	13
4 Assumptions and Supporting Information	14
4.1 Collaboration	14
4.1.1 How collaboration is measured	14
4.1.2 Collaboration with other organisations	14
4.2 Transformation Plans	16
4.2.1 How transformation is measured	16
4.2.2 Transformation projects and programmes.....	16
4.2.3 Charging policies.....	16
4.3 Asset Management and Investment in Technology	17
4.3.1 Equipment and appliance checks and inventories	17
4.3.2 Record defects	17
4.3.3 New technology to be utilised by the service and where old systems have been replaced	17
4.3.4 Investment in new appliances, fleet and support vehicles	17

4.4	Resourcing	18
4.4.1	How is Resourcing measured	18
4.4.2	Retained duty system.....	18
4.4.3	Changing the length of day and night shifts.	18
4.5	Procurement.....	18
4.5.1	How procurement is measured	18
4.5.2	Collaboration with partners/use of national frameworks delivering regional contracts in areas such as PPE, uniforms and specialist vehicles	18
4.5.3	Outline what cost savings have or will be made as a result of these methods	19
4.6	Local Initiatives.....	19
4.6.1	Fire Cadets	20
4	Conclusion.....	20

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.

LFB has a strong focus on making best use of the available resources. London is a global city with a range of major risks, yet LFB is a significantly smaller organisation compared to services in other global cities such as Paris, New York, Hong Kong, and Tokyo¹.

The LFB was able to close its financial position as part of its budget process for 2026-27 through additional Mayoral funding and by agreeing numerous savings totalling £6.2 million, without reducing the number of fire stations, appliances, firefighters or its regulatory capabilities. The final LFB budget for 2026-27 was published on 31 March 2026 [LFC Budget 2026-27](#).

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 Reflection on 2025/26

2.1 Budget 2025/26 Challenge

For the last financial year 2025-26 the LFB agreed a budget with a financing requirement of £536.4 million. This included ensuring the 2 per cent efficiency target was met. As part of the published Final Budget Report for 2025-26 the LFB set out total budget reductions of over £28 million including savings, efficiencies and further income generation.

The 2025-26 budget process was developed under three core themes that have continued from the prior year process, these being; Business as Usual (including continuous improvement), CRMP Delivery and Efficiencies and Savings. These were considered alongside central assumptions around inflationary pressures and financial risks.

Each Transformation programme submitted budget bids based on known and anticipated funding requirements for the next phase of transformation. These bids, as far as possible, included any additional funding requirements of departments supporting delivery of that change. In comparison to prior years, the overall investment within Transformational programmes was reduced as a consequence of embedding investments within Business as usual/core departmental activities, ensuring the large-scale improvements over the recent years are embedded into everyday practices.

¹ London has less than 5,000 operational firefighters compared to 11,000 in New York and 8,650 in Paris. Tokyo and Hong Kong have over 18,000 and 10,000 operational staff respectively; this includes Emergency Medical staff, but the bulk of the workforce are firefighters

Departments were also asked to submit investment bids for improving core / business as usual services and focusing on opportunities for efficiencies and productivity improvements.

Throughout the early stages of this process, it was evident that in order to maintain and build upon the performance over the last few years and in the context of significant financial challenges including pay, overtime and inflation (as outlined in the Budget Submission to the Mayor in November 2024), it would be challenging to deliver a balanced budget for 2025-6 and future years. The cost of transformation had been met through a combination of core budgets and use of reserves (including the Budget Flexibility Reserve), with the latter being almost exhausted by the end of 2024-25 and the Brigade faced difficult choices in prioritising resources.

As at the end of August 2024, with all proposals consolidated the overall budget gap was £46 million (after factoring in savings of £10 million that were set out in the 2024-25 budget process and within the 2025-26 process).

Alongside the budget and financial planning work, we established an in-depth Financial Review, jointly led by a newly appointed LFB Assistant Director and an external expert. They looked with fresh eyes and an outside-in perspective across the Brigade at how we operate and worked with Directors and Heads of Service to identify additional efficiencies so that LFB can continue to maximise investment in its frontline. As was implemented, the review did not result in any reduction in operational frontline delivery or regulatory capabilities to ensure we remain trusted to serve and protect London.

Through tough choices on priorities, and de-scoping, delaying or stopping certain areas of activity, this resulted in significantly reduced growth bids, thereby reducing the budget gap by £10.2 million.

The next stage focused on efficiencies and savings. Whilst there were already significant departmental savings targets of £10.0 million, further savings were identified to reduce the budget gap. These additional savings amount to £18.0 million and therefore the overall savings target for 2025-26 totals £28.2 million as set out below. The LFB worked hard to reduce the impact on individuals and teams and balance LFB's budget as far as possible by improving efficiency and reducing unnecessary spend. Nevertheless, it became clear that it would not be possible to balance the budget without considering changes to the way Fire and Rescue Staffing (non-operational) teams are organised and, in some cases, reducing the number of posts and people.

Total 2025-26 Savings

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.
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 £6 million of savings, 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vacancy Control Panel (£3 million); - Reduction in operational overtime through measures including lower sickness levels (£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	

This however still left a residual budget gap of £18.0 million, which formed the basis of the consultation budget submitted on the 22 November 2024 with further savings still to be identified or additional income to be sought. Recognising that the Brigade had gone as far as it could, and that further savings would have to come from the frontline, this residual gap was subsequently closed by the Mayor in his Final Consolidated Budget.

2.2 Delivering on Agreed Savings for 2025/26

Implementing, monitoring and reacting agilely were key priorities for the LFC in ensuring it could deliver a sustainable outcome as part of the financial position for 2025/26.

Significant additional governance arrangements were put in place to ensure these priorities could be achieved. This included a new monthly Savings Dashboard which was reviewed by the LFB's Investment Finance Board, which is attended by its Directors and Chaired by its Chief Finance Officer.

Additional regular targeted review meetings were also set up to review progress with key Directorates and Departments.

As a result of the wide range of savings proposed and the significant amount of time and resources required to deliver them, these processes identified that some savings were slipping or would deliver at below expectations following consultation. Where this has arisen then additional savings and efficiencies were identified to mitigate any impact to the LFB's overall Financial Position.

As at Quarter 3 this has meant that the LFB was forecasting to be broadly on budget for the 2025/26 financial year, with a relatively small overspend of £2.2m, or 0.4 per cent of the LFB's Budget. This overspend also largely aligns with the impact of an above budget pay award pressure for the LFB of £1.5m (firefighter pay is determined nationally, and was agreed after the budget was set).

The LFB will continue these new processes to ensure that its savings proposals continue to be delivered in an effective and sustainable way into 2026/27.

3 Efficiency and Productivity Plan

3.1 Budget 2026/27

LFB agreed the budget for 2026-27 on the 31 March 2026. That budget set out a balanced position for 2026-27 of £573.5 million and included over £6.2 million of savings.

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 2026-27 and financial forecasts for a further two financial years.

	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
	£'m	£'m	£'m
Corporate Services	86.9	95.5	94.3
Preparedness and Response	412.9	422.8	429.0
People	6.8	7.0	7.1
Prevention, Protection and Policy	38.9	39.6	40.3
Communications	3.6	3.7	3.7
Savings yet to be identified	0.0	(10.1)	0.0
Net Service Expenditure	549.1	568.6	574.1
Capital Financing	23.4	30.6	38.8
Interest Receivable	(1.5)	(1.5)	(1.5)
Net Expenditure	571.0	597.7	611.4
Transfer to / (from) Reserves	2.5	3.0	6.4
Financing Requirement	573.5	590.6	617.8
Un-ringfenced Government Grants	0.0	0.0	0.0
Retained Business Rates	322.1	319.4	325.8
Council Tax Collection Fund Surplus / (Deficit)	0.0	0.0	0.0
Council Tax Requirement	251.5	271.2	292.0

Whilst the work to identify significant cost reductions creates a balanced budget in 2026-27, 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 £10.1 million in 2027-28. A large proportion of this gap in 2027-28 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, and then one-off funding by the Mayor in 2026/27; 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.

3.2 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 26 February 2026. As part of that budget the Mayor increased the fire element of his precept by £5.13 (Band D) in 2025-26 – equivalent to the monetary impact of a 2.99 per cent increase on the 2025-26 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 2026-27 for equivalent fire and rescue authorities in England.

3.3 Efficiency

As part of the published Final Budget Report for 2026-27 LFB set out total budget reductions of £6.2 million including savings, efficiencies and further income. In assessing savings opportunities across the organisation, we have been mindful of the evolving risk environment, Mayoral commitments around frontline resources and ambitious savings already made / committed to. Frontline costs, including on-costs and fixed costs are 83% of total expenditure; adding in statutory costs (prevention and protection department) increases this to 86%. This means the scope for further savings in support costs, following the £28m of savings for 2025-26, is limited. Nevertheless, LFB has continued to look at more opportunities for efficiencies and productivity improvements and identified further incremental savings of £6.2 million in 2026-27. These savings are set out in the below table.

Savings	2026-27 £'000	Comments
Existing Departmental Savings (from prior year's budget process)	948	These are savings put forward by departments in the previous year's budget planning round that are expected to be delivered in 2026-27.
New Departmental Savings (2026-27 budget process)	3,467	These are new savings put forward by departments as part of this year's budget planning round, specifically across Corporate Services and Preparedness and Response
Total Departmental Savings	4,415	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 Risk and Assurance Board (RAB) and prioritisation by Directors and Commissioner.
Total Budget Review Proposals	1,764	Additional savings identified through Savings Review and Cost cutting as follows: £0.45m in additional net contract renewal savings; £0.5m in further cross cutting saving opportunities; £0.5m in process efficiency savings; and £0.314m identified from Specials review in light of gas tight suit savings being unachievable.
Total (Departmental + Budget Review Proposals)	6,179	

We continue to strengthen our processes around business cases which improve our resource allocations and delivery of value for money.

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).

3.4 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. Additional information on the LFB's achievements is set out at section 3.4.10.

3.4.1 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 2026-27 have been published here: [CRMP KPI Targets](#)

3.4.2 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 overspend at 2024/25 was for £7.1 million, a reduction of £5.4 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. This resulted in forecast spend on overtime at Fire Stations of £6.2m as at Q3 of 2025-26, against a budget of £5.8m.

3.4.3 Home Fire Safety Visits

Our Home Fire Safety Visit (HFSV) strategy incorporates a triage and out of hours process, as well as 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 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.

3.4.4 Automatic Fire Alarms (AFAs)

Since the implementation of the revised Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) policy on 29 October 2024, which restricts the Brigade's attendance at AFAs in commercial buildings during business hours (with some exemptions), the LFB has seen a sustained reduction in false alarm attendances. Over the past 12 months, the number of AFAs attended has remained below the upper target threshold and shows a marked improvement compared to the previous year's figures. As a result, we have revised our KPI target from 1,667 to 1,300 per month.

3.4.5 Sickness

Action continues to be taken in reducing both short term and long-term sickness absence. Over the past year we have made a number of interventions including introduction of the new Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), Long Term Sickness Absence Panel and Emergency Services Trauma Intervention Programme (ESTIP). We are starting to see improvement at Brigade level as over the past 8 months we have seen sickness rates which are both lower overall and lower when comparing to the same period of the previous year. During the most recent quarter (January to March 2026), sickness rates have been the lowest we have seen since pre-COVID.

3.4.6 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.

The LFB is also proactively investigating new areas of income generation as summarise below:

- LFB has entered into an Agreement for Lease for the temporary use of the vacant Lambeth Vehicle Workshops site. The property has been empty for several years, incurring £58,000 per annum in security costs and facing risks such as trespassing and deterioration.

- The LFB is working on renewing Telecommunications leases which are near completion. Despite lower long-term income, LFB will receive additional funds in outstanding rent recovery.
- The LFB has agreed a significant premium as a result of an easement at Park Royal. The agreement protects the LFB's operational position. The works are limited to subterranean cabling, meaning the LFB will retain full surface use of the land with no practical impact on the fire station site.

3.4.7 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 15.69% in 2025-26 (an increase from 13.68% in 2024-25).

Protection activity – 4% of available time during dayshift (increased from 3% in 2024-25). The actual in this area was 5.16% in 2025-26 (an increase from 3.38% in 2024-25).

Incidents – There is no target for this area, though the percentage of time spent attending and travelling to incidents increased in 2025-26 to 11.7% compared with 10.8% in 2024-25.

Across these three key activities since 2022-23 we have seen a productivity improvement of 14% on prevention activity, a 53% improvement on protection activity and a 3% increase 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 supported new acquisition training for the introduction of Positive Pressure Ventilation (PPV). The roll out of Microsoft 365 to stations has also improved the availability of digital tools available to the workforce.

3.4.8 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

3.4.9 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.

3.4.10 LFC Reflections

When assessing our achievements from 2025-26, we are proud, as an organisation, of our ability to have delivered substantial efficiency savings of £28m, while preserving operational integrity and frontline services across the Brigade.

Our most significant productivity achievement has been the sustained increase in the proportion of station staff time dedicated to prevention and protection activity. In April 2024, we launched the Fire Station Performance Report alongside a strengthened performance management framework spanning all management levels within fire stations. Together, these provide a clear "golden thread" of information from the frontline to the Executive Team by democratising performance data and enabling structured performance commentary from watch through to area level.

Since implementation, we have seen a marked improvement in productivity outcomes. The proportion of station staff time spent on prevention activity has increased from approximately 10% to 15–16%, while time spent on protection activity has risen from below 3% to regularly exceeding 5%. We have exceeded our KPI targets for both indicators every month since October 2024. These improvements demonstrate a more consistent and effective focus on core prevention and protection duties, ensuring that Londoners receive more of the services they need.

4 Assumptions and Supporting Information

4.1 Collaboration

4.1.1 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."

4.1.2 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 is related to the installation of the Multi Agency Incident Transfer (MAIT) system which is now automating the transfer of information to other fire control rooms to enable incident sharing with 'buddy' control rooms and other control rooms during extreme call demand. Work is ongoing to automate the sharing of information between the three emergency service control rooms in London, in real time. The LFB is committed to establishing a data solution between the three emergency service Control rooms and implementing a MAIT solution.

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 20% 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 in 2024/25 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.

4.2 Transformation Plans

4.2.1 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.

4.2.2 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.

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

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.

In comparison to prior years, the overall investment within Transformational programmes was reduced in 2025-26 as a consequence of embedding investments within Business as usual/core departmental activities, ensuring the large-scale improvements over the recent years are embedded into everyday practices.

4.2.3 Charging policies

LFB's powers to charge are limited to cost recovery, including charging for Shut in Lifts which is reviewed annually by the LFB.

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 2026-27 onwards, including reviewing options for vehicle electricity charging. The LFB also generates income under the MFB Act which will continue to be reviewed in light of inflationary impacts.

4.3 Asset Management and Investment in Technology

4.3.1 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.

4.3.2 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.

4.3.3 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, implementation of a new HR & Payroll system which went live in February 2026, and a new Finance System which went live for LFB on 8 April 2025.

4.3.4 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 working towards reaching 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 annual budget submissions to the Mayor LFB sets out funded and unfunded work areas to meet that ambitious timetable to decarbonise the estate and fleet.

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

4.4 Resourcing

4.4.1 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 in the last inspection in 2024.

4.4.2 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.

4.4.3 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.

4.5 Procurement

4.5.1 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 was a targeted £2.0 million reduction of contracted spend through review of existing contracts, which were incorporated into the 2025-26 budget. In 2026-27, this savings target has been set at £2.1 million.

4.5.2 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 continued 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.

4.5.3 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 complements 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, 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.

4.6 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.

4.6.1 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 government 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 Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government as an annex to the requirements set out as part of the Productivity and Efficiency Plan for 2026-27.

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 3.85 per cent in 2024-25, 11.35 per cent in 2025-26 and 4.37 per cent in 2026-27.

BUDGET (£000)					
Revenue Expenditure	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029
Direct Employee	421,877	441,219	460,463	466,532	471,585
Indirect Employee	57,263	56,743	64,436.00	68,900.00	70,070
Premises	48,757	50,760	53,147.00	62,753.00	61,532.00
Transport	19,808	19,715	20,783.00	21,883.00	23,109.00
Supplies and Services	40,037	43,304	36,113.00	36,244.00	36,789.00
Capital Financing	16,000	17,477	22,368	30,604	38,779
Other	-31,972	-10,737	1,815.00	-8,196.00	6,771.00
Total	571,770	618,481	659,125	678,720	708,635
Income	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029
Actual Received from Precept	-494,253	-536,400	-573,600	-590,600	-617,800
Local Government Finance Settlement					
Other Grants	-26,256	-25,793	-30,238.30	-30,174.00	-30,174.00
Income Raised Locally	-51,260	-56,288	-55,344.71	-57,946.00	-60,661
Total	-571,769	-618,481	-659,183.01	-678,720	-708,635

RESERVES (£000)					
	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029
General Reserves	15,652	13,900	16,400	19,400	25,300
Earmarked Revenue Reserves	29,852	14,900	13,900	13,900	14,000
of which MRP reserve					
Earmarked Capital Reserves					
Other Reserves					
of which revenue					
of which capital					
Total	45,504	28,800	30,300	33,300	39,300

Appendix 1: Productivity & Efficiency Survey – Annexe A

EFFICIENCY DATA (£000)

London Fire Brigade	Actual 2024-25		Actual 2025-26		Forecast 2026-27		Forecast 2027-28		Forecast 2028-29	
	Recurrent	Non-recurrent	Recurrent	Non-recurrent	Recurrent	Non-recurrent	Recurrent	Non-recurrent	Recurrent	Non-recurrent
Opening Revenue Expenditure Budget (Net)	494,253		536,400		573,600		590,600		617,800	
Less Total Direct Employee Costs	421,877		441,219		460,463.00		466,532		471,585	
Non Pay Budget	72,376		95,181		113,136.00		124,067		146,214	
Efficiency Savings	Recurrent	Non-recurrent	Recurrent	Non-recurrent	Recurrent	Non-recurrent	Recurrent	Non-recurrent	Recurrent	Non-recurrent
<u>Direct Employee</u>										
Reduction in Prevention/Protection/Response Staff	476	-	8,166	0	252					
Reduction in Support Staff	430	-	6,125	0	980		1000		1000	
<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	1692	0	3,703	0	1,147	102	366		53	
Other Technology Improvements	40	0	2,047	0	2,126					
Decreased Usage	946	0	2,742	0	1,262					
<u>Capital Financing</u>										
Revenue Expenditure Charged to Capital	0	0								
Net Borrowing Costs	0	0								
<u>Other</u>										
Other Savings 1 (Please Specify)	0	0			308					
Other Savings 2 (Please Specify)	0	0								
Other Savings 3 (Please Specify)	0	0								
Total Efficiency Savings (excluding direct employee savings)	2,787		10,812		4,945		366		53	
Efficiency Savings as a Percentage of Non-Payroll Budgets	3.85%		11.36%		4.37%		0.30%		0.04%	

Appendix 1: Productivity & Efficiency Survey – Annexe A

INCOME										
£000										
	Actual 2024-25		Actual 2025-26		Forecast 2026-27		Forecast 2027-28		Forecast 2028-29	
	Recurrent	Non-recurrent	Recurrent	Non-recurrent	Recurrent	Non-recurrent	Recurrent	Non-recurrent	Recurrent	Non-recurrent
Income generated from charging policies	43,989	2,847	52,442	0	48,924	-	51,525	-	54,240	-
Income generated from trading operations	4,564	1,048	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Income generated from shared premises	0	0	4,740	0	4,921	0	4,920	0	4,920	0
Income generated from interest on investments	2,557	0	1,790	0	1,500	0	1,500	0	1,500	0
Income generated from other sources	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	51,110	3,895	58,972	-	55,345	-	57,945	-	60,660	-