

Procurement of Mobile Telephony Services

Report to:

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

Date:

3 November 2025
12 November 2025
24 November 2025

Report by: Chief Information Officer (CIO)

Authorising Head of Service:

Julian Martin - CIO

Report classification:

For decision

For publication/Not for publication: For publication

Values met

Service

I agree the recommended decision below.



Jonathan Smith
London Fire Commissioner

Date

This decision was remotely
signed on 18 December 2025

PART ONE

Non-confidential facts and advice to the decision-maker

Executive Summary

The current contract for the provision of mobile telephony services will expire on 23 January 2026. The LFC relies upon having an effective mobile communications contract in place, to support both front line and enabling activities.

This report seeks authority to enter into a new contract for the provision of mobile telephony services, for a period of up to five years.

For the London Fire Commissioner

The LFC delegates authority to the Assistant Director Procurement & Commercial to enter into a contract for procuring mobile telephony services, be entered into in accordance with the arrangements set out in Part Two of this report.

1 Introduction and background

- 1.1. The LFC has relied upon mobile telephony services (voice and data) for a number of years in support of a wide range of critical operational as well as enabling functions. The amount of mobile data being used, in particular, has increased considerably in recent years, supporting the operational and enabling requirements of a 365/24 organisation.
- 1.2. The LFC now has around 3686 data connected mobile phones, laptops / tablets as well as 1653 voice SMS and data connections and 2033 data only connections.
- 1.3. After the pandemic a decision was taken to equip relevant staff with 4G enabled mobile devices in support of "hybrid working" (LFC decision LFC-0429z) and associated peripherals. This lay the foundations to enable staff to work from multiple locations and maintain connectivity.
- 1.4. All front-line fire appliances now contain 4G connected tablets that operate alongside the appliance mobile data terminals (MDT). These tablets provide the ability for crews to access a wide range of systems both on the way to and at incidents, and to support off-station activity like home fire safety visits, outside duties and fire survival guidance. Increasingly, these devices support risk critical activities throughout the Brigade.
- 1.5. In addition to devices, the Brigade also uses specialist communication links in the command support units (CSU). These links provide dedicated links to/from the CSUs are typically utilised when the vehicles are deployed at an incident.

- 1.6. The voice element of the current mobile telephony contract provides the LFC with an 'all inclusive' call tariff. This means that the contract is fixed cost and not dependent upon usage which is particularly useful for an organisation that relies heavily upon mobile communications.
- 1.7. A similar scheme applies to the use of mobile data, whereby the LFC has access to a 'data sharer' system. The contract allows for a specific amount of data to be used as part of the contract, at an all-inclusive cost. This has advantages in that those users whose role demands that they are heavy users of data, have this usage offset by other users whose use of data is light.

2 Objectives and expected outcomes.

- 2.1 The objective of this report is to seek authority to procure a new mobile telephony services contract for a period of three years, with options to extend by a further two years in one year increments (3+1+1), ensuring that essential mobile voice and data services are available to the LFC, past the end of the current contract.
- 2.2 LFB's current mobile telephony contract with Telefonica (O2) was procured as part of a CCS aggregation exercise that included the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS). MPS has confirmed that they are not going to be part of the aggregation. Also CCS has communicated that they do not have enough volume to carry out the aggregation exercise. Additionally LFB has reached out to MPS to try to carry out an aggregation outside of CCS. However, the timeline and requirements are not suitable for LFB. Therefore the LFC has decided to proceed with their own procurement.
- 2.3 The intention is for any new contract to be in place ahead in January 2026.

3 Values Comments

- 3.1 The LFC notes the Fire Standards Board requirements around adopting and embedding the Core Code of Ethics at an individual and corporate level. Following extensive engagement, the LFC has introduced Brigade values which build on and do not detract from the Code of Ethics.
- 3.2 The Brigade values are:
 - Service: we put the public first
 - Integrity: we act with honesty
 - Teamwork: we work together and include everyone
 - Equity: we treat everyone fairly according to their needs
 - Courage: we step up to the challenge
 - Learning: we listen so that we can improve
- 3.3 This report relates to the "service" value. The procurement of a new mobile telephony service will allow the LFC to use mobile communications technology in support of front line and enabling services, helping to protect London.

4 Equality Comments

- 4.1 The LFC and the Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and the Fire Service are required to have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) when taking decisions. This in broad terms involves understanding the potential impact of policy and

decisions on different people, taking this into account and then evidencing how decisions were reached.

- 4.2** It is important to note that consideration of the Public Sector Equality Duty is not a one-off task. The duty must be fulfilled before taking a decision, at the time of taking a decision, and after the decision has been taken.
- 4.3** The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership (but only in respect of the requirements to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination), race (ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality), religion or belief (including lack of belief), sex, and sexual orientation.
- 4.4** The Public Sector Equality Duty requires decision-takers in the exercise of all their functions, to have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct.
 - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
 - foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 4.5** Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:
- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic where those disadvantages are connected to that characteristic.
 - take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it.
 - encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- 4.6** The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.
- 4.7** Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:
- tackle prejudice
 - promote understanding.
- 4.8** An EIA has not been undertaken in respect of this report. A new mobile telephony contract will have no impact upon any persons with the protected characteristics of Age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. If the report is authorised, existing established communication mechanisms will continue, underpinned by a new contract.

5 Other considerations

Workforce comments

5.1 There are no plans for workforce consultation as a result of this procurement.

Sustainability comments

5.2 This report does not introduce any significant sustainability impacts. An SDIA has not been undertaken as this is a re-procurement of a standard telephony contract.

Procurement comments

5.3 LFB will use the CCS Mobile Voice Data & Services framework to run a compliant process under PCR 2015 based on the final Statement of Requirement Options that are under consideration are set out in LFC-25-094 Part 1.

5.4 A formal strategy has been developed and approved including a benchmarking exercise on the framework suppliers. This exercise also took into account the potential switching costs associated with moving from the incumbent to alternative providers. The outcome of the benchmarking supports the decision to retain the incumbent supplier, who is considered to offer the best value for money among the available framework options.

5.5 The Procurement and Commercial team will support the development of the tender and evaluation methodology to ensure that the selected solution aligns with technical and security standards and delivers against the LFC's business continuity and cyber resilience objectives.

5.6 The procurement will also include appropriate contract terms, including provisions for service levels, data protection, system scalability, exit management, and a break clause..

Communications comments

5.7 Once a new provider is chosen (if not the incumbent), there will need to be a communication plan to explain to colleagues any changes they may see, and any actions they will need to take, if we move to a new provider and if there's any discontinuity of service.

5.8 The plan will use our core channels to explain changes – Hotwire, LFB Update – targeting any groups who need specific information as appropriate.

6 Financial comments

6.1 The report seeks authority to enter into a new contract for the provision of mobile telephony services by up to five (5) years, upon expiry of the current agreement in January 2026. The services provided by the contract will satisfy ongoing requirements for mobile communications to support both front line and enabling activities.

6.2 All costs related to the new agreement will be solely funded by the London Fire Commissioner revenue budget. The amount is set out in Part Two of this report.

6.3 The contract which provides these services has been operational for a number of years, since it is an ongoing requirement. Hence there is sufficient budget cover for the contract across all years.

7 Legal Comments

- 7.1** Under section 9 of the Policing and Crime Act 2017, the London Fire Commissioner (the "Commissioner") is established as a corporation sole with the Mayor appointing the occupant of that office. Under section 327D of the GLA Act 1999, as amended by the Policing and Crime Act 2017, the Mayor may issue to the Commissioner specific or general directions as to the manner in which the holder of the office is to exercise his or her functions.
- 7.2** By direction dated 1 April 2018, the Mayor set out those matters, for which the Commissioner would require the prior approval of either the Mayor or the Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and Fire Services (the "Deputy Mayor").
- 7.3** Paragraph (b) of Part 2 of the said direction requires the Commissioner to seek the prior approval of the Deputy Mayor before "[a] commitment to expenditure (capital or revenue) of £150,000 or above as identified in accordance with normal accounting practices ...".
- 7.4** The Deputy Mayor's prior approval is accordingly required.
- 7.5** The statutory basis for the action proposed in this report is provided by section 5A of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, under which the London Fire Commissioner, being a 'relevant authority', may do 'anything it considers appropriate for the purposes of the carrying out of any of its functions '.
- 7.6** The report states that the proposed procurement routes for the telephony services are compliant, transparent and competitive as it was established through a fully regulated, open competition under the PCR 2015/PA23 with pre-agreed, benchmarked pricing and terms.
- 7.7** The LFC may delegate the authority to the Assistant Director of Procurement and Commercial to enter into a contract under Part 4, Paragraph 1.1 of the LFC's scheme of governance.

List of appendices

Appendix	Title	Open or confidential*
1	None	

Part two confidentiality

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

Is there a Part Two form: YES