
The closure or movement of the Culture Review recommendations

Report to:	Date:
Service Delivery Board	03 June 2026
Commissioner's Board	10 June 2026
Deputy Mayor's Fire Board.....	30 June 2026

Report by:
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Authorising Head of Service:
Sally Hopper – Director for People

Report classification:
For decision

For publication

Values met

Service
Integrity
Teamwork
Equity
Courage
Learning

I agree the recommended decision below.



Jonathan Smith
London Fire Commissioner

This decision was remotely
Date **signed on 23 June 2026**

PART ONE

Non-confidential facts and advice to the decision-maker

The Culture Review published its findings and recommendations in November 2022. A programme of work was stood up in 2024 to work through these recommendations. Of the 23 recommendations made, 17 were assessed as having been completed by the Culture Transformation Programme in April 2025. The programme shut down and the recommendations transferred to the associated department to continue working on. The six remaining recommendations were formally reviewed at Culture Improvement Board in April 2026 and the proposals is to close five of the recommendations leaving one recommendation open.

Executive Summary

This report reviews progress against the Culture Review recommendations published in November 2022 following the independent review led by Nazir Afzal. A dedicated programme was established in 2024 to oversee delivery, completing 17 of the 23 recommendations by April 2025 before closing and transitioning ownership to relevant departments as business-as-usual.

A further review in April 2026 of the Culture Review recommendations that remained at the time of the Culture Transformation Programme closing, confirms that five of the six remaining recommendations are complete and embedded within existing departments or managed through established projects. One recommendation requires continued central oversight. This report proposes the formal closure of five recommendations due to activity now being business as usual for the reasons set out within this report.

Recommended decisions

For the London Fire Commissioner

That the London Fire Commissioner approves the formal closure of recommendations 6, 9, 10, 13, and 22 contained in this report on the basis that work is either complete or fully embedded in LFB business as usual activities.

That the London Fire Commissioner approves the decision for recommendation 11 to remain open and be managed through the Culture Team Project sponsored by People Services.

1 Introduction and background

The Culture Review published its findings from Nazir Afzal in November 2022 and 2023 recommendations were put forward and accepted with the aim of strengthening organisational culture, governance and ways of working. Following the HMICFRS Values and Spotlight report in 2023 the two were combined into a programme of work. In 2024, a time-limited The Culture Review programme was established to oversee delivery of these recommendations and ensure consistent monitoring and assurance. By April 2025, 17 recommendations had been assessed as complete, and the programme was closed with responsibility for ongoing activity transferred to the relevant departments.

This report provides an updated position following a further review by the Culture Improvement Board of the six remaining recommendations in April 2026. It sets out a proposal to formally close five of these recommendations, reflecting progress made, with actions now embedded in core processes or overlap with wider organisational initiatives and priorities. One recommendation is proposed to remain open and is linked to the HMI3 007 Area for Improvement and this outstanding recommendation will be monitored at the monthly Culture Improvement Board.

The decision sought is to close five of the remaining six recommendations and keep one open as follows:

1. Recommendation 6 – Build a Culture Dashboard

Close – delivered and embedded in BAU.

2. Recommendation 9 – Ensure there are secure facilities for all women in stations (Privacy for All)

Close – a funded and ongoing delivery programme is in place.

3. Recommendation 10 - Borough Commanders should build a better understanding of and closer relationships with their local communities.

Close – embedded within business as usual.

4. Recommendation 13 - Integration of HQ and operations and new HQ opportunities

Close – progressed into formal project governance.

5. Recommendation 22 – Create a workforce planning strategy with positive action and talent development

Close – Governed through HR leadership, Culture Improvement Board oversight (EVP), and BAU reporting to workforce and establishment governance.

6. Recommendation 11 – Recruit and progress firefighters who reflect and can demonstrate their commitment to London's diverse communities.

Remain open – continued focus and central oversight required linked to HM13-007 Area of Improvement

2 Objectives and expected outcomes

The objective is to agree a proportionate and risk-based closure or movement of five of the six remaining Culture Review recommendations with one recommendation retained as open. This reflects evidence that relevant actions are complete, embedded in business-as-usual or better managed through existing projects or frameworks.

Expected outcomes (SMART)

- **Specific:** Five recommendations formally closed with transfer of ongoing continuous improvement to the responsible departmental ownership or projects; with the remaining retained with a clear action plan.
- **Measurable:** Decision recorded and governance registers updated within one month of approval & where applicable monthly into LFBs Project Management Office.
- **Achievable:** Actions are based on completed delivery and existing controls.
- **Relevant:** Supports focus on material cultural and organisational risks aligned to GLA priorities.
- **Time-bound:** Review completed April 2026; ongoing assurance through normal governance cycles.

Assurance, implications and risks

Assurance will be provided through departmental reporting and existing oversight forums. Risks include reduced visibility if ownership is unclear; this is mitigated through documented accountability and inclusion in BAU monitoring through Boards and LFBs Project Management Office.

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.

Alignment with Brigade values

Service – we put the public first

The proposed closure or movement of recommendations ensures that organisational focus, leadership attention and resources are directed towards actions that most directly support service delivery to Londoners. Embedding completed actions into business-as-usual arrangements and retaining oversight of Recommendation 11 ensures sustained cultural improvement that underpins a safe effective and trusted public service.

Integrity – we act with honesty

The recommendations proposed for closure are supported by clear evidence of delivery,

governance and ongoing assurance as set out in this paper and the appendices. This transparent, evidence-based approach provides confidence that recommendations are only closed where outcomes have been achieved or responsibility has been appropriately transferred.

Teamwork – we work together and include everyone

Moving recommendations into departmental ownership and existing governance and project structures reinforces shared accountability and collaborative working across operational and corporate functions. Engagement with staff networks, communities and internal stakeholders, particularly in relation to Recommendations 10, 11 and 22, demonstrates inclusive approaches to cultural change.

Equity – we treat everyone fairly according to their needs

Several recommendations explicitly address equity, inclusion and representation, including facilities for women (Recommendation 9), workforce planning and positive action (Recommendation 22), and recruitment and progression of a diverse workforce (Recommendation 11). The proposed approach ensures these priorities continue to be addressed proportionately through live projects, BAU activity and targeted oversight.

Courage – we step up to the challenge

Formally closing or moving recommendations requires confident judgement and challenge to ensure continued progress without over-reliance on legacy programme structures. Retaining Recommendation 11 as open reflects recognition of the ongoing complexity and importance of this issue and the need for sustained leadership focus.

Learning – we listen so that we can improve

Transitioning completed recommendations into BAU and maintaining oversight where needed supports continuous improvement and organisational learning over time.

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 Consideration of equality impacts

Equality considerations have been integral to the Culture Review programme since its inception in 2022 and continued through delivery, review and the April 2026 reassessment of remaining recommendations. Several recommendations explicitly focus on advancing equality, diversity and inclusion, particularly those relating to facilities for women (Recommendation 9), community engagement (Recommendation 10), recruitment and progression of a diverse workforce (Recommendation 11), and workforce planning and positive action (Recommendation 22). Engagement with staff networks (ESGs), the Community Forum and advisory panel has informed delivery and helped identify barriers and mitigations.

4.9 Potential negative impacts and justification

The proposed closure or movement of recommendations is not expected to have a negative equality impact. Recommendations are only proposed for closure where actions are complete, embedded into business-as-usual or actively managed through established governance arrangements. The recommendations sitting within projects will have their own EIA established and signed off. Retaining Recommendation 11 as open acknowledges ongoing equality risks relating to representation and progression and ensures continued focus. Maintaining legacy recommendations outside appropriate governance structures was assessed as posing greater risk to equality outcomes through diluted ownership and reduced effectiveness.

4.10 Equality Act duty and EIA

Equality Act duties have been considered throughout programme delivery and subsequent review. A separate Equality Impact Assessment has not been produced for this paper as it does not introduce new policy or operational change, it formalises governance arrangements for work already delivered or underway. Equality impacts are addressed through existing EIAs associated with individual projects and BAU initiatives (e.g. Privacy for All, Workforce Planning and EVP), which are subject to ongoing monitoring and assurance.

5. Other considerations

There are no additional legal, financial or operational implications beyond those already managed through existing project, portfolio and BAU governance arrangements. The proposed approach supports effective assurance, clear accountability and alignment with wider organisational and GLA priorities while maintaining oversight of key cultural and equality risks.

6. Workforce comments

The implementation of the proposals in this report is not expected to result in adverse workforce impacts. No additional staffing or new roles are required as the recommendations proposed for closure or movement are either complete or embedded within business-as-usual arrangements.

7. Sustainability comments

The proposals in this report relates to governance, assurance and the formal closure or movement of Culture Review recommendations. They do not introduce new activity with environmental or sustainable development impacts. As such consultation with the Sustainable Development team has not been required for this report.

8. Procurement comments

This report does not contain a business case and does not propose any new procurement activity. No additional contracts, spend or commissioning decisions are required as a result of the recommendations. Any procurement activity associated with underlying projects has been or will be managed separately in line with LFB requirements. As such, no further procurement consideration is required for this report.

9 Communications comments

The decision relates to the formal closure or movement of Culture Review recommendations, rather than the introduction of new policy or service change. However, given the high profile and external interest in the Culture Review it is important that progress and decisions are communicated clearly and transparently.

What

Communications will focus on confirming progress against the Culture Review recommendations,

explaining why certain recommendations are being closed or moved into business-as-usual and setting out that Recommendation 11 remains open and subject to continued scrutiny.

Why

The primary purpose is assurance and transparency demonstrating that the organisation has continued to act on the findings of the independent review and remains committed to cultural and equality improvement.

Who

Primary audiences are internal staff (particularly leaders, staff networks and representative bodies) and governance bodies such as the advisory panel. External audiences include partners and interested members of the public where appropriate.

When

Communications will follow confirmation of the final decision by the relevant governance bodies aligned to existing reporting and publication cycles.

How

Internal communications will be delivered through established channels such as Directors' briefings, intranet updates and engagement with staff networks and reps. External communication will be managed through agreed corporate channels where necessary, ensuring alignment with previous Culture Review messaging if deemed appropriate once discussed with the Heads of Internal and External Communications within the Communications Department.

5 Financial comments

- 5.1 This report recommends the closure of five Culture Review recommendations and for one recommendation to remain open. The open recommendation will be managed through the Culture Team Project sponsored by People Services. The cost of this will be met from within the culture budget within People Services agreed as part of the Final 2026/27 Budget Report. Spend against this will be monitored as part of the regular Financial Position reporting to Investment and Finance Board.
- 5.2 Any cost identified for subsequent financial years will be considered as part of the 2027/28 Budget Process.

6 Legal Comments

- 6.1 Under section 9 of the Policing and Crime Act 2017, the London Fire Commissioner (the "LFC") is established as a corporation sole with the Mayor appointing the occupant of that office.
- 6.2 Section 1 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act (FRSA) 2004 states that the LFC is the fire and rescue authority for Greater London.
- 6.3 The LFC commissioned a Culture Review (LFC 0526) under section 7 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 by which the LFC has the power to secure the provision of personnel, services and equipment necessary to efficiently meet all normal requirements for those functions.

Furthermore, in accordance with Section 5A Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 (FRSA 2004), the LFC, being a 'relevant authority,' may do 'anything it considers appropriate for the purposes of the carrying- out of any of its functions...'.

- 6.4** This includes putting in place Culture Review to improve efficiency of personnel in meeting the functional requirements.
- 6.5** This report seeks the LFC's approval for the formal closure of the Culture Review's recommendations 6, 9, 10, 13, and 22 on the basis that work is either complete or fully embedded in LFB business as usual activities.

List of appendices

Appendix	Title	Open or confidential*
1	Independent Culture Review of London Fire Brigade – Review of Recommendations	Confidential

Part two confidentiality

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

Is there a Part Two form: NO