

Legal Costs Related to the Grenfell Tower Fire

Report to:

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

Date:

3 November 2025
12 November 2025
29 January 2026

Report by:

Yvonne McKenna, Head of Litigation, General Counsel's Department

Authorising Head of Service:

Kathryn Robinson, General Counsel

Report classification:

For decision

For publication

Values met:

Service
Integrity

I agree the recommended decision below.



Jonathan Smith
London Fire Commissioner

**This decision was remotely
Date signed on 30 March 2026**

PART ONE

Non-confidential facts and advice to the decision-maker

Executive Summary

Under the Mayor's Direction of April 2018, prior authority is to be sought from the Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and the Fire Service to incur expenditure of £150,000 or above. This report seeks authority to incur expenditure on legal costs for 2026/27 relating to the Grenfell Tower fire and delegation is sought from the London Fire Commissioner to the Director of Corporate Services to make decisions to incur such expenditure in 2026/27.

Recommended decision

For the London Fire Commissioner

Subject to the Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and the Fire Service giving prior approval to the expenditure, the LFC delegates authority to the Director of Corporate Services to incur expenditure of £191,000 for the period 2026/27 plus 15 per cent margin (which equates to £219,650) to secure legal advice and representation for the LFC in relation to the Grenfell Tower fire, and to include any consequent or related legal action in respect of the Grenfell Tower fire.

1 Introduction and background

- 1.1 The Chair of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, Sir Martin Moore-Bick, published his final report in September 2024 related to Phase 2 of the Inquiry which examined the circumstances leading up to and surrounding the fire. The legal work relating to representation at the Grenfell Inquiry is complete.
- 1.2 There remains ancillary litigation related to the Grenfell Tower fire. Some of those claims/proceedings have been settled and others are ongoing.

External Legal Resource

- 1.3 It has been necessary for the LFC to engage external legal resource to assist General Counsel's Department in relation to work arising out of the ancillary litigation.
- 1.4 The nature of the ancillary litigation means that it is extremely difficult to predict accurately the totals for each legal resource and when that resource will be needed.
- 1.5 This report is the latest in a series of reports over the past six years relating to authority to incur costs in respect of legal costs arising from the Grenfell Tower Fire.

2 Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1 The objective of this report is to seek authority to incur expenditure in 2026/27
- 2.2 The expected outcome is that the LFC is able to properly resource the work related to the Grenfell ancillary litigation.

3. Values

- 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 is concerned with delivering on the following two LFB values:
 - Integrity and Service: This report is focused on funding the legal resource necessary to enable the LFB to respond to ancillary litigation relating to the Grenfell Tower fire in the most efficient timescale which serves the public interest.

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 decisions have 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** There are no specific equality implications arising from this report.

5 Other considerations

Workforce comments

5.1 There are no workforce implications arising from this report.

Sustainability comments

5.2 There are no sustainability implications arising from this report.

Procurement comments

5.3 There are no procurement implications arising from this report.

Communications comments

5.4 There are no communications implications arising from this report.

6. Financial comments

- 6.1** This report recommends that a gross expenditure of £191,000 plus a 15% margin (which equates to £219,650) is agreed for the period of 2026/27 to secure legal advice and representation for the LFC and appropriate individuals in relation to the Grenfell Tower fire.
- 6.2** Various elements of the requested expenditure can be recovered. Out of the £219,650 gross cost requested, £28,750 should be recoverable, leaving a net cost of £190,900 chargeable to LFC (£110,400 to be funded by Earmarked Insurance Reserve plus £80,500 to be funded by LFC Grenfell Legal Costs Revenue Budget of £543,588). Part two of this report provides further information on anticipated expenditure.

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 that 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 the Fire Service (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..." A number of the individual items in the Table attached as Appendix 1 to Part 2 do not fall within the category of matters for which prior approval must be sought: they are contracts and arrangements already entered into, or individually fall below the £150k threshold. However, it is considered prudent to provide details of the costs, insurance reimbursement and an overall financial picture, in addition to the reporting through the ordinary budget mechanisms, to seek prior approval of the Deputy Mayor for the avoidance of doubt.
- 7.4** The Commissioner may, under s222 Local Government Act 1972, where it is considered *'expedient for the promotion or protection of the interests of the inhabitants of their area ... prosecute or defend or appear in any legal proceedings and, in the case of civil proceedings, may institute them in their own name, and ... they may, in their own name, make representations in the interests of the inhabitants at any public inquiry held by or on behalf of any Minister or public body under any enactment.'*
- 7.5** It is implicit in the above that the Commissioner may authorise spending and the instruction of outside experts. Notwithstanding this, the powers granted by Section 222 of the 1972 Act constitute a function of the Commissioner and Section 5A (1) of the Fire Rescue and Services Act 2004 ('2004 Act') states a relevant fire and rescue authority may do anything it considers appropriate for the carrying out of any of its functions, or anything that is considers appropriate for purposes incidental, whether directly or not, in relation to its functional purposes. This includes incurring spending in furtherance of the powers under Section 222 of the 1972 Act.
- 7.6** The participation by and representation of the London Fire Commissioner in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry and associated enquiries and legal matters falls within Section 222 of the 1972 Act and Section 5A(1) of the 2004 Act. The Grenfell Tower Inquiry's final report was published on 4 September 2024 which formally closed the Inquiry.

List of appendices

| Appendix | Title | Open or confidential* |
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| | None | |
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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