
Appointment of an Independent Operational Assurance Adviser

Report to:

Date:

London Fire Commissioner

Report by:

Director for Transformation

Report classification:

For decision

For publication

I agree the recommended decision below.



Andy Roe

London Fire Commissioner

Date

**This decision was remotely
signed on 23 April 2025**

PART ONE

Non-confidential facts and advice to the decision-maker

Executive Summary

The role of the Independent Operational Assurance Adviser is to provide independent advice and assurance to the London Fire Commissioner and where required the Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and the Fire Service on a range of safety critical matters relating to fire and rescue as well as providing reports to other key stakeholders including the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and the Fire and Rescue Services sector.

A recruitment process was undertaken to find a successor to the previous incumbent following the cessation of his appointment term. It is now recommended that the London Fire Commissioner appoint Mark Hardingham MA QFSM to the post of Independent Operational Assurance Adviser.

Recommended decision

For the London Fire Commissioner

The London Fire Commissioner agrees to enter into a contract for services with Mark Hardingham MA QFSM for the position of Independent Operational Assurance Adviser, on an allowance of £16,000 per annum, with a start date to be confirmed.

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. Recruitment to this post commenced on 28 January 2025 with a closing date of 25 February 2025.
- 1.2. Five applications were received and reviewed with one candidate being shortlisted. The shortlisting of candidates was undertaken by the London Fire Commissioner and Director for Transformation.
- 1.3. Final interviews were conducted by the London Fire Commissioner, Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and the Fire Service and the Chair of LFB's Audit Committee. One candidate was selected for appointment.

2. Recommendation of the panel

The Panel's recommendation is that Mark Hardingham MA QFSM is appointed to the position of Independent Operational Assurance Adviser, with a start date to be confirmed.

3. Equality comments

3.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the London Fire Commissioner when they make decisions. The duty requires the LFC to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

3.2 Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

3.3 The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).

3.4 Equal opportunities monitoring has been undertaken at all stages of the recruitment process. Of the 5 applicants, 4 declared as male with 1 declaring as female. 3 declared as White British and 2 declared as BAME. No applicants declared as having a disability.

4. Workforce Comments

4.1 The post of Independent Operational Assurance Adviser remains independent from the LFC reporting structure.

5. Financial comments

5.1 The role of the Independent Operational Assurance Adviser and required funding is included in the Budget for 2025/26 and for future years within the Transformation Directorate. The £16,000 cost of this appointment will be contained within that budget.

6. Legal comments

6.1 Under section 9 of the Policing and Crime Act 2017, the London Fire Commissioner is established as a corporation sole with the Mayor appointing the occupant of that office.

6.2 Under section 327D of the GLA Act 1999, as amended by the Policing and Crime Act 2017, the Mayor may issue to the London Fire Commissioner specific or general directions as to the manner in which the holder of that office is to exercise his or her functions. By direction dated 1 April 2018, the Mayor set out those matters, for which the Commissioner would require the

prior approval of, or prior consultation with, either the Mayor or the Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and the Fire Service (The Deputy Mayor).

- 6.3 The Deputy Mayor formed part of the interview and selection panel for this appointment however the said direction does not apply to the decision being recommended in this report.
- 6.4 Section 1 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 states that the London Fire Commissioner ('Commissioner') is the fire and rescue authority for Greater London. Section 327A (5) of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 requires the Commissioner to secure that the London Fire and Rescue Service is efficient and effective. When carrying out its functions, the Commissioner, as the fire and rescue authority for Greater London, is required to "have regard" to the Fire and Rescue National Framework prepared by the Secretary of State (the Framework) (Fire and Rescue Service Act 2004, section 21).
- 6.5 In accordance with sections 6, 7 and 8 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 (FRSA 2004) the LFC is responsible for, amongst other things; extinguishing fires, protecting life and property in the event of fires in its area, rescuing people in the event of road traffic accidents in its area and, promoting fire safety in its area. The LFC may under those sections secure the services of personnel required to provide those services and under section 5A of the FRSA 2004 the LFC, may do 'anything it considers appropriate for the purposes of the carrying out of any of its functions'. This is a matter coming within these powers.

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List of Appendices

Appendix	Title	Open or confidential
1.		

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 2 form – no