LONDON FIRE BRIGADE

LFC – 26-091

Provision of Undress Uniform for Operational Staff

Report to:	**Date:**
Investment & Finance Board.....	24 September 2026
Commissioner's Board	7 October 2026
Deputy Mayor's Fire Board.....	20 October 2026
London Fire Commissioner	

Report by:
Jamie Jenkins - Deputy Assistant Commissioner, Central Operations

Report classification:
For decision

For publication

Values met

Service
Integrity
Teamwork
Equity
Courage
Learning

PART ONE

Non-confidential facts and advice to the decision-maker

Executive Summary

This report seeks approval for the London Fire Commissioner to enter into a contract for the provision of undress uniform comprising the jacket and trousers or skirt, shirt, tie, belt, shoes and cap for operational staff and for the associated expenditure detailed in Part Two. The proposal implements the Brigade's approved approach to providing a sustainable, standardised and resilient undress uniform solution for operational firefighters.

The proposal will introduce an off-the-peg undress uniform ensemble, comprising the jacket and trousers or skirt, shirt, tie, belt, shoes and cap, for personnel from Firefighter to Station Officer rank and Control Officer to Assistant Control Commander in Control. A tailored garment provision will be retained for Station Commander and Control Commander and above where operational, representational, and ceremonial requirements justify a bespoke approach. The proposed specification has been developed through market engagement activities and informed by wearer feedback collected during a pilot conducted in support of firefighter participation at the Wimbledon Tennis Championships in 2026.

This approach seeks to balance operational requirements, wearer comfort, and value for money, while ensuring that senior officers continue to have access to uniforms that meet the demands of their corporate and ceremonial responsibilities.

The contract will be awarded following a further competition under Lot 13 of the YPO 001204 PPE Workwear, Uniform and Managed Services Framework. The proposed arrangements will improve resilience of supply, support value for money and provide equitable access to undress uniform across the operational workforce.

Recommended Decision

For the London Fire Commissioner

The LFC agrees that a contract be entered into in accordance with the arrangements set out in Part Two of this report.

1 Introduction and background

1.1 In September 2022, the London Fire Commissioner approved changes to the Brigade's approach to the provision of undress uniform following a review of the market and historical procurement arrangements. The review found that the Brigade's traditional requirement for bespoke tailored

garments, premium cloth and personal measuring services had become increasingly difficult and expensive to source due to changes in market capacity and supplier availability.

1.2 The 2022 decision approved a move away from bespoke undress uniform towards a standardised off-the-peg solution that better reflects current market capability and aligns with approaches adopted by other Fire and Rescue Services. The decision recognised that standardisation would improve resilience of supply, increase competition, support consistency of appearance and reduce the risk of future supply disruption

1.3 Following the Grenfell Tower Inquiry and the Independent Culture Review of London Fire Brigade, increased emphasis has been placed on inclusion, representation, and ensuring that all staff are able to participate fully in ceremonial, commemorative, community, and public-facing engagements. The Culture Transformation Board monitored the development of the undress uniform provision to ensure that access to appropriate uniform supports the Brigade's commitment to professionalism, inclusion, and organisational identity. The provision is recognised as an important element in fostering a modern and inclusive working environment, ensuring that staff have access to clothing that is fit for purpose, reflects the diversity of the workforce, and promotes a consistent and professional appearance across the organisation. Furthermore, it enables staff to represent the Brigade consistently at ceremonial events, commemorations, official engagements, and community activities, reinforcing public confidence, organisational cohesion, and a shared sense of belonging across the workforce.

1.4 Since that decision, work has continued to develop and test a standardised undress uniform specification suitable for operational firefighters. The proposed approach seeks to provide a sustainable, resilient and inclusive long-term solution that reflects current market capability whilst maintaining a professional appearance for ceremonial, commemorative and public-facing duties. This report seeks approval for the provision of undress uniform for approximately 4,800 firefighters and Control staff comprising the jacket and trousers or skirt, shirt, tie, belt, shoes and cap.

1.5 The current arrangements do not provide a standardised undress uniform solution across the operational workforce and continued reliance on bespoke tailoring services presents ongoing risks in relation to market capacity, affordability and long-term supply resilience. Procuring a standardised solution will provide greater consistency, improve access to undress uniform and establish a sustainable model for future provision.

1.6 Earlier in 2026, the Brigade conducted a further competition for the provision of undress uniform to support firefighter participation at the Wimbledon Tennis Championships. This provided an opportunity to pilot the proposed specification in a live operational environment. Following issue of the garments, a wearer evaluation was undertaken to obtain feedback on fit, comfort, appearance, sizing and overall suitability. The feedback received has informed and refined the final specification, ensuring lessons learned have been incorporated prior to the wider provision of undress uniform across the operational workforce.

2 Objectives and expected outcomes

2.1 The proposed approach introduces a standardised undress uniform model across the operational workforce. The provision will comprise the jacket and trousers or skirt, shirt, tie, belt, shoes and cap needed to create a complete and consistent uniform ensemble. Undress uniform from Firefighter to Station Officer rank and Control Officer to Assistant Control Commander in Control will be provided through an off-the-peg solution, whilst tailored garments will continue to be provided for Station Commander and Control Commander and above to reflect the additional ceremonial, representational and protocol requirements associated with senior leadership roles.

2.2 The proposal will establish a consistent undress uniform solution across the Brigade through the adoption of a common black uniform manufactured from 100 per cent Barathea wool. The use of a single fabric specification across both off-the-peg and tailored garments will ensure a professional and consistent appearance across all ranks whilst maintaining the distinctions appropriate to rank and role.

2.3 The proposed arrangements will improve the availability and resilience of undress uniform by reducing reliance on a limited bespoke tailoring market, widening access to suppliers and providing a more sustainable and cost-effective model of supply. The solution has been developed to support inclusion and equality through appropriate male and female garment options, an extensive size range and the ability to accommodate individual wearer requirements where necessary.

2.4 The proposed procurement builds on the undress uniform further competition undertaken in early 2026 for the Wimbledon Tennis Championships. Following issue of the garments, wearer feedback was obtained and used to review garment design, sizing, comfort and overall suitability. Lessons learned from the pilot and wearer evaluation have informed the specification and will help ensure that the final solution meets the needs of operational staff.

2.5 The proposed arrangements will improve access to undress uniform through the provision of garments designed for both male and female wearers, an extensive range of sizes and the ability to accommodate reasonable adjustments where required. This will support the Brigade's commitment to inclusion, representation and equitable access to uniform provision across the workforce.

2.6 The provision of undress uniform will ensure firefighters and Control Staff are appropriately equipped to attend ceremonial, commemorative and public-facing events in a professional and consistent manner. The proposal will support organisational identity, public confidence and the Brigade's ability to represent itself effectively at official engagements.

2.7 The proposed model will reduce reliance on a limited bespoke tailoring market by using a standardised off-the-peg solution for the majority of operational staff whilst retaining tailored garments only where justified by ceremonial and representational requirements. This approach is expected to improve security of supply, increase market competition and provide a more sustainable and cost-effective solution for the Brigade.

3 Values Comments

Service

The proposed provision of undress uniform supports the Brigade's ability to maintain a professional appearance at ceremonial, commemorative and public-facing events. Providing a sustainable and accessible uniform solution ensures firefighters are appropriately equipped to represent the Brigade and supports public confidence in the service.

Integrity
The proposal promotes transparency and value for money by adopting a sustainable procurement approach that reflects current market capability. The hybrid model balances operational requirements, affordability and quality whilst ensuring public funds are used responsibly.

Teamwork
A consistent undress uniform supports a shared organisational identity and reinforces a sense of belonging across the workforce. The proposal has been informed by engagement with stakeholders and seeks to provide a solution that meets the needs of different employee groups whilst maintaining a cohesive appearance across the Brigade.

Equity
The proposed arrangements support equitable access to undress uniform through the use of a standardised specification for operational staff and appropriate tailoring arrangements for senior officers where required. The approach has been developed taking account of equality considerations, sizing requirements and the need to provide suitable garments for all wearers.

Courage
The proposal reflects lessons learned from previous procurement exercises, market engagement and changing supplier capability. It builds on the Commissioner's 2022 decision, incorporates feedback from stakeholders and responds to the findings of wider organisational reviews by providing a modern and sustainable uniform solution for the future. standards expected of the Brigade.

Service
The proposed provision of undress uniform supports the Brigade's ability to maintain a professional appearance at ceremonial, commemorative and public-facing events. Providing a sustainable and accessible uniform solution ensures firefighters are appropriately equipped to represent the Brigade and supports public confidence in the service.

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 The proposed arrangements support equitable access to undress uniform across the operational workforce. The introduction of a standardised specification from Firefighter to Station Officer will provide consistent access to high-quality undress uniform, whilst tailored garments will continue to be available for Station Commander and above where ceremonial, representational and protocol requirements justify a bespoke approach. The proposal has been developed taking account of equality considerations, including the availability of appropriate sizing and fit for both male and female firefighters, and the need to accommodate individual requirements and reasonable adjustments where necessary. The adoption of a common black uniform

manufactured from 100 per cent Barathea wool will ensure a consistent and professional appearance across all ranks whilst supporting inclusive access to uniform provision for all wearers.

5 Other considerations

Workforce comments

5.1 The introduction of a standardised undress uniform solution is not expected to have any adverse workforce implications. The proposal has been developed following market engagement, the procurement of undress uniform for the Wimbledon Tennis Championships and subsequent wearer feedback. The proposed arrangements support operational staff by providing access to high-quality undress uniform suitable for ceremonial, commemorative and public-facing activities. The specification has been developed to accommodate both male and female firefighters through an extensive range of sizes and garment options, with provision for reasonable adjustments where required. Consultation will continue with representative bodies and relevant stakeholders throughout implementation to ensure any workforce concerns are appropriately addressed.

Sustainability comments

5.2 The proposed procurement supports a more sustainable and resilient approach to uniform provision by reducing reliance on a limited bespoke tailoring market and introducing a standardised solution for the majority of wearers. The use of a common specification and fabric across the operational workforce is expected to support more efficient sourcing, manufacture and stock management arrangements.

5.3 LFB's preferred approach remains the return, re-use and re-issue of garments wherever items remain fit for purpose. Whilst the transition from the current navy uniform to the proposed black uniform will temporarily reduce opportunities to re-issue existing stock, all returned garments will continue to be assessed for re-use, alteration, repair or use as temporary loan stock before disposal is considered.

5.4 Once the new black Undress Uniform is fully implemented, the Brigade's established return, inspection and re-issue process will continue, supporting a circular approach to uniform management, reducing waste and delivering ongoing value for money. The proposed solution also seeks to maximise garment longevity through the use of durable 100 per cent Barathea wool fabric and a consistent specification that can be maintained throughout the life of the contract.

5.5 Where garments cannot be re-issued, the Brigade will seek to maximise residual value through the recovery and re-use of reusable components, including brigade buttons and other serviceable fittings. Garments that are no longer suitable for re-use or re-issue will be recycled wherever feasible, enabling materials and components to be recovered and reused in the manufacture of new products, thereby supporting the Brigade's wider sustainability objectives and reducing the volume of textile waste sent for disposal.

5.6 Sustainability requirements and opportunities relating to responsible sourcing, ethical supply chains, garment durability, repairability, recycling and end-of-life garment management will be considered as part of the procurement process and ongoing contract management arrangements.

Procurement

5.7 The London Fire Brigade proposes to procure the provision of undress uniforms through a further competition under the YPO PPE Workwear, Uniform and Managed Services Framework Agreement (Ref. 001204), specifically Lot 13: Undress Uniform & Ceremonial Wear. The framework commenced on 1 September 2024 and expires on 31 August 2028. The framework permits call-off contracts to be awarded by either direct award or further competition.

5.8 A further competition will be conducted in accordance with the framework's terms and conditions and YPO's prescribed call-off procedures. The competition will be issued to all suppliers appointed to Lot 13, ensuring compliance with the framework requirements and securing best value for LFB. The procurement will evaluate suppliers against requirements including garment quality, fit, functionality, delivery arrangements, customer service, sustainability and social value considerations. The final award will be made to the supplier offering the most economically advantageous tender based on the evaluation criteria set out within the further competition documentation.

5.9 The use of the YPO framework provides a compliant and efficient route to market, having already satisfied the framework-level procurement requirements. The framework is available for use by UK public sector organisations and specifically includes Lot 13 for the provision of undress uniform and ceremonial wear.

Communications comments

5.10 A communications plan will be developed in conjunction with the Communications Team to support the introduction of the new undress uniform. Communications will ensure that employees are informed of the purpose of the new uniform, the implementation timetable, ordering arrangements and expected benefits. Particular emphasis will be placed on promoting consistency of appearance across the organisation, supporting equality of access, and explaining the distinction between standard off-the-peg garments for operational staff and tailored provision for senior officers.

5.11 The introduction of the new undress uniform represents a visible investment in the professional appearance of London Fire Brigade personnel and supports the Brigade's commitment to maintaining high standards when representing the organisation at official, ceremonial and community events. Communication activity will be aligned to the rollout programme to ensure staff receive timely and accurate information regarding fitting, ordering and distribution arrangements.

5.12 No adverse communications implications have been identified. Appropriate stakeholder engagement and internal communications will be undertaken ahead of implementation to support awareness and acceptance of the new arrangements.

6 Financial comments

This report requests the authority to commit revenue expenditure financial year 2027/28 for the purchase of Undress Uniforms for firefighters.

The funding for this procurement will be met from existing revenue budgets and earmarked reserves. There is no identified budgetary risk associated with this procurement

7 Legal Comments

a. 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.

b. Section 327D of the Greater London Authority Act 1999, as amended, 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.

c. 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 Service (the Deputy Mayor'). In particular, 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 is identified in accordance with normal accounting practices...". The proposed expenditure exceeds this financial threshold, accordingly, prior approval from the Deputy Mayor will be sought.

d. The Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and the Fire Service may authorise the London Fire Commissioner to commit revenue expenditure of up to the amount set out in Part Two of the report.

e. The London Fire Commissioner may agree that a contract be entered into for the provision of a complete undress uniform ensemble for operational staff, comprising the jacket and trousers or skirt, shirt, tie, belt, shoes and cap, and for the associated expenditure detailed in Part Two.

f. The statutory basis for the actions proposed in this report is provided by sections 7 and 5A of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 ("FRSA 2004"). Section 7 (2)(a) FRSA 20014 the Commissioner has the power to secure the provision of personnel, services and equipment necessary to efficiently meet all normal requirements for firefighting and section 5A allows the Commissioner to procure personnel, services and equipment they consider appropriate for purposes incidental or indirectly incidental to their functional purposes.

g. It is noted that the proposal implements the Brigade's approach to providing a sustainable, standardized and resilient undress uniform solution for operational firefighters.

h. The proposal to procure the provision of undress uniforms through a further competition under YPO PPE Workwear Uniform & Managed Services Framework Agreement has a relatively low risk as the YPO framework provides a compliant and efficient route to market, having already satisfied the framework-level procurements requirements and securing best value for the LFB.

List of appendices

Appendix	Title	Open or confidential*
1	None	N/A

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