

## Appendix 1

### **London Assembly (Mayor's Question Time) – 25 February 2013 Transcript: Agenda item 4a – Report of the Mayor**

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Chair):** This is the part where we deal with the final draft of the Mayor's Consolidated Budget for 2013-14. The Assembly agreed, at its Mayor's Question Time meeting on 19 December 2012, to accept written answers to all questions submitted to this meeting under the Mayor's Question Time procedure in order to devote to time to discussions of the Mayor's Draft Consolidated Budget.

Can I just make a note about petitions? Petitions are not received formally at this meeting because of time and those petitions which have been received by Members -- I know that I have received one from my constituents in Islington South and that has been delivered so I would hope that Members have had the opportunity to deliver their petitions. If there are any outstanding papers relating to those petitions then I am sure Members will pick them up at the end of the meeting.

So now let me ask the Assembly to turn to consideration of the final Draft Consolidated Budget for the GLA group 2013-14. Let me just say, before you start, Mr Mayor, what I would like you to do is to present your report focusing particularly on the changes to the budget proposals since they were last presented to the Assembly on 8 February 2013. I would also like you to address your response to the budget amendment and budget related motions agreed by the Assembly at that meeting.

If I can just say to those people who have not got the papers we have got in front of us that, in presenting his report, the Mayor will also make a statement concerning his direction to the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA) to begin public consultation on the draft fifth London Safety Plan. To Members I will then allow up to ten minutes of questions from Assembly Members specifically on the London Safety Plan and I will ask Members to speak as they indicate. That is not going to be taken from Groups' allocated time.

**Boris Johnson (Mayor of London):** Thank you very much, Chair. Good morning Members. It is this Authority's role to create the environment for an age of enterprise in London and to help create the growth and the jobs that we need to lift this city and this country out of the difficult economic circumstances we have been going through.

The programmes that we are leading here in City Hall will deliver 200,000 jobs in this Mayoral term; much of it through infrastructure investment in housing, in transport or in regeneration.

We are seeing a surge of post-Olympic confidence in London and from Croydon to the docks to the Olympic Park, to Vauxhall, Nine Elms, Battersea, we are seeing projects taking off that have been stalled for years, if not decades. On those sites and elsewhere we will deliver 55,000 affordable homes, creating 100,000 jobs, and we will continue to put in the transport infrastructure that will make those homes possible.

In the course of this Mayoral term we will continue to deliver Crossrail. We will extend the Northern line, adding two stations. We will cut delays on the Tube by 30%. We will put in new river crossings and these investments will help us in this city to offer the best quality of life for everyone in London to be found in any major city in the world.

It is in order to improve quality of life that I have asked the Metropolitan Police Service the 2020 20 challenge: to cut crime by 20%, to boost confidence by 20% and, of course, to cut costs by 20%. That is a challenge that Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe [Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service], who cut crime by 40% I think in Liverpool, has taken up with enthusiasm.

It is to continue to improve our quality of life that I am driving on with our programmes of planting more street trees, putting in 100 pocket parks, as we promised in the manifesto, and continuing with the revolution in electric vehicles so that London is the electric vehicle capital of Europe. Members of the Assembly will have seen only in the last few days that Transport for London (TfL) is now at work on an Ultra Low Emissions Zone so that we have even cleaner air in this capital and that will be in place by 2020.

The objective is to improve, as I say, our quality of life and to lengthen London's lead as the greatest city on earth. Now I know that not everybody around this horseshoe will necessarily agree with the route that we are taking but I think we share those ambitions.

Our work has taken on particular urgency because of the demographic pressures that this city is under. According to the 2011 census anything between 400,000 and 600,000 people have been added to the population of London since I became Mayor in 2008. That is a huge increase. We have known nothing like it in the post-war period. We need to house and transport those people, ensure that they find the skills to get the jobs that they need, we need to plan for a world in which we are continuing to bear down on CO<sub>2</sub> while electricity demand is going up by between 1% and 4% per year and we need to ensure that we can sustainably finance those investments.

London is the motor of the whole UK economy and we must not starve it of fuel. That is why we have set in train two parallel pieces of work - the Independent Finance Commission and the 2020 Vision for London - to build the maximum possible consensus about what we are doing.

There may be no limit to our ambitions for London but we must fund those ambitions responsibly. If I may be Party political we cannot go back to the Labour approach that we saw in Whitehall and in City Hall of expecting our children, our grandchildren and our great grandchildren to pay for our bills because they were too cowardly to enact the fundamental reform of our public services that they need to function in the 21st century.

That is why I have carefully considered the Assembly's amendments to the budget and have respectfully decided to reject them because I am afraid they do not make any sense at all. Of all the bad suggestions I might single out that we might somehow close the budget gaps in The Mayor's Office of Policing and Crime (MOPAC) and LFEPA --

[Disturbance in the public gallery.]

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Chair):** Boris, can you just stop a moment. The clock has stopped whilst this gentlemen is escorted out.

**Boris Johnson (Mayor of London):** If anybody else wants to say something like that - and of course I perfectly understand - can you say it now so we can get on with it!

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Chair):** No.

**Boris Johnson (Mayor of London):** What, you are encouraging them to keep interrupting the meeting?

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Chair):** No, that is totally out of order.

**Boris Johnson (Mayor of London):** Oh all right. OK.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Chair):** That is totally out of order.

**Boris Johnson (Mayor of London):** I am sorry.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Chair):** You have been invited along here by the Assembly and you know the job in hand. Now can I ask you to reconvene your comments to the Assembly?

**Boris Johnson (Mayor of London):** Thank you. All right. I just thought it might be helpful to lance the boil but never mind.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Chair):** It is not.

**Boris Johnson (Mayor of London):** OK. Of all the absurd suggestions put forward by the Labour Group supported by their clan here in the audience this morning I would single out the suggestion that we could somehow close the budget gaps in MOPAC and LFEPA by reversing the cut in council tax. There are two objections to that. It is completely ludicrous but there are two objections.

The first is it is not what Londoners need or deserve. In tough times we should be bearing down on council tax, particularly after the last Labour Mayor put it up by 152% during his time in office. Above all, Labour's amendment would mean a continuing shortfall of well over £20 million in LFEPA's budget a year every year from next year. That would be asking me and this Authority and all of us round this horseshoe to go back to the wasteful and improvident style of financial management pioneered by Ed Balls [Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer] and Gordon Brown [former Prime Minister (2007– 2010) and former Chancellor of the Exchequer (1997–2007)]. The approach that left this country with the largest structural deficit in the G20. The approach that got us into the mess that we were in.

I will not do that with taxpayers' money. Above all I will not do it because I believe we can enact the reforms that will help improve fire cover and help improve Londoners' access to our police force. Thanks to the work of the London Fire Brigade - who I salute and congratulate - there are now fewer fires in London than at any time in the last 40 years. Fewer people die in fires thanks to their work. An average of 56 a year for the ten year period 2002-2012 compared to an average of nearly 80 a year in 1991 to 2001. Similarly, with the work of the Metropolitan Police Service, in spite of the recession, we have seen the Metropolitan Police Service driving down crime with total offences down by 13.6% since I was elected and violence against the person down 11.5%.

Members of the Assembly, I have to weigh up two competing sets of advice; that of the Labour opposition and others whose views I am afraid may well be contaminated by the understandable desire to make political points and the strong views of professional officers, men and women of long service, who have dedicated their lives to fighting fire and fighting crime and who believe that these are good and sensible reforms. I think Londoners would be amazed and disappointed to discover that their representatives on LFEPA are squandering thousands of pounds on lawyers to try to delay a consultation without even having bothered to put forward an alternative proposal that is remotely sustainable. Shame indeed. That is why I believe it is time to let the consultation go ahead.

I want to end with an acknowledgement obviously of some of the things I think the Assembly has got right. On page 9 of the London Assembly's admirable report on cycling last November you called on me to, "double funding for cycling in 2013-14". Well, Jenny [Jones], Len [Duvall], others, I do not normally approve of judging the success of a policy by the amount of cash spent. We look at outputs rather than inputs don't we? I am glad to say that we are doing even better than you wanted. We have not only put in the best cycle hire scheme anywhere in the world and we have massively increased the numbers of people cycling, we have a vast plan now in train to improve the roads and put in a new network of Cycle Superhighways. But for those who simply yearn to hear the chink of taxpayers' cash Jenny [Jones] - I am more than doubling our spending on cycling. In the coming financial year under our old plans funding specifically for cycling was to have been £50.5 million. It will now be £111 million in 2014/15. Indeed, over the next three years total funding will be 2.5 times more than we had previously planned and over the next ten years we will be spending almost £1 billion on cycling here in London. I just think it is a shame that Brian Coleman [Conservative London Assembly Member 2000-2012] is not here today to hear that announcement because I would have liked to have seen his reaction.

The Conservative Group has also brought forward an interesting idea concerning a programme to assist homeless veterans. It seems to me that veterans have more than earned their right to priority access and benefits from our public services. That is why, in my first term, I delivered free travel for injured veterans. So, following the Conservative Group proposal, I can confirm that I will commit at least £300,000 in supporting homeless people with a UK armed forces background during 2013-14. The funding for this will come from the housing and land budget --

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Chair):** Mr Mayor --

**Boris Johnson (Mayor of London):** My fifth budget ensures this Authority delivers more for less, it invests in the future and it does not mortgage it as is proposed by some around this horseshoe. It will drive jobs and growth in London and I commend it to the Assembly.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Chair):** Thank you very much. Now I did make a statement at the beginning about the directions that you have made.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** Chair?

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Chair):** I will finish what I am saying. If you could sit down I will take your procedural motion in a moment. I did ask the Mayor to make a statement concerning his direction to LFEPA to begin the public consultation and to share with us why he thought it was necessary --

**Jenny Jones (AM):** Please.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Chair):** No. If you can just wait for a while I will finish what I have said and I will ask the Mayor to make that statement briefly as to why he has chosen to seek legal advice about his direction to LFEPA.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** Chair, under Standing Orders I would like to make a procedural motion.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Chair):** OK. What is your procedural motion?

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** Under Standing Order 4.5 I would like to proceed to the next item of business on the agenda.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Chair):** Right. That procedural motion is under section 4.5a.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** Which is normally, Chair, voted on without a debate.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Chair):** OK. Can I have a seconder?

**Jenny Jones (AM):** Yes. Seconded.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Chair):** Right. Jenny Jones seconded it. I absolutely understand what is going on here. That is a procedural motion. Have you got a procedural motion?

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** No, Chair, my procedural motion has been moved and seconded. I understand under Standing Orders it needs now to move to the vote.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Chair):** Yes, except to say, Assembly Member Shawcross, my business is to ensure that this Assembly appears to be reasonable in all that it does. So I do have a matter on the floor and I will finish that and then move to your procedural --

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** Chair, under Standing Orders the Mayor has ten minutes to make his statement. That ten minutes has now lapsed, including some injury time if I dare say it, and I would like to move that we press to the next item of business, which should be amendments.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Chair):** OK. I can do that because within that ten minutes I did ask the Mayor to make that statement and he has not made that.

**Boris Johnson (Mayor of London):** I am more than happy to make it now.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Chair):** No, no. What you have done is you have used up your ten minutes without giving me --

**Boris Johnson (Mayor of London):** Do you want me to make a statement. I am sorry. At some point you want me to --

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Chair):** -- without responding to what I asked you to do and what you agreed to do so I will take the procedural motion.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** Thank you, Chair.

**Boris Johnson (Mayor of London):** Oh come on. You can't have it both ways.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Chair):** No, I am dealing with the procedural motion.

**Richard Tracey (AM):** Chair, I believe all Members of this Assembly received last week some guidance from the Executive Director of Resources about the very matter you are talking about.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Chair):** No, that is not a procedural motion or a point of order. Let's move to the vote.

**Richard Tracey (AM):** We were advised not to discuss the matters of LFEPA because of prejudicing judicial proceedings.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Chair):** Can I ask the Member to sit down. Can we move to the vote. Do I see those in favour of moving to the next item on the agenda? 16. Can I see those against? 8. So that means then that we thank the Mayor for his attendance because the Assembly Members have decided they have no questions to put to you --

**Boris Johnson (Mayor of London):** They do not want to scrutinise. Are you saying they are abdicating their duty to scrutinise me?

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Chair):** Thank you.

**Boris Johnson (Mayor of London):** Are you saying they have not the guts to put questions to me? Great supine protoplasmic invertebrate jellies. That is it. They do not want to ask me any questions. My friends from the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) you have been cheated --

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Chair):** We are now on to the next business.

**Boris Johnson (Mayor of London):** Your Labour accomplices have failed in their --

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Chair):** Mr Mayor, thank you.