

# Subject: Motions

**Report to: London Assembly (Plenary)**

**Report of: Executive Director of Secretariat**

**Date: 4 November 2015**

**This report will be considered in public**

## 1. Summary

- 1.1 The Assembly is asked to consider the motions set out which have been submitted by Assembly Members.

## 2. Recommendation

- 2.1 **That the Assembly considers the motions set out below.**

## 3. Issues for Consideration

- 3.1 The following motion has been proposed in the name of **Darren Johnson AM** and will be seconded by Andrew Boff AM:

“This Assembly notes the tragic deaths of eight people cycling in London so far this year, seven of whom were killed in collisions with Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs).

Despite positive initiatives led by the Mayor, TfL and the MPS, this Assembly believes there are still too many dangerous HGVs on London’s roads.

We therefore call on the Mayor of London to work with the Government and commercial partners to implement the following policies:

- a rush-hour lorry ban, subject to the completion of a full impact assessment;
- the construction industry to adopt Construction Logistics and Cyclist Safety (CLOCS) standards across the board, including direct vision lorry cabs;
- confidential reporting of bad practice to be rolled out to all HGV drivers, irrespective of whether their employer wants to take part;
- comprehensive enforcement so that rogue operators do not permit unlicensed, untrained lorry drivers, or unsafe vehicles, to operate on our roads.”

- 3.2 The following motion has been proposed in the name of **Stephen Knight AM** and will be seconded by Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM:

“This Assembly notes the recent admission by Volkswagen, the German carmaker, that it has installed ‘defeat devices’ – software designed to manipulate emissions test results – in 11 million vehicles worldwide, of which 1.2 million are in the UK.<sup>1</sup>

This Assembly further notes:

- i) the failure of recent European vehicle emissions standards (Euro standards) to deliver the anticipated emissions reductions; and
- ii) the results of TfL’s recent testing of Euro 6/VI vehicles using London drive cycles which found that a number of Euro 6 passenger cars emit several times more NOx than some HGVs.<sup>2</sup>

This Assembly remains concerned that large sections of the capital continue to exceed both the annual mean and hourly legal limits for the concentration of nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and are currently projected to continue doing so until 2025 at the earliest, over fifteen years after the original deadline for compliance.<sup>3</sup>

This Assembly believes that the Mayor has a duty to review his current policies and proposals in light of the emerging scientific evidence on the performance of Euro 6 vehicles under real-world driving conditions and our increasing knowledge of the adverse effects of air pollution on human health.

This Assembly therefore calls on the Mayor of London to review the planned exhaust emission standards of his Ultra Low Emission Zone to ensure that all vehicles driving in the centre of the capital in 2020 are truly ultra-low or zero emission.”

- 3.3 The following motion has been proposed in the name of **Stephen Knight AM** and will be seconded at the meeting:

“This Assembly notes the Government’s recent consultation on its review of the Feed-in Tariff scheme, the subsidy scheme for the generation of renewable electricity from small-scale installations.

This Assembly further notes that

- i) London currently has the lowest amount of installed solar power capacity of any region in the UK, but among the greatest potential to generate solar power; and that
- ii) 2,740 people are currently employed in the solar industry and its supply chain in London according to recent research published by the Solar Trade Association.

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<sup>1</sup>See comments made by Paul Willis, Managing Director of VW UK, appearing before the House of Commons Transport Select Committee on Monday 12 October 2015.

<sup>2</sup> TfL Euro 6 emission standard testing: <https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/In-service%20emissions%20performance%20of%20Euro%206VI%20vehicles%20WEBSITE%20COPY.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Draft Air Quality Plan for the achievement of EU air quality limit value for nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) in Greater London Urban Area: [http://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/assets/documents/no2-consultation-2015/AQplans\\_UK0001.pdf](http://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/assets/documents/no2-consultation-2015/AQplans_UK0001.pdf)

This Assembly is concerned that the 87 per cent cut to the Feed-in Tariff for solar energy proposed by the Government will have a disproportionate impact on London's ability to generate energy from local and renewable sources.

This Assembly also notes the comments made by the Mayor of London on 16 September 2015 that "it would be wrong if the cut in the feed-in tariffs actually stops people from investing in solar because it clearly has many attractions."

This Assembly calls on the Mayor of London to lead a cross-party delegation of Assembly Members, solar companies and other industry experts to meet with the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change in order to express our shared concerns over the impact of the Government's proposed changes to the Feed in Tariff on the viability of the solar industry in London."

- 3.4 The following motion has been proposed in the name of **Richard Tracey AM** and will be seconded by Murad Qureshi AM:

"This Assembly notes that up to 300 tonnes of rubbish is recovered from the Thames every year, with the amount of plastics, especially plastic bottles growing annually.

With this in mind the Assembly offers its wholehearted support to the Port of London Authority's Cleaner Thames Campaign, which calls on Londoners to 'do the right' thing and make sure their rubbish goes in the bin, not in the River Thames.

Noting the Authority's strategic role in promoting recycling and waste reduction, this Assembly also urges the Mayor to work with the Port of London Authority, its partners and London's riparian Boroughs to support this campaign."

- 3.5 The following motion has been proposed in the name of **Andrew Dismore AM** and will be seconded at the meeting:

"This Assembly expresses its concern over the decision of the Government abruptly to end ESOL funding for mandated DWP referred FE students.

The Assembly believes that it does not represent joined up Government for one department, the DWP, to mandate people to go on ESOL courses or lose their benefit on the one hand; and on the other for another department, BIS, to entirely cut the funding for such mandated, work tailored courses.

The Mayor has previously insisted that "everybody in London, everybody who comes to work in our economy, should be able to speak English."<sup>[1]</sup> However, given this latest barrier being placed in the way of those seeking to acquire English language skills, this Assembly is sceptical about the Government's commitment to ensuring that all those seeking employment and greater integration into their communities are able to do so, especially in the context of other Government cuts to the Adult Skills Budget, which restrict ESOL courses so that refugees, asylum seekers, and other migrants who need to learn English find it ever-harder to access appropriate language classes. The Assembly therefore calls on the Mayor to:

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<sup>[1]</sup> Nicholas Cecil, Boris Johnson: Everybody in London should be able to speak English, Evening Standard, 06.01.15

- Lobby the Business, Education, and Work and Pensions Ministers to seek an alternative to the ESOL funding cuts.
- To commission a study from GLA Economics looking at the costs and benefits to the London regional economy of government funding for ESOL courses.”

3.6 The following motion has been proposed in the name of **Nicky Gavron AM** and will be seconded by Navin Shah AM:

“This Assembly calls on the Mayor of London to lobby the Government to reverse its decision that the temporary rule allowing property owners to convert offices and other workspaces into flats almost overnight, without the need for planning permission, will be made permanent<sup>4</sup>.

The temporary policy has already been an unmitigated disaster for outer London, where over 320 fully occupied office buildings have been earmarked for conversions. Richmond-upon-Thames, for example, has lost 20 per cent of its office space, displacing 3,150 local jobs<sup>5</sup>. Where owners do not convert, the hope value on all commercial and light industrial premises provides an incentive to drive up rents, squeezing out even more affordable workspace. The migration of jobs outside of local authorities and beyond is particularly concerning in light of plans to allow local authorities to keep increased business rate revenues. The converted housing will not be affordable and is not required to meet environmental or disability standards set by local authorities<sup>6</sup>.

The extended policy will be even more damaging to London’s economy. The exemption currently enjoyed by limited parts of central London will expire in 2019. Boroughs will be able to impose Article 4 directions to suspend the permitted development rights, but this is a cumbersome process which can result in councils being subject to compensation claims by property owners and can be vetoed by the Secretary of State against the councils’ wishes.

In addition, under the new rules, developers will be able to demolish office buildings and build new residential buildings in their place, further undermining the ability of local authorities to plan for development.

This Assembly recognises that some areas may have a surplus of office space, but the existing planning system already gives local authorities the tools to allow conversions where appropriate<sup>7</sup>.

Given his statutory planning function in London, this Assembly calls on the Mayor to lobby the Government to withdraw its proposals regarding Permitted Development Rights in the capital.”

3.7 The following motion has been proposed in the name of **Fiona Twycross AM** and will be seconded by Dr Onkar Sahota AM:

“This Assembly urges the Government to maintain Universal Free School Meals for infant school pupils in London, introduced in 2014, when it announces the Spending Review on 25 November 2015.

<sup>4</sup> DCLG press release. “[Thousands more homes to be developed in planning shake up](#).” 13 October 2015.

<sup>5</sup> London Councils. “The Impact of Permitted Development Rights for Office to Residential Conversions.” August 2015.

<sup>6</sup> National Planning Policy Guidance. “[Planning Obligations](#).” Paragraph: 005 Reference ID: 23b-005-20140306

<sup>7</sup> London Plan Policy 4.2

Universal Free School Meals have been shown to have significant benefits for educational performance of children across the country, and therefore in London, with the 2009-11 pilot schemes generating four weeks additional progress for pupils at Key Stage 1 and eight weeks progress at Key Stage 2. Universal Free School Meals for infants are therefore an important tool for improving attainment in the classroom and reducing the stigma of means tested free school meals that results in many children failing to claim their meal.

With over 40,000 visits by children to a London food bank last year (2014/15), and evidence from the Mayor that 74,000 London children sometimes or often go to bed hungry at night, it is also clear that Universal Free School Meals can be an important means of tackling child hunger in the capital. At a time when tax credits are due to be severely cut, Universal Free School Meals are also helping the family budgets of parents with young children, who save around £400 a year per child.

This Assembly therefore urges the Government to protect Universal Free School Meals for infant school pupils in London and for the Mayor – who has previously stated his support for the School Food Plan’s recommendation for the rollout of universal free school meals for 4 to 7 year olds<sup>8</sup> -- to lobby the Prime Minister to state categorically that infant school meals in London are not under threat as part of the Spending Review.”

- 3.8 The following motion has been proposed in the name of **Jennette Arnold OBE AM** and will be seconded by Tony Arbour AM:

“This Assembly notes that approximately 11 million people were killed during the Holocaust, including 1 million Jewish children. Since the Holocaust, other genocides such as the Rwandan Genocide of 1994 have killed millions of people. Even now, people all over the world live in fear of being killed due to their race, ethnicity, religion, culture, or nationality.

This Assembly is proud that the UK has always played a major role in ensuring that the Holocaust is never forgotten. Holocaust Memorial Day has taken place in the UK since 2001, with a UK event and over 3,600 local activities taking place on or around 27 January each year. The Holocaust Educational Trust has taken thousands of UK students to visit former-concentration camps, in order to teach them the lessons of the Holocaust.

This Assembly believes that Holocaust Memorial Day should continue to be commemorated in the UK. Children should be encouraged and enabled to actively promote the lessons learnt from the Holocaust and other genocides. Efforts of schools across London to raise awareness, such as the Hampton School in Richmond, where pupils promoted the issue on social media using the hashtag #genocideknowmore, should be encouraged and applauded.

This Assembly also believes that the Greater London Authority and London’s Boroughs should continue to work with local schools, charities, and other stakeholder organisations to promote understanding of this important issue, to ensure that the Holocaust, and other Genocides, are remembered through the generations.”

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<sup>8</sup> Question 2015/1948, Mayor’s Question Time, 17.06.15

- 3.9 The following motion has been proposed in the name of **Fiona Twycross AM** and will be seconded by Andrew Dismore AM:

“Trade unions play an important role in reducing inequality<sup>9</sup>. Given London’s status as one of the most unequal cities in the industrialised world<sup>10</sup>, this Assembly believes the Trade Union Bill 2015-16 is an attempt to militate against the economic interests of hardworking Londoners, including officers of the Greater London Authority, by discouraging trade union membership.

This Assembly believes the Trade Union Bill will seek to undermine trade union membership in the following ways:

#### Turnout Restrictions

Strike action is always a last resort, but the Government’s aim that 50% of members must turn out to vote and 40% of the entire membership must vote in favour (that amounts to 80% of those voting, on a 50% turnout)<sup>11</sup> in ‘important public services’, represents an attack on the democratic rights of workers in London, such as those working for TfL and for the London Fire Brigade.

The Government’s refusal to allow secure online balloting<sup>12</sup> of the kind used to select the Conservative Party candidate for the 2016 London Mayoral Election, and which could potentially increase turnout, suggests that the primary motivation for the Trade Union Bill is to reduce the scope for unions to represent the interests of workers.

#### Surveillance of Trade Union Members

The London Assembly believes draconian measures seeking the names of pickets and restrictions on social media usage are an attack on fundamental human rights<sup>13</sup>. Oversight of such matters would place costly demands on the Metropolitan Police Service risk the independence of policing in the capital.

Steve White, the chair of the Police Federation of England and Wales, recently informed MPs that the surveillance of trade unionists proposed by the bill:

*“would be such a massively complex operation and from the police point of a view a dangerous road to go down...It would be a travesty if the police went back to the days of the 70s or the 80s when the police were seen as an arm of a state.”<sup>14</sup>*

#### Use of Agency Workers

The London Assembly is further concerned that allowing the use of agency workers to ‘break’ strikes<sup>15</sup> will lead to staff carrying out work they are not trained for, potentially lead to unsafe

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<sup>9</sup> Dr Lydia Hayes and Professor Tonia Novitz (2014), *Trade Unions and Economic Inequality*

<sup>10</sup> Randeep Ramesh, London’s richest people worth 273 times more than the poorest, *Guardian*, 21.04.10

<sup>11</sup> Trades Union Congress, [About the Trade Union Bill](#)

<sup>12</sup> Trades Union Congress, [TUC slams Conservative “hypocrisy” over use of online balloting for London Mayoral selection](#), 02.10.15

<sup>13</sup> Article 23(4) of The Universal Declaration Human Rights – “Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.”

<sup>14</sup> Patrick Wintour, Trade union bill: police ‘dread and fear’ social media plan, *Guardian*, 15.10.15

<sup>15</sup> Frances O’Grady, The Trade Union Bill is coming – here’s what it threatens, *The Independent*, 16.10.15

workplaces and services, and undermine good working relationships. Such practices could also have an impact of the effective functioning of London's transport network.

#### Facility Time and Member Subscriptions

This Assembly believes that facility time arrangements for local trade union representatives and the deduction of subscriptions through payroll are matters for negotiation between employers, such as individual members of the GLA family, and recognised trade unions, which form the basis of good employee relations.

Given the concerns expressed and that, despite the Bill's potentially negative impact on workers in the capital, the Mayor has expressed 'passionate support' for the proposed legislation<sup>16</sup>, this Assembly believes that

- If enacted, the Trade Union Bill 2015-16 could discourage trade union membership, undermining the important role trade unions play in addressing economic inequality in the capital; and
- This would impact upon the principle duty of the Greater London Authority to promote economic development and wealth creation in Greater London.

The Assembly requests that the Chair of the Assembly writes to the Mayor of London to convey these concerns."

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**List of appendices to this report:** None.

<b>Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985</b>
List of Background Papers: None.
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<sup>16</sup> Boris Johnson, If Jeremy Corbyn honestly cares about the workers, he'll back trade union reform, *Daily Telegraph*, 13.09.15