

### **Labour Group Budget Related Motion – 27.01.16**

**Proposed by: Valerie Shawcross AM**

**Seconded by: John Biggs AM**

Over the eight years of Boris Johnson's Mayoralty, many of the greatest challenges facing the capital have grown. From the housing crisis to the rocketing cost of transport, these are issues which directly affect Londoners but which the Mayor has allowed to spiral out of control.

At the same time, the Mayor has increasingly invested his time, political capital, and tax payers' money in pet projects, vanity schemes, and mismanagement.

When he departs City Hall in May, the Mayor's legacy of failure will leave his successor facing far greater challenges than he inherited, with few or in many cases no, plans in place to address them.

This Assembly believes that the scale of the Mayor's failure is not something which can be addressed with minor amendments to an outgoing Budget. The real change Londoners are crying out for can only be achieved with a fresh start – a new, progressive Mayor, and new ideas.

#### **Transport**

On transport, the Mayor has been responsible for a 48% increase in bus fares and a 38% increase in Tube fares since 2008<sup>1</sup>. Londoners will know that, despite the Mayor's sleight of hand, a token cut in council tax will do very little to undo years of inflation-busting fare increases. This has meant a couple living in the Mayor's Uxbridge parliamentary constituency using Zone 1-6 annual Travelcards will have seen their annual fare rise by £1160<sup>2</sup> since Boris Johnson came to power.

At the same time, the Mayor has wasted millions on vanity projects, such as the Cable Car; wasted time cancelling projects only to resurrect them at a later date; and allowed fare evasion on the transport network to reach a staggering £61m last year.<sup>3</sup>

The Mayor's failure to ensure that the London Underground sub-surface signalling contract was delivered on time has resulted in £1.15bn being lost by London Underground<sup>4</sup> – money that could have been invested in delivering much-needed improvements to the transport network. As could the staggering cost of each new Routemaster the Mayor has bought, at around £50,000 more expensive than a comparable double decker<sup>5</sup>; the Mayor's shoddy handling of the 'Garden Bridge' proposal, for which taxpayers are stumping up at least £60m<sup>6</sup>; and the £5.2m wasted on drawing up proposals for a 'fantasy island airport' in the Thames Estuary<sup>7</sup>.

This Assembly believes that, given the level of waste and financial mismanagement associated with the Mayor's Chairmanship of the TfL board, it is clear that much more is needed than a tweak at the edges

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<sup>1</sup> Figures supplied by Transport for London – available on request.

<sup>2</sup> MA3210 shows the 2008 fares when Boris Johnson became Mayor. [MD1560](#) shows the 2016 fares. An annual 1-6 travelcard cost £1,784 in 2008 and costs £2,364 in 2016. That is an increase of £580 per person or £1,160 per couple, Date retrieved: 18.01.16

<sup>3</sup> Val Shawcross AM, (14.10.15), [Cracking down on fare evasion would save TfL millions](#), Date retrieved 27.01.16

<sup>4</sup> The £1.15 billion in the increase in cost of the overall SUP Upgrade programme – planned expenditure on the programme increased from £4.258 billion to £5.412 billion – see table 5 - <http://content.tfl.gov.uk/fpc-20150617-item17-part-1-four-lines-modernisation.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Taxi Leaks (3 May 2013), [TfL reveals cost of New Bus for London fleet](#), Date retrieved: 09.09.2014

<sup>6</sup> TfL Finance and Policy Committee (18.07.13), [Garden Bridge](#), Date retrieved: 13.01.14 & <https://twitter.com/BBCTomEdwards> (22.01.14) "It's been confirmed the Mayor through TfL will match fund Treasury's £30m contribution to the Garden Bridge subject to final business case." Date retrieved: 22.01.14

<sup>7</sup> Valerie Shawcross AM, *Val's statement on Boris Island and Airports Commission decision*, 02.09.14 – [MD1334](#) on 9 April 2014 provided an extra £2m. [MD1080](#) provided an extra £3m. [MD1037](#) extended [MD806](#) which provided £200,000

## Housing

One of Boris Johnson's chief legacies as Mayor will be to have turned 2008's housing shortage into a crisis by 2016. In every respect, the picture with housing has worsened dramatically since 2008, with supply falling flat, rising costs, and property standards still dire for private tenants.

At best, Boris Johnson's Mayoralty has failed to address this crisis; at worst, the Mayor has introduced planning and housing reforms that have exacerbated matters. Department for Communities and Local Government data shows that just 18,260 homes were built in 2014/15<sup>8</sup>, against a GLA Strategic Housing Market Assessment that demonstrates a need for 48,841<sup>9</sup> units. In the seven full years since his election in 2008, the Mayor has not once hit his overall housing supply target set out in the London Plan.

Average house prices rose above £500,000 for the first time in July 2014 and, as of November 2015, currently stand at £537,000.<sup>10</sup> For private renters, too, the average rent for a typical property has increased by 30% since 2008 to £1,626 a month, leaving households £4,484 a year worse off.<sup>11</sup> At the current rate of rent inflation, the average two-bedroom property in Greater London will require a monthly rent payment of over £2,000 by January 2020, demanding a single salary of £118,240 a year or two salaries of £49,655 a year to be considered affordable<sup>12</sup>.

Despite the sub-standard condition of London's private rented sector, the Mayor has continued to pursue a voluntary approach to regulation. In May 2012, Boris Johnson pledged to launch a London Rental Standard, which he described as "voluntary self-regulation",<sup>13</sup> whereby landlords would voluntarily agree to slightly higher standards. His manifesto pledged that 100,000 landlords would be voluntarily accredited by May 2016.<sup>14</sup> Yet, as of October 2015 – with six months of his mayoralty remaining – just 14,575 landlords were accredited.<sup>15</sup>

This Assembly believes that the Mayor's poor record on housing is clear. Failing to build even half the number of homes we need, failing to keep prices affordable to ordinary Londoners, and failing to protect renters from the worst excesses of runaway prices and unscrupulous landlords.

## Policing

The Mayor has repeatedly pledged to hold police numbers at 32,000<sup>16</sup>. In fact, he has failed to do this for 78%<sup>17</sup> of the time since May 2010. Numbers rose around Mayoral election time but have slumped in-between<sup>18</sup>.

The effect on neighbourhood policing has been devastating. In October 2011, the Mayor remodelled neighbourhood policing reducing Safer Neighbourhood Teams from three PCSOs, two PCs and one sergeant per ward to just one PC and one PCSO per ward. Since this change was implemented, 1,085 police officers have been lost from local borough teams<sup>19</sup>. There has also been a significant reduction in

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<sup>8</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government

<sup>9</sup> 'The 2013 Strategic Housing Market Assessment', Greater London Authority, 2014, p.8

<sup>10</sup> Office for National Statistics House Price Index

<sup>11</sup> Valuation Office Agency

<sup>12</sup> London Assembly Labour Group analysis of Valuation Office Agency data. Affordability assumptions based on requirement that rent payments should account for no more than a third of net household income.

<sup>13</sup> 'The Mayor's Housing Covenant: Making the private rented sector work for Londoners', Greater London Authority, December 2012, p.24

<sup>14</sup> 'Taking Greater London Forward', Boris Johnson 2012 Manifesto, 2012, p.11

<sup>15</sup> Greater London Authority

<sup>16</sup> Kit Malthouse AM, MPA Transcript, 24th February 2011, p.772

<sup>17</sup> Measured on officer numbers London wide per month since May 2010, from Metropolitan Police Service Recorded Crime Figures and Associated Data, [Police Numbers by Borough, to November 2015](#), accessed 30.12.15

<sup>18</sup> Ibid

<sup>19</sup> Measured on officer numbers London wide per month since October 2011, from Metropolitan Police Service Recorded Crime Figures and Associated Data, [Police Numbers by Borough, to November 2015](#), accessed 30.12.15

PCSOs across London with the number of borough-based PCSOs now standing at just 1,023, a loss 2,516 PCSOs (67%), with only 629 dedicated to London wards<sup>20</sup>.

The result of this is that we are now seeing the most serious crimes once again on the rise. In the last two years violent crime has increased by 47%<sup>21</sup> and violence with injury by 28%.<sup>22</sup> There has been a resurgence of Serious Youth Violence, increasing by 16%<sup>23</sup>, with the Gang Violence Indicator soaring by 25%<sup>24</sup> over the same period. Most concerning has been the recent upward trend in 'Knife Crime with Injury' offences, which have risen by 15%<sup>25</sup> in the last two years – resulting in the death of 15 teenagers in London over the last year<sup>26</sup>.

The primary duty of a Mayor should be to ensure the safety of Londoners, but on Boris Johnson's watch even the Deputy Commissioner had to concede some of the decisions on cuts "kept him awake at night"<sup>27</sup>. This Assembly believes that the Mayor's reductions to neighbourhood policing have threatened the trust between the public and the police. Despite a warning from the former Commissioner for Counter Terrorism Command of the severe risk of breaking the "golden thread" of policing, numbers of Police Officers and PCSOs have plummeted<sup>28</sup>.

## Environment

Air pollution remains a major public health problem facing London, causing nearly 10,000 premature deaths every year<sup>29</sup>. By the time the proposed Ultra LEZ is in place in 2020, approximately 114,000 Londoners will have died prematurely since the Mayor took office.<sup>30</sup>

Not only does London's air quality cost lives in the capital, it costs a disproportionate number of lives amongst the poorest and most vulnerable. There is extensive evidence of a link between areas of high deprivation and pollution, with those living in the more deprived areas being exposed to higher concentrations of air pollution<sup>31</sup>; and London's most vulnerable citizens of all – its children – find themselves heavily exposed, with studies showing that air pollution in the capital is stunting lung growth in infants<sup>32</sup>.

This Assembly believes that, despite all of the Mayor's rhetoric about tackling London's silent killer, the fact remains that whilst our understanding of the danger posed by air pollution has grown, the Mayor's policies for tackling the problem have failed to keep pace, leaving him to pass on a toxic legacy to his successor.

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<sup>20</sup> Measured on officer numbers London wide per month since October 2011, from Metropolitan Police Service Recorded Crime Figures and Associated Data, [Police Numbers by Borough, to November 2015](#), accessed 30.12.15

<sup>21</sup> London Datastore, [Metropolitan Police Service Recorded Crime Figures and Associated Data](#), Violent Crime offences December 2012 to November 2013 vs December 2014 to November 2015, accessed 26.01.16

<sup>22</sup> Ibid

<sup>23</sup> Ibid

<sup>24</sup> Ibid

<sup>25</sup> London Datastore, [Metropolitan Police Service Recorded Crime Figures and Associated Data](#), Knife Crime with Injury Offences December 2012 to November 2013 vs December 2014 to November 2015, accessed 26.01.16

<sup>26</sup> 'Teenage victims of knife crime in London this year – their stories', *Guardian*, 10<sup>th</sup> December 2015

<sup>27</sup> London Assembly, Budget and Performance Committee, [Transcript p.1](#), 6<sup>th</sup> January 2015

<sup>28</sup> Peter Clarke, 'If we cut policing's golden thread, we will all be in danger', *The Times*, 19<sup>th</sup> January 2015

<sup>29</sup> The Guardian: [Nearly 9,500 people die each year in London because of air pollution – study](#) 15.7.15 (Accessed 22.12.15)

<sup>30</sup> Explanatory Note: Calculated estimated deaths from 2008-2020 based on 9,500 figure.

<sup>31</sup> [Air Quality in Enfield, A Guide For Public Health Professionals by the Mayor of London June 2013](#). (Accessed 1.10.13) p.14

<sup>32</sup> Laura Donnelly, Air pollution stunting children's lungs, study finds, *Daily Telegraph*, 25.10.15

## **Conclusion**

Over eight years, the Mayor has time and time again rejected measured and progressive proposals put forward by London Assembly Members, which would have directly benefitted Londoners. Instead of placing Londoners first, accepting good ideas – irrespective of their source – the Mayor has played politics with the Budget-setting process.

This motion barely scratches the surface of the Mayor's lacklustre legacy, yet even on the evidence provided it is clear that no amount of tweaking at the margins of this doomed budget could possibly make up for his eight years of failure.

In May, the Mayor's term of office will come to an end, with Londoners able to choose a new person to lead our great city. That new Mayor will need to give London a fresh start, using creative and innovative ideas that bring hope to Londoners, with policies that enable people to live in London without being driven out by exorbitant rents and spiralling house prices; proper funding for community policing and PCSOs in all of London's neighbourhoods; fares that are frozen for the next four years; and a serious approach to tackling London's air quality. No more vanity projects and waste – just a Mayor who will work tirelessly to deliver for London and its citizens.

This Assembly recognises that Boris Johnson has a mandate to implement the manifesto on which he was elected, including his final precept proposals – particularly given that the vast majority of this reduction makes up the Olympic precept, which the previous Mayor agreed in 2006-07 would be 'returned to Londoners'.

Whilst we do not oppose the Mayor's plans for cutting the precept, this Assembly believes that, within the 2016-17 spending envelope, the Mayor has once again failed to produce a Budget with credible policies that recognise the gravity of the challenges London faces.