

London Assembly (Mayor's Question Time) – Thursday 21 July 2022**Transcript of Item 5 – Questions to the Mayor****2022/2344 - Cost of Living Support Hub**[Hina Bokhari AM](#)

What is the cost of the Cost of Living Support Hub?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): In April [2022] I launched the Cost of Living Hub to help Londoners struggling with the spiralling cost of living to access advice and support. The hub helps Londoners find advice near them and signposts information about benefits, energy debt, mental health and crisis support. It was developed and built inhouse by Greater London Authority (GLA) officers at no additional cost. Between £100,000 and £150,000 has been allocated for work to improve the usability and accessibility of the hub and to raise awareness of the hub within communities most affected by the cost of living crisis. As part of this work, officers carried out user testing to better understand how Londoners in financial hardship navigate and interact with the hub. Improvements are being made to its design and content based on the recommendations from the user testing in time for the hub's relaunch in September [2022]. Over 40 London-based community organisations, networks and anti-poverty charities have also given their feedback.

Officers have commissioned a benefits calculator that will feature on the hub so that Londoners can check their entitlement to welfare support without having to leave the site. The team is also working with partners to develop translations of the hub's content into ten languages for Londoners with limited English, including an easy read version. The hub and the support it offers will be promoted to Londoners through an online and in-person campaign funded through existing resource. This will include leaflets to share key messages with communities who are less likely to access the content online. To increase our reach, we have launched an open call for grant funding for the development of new or existing digital tools that will be hosted by third-party sites and signposted to from the hub. Officers are monitoring the success of the Cost of Living Hub by tracking the number of unique page views the hub receives, and will report on progress quarterly.

The hub is a useful tool for Londoners who might be struggling, but the levers to tackle the cost of living all sit with central Government. As a start, Londoners desperately need the Government to freeze private rents for the next two years, abolish the benefit cap, two-child limit and 'no recourse to public funds' conditions, and expand eligibility for free school meals to all primary-aged school children.

Hina Bokhari AM: Thank you very much, Mr Mayor. In June [2022] the London Assembly passed a Cost of Living Emergency motion to highlight the needed support for our most vulnerable Londoners and to make sure it is most effective. Now, when I spoke to The Trussell Trust, which I know is one of the groups that you have been consulting this week, they welcomed the Cost of Living Hub but they did urge that we must go further to end the postcode lottery in the provision of local support across London. You have also mentioned that you are going to be doing some reviewing. Will that particular area be reviewed to make sure that you are helping the most vulnerable, and are unique page views enough to evaluate the success of Cost of Living Hub?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Let me be frank: a Cost of Living Hub is not going to alleviate the struggles families are facing across our city. I mentioned in my answer some of the changes required from

central Government. The postcode lottery is partly caused by some councils, frankly speaking, being better than others, and by some councils having more deprived communities and bigger challenges. Also, some of the community services available in addition to services from the council are better in some parts of London than others, for a variety of historical reasons.

I accept that simply checking the numbers of people going to a page will not be enough for us to assess the success or otherwise. There are a number of other things we are doing, as I said in my answer. I am more than happy to write to the Member in relation to some of the additional things we are doing, and I am always keen to hear from Members with their own experiences from the communities they speak to about some of the things we can be doing, with the limited resources we have, to help the families I know she cares about.

Hina Bokhari AM: I look forward to that written answer. Around 270,000 Londoners are considered to be digitally excluded and are unable to access your Cost of Living Hub, and they are the people that we really need to help. What additional work are you doing to reach out to those digitally excluded Londoners who need advice and support during this cost-of-living emergency?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am sure the Member is well aware of the work of the London Recovery Board. One of the things that we knew was the case during the pandemic was digital inequality in relation to children who could not access classroom lessons because they were relying on Mum or Dad's mobile as there were no laptops at home, lack of connectivity in some parts of London in relation to Wi-Fi connection and so forth, and also a lack of skills their parents or carers had in relation to the inability to help their children.

The three areas of focus in relation to the work of the London Recovery Board across London are, first, addressing the issue of skills shortages so parents and carers have the skills to work with their children and themselves, particularly older people accessing skills. The second is helping people have the right kit, including free laptops, tablets and so forth for some members of our communities. The third is improving connectivity across our city. You will be aware that in some parts of London the digital connection is really awful; in other parts it is great. All three things are being addressed by the work of the Recovery Board. It is one of the nine missions that we have.

Hina Bokhari AM: Energy and food prices, though, are going to continue to rise, causing more stress and anxiety to many Londoners. That includes innocent leaseholders trapped in buildings blighted by fire safety defects. They are facing crippling bills and it is only going to get worse. Leaseholders are, and have been for a while now, crying out for a support hub to help them, especially now because of this emergency. Will you reconsider establishing the fully costed Building Support Hub that we proposed to provide leaseholders with the necessary support that they desperately need right now?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I do not accept that it was a fully costed leaseholders' hub. There is a hub for leaseholders provided by the Government. It cost £1.2 million. That is fully costed because they spent that and they spend a similar amount every year. The, in inverted commas, 'fully costed' hub put forward by the Member was £120,000, clearly not commensurate with the challenge leaseholders face in London or the cost of a hub for leaseholders. Many of the issues facing leaseholders - and I meet them regularly - cannot be met by a hub. They are in relation to some of the changes that need to be made. I am concerned that [the Rt Hon] Michael Gove [MP, former Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities] has resigned --

Hina Bokhari AM: That is a 'no' to the hub for the leaseholders, just to be clear?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am concerned that Michael Gove, who was doing a really good job helping leaseholders, is no longer in his job. The key thing is to make sure that whoever succeeds him once there is a new Prime Minister, understands the challenges facing leaseholders, which the Government's lease hub, which cost £1.2 million, is not addressing because they need more than a hub.

Hina Bokhari AM: OK, let us leave it there. Thank you very much.

2022/2541- Reducing road death and injury through policing

[Caroline Russell AM](#)

What contribution is the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) Roads and Transport Policing Command making to the recent reduction in road deaths, and to counter the increase in serious collisions?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Since we introduced Vision Zero in 2018, casualties in London have fallen faster than the national average as we work towards my zero target for 2041. I am pleased with the progress we have made in London but our journey to Vision Zero is far from complete. The impact of road deaths and serious injuries on families is devastating and too many communities are blighted by road danger. Last year the number of people killed on London's roads was the lowest on record, but still 75 people sadly died on London's roads and over 3,500 were seriously injured. That is far too many.

Transport for London (TfL) and the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) have a strong and successful partnership in keeping Londoners safe, especially through their collaboration with the Roads and Transport Policing Command (RTPC), which leads on Vision Zero and roads policing for the MPS and the Prosecutions team for safety camera enforcement.

The MPS prioritises its enforcement on the offences that cause the greatest risk and harm on London's roads, including speeding. Although the MPS already undertakes more speed enforcement than any other force in the country, we need to go further to challenge the culture around speeding in London because speeding is a factor in half of all fatal collisions. TfL and the MPS are working to significantly increase levels of speed enforcement across London, building the capacity to enforce up to 1 million offences by 2024/25 through a combination of on-street police enforcement and safety cameras, including the introduction of five new mobile safety cameras earlier this year. Significant progress has already been made with the MPS dealing with 72% more speeding offences in 2021/22 than the previous year. The RTPC also undertakes important community engagement on speed through Road Watch initiatives, where local residents have the opportunity to work side-by-side with police teams using speed detection equipment to identify speeding vehicles.

This work is critical to achieving Vision Zero and my wider vision of a cleaner, safer and more sustainable London. As TfL currently funds around 65% of the total cost of the RTPC, it is vital, though, that TfL receives long-term funding certainty so that it can maintain its investment in dedicated policing for London's roads and public transport networks.

Caroline Russell AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor, and I would thoroughly agree with you about the need for sustainable funding from the Government for TfL. This is really urgent work that needs to be paid for.

It is more than ten years since *The Times* journalist Mary Bowers was left in a minimally conscious state, facing the rest of her life in a care home, after being run over by a tipper lorry twice. That was one of the catalyst

moments ten years ago to trigger the campaigner calls for safer lorries which you have done such welcome work on.

Victims who suffer life-changing injuries, like losing a leg, tell me that they feel that their injury does not matter much to the police, and they are frustrated that an opportunity to learn and prevent future collisions through a thorough investigation gets lost. Between 2018 and 2020 the Serious Collision Investigation Unit investigated 62% of fatal collisions and just 4% of serious collisions on London's roads. My question is: if you are going to meet your Vision Zero target, does the Serious Collision Investigation Unit need to be investigating more of the serious collisions, and would you commit to that?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chair, can I thank the Member for asking the question the way she did, and can I take that away? We do, when we give figures, mention not just those killed but also seriously injured, for the reasons you suggest, but your follow-up point about investigations is one that I want to look into because the stats you mention are clearly worrying. Can I, Chair, take that away and be in touch with the Member offline or ask my Deputy Mayor [for Transport] to do so?

Caroline Russell AM: Thank you. I think there is a huge opportunity to learn from these investigations, so that is appreciated. I look forward to hearing from you.

I am also concerned about road crime like speeding that is often seen by Londoners as being a bit less serious. It is really good to see the work that the MPS is doing on enforcing against speeding offences. I think there were 475,000 enforcements in 2021/22. My question is: should the MPS be communicating more to Londoners that casually committed road crime like speeding or close passing has very serious consequences for the lives of fellow Londoners and that it will be enforced?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): We have looked into this. On the issue of the safety enforcement, most people, when they see the reduced speed limits, 20 mph, do respond to that. I think more than 80% do respond. They are good citizens. A small minority do not and that is where enforcement is really important. You are right about public information. I am less concerned about there being not enough of that; I am more concerned about if people think there is no enforcement. That is one of the reasons why we have invested in the mobile safety cameras, and we work with councils to let us know about areas of concern they have. Also just to reassure you, I know it is no consolation for the victims of a road traffic accident (RTA) but after an event there is also a review done and if there is a particular part of an area where there are lots of incidents in relation to speeding, that is looked into as well. I take your point, but I think the issue is more about enforcement.

Caroline Russell AM: Yes. Mr Mayor, they have only ever tweeted twice about Vision Zero and that was three years ago.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I do admire your confidence in those drivers responding to a tweet to drive slower.

Caroline Russell AM: Indeed. More importantly - and this is my final question - at the policing [London Assembly] Plenary meeting back in December [2021] my colleague, Siân Berry AM, asked the then Commissioner [of Police of the Metropolis] for an MPS dashboard monitoring the MPS's commitment to Vision Zero so that we can find up-to-date data on enforcement of speeding and dangerous driving. The Commissioner was happy to look at it. My brief final question: where is the MPS road policing dashboard that we are waiting for?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am not on top of that information. Again, Chair, with your permission, can I write back to the Member and let her know what progress has been made in relation to the dashboard she mentioned?

Caroline Russell AM: That would be much appreciated, thank you. I have no further questions.

2022/2662 - Biggest Regret

[Emma Best AM](#)

What is your biggest regret as Mayor of London?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Being Mayor of London is the greatest job in the world and I am proud of my achievements during my time in office so far. We have started almost 13,000 new City Hall-funded council homes in London since 2018 and exceeded our affordable homes target yet again last year. We have reduced violence, with violent crime down since before the pandemic and since I became Mayor. We have reduced toxic air in central London by nearly half and we are going further to replicate this across more of the city. We have helped 200,000 people access free skills training last year alone and we have put £44 million into my academies programme to help Londoners into good jobs. This year we are investing £80 million to help Londoners with the cost of living.

However, there is one major area where we are struggling in London, and that is transport funding. I regret not being able to convince the Government that investing in public transport rather than insisting on politically motivated cuts is the right thing for London and for our country. At the heart of many of the issues we are currently facing, including the widespread industrial action, is the Government's woeful approach to transport across the country. We saw this again last week, when we were given another sticking plaster extension to the TfL funding deal.

Prior to the pandemic London was the third most visited city on the planet, with a thriving tourism sector accounting for as many as one in five jobs. Our Let's Do London campaign is seeking to bring back tourists to our city, but without a properly funded transport network to help these people get around London will be a much less attractive place to visit. London makes a net contribution of £36 billion a year to the Treasury, money that is spent elsewhere in the country. This contribution to the UK economy depends on a transport network that works for Londoners, visitors and businesses, and we are asking for a fraction of that contribution to keep London's transport running to support London's recovery and the UK economy. We have made this case again and again to Ministers but [the Rt Hon] Grant Shapps [MP, Secretary of State for Transport] will still not meet with me, despite saying he wants to reset our relationship.

Without a long-term deal, TfL will be forced into a managed decline scenario. That would mean much more significant cuts to the bus network, Tube cuts equivalent to the loss of an entire line, future improvement plans scrapped and the current network falling into disrepair.

Emma Best AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. You have been in charge of TfL for six years now. Before lockdown, TfL had a record high debt of £13 billion and 22 out of 26 major capital projects had been delayed or cancelled. You regularly omit that you have had a very generous business rates devolution agreement of £1.9 billion to fund capital projects and just this year we have seen that you have underspent on TfL capital funding by eight times the amount of last time, underspending £400 million. Most look at this situation and

just want a resolution and want everyone at the table to act like grown-ups. Do you think that the narrative that you have very little to regret is helpful or do you think that some humility would perhaps help in getting people back around the table and getting London moving?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Let us deal with the issue of debt. Ken Livingstone [former Mayor of London] borrowed £2 billion, [the Rt Hon] Boris Johnson [MP, former Mayor of London] £8 billion, and I have had to borrow £2 billion since I have become Mayor. The deficit I inherited when I became Mayor had been reduced by more than 71% before the pandemic. The cash reserves I inherited before I became Mayor had been built up by more than 13%. We have managed to reduce year-on-year operating costs of TfL since 2016, something never achieved from 2000 to 2016, so it is £1 billion less than in 2016. At the same time, before the pandemic we cut the cost of transport for Londoners by freezing fares for five years and introduced a Hopper fare. The previous Mayor could not bring in the Night Tube; we did it within five months of me becoming Mayor, with the Night Overground as well.

The only reason for TfL's challenges is the pandemic. We were asked to keep it running because key workers needed to get around, but we reduced almost all of our fares revenue. Due to the deal made between Boris Johnson [MP, former Mayor of London] and [the Rt Hon] George Osborne [former Chancellor of the Exchequer], we now receive no revenue support from the Government. That is why TfL has challenges. I am not humble enough to say it is the Government's fault.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Mr Mayor, I have four Assembly Members who want to come in with supplementaries to that question. The first is Assembly Member Hall.

Susan Hall AM: Thank you. We are talking about regretting things, Mr Mayor, and you have been in charge, as you know, for six years. Do you regret that the MPS has been placed under special measures for the first time in its history?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I think all Londoners will regret our police service being put into special measures. I make this point. Unlike the Police and Crime Committee, the Home Secretary, the Policing Minister or the Home Affairs Select Committee, I was both publicly and privately expressing my concerns about the MPS and the former Commissioner [of Police of the Metropolis], so it gives me no comfort when Her Majesty's Inspectorate [of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services] (HMICFRS) agrees with many of the things I have been saying, it gives me no comfort when HMICFRS refer to the cumulative impact of some of the high-profile incidents that I have been quite vocal on, and it gives me no comfort from what I talked about in 2016, the consequences of austerity with police officers being cut and us losing £1 billion, when HMICFRS confirm that one of the consequences is the experienced police officers who we lost because of Government cuts being replaced recently by inexperienced newer officers and there not being sufficient supervision. It is no source of comfort to me, being proved right.

Susan Hall AM: The one thing you are exceptionally good at is using up an extreme amount of our time blaming anybody and everybody other than yourself. You are the Police and Crime Commissioner for London, you have been in charge for six years, and for the first time the MPS has been put under special measures. You have an office called MOPAC. For anybody watching, it is the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime. One of the things that they are responsible for - and of course it sits under you and your Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime - is ensuring oversight of the police. There are 180 people in that particular organisation that you are in charge of. Do you not think, given the situation is so bad, that it should have been picked up long before?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): One out of seven police forces in the country are in special --

Susan Hall AM: No, let us talk about you. Just let us talk about you for a change, your responsibility and our responsibility to London.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): One out of seven police forces across the country are in special measures, and the MPS is one of those. MOPAC does a number of things. One is checks and balances on the police service. One is commissioning services. We are now commissioning record amounts of services, which have led to a massive reduction in youth violence, gun crime, burglary and so forth. The third is to provide services, and you have seen some of the services provided.

Susan Hall AM: Mr Mayor, do you take any responsibility ever for anything? On this particular occasion I am asking you about the MPS: are you not mortified that it is under special measures under you, when you have been in charge for six years?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The third thing MOPAC does is the --

Susan Hall AM: Yes, you see, you just ignore these questions, don't you?

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Assembly Member Hall, can you please let the Mayor answer?

Susan Hall AM: If he did answer properly, Chairman, I would.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): He will answer. Give him the chance.

Susan Hall AM: Instead of that, he goes on and on about a load of old rubbish --

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Hang on, Assembly Member Hall.

Susan Hall AM: -- and will not accept responsibility for anything.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Look, can I please make one point? You asked the Mayor the question. I am going to allow the Mayor to answer it.

Susan Hall AM: OK. Will you ask the Mayor to answer it --

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Can you not talk over me, please?

Susan Hall AM: -- properly then?

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Can you not talk over me, Assembly Member Hall?

Susan Hall AM: Do you take responsibility, Mr Mayor, since it is under you, since you have been in charge for six years? Will you take any of the responsibility for the mess the MPS is in, yes or no?

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): And now, Assembly Member Hall, let the Mayor answer --

Susan Hall AM: Yes, all right. Yes or no?

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): -- the way he wants to answer it.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Well, I remember the Police and Crime Committee and the Member herself, along with the Chair of the Metropolitan Police Federation, being critical of me when I was holding the MPS to account earlier on this year and being critical of me in previous years when I expressed my concern about some of the things the MPS has been doing. I do not apologise for both supporting the police service and also challenging them and holding them to account. It was because of my concerns in relation to policing in London - the racism, the sexism --

Susan Hall AM: Thank you.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): -- the misogyny, the homophobia and discrimination - that I did not have confidence in the former Police Commissioner -- criticised, by the way, by the Member who now expresses mock outrage about the HMICFRS report.

Susan Hall AM: No, believe me, this is real outrage. The Metropolitan Federation and I express extreme disappointment in you, Mr Mayor, and all of us must be disappointed that you are not even humble enough to say, "Yes, I actually take some responsibility", something I doubt will ever come out of your mouth. Thank you, Chairman, I have finished.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Was there a question there, Assembly Member Hall?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): No, that was mock outrage.

Susan Hall AM: I gave up because none of them were being answered properly. All the man has to say is yes, he deeply regrets it, and he takes responsibility, but he is clearly unable to do that.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): I could not hear a question there. I just want to remind the Assembly Members this is question time, not statement time, please. If you want to make statements there are other places, but here I want questions asked that the Mayor can answer.

Tony Devenish AM: Chair, can we move on?

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): We can do that, yes. The next Member who has indicated to me they want to speak is Assembly Member Bailey.

Shaun Bailey AM: Morning, Mr Mayor, and thank you for your answer, but in your answer, I did not hear you mention the plight of the Black community. You have been Mayor for six years now and in that time 355 members of the Black community have been murdered. In fact, we are four times more likely to be murdered than our neighbours. Surely you regret that, on your watch?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I have been expressing for some time, Chair, my concern about the experiences of victims of crime. Disproportionately they are Black Londoners, they are poorer Londoners, and they are those Londoners who live in deprived communities. Without excusing crime, they are those Londoners who live in the areas of high inequality and poor housing. In fact, I am the person who has been talking about dealing with the causes of crime, and that includes structural inequalities and structural racism. It is my Conservative opponents who criticise those of us who talk about this deprivation and who explain that austerity

was a choice. In 2010 the Coalition Government made a choice to choose austerity, and those cuts in public services, those cuts in youth centres, those cuts in policing, those cuts in decent housing and the increase in inequality have been one of the factors why there has been an increase in violent crime across our country, including London.

Look at some of the consequences of our investment in young Black Londoners and poorer Londoners. We are now seeing for the first time since 2016 a reduction in youth violence, a reduction in knife crime injury, a reduction in knife crime injury with a knife, and a reduction in gun crime. That means more Black Londoners being safer because of our policies, made much harder with cuts from central Government. What I would say gently to the Member, if he is concerned about the issue of poorer Londoners and Black Londoners, is to lobby the next Leader of the Conservative Party, the next Prime Minister, to reverse austerity rather than continuing with [the Rt Hon Boris] Johnson's [MP, Prime Minister] policies.

Shaun Bailey AM: You are deflecting slightly. When it comes to crime in London, particularly the financial provision of that, the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) gets money for crime prevention. You have had grants from the Government for particular initiatives. You have access to business rates money and of course you raised the council precept, your part of the council precept, and you have then spent the money on crime. We supported all that and so I am asking --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): No, you did not. You voted against the budgets.

Shaun Bailey AM: I am asking you --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Every budget you have voted against, every budget.

Shaun Bailey AM: I am asking you: what have you done? For instance, did you spend enough time speaking to the right people about crime? Did you speak to the victims of crime early on? Did you get involved in it early enough to do the right thing for the community?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Let me deal with all the points raised. There were five points raised there, Chair, to be fair. Firstly, I am the first Mayor in the history of the mayoralty to regularly spend time speaking to bereaved families and victims of crime, as I did when I was a Member of Parliament (MP). It is really important to do so, not just because they deserve that respect, spending time with their MP or Mayor, but also because you can learn from their experiences. In five years - forget six years - I have invested more in policing than any mayor in history and that was during an eight-year term. [Former Mayor of London Ken] Livingstone had eight years, [former Mayor of London Boris] Johnson [MP] had eight years as well. I have invested more in policing than any other mayor in history. I have also invested more in youth services than any other mayor in history, not money from central Government but from a combination of business rates and the council tax precept, by the way.

What this Government has done in the last 12 years is to take £1 billion out of the MPS budget. At one stage, we had fewer than 30,000 police officers in London, the fewest we have ever had, bearing in mind the size of our population, and our population has been going up. In the last two years, the Government has agreed to partially reverse those cuts, partially, and so we lost 21,000 officers across the country and have partially replaced them with 20,000, but only 4,500 in London at a time when our population is rising. It is 1 million more in population than in 2010, with fewer police officers. The only reason we are getting more police officers is because of the 1,300 we invested in from City Hall and the consequence of our lobbying of central Government.

It is still not enough though because, according to the former Commissioner [of Police of the Metropolis] we needed 6,000 from the 20,000 and we only have 4,500. We still have too few police officers as a consequence of Government cuts. We still have too few youth services as a consequence of austerity. Our councils are struggling because they have lost more than half of their budgets since 2010. Notwithstanding that, we are investing in young people. We are investing in the police. We will continue to make progress.

Shaun Bailey AM: Thank you for your answer. Of course, I am focused on what you could do. You made the comment there that you see the families of the bereaved, but how early did you do this? You were famously shamed into admitting that you had seen absolutely no families by Theo Usherwood [political editor, *LBC*] on the radio. How many families did you see? When did you start this? How many victims of knife crime, particularly in the Black community, had there been before you saw any of the victims of those crimes and those families?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): One of the problems with long questions is when there are misconceptions and lies. It is difficult to address them because there are four or five points. I went to my first funeral as Mayor within a month of being Mayor and he was a Black Londoner.

Shaun Bailey AM: Yes, you went to the funeral, but did you speak to anybody from the communities or the victims? You were asked a direct question on the radio: how many families had you seen that were victims of knife crime? You had to say none. I am asking you: how many people were murdered before you bothered to speak to people from the community?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I live in the community, and I spoke to bereaved families both as an MP and within a month of being elected Mayor, as the Mayor. I am not sure which particular lie he is telling about a radio interview, but I can be quite clear. I regularly meet bereaved families and victims of crime.

It is only one party that uses victims as a political football and that is the Tory Party. It is only one party that has made cuts over 12 years to policing and youth services in the country and that has been the Conservative Party. What I am asking him to do is reflect on his responsibility in supporting three Prime Ministers now, [the Rt Hon David] Cameron, [the Rt Hon Theresa] May [MP] and [the Rt Hon Boris] Johnson [MP], who have cut public services, cut youth services and cut policing. That has led to what we are seeing across the country.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Thank you, Mr Mayor --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): One in seven police services is in special measures and crime across the country is going up when it is going down in London.

Shaun Bailey AM: Look, we know you like to deflect by bringing in people's names, but the bottom line is you are responsible for crime prevention in London. We have had a record amount of murders in the Black community under your watch. You have had the funds to do something about it, but you have not shown the leadership to do something about it. Back to you, Chair.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chair, is that a statement or a question? I am allowed to respond in Mayor's Question Time (MQT), surely.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): I keep reminding Assembly Members this is MQT --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): As he was making his speech, it took me back to other debates we had before May 2021 and --

Shaun Bailey AM: I hope this is not coming out of my time, Chair.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am answering the question.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): You asked a question about --

Shaun Bailey AM: No, I did not.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): OK. Then can I remind you to ask a question next time, please, and stop making statements?

Shaun Bailey AM: Thank you, Chair. Consider me reminded. Thank you very much, Chair.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Thank you. OK, Mr Mayor, Assembly Members are reminded that they must ask questions that you can answer rather than make statements.

Emma Best AM: On the Labour side, too, Chair. Just because you might --

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Yes, and the Labour side, too, and the Liberal Democrats and the Greens. We all ask questions.

Emma Best AM: I look forward to your impartiality when the Labour Members start making statements later.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Look, let me tell you. For people who are watching from the public, you are --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): They have stopped watching by now.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): You are on timers. You are using your time up. It is a question about how you use it effectively. This is MQT. I have to go to other Assembly Members who want to come in. One is Assembly Member Rogers.

Nick Rogers AM: Thank you, Chair. What fun. Mr Mayor, talking of regrets, do you regret the way that too many Londoners have been let down by your Solar Together London scheme?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Yes, I do. Can I thank you for raising this offline as well? I have looked at, when you raised it last time, the issue because you had received, I think, two complaints. I had almost 100 people contact me in relation to the issue. It is not on, in relation to a number of things, but we are looking into this. There is an explanation. I do not want to excuse the poor service that has been received by too many Londoners. The fact that 100 contacted me gives you an idea. That is not normal.

We are looking into what went wrong. We have met with both the company doing the installations and its partner. We think we understand what the issues are. It is no consolation to your constituents and Londoners. As a result of supply issues, we are seeing this across different places in the country where these have been

installed. I am happy to write to you to reassure you that we think we have understood the problem and we think we can ameliorate some of the issues. It is not going to be perfect yet until we get more supply.

I want to thank him, Chair. Offline the Member raised it with me. I looked into it and there are problems. We think we know what they are, and we think we have a way forward. I can write to you to save you time if you want.

Nick Rogers AM: Thank you. Writing to me would be appreciated. You are right. There have been hundreds of complaints. The particular one I got involved with from my constituent ended up involving an Assembly Member, a Deputy Mayor [for Environment and Energy], and senior GLA officers to get a set of solar panels installed. It really should not come to that.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): It should not, yes. I agree.

Nick Rogers AM: I am sure you have seen the Trustpilot reviews where Solar Together has [a score of] 2.6 and Green Energy Together (GET) UK has 2.3. I was looking at the reviews and they are pretty damning recently. There was one in particular that said the installation was shambolic and there were missed appointments. He could not get the handover pack he needed to complete the process. Promises to call back were not kept. He said that this experience should be “noted by potential customers”. This particular review was signed by Sir Peter Hendy CBE [former Commissioner of Transport for London], whom you know. There are clearly significant issues.

On page 23 of your Solar Together Strategy [*Solar Action Plan for London*], it says:

“Through a rigorous supplier vetting process and by auditing installations, best practice standards will be ensured so that Londoners benefit from high quality solar PV systems.”

Do you think this process is not as rigorous as it could be and, in addition to the other points you are addressing, will you be addressing the actual supplier processes as well?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Nothing the Member has said would I disagree with in relation to the numbers. Just to give you an idea of the scale, there have been 454 complaints on Solar Together phase 4. It is this particular phase 4. There was a big increase in the number of solar panels going out and the volumes experienced were the challenge in relation to promises made that could not be met, people being frustrated by the delay and so forth. Just to reassure you, the explanation for the delays is the delivery. They have struggled to do so.

Some of the stuff we have done in relation to addressing this is with iChoosr, the partner we instructed. It has a contract with GET UK. For the next phase, they will have more than one person doing this work and so you are not having all the eggs in one basket, one of the lessons to learn as we go into phase 5. Phase 4 had just one person doing the work on the ground, which was GET UK. Again, it is no consolation for your constituents and those who contacted me. We have been assured that iChoosr will now have a manager at every GET UK site who will meet one day a week and hold daily calls to review progress. To reduce the risk of late cancellations, which is a huge frustration in the correspondence you have sent us, the amount of bookings, rather than promising 70 and not meeting them, will be 50 a week. That way, they are going to meet the time.

Separately, the Deputy Mayor [for Environment and Energy], Shirley Rodrigues, is meeting again with iChoosr to raise the additional concerns. Our officers have raised them with them because you are right, people get put

off with the best of intentions and that cannot be right. Phase 4 we are trying to sort out. Phase 5 should be better.

Nick Rogers AM: Excellent. People do get put off and it is a shame because these are people trying to do the right thing and live more sustainably. If you would write to me, I would be very grateful. Thank you. Thank you, Chair.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Assembly Member Boff.

Andrew Boff AM: Mr Mayor, in six years, do you regret that there are homes currently being built on your Affordable Housing Programme that will require retrofitting in the future to comply with your own energy efficiency standards?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am not sure what he means. Sorry, it is my fault, not his, I am sure.

Andrew Boff AM: I mean the homes that are currently being built and in the past six years. Many of those will have to be retrofitted for energy standards. Do you regret that?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Why would they need to be --

Andrew Boff AM: Do you regret that those high standards were not imposed at the time of design and building?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am unclear what retrofitting he means and what needs to be done.

Andrew Boff AM: The retrofitting to comply with energy efficiency standards.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): They do. Is there a particular issue that he is saying needs to be retrofitted?

Andrew Boff AM: One of the pieces of data that perhaps could resolve this and perhaps you could further send on to me is to let me know over the past six years how many of those homes that have been built will need retrofitting to comply with the standards that you have established under the London Plan.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): We are talking at cross-purposes. It is probably my fault, not yours, again. The funding we have from the Government is for starts in relation to affordable housing. On top of that, to get permission, we need to satisfy the planning rules we have. I have brought in the London Plan, which only got approved in 2021 because it sat on [the Rt Hon] Robert Jenrick's [MP, former Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government] desk for a year. All developments must abide by the London Plan. Separately, we have separate policies around the Environment Strategy, around design and so forth. Is he suggesting that some of the homes that have been built are not in accordance with our policies? They all should be.

Andrew Boff AM: I am suggesting that you have established standards recently - in fact, you are consulting at the moment on standards with your Housing Design Programme - that are not reflected in your own Affordable Housing Programme. Perhaps, to cut this short rather than talking across details, if you could write to me and give me an assurance that every single home that has been built under your Affordable Housing Programme over the past six years complies with your current standards for energy efficiency.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I understand. OK. Yes, if I write to you, it might be easier.

Andrew Boff AM: Thank you very much, sir. Thank you.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Thank you. I am going to ask Assembly Member Duvall to come in.

Len Duvall AM: Mr Mayor, I am quite intrigued with the answer you were about to give in terms of Assembly Member Bailey. You were alluding to something he did in 2021. You were going to tell us and share with us what those were in terms of answers to his question. Can you tell us that? What were you going to say?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I did not get a chance to answer the speech that he made because he turned a question into a speech because he probably guessed what I was going to say in response to the question.

The two points I was going to make were -- listening to him speak, the first point I was going to say is that they were similar to the arguments he was raising in the weeks and month preceding May 2021. He spent a huge amount of money, by the way, in relation to getting this message out across London. One of those who funded this was a guy called Nick Candy [British property developer]. I am not sure if you know. He was photographed next to the candidate at a party during the worst of the lockdowns. These arguments were presented to Londoners and in May 2021 Londoners gave their verdict on his answers. No other Mayor has received more votes than me, which may be because of my opponent and some of the arguments he was making.

Len Duvall AM: In light of the comments made by the last Conservative Member who made a contribution, is it some of the issues around building standards, around the deregulation by [former Chancellor of the Exchequer the Rt Hon George] Osborne and whoever was Prime Minister then, [former Prime Minister the Rt Hon David] Cameron, around some of those issues that led to some of the greatest scandals we are having now under building regulations in terms of cladding, insulation and everything else that goes with that?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The two points to make in relation to that are, firstly, one of the lessons from Grenfell [Tower fire] is the consequences of deregulation, cutting - in inverted commas - 'red tape' and cutting corners in relation to standards. As it is, we have the zero carbon requirement in the London Plan. The Government has got rid of that for the rest of the country in the interests of deregulation, as you mentioned, and that was [the Rt Hon] Boris Johnson's [MP, Prime Minister] Government. To give the last Member credit, he is the one person on the Conservative side who can hold his head up high because he warned everyone about Boris Johnson. He has been proved right.

Len Duvall AM: Thank you.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Thank you, Mr Mayor. I want to bring Assembly Member Hall in, please.

Susan Hall AM: Thank you. Mr Mayor, I have been listening to your answers and you do regret issues around Solar Together, of course. You cannot do anything else but that. Then, given that, you expressed no regret over your handling of the situation with the MPS where it has gone into special measures for the first time, and it is disgraceful. Even worse than that, you did not express regret that we have lost so many young Black lives. OK, admit regret over the solar, but do you not think that the MPS going into special measures is certainly

worth something to regret or certainly to be embarrassed by - I would be - and not to absolutely express remorse at the number of Black lives that have been lost in the six years that you have been the Mayor?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): One of the reasons I mentioned the funeral in answer to the question from one of the Members who asked the questions was because I regret every loss of life in London. I try to attend the funerals when I can, and I meet the families. Every loss of life is one life too many. It is a source of huge regret that those families' lives will never be the same again. I have met parents whose lives have been changed forever, often because a child has been killed.

It is because of my anger at the unnecessary loss of life that I have been lobbying the Government for more resources in relation to policing. When you cut police officers, do not be surprised if it leads to their inability to deal with crimes that are really important to many Londoners. When you close down youth centres and young people have nowhere to go to in the evenings, weekends and summer holidays, do not be surprised if idle hands do the devil's work. If you have young people who have an aspiration, because their communities have seen massive cuts in their ability to providing helping hands, role models, careers advice, after-school clubs and so forth, do not be surprised if some young people get involved in criminality, join criminal gangs and so forth. It is because of my anger at the consequences of austerity and because of my regret at every life lost that I have been a passionate advocate for more resources in young people so that they can fulfil their aspirations and potential but also in relation to giving the police the resources they need to fight crime.

Susan Hall AM: Mr Mayor, can I just remind you that you have a £20 billion budget? Can I remind you that you are the Police and Crime Commissioner? Can I remind you that you have now up to 34,000 frontline officers? I wonder what excuse it will be next. No doubt it will be the Government's fault because everything, according to you, is the Government's fault.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chair, we have had three speeches. Was that a question or a speech?

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Let us turn that into a question, shall we?

Tony Devenish AM: No, let us move on. Thank you.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): That is what you would like me to do, yes. I know.

Tony Devenish AM: There are no answers today.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): I am not going to allow any more statements, OK? If you cannot get this simply right that this is question time and you put questions -- you could have made a question out of it. Anyway, Mr Mayor, you made your point very well and the listeners will have --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chair, I should just say for those students watching, that is not how to ask a question.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): All right. OK. Let us make some progress on the published question list.

2022/2369 - A Safe Transport Network

Elly Baker AM

How is TfL ensuring the transport network is safe, despite the ongoing lack of long-term Government funding?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The safety of Londoners and visitors on our public transport network is a top priority for TfL. The past two years have been some of the most difficult in our history and I am deeply grateful to TfL staff, trade unions and TfL supply chain teams, who adapted and worked tirelessly to keep the network safe, clean and reliable, despite facing significant financial challenges. TfL has continued its work towards achieving my Vision Zero goal on London's road and public transport networks. When TfL runs services, safety is always the number-one priority and no trains or buses would be allowed to run with any outstanding safety concerns.

However, TfL also manages a huge range of other safety work including our Vision Zero and road danger reduction programmes. Without long-term and adequate Government funding, TfL has to prioritise its activities. TfL has been able to protect £10 million for Healthy Streets schemes to tackle the highest-priority safety interventions on the road network. TfL also continues to fund cameras, customer safety campaigns and projects for bus, cycling, walking and driver safety to ensure that passengers and staff remain safe.

Despite the disruption of the pandemic, TfL has successfully delivered several major projects including the upgrade of Bank Station, Cycleway 4, the Northern line extension, walking and cycling improvements at Bishopsgate and Hammersmith gyratory, enhancing step-free access and of course the launch of the Elizabeth line. All new projects are completed to the highest safety standards. In response to the pandemic, TfL enhanced its cleaning regime across its stations and vehicles, including using new technologies to deliver a transport environment that is cleaner than ever before.

However, sustained, long-term Government funding is vital for the coming years if we are to avoid the managed decline of London's transport network, which would see huge reductions in investment. I am very concerned about how much the lack of funding will impact our ability as a city to eliminate deaths and serious injuries from our transport network, along with our ability to decarbonise, improve air quality, increase active travel and support a shift towards more sustainable roads.

Elly Baker AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor, for that comprehensive response. Hopefully, welcome to the portion of the meeting where we actually ask some more substantive questions.

It is really pleasing to hear you outline how safety continues to be a priority, but I would like to ask about a couple of specific areas. Having appropriate numbers of staff on hand at Tube stations is crucial for personal safety, for the safety of the running of the network and for passenger confidence, as well as, crucially, for accessibility for so many Londoners. How do you think TfL will be able to keep London Underground passengers safe when they are having to look at potentially cutting 500 to 600 frontline station staffing posts as a result of Government financial demands?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thanks for that question. It is a big concern that I had as well when we were to consider this. I am particularly mindful of the concern - and I know you have raised it - of women not feeling safe and girls not feeling safe, and the assistance often disabled passengers need when they turn up at a station. It is worth reminding ourselves that we have basically a turn-up-and-go system, unlike National Rail and other public transport.

The proposals that TfL have put forward in relation to the posts being lost are those posts that do not affect any issue around safety. I have had to be reassured that there will still be staff available at stations at all times to assist those who need assistance but also for issues around safety. There is a particular concern, you will be aware, of having staff at stations where there is deep underground for obvious reasons. That is just the minimum, by the way. We do more than that. We are doing more than the minimum. For every post, there is consideration about its impact on safety.

The other point I would make, just to reassure you as I have been reassured, is, on top of the TfL staff, do not forget there are more than 2,500 police and police community support officers, as well as enforcement officers, around the estate. On top of that, separately, there are of course the British Transport Police (BTP) officers as well.

I am grateful for you raising it. Please continue to raise any particular concerns you have around particular stations, but I have been reassured that the posts we are talking about - and they are posts, not jobs, by the way, not people losing their jobs - should not lead to our public transport being any less safe.

Elly Baker AM: Thank you. I am sure we will continue to look at it. Finally, I just want to move on to a subject that is very close to my heart, which is railway safety. As part of the Government-led cuts under the cover of Great British Railways reforms, Network Rail wants to cut 2,500 safety-critical maintenance posts. Those are posts that are there to make sure the network runs safely. I am really concerned about the safety of the railway in London, especially as so many Londoners rely on our suburban rail, especially in areas where the Tube does not go. Do you share that concern? Are you concerned about the future of the railway?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am fully aware that we are currently being prosecuted because of the tram accident in Croydon. Safety issues are raised as a consequence of what we have discovered since the accident in Croydon. Just to reassure you, every time I speak to the Commissioner [of Transport for London], the first thing we discuss is safety. It began with the previous Commissioner in relation to safety running through everything we do.

In the heatwave over the last week, I have learned more about the dangers of rail tracks buckling because of hot temperatures. I now know about the impact on overhead cables and signalling because of the concerns TfL has around the consequences on safety if it does not get this right. One of the reasons why TfL reduced the speed of trains - it did not need to - was because it was concerned about safety if they were going too fast and there were issues with buckling and stuff. That is at the fore of our minds.

Clearly, I cannot speak for Network Rail. No safety-critical job would ever be lost from TfL whilst I am Mayor, but for the current Commissioner and the previous Commissioner, the two I have worked with closely, it runs through the DNA of everything they do. Even at TfL Board meetings, we encourage non-executive members to raise issues of safety they have experienced or know about during the entire course of the Board meeting or at various committee meetings as well.

You are right to raise it, though. When I first became elected Mayor, there was a big concern around the staff lost in the previous year because of the ticket offices being closed down and staff being lost. However, we will keep an eye on this, and we are making sure we do what we can to keep public transport in London run by us as safe as it can be.

Elly Baker AM: Thanks, Mr Mayor. Thank you, Chair.

2022/2347 - Holiday hunger

Marina Ahmad AM

How can children at risk of holiday hunger in London be supported during the summer holidays, especially as food inflation increases as the cost of living worsens?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): School holidays are often a struggle for low-income families, but the worsening cost-of-living crisis will leave many more children and their families at risk of going hungry this summer. Last year around a quarter of children in London's schools, over 320,000 children, were eligible for free school meals. Now, with more than 570,000 children in London living in households that receive Universal Credit, many more children could be facing holiday hunger this summer.

The main driver of holiday hunger is families with income levels that are too low to afford the essentials. It is not only children who are affected. Adults are having to choose between eating themselves or feeding their children. This is simply unacceptable. We must all take whatever action we can to tackle this crisis so that no child or family goes hungry.

Despite extreme financial pressures, some London boroughs have committed to using their own resources to fund free school meals over the holidays until the end of the year. I commend them for this. But to really move the dial, we need action from central Government. I recently called on the Government to act to help families manage the crisis. This included asking for the meal voucher system over the summer holidays for children eligible for free school meals to be restored, for funding for free school meals to increase in line with inflation and for universal free school meals to be available to all primary school children.

For my part, we are spending more than £80 million this year to help Londoners struggling with the rising cost of living, including more than £50 million to tackle fuel poverty, more than £20 million to improve security for private renters and house Londoners who are rough sleeping or homeless, more than £5 million to connect Londoners with welfare advice and £400,000 to tackle food insecurity. These actions cannot solve the problem alone but they will, hopefully, go some way to easing the pressures so many families are, sadly, under.

Marina Ahmad AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. The Government's Food Strategy was released on 13 June [2022] and was met with disappointment across the board. To draw attention away from that, the former Education Secretary Nadhim Zahawi - and sorry, that is one of the former Education Secretaries in those two weeks - the next day announced an £80 million increase to universal free school meals. This is an increase of seven pence per meal to £2.41. Is this enough, given the current level of food inflation, which now is at 10%, and the removal of the national free school meal voucher scheme, or will children struggle to get nutritional meals?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Within two days, we had three separate Secretaries of State for Education, one of them for 36 hours. She has the distinguished record of being the shortest ever member of the Cabinet. She received a £17,000 payoff as a severance payment for losing her job after 36 hours' work - more than, by the way, a teaching assistant receives in a year - for 36 hours' worth of redundancy payment.

The increase, although welcome, does not go anywhere near meeting the cost of these meals. If you look at the funding increase announced by the Government, welcome though it is, seven pence per meal to £2.41, that is not even making up the backlog of the increase in inflation. It is £2.41 for a meal now, but if you take into account the inflation there has been in the past, a meal should be costing £2.57. There is still a gap. That is

why there has been concern expressed about the quality of some of the meals our children are receiving. Obviously, if you are spending £2.41 on a meal, you query the quality of the meal you can receive.

We are asking the Government to consider increasing the contribution towards this. It will help with the quality of meal received, particularly as, for some children, the meal at school is the only decent meal they receive in the daytime because of various issues around poverty, the cost of living and so forth.

Marina Ahmad AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. Given that the Government has stalled until a new Conservative Party leader is elected in early September [2022], what actions are you taking to support foodbanks this summer?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): This is a big concern we have. The way foodbanks normally work is that people, when they shop, buy extra stuff and leave it in a basket at the shopping centre and they give it to the local foodbank. As families are struggling now, it means there is less surplus food being bought to leave in supermarket baskets to give to foodbanks.

City Hall is not directly contributing towards foodbanks. We are working with councils to coordinate and lobby the Government in relation to school vouchers and also supporting councils in other ways through the work of the London Recovery Board, which is co-chaired with the Chair of London Councils. We are speaking to councils. I am going on a council visit next week to discuss its summer schemes. One of the things we will be discussing in relation to the children we are funding to be kept busy during the school holidays is that they receive a nutritional meal whilst they are at the scheme that we are funding to make sure, particularly this summer, they are getting some decent nourishment and their parents are getting some respite in relation to the cost of feeding their kids.

Marina Ahmad AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. Can I thank you for the actions that you are taking? Thank you, Chair.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Thank you. Mr Mayor, I have a supplementary question to be asked by Assembly Member Best in relation to this question.

Emma Best AM: Thank you, Chair. This year London will receive £33 million from the Government's Holiday, Activity and Food Programme. That equates to 16.5% of the total spend for the UK and so it is very good news for London. The holiday provision, as I am sure you know, is for children aged from reception to year 11 who are in receipt of benefit-related free school meals.

Will you commit this summer to going out and visiting one of those programmes at one of those clubs delivering that across London to see how that programme is being rolled out and to visit the hard-working people who are delivering it on the front line?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am more than happy - and if I cannot, one of my Deputy Mayors will - to visit that particular scheme. We are doing lots of visits during the course of the summer. I am going on a visit after this, a different type of visit. I am more than happy for somebody from City Hall to go and thank those hard-working staff. They are making a difference - let us be frank - in relation to the kids they are helping. Of course, somebody from my team, if not me, will go and visit one of those particular schemes.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Thank you, Mr Mayor.

2022/2465 - Skills and Employment Opportunities for Disabled Londoners

Krupesh Hirani AM

How are your skills funds and Academy and Careers Hubs engaging with Londoners with physical and learning disabilities to help access job opportunities and training programmes?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Supporting disabled Londoners to access training and employment opportunities is a key pillar of my Skills Roadmap for London. I remain committed to working with boroughs and other partners to support more disabled Londoners to find work and to progress in work.

Since 2019, when this was devolved to us, I have implemented several changes to the adult education budget (AEB) to make training more accessible for disabled Londoners. These include fully funding some British Sign Language courses and supporting providers to upskill their staff to better meet the needs of learners with special educational needs and disabilities. During the 2020 and 2021 academic year, almost 24,300 learners with a self-declared learning difficulty, disability or health problem participated in our adult education programme.

Disabled Londoners are also a priority group for my community outreach programme. Small grants are being made available to grassroots organisations to help generate referrals into learning opportunities and promote job opportunities. Through our careers hubs, we are working with special schools and with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) students in mainstream schools and colleges, linking employers to school career programmes, to help more young Londoners to identify suitable career pathways. We also run a pilot project working with small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to support the recruitment of disabled young people once they leave further education (FE) colleges. Through my academies programme, I am helping disabled Londoners to access good work opportunities in London's priority sectors - creative, digital, green, health, hospitality and social care - by building closer partnerships between training providers and employers, building pathways into employment and addressing under-representation in the workplace. Our Skills for Londoners Capital Fund has already prioritised projects that support learners with SEND and this will be a key feature of my new capital programme launching later this year.

Londoners with physical and learning disabilities will benefit from improved access into and around buildings, technological improvements and better facilities for SEND provision. Going forward, disabled Londoners are a priority group for the No Wrong Door Programme, which helps coordinate skills, careers and job-related support so that there is no wrong door for Londoners seeking employment assistance. User journey mapping and research is being undertaken to understand how to meet the needs of disabled Londoners, helping them to get the support they need to access good work.

Krupesh Hirani AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. Just to acknowledge, I have constituents from Brent Mencap in the audience and watching online as well. An apology first because you could have been forgiven for thinking you were at the Conservative Party leadership debate with some of the blue bickering that we had, but I can assure you that you are at MQT.

I understand that as part of the London Recovery Programme's Good Work For All strand that there is a subgroup looking at issues in relation to structural inequalities, including the issue of disabled Londoners who are suffering in relation to the lack of employment opportunities. Can you highlight the importance of this and also outline the other work that you are doing to support disabled people as part of your recovery plan?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you for your question and thank you for raising this issue, which does not normally get raised at MQT. I am really grateful for you raising it. Also, it is really important with Brent Mencap watching and their families and friends and others who have an interest in this for us to be discussing the really important issue.

I am concerned about the waiting list for the Government's national Access to Work scheme. It has more than doubled over the last eight months, which, if you think about it, means too many disabled people left waiting for decisions on the vital support the programme provides to remove barriers. What we are doing is, with the work of the London Recovery Board, with the work Jules Pipe [CBE, Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and Skills] is leading in relation to adult education, trying to do all we can, in the absence in support in that scheme being as good as we had hoped, to narrow the disability employment gap that exists in London.

I mentioned in answer to your question the No Wrong Door principle. To give the Government credit, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is working really closely with us in relation to the scheme we have implemented. I visited an integration hub last week in Hackney doing some really exciting work with the DWP, Jobcentre Plus, colleges and skills providers. They are getting together to ensure that wherever you go there is no wrong door, but the waiting list is not helping matters. We have to do what we can ourselves.

Krupesh Hirani AM: Thank you. There has been progress made on tackling the disability employment gap. You mentioned the issue around Access to Work. Before coming to City Hall, working in the disability sector, it was known as the DWP's best-kept secret. It is sad to see that it has deteriorated in the way that it has in recent months. The spreadsheets do not provide a real picture of what is happening out there. For example, the Government's disability strategy was criticised by charities and deemed unlawful by the courts as well.

What more can the Government and City Hall do to provide ongoing support to disabled Londoners in the workplace so that they are paid fairly and also treated equally?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): It is really important that we at City Hall lead by example and so we have published now for the first time people's pay and have included issues around not just gender and race but also disability. There is even in City Hall - and I say "even" because we should be leading by example - a disability pay gap. There are things we can do by involving disabled staff in decisions we are making when designing the new building and getting them involved in that, which we did, and so forth. Also, we need an action plan to respond to a disability pay gap.

There are things we can be doing ourselves in relation to putting our own house in order and then working with colleagues across the private sector as well. In City Hall, we have a Good Work Standard that you will be well aware of. We work with more than 100 employers, and around 250,000 Londoners are now employed by Good Work Standard employers. We make sure we have in this issues around improving recruitment, retention and progression of disabled Londoners into work. With some of the work we are doing in relation to the Good Work mission, we are making sure that built into the DNA of that are issues around disability and other issues like race and gender as well.

TfL has tried to lead by example. It has an excellent Steps into Work 12-month programme where they take on disabled people and they work for pay in TfL. The Recovery Board is one way of getting everyone around the table to make sure, whether you are the National Health Service (NHS), TfL, the private sector, the voluntary and community sector or councils, we can get our own house in order and then show the country. If London can do it, why can't you?

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Assembly Member Hirani, I did not want to stop your flow, but it was not bickering that took place. Questions took place and Assembly Members on either side also were asking very serious questions. It is very important that we recognise that. Assembly Members even in the Tory Party are doing their job. It adds to the liveliness of the debate. I really wanted to just put that on record. Can I ask Assembly Member Boff to come in with a supplementary to this question?

Andrew Boff AM: Mr Mayor, as you know, Neurodiversity in Business is an organisation that is actively looking to address the employment prospects of autistic and other neurodiverse Londoners. Back in May [2022] I asked you to meet them, and you expressed some enthusiasm to do so. They have yet to hear from your office and I wonder when that will be rectified.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chair, let me follow that up. I do apologise, through you, to them. Can I follow that up and get back to you and them today to let you know when we are going to meet? Even if it is not soon, we need a date in the diary today. Is that OK?

Andrew Boff AM: That is. Thank you.

2022/2778 - TfL Fleet Fines

[Tony Devenish AM](#)

An 18th June Sunday Telegraph article found that “from 2017 to 2021, a total of 521 fines for moving traffic offences were issued to TfL staff when they were driving the transport authority’s official cars and vans”.

Do you think you are being fair to motorists when over half of your own TfL fleet have been fined for entering a bus lane or a yellow box junction?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): My Transport Strategy aims to dramatically increase the proportion of journeys that are carried out on foot, by cycle or by using public transport to 80% by 2041. For this to be achieved, our road network needs to run smoothly for the benefit not just of buses and other service-level public transport but for people cycling and for essential road freight and other essential vehicle use. TfL, as the highway and traffic authority for the TfL road network, is committed to improving the safety, sustainability and reliability of its roads.

Good compliance with road regulations is absolutely vital to the safe and efficient operation of the road network in London. Some 5% of the roads are TfL road network and the rest are managed by London’s local authorities. Poor compliance increases road danger and disruption and puts people at risk, especially vulnerable road users. It also causes congestion and delays, increasing journey times for bus users and drivers, which can have a significant impact on London’s economy. Road traffic regulations are there for the benefit of all road users. Fair and proportionate enforcement of the road rules are essential for delivering improved compliance and keeping Londoners safe.

For TfL’s part, enforcement activity is focused on the contraventions in locations that cause the greatest harm in terms of road danger or disruption, particularly to the bus network, which must operate efficiently to help Londoners and visitors move around our city. Blocking junctions and roads, for example, can negatively impact traffic flow and can hinder the passage of emergency vehicles. The importance of these rules applies to all road users. We all have to follow the rules to keep the system operating efficiently.

I want to be clear that TfL makes no special allowances for its own staff. TfL drivers, like all motorists, have a responsibility to follow the rules of the road. When they do not and there is no good reason, they are required to pay the penalty charge notice (PCN) themselves. Of the 521 PCNs mentioned in the article relating to moving traffic offences that were issued by various highway authorities over a five-year period, 100 were successfully appealed through the usual process open to all road users who are issued with a PCN. I make no excuse for TfL staff who break the rules and have asked TfL to look at what more it needs to do to ensure those who receive PCNs are appropriately educated to increase compliance.

Tony Devenish AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. You are saying, basically, it is the individuals within TfL who are in the wrong? You are not saying that it was anything to do with the road layouts in this case?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): No. I looked at the number of PCNs issued and TfL as a proportion is very low over the five-year period. It was 0.002%. Bear in mind we have coverage of only 5% of the roads and 95% of the roads, the rest of them, are covered by the councils. I have seen no evidence in preparing for this answer of any problems with those regulations in relation to what those councils do. If there are particular concerns you have, I am more than happy to take them away.

Tony Devenish AM: OK. I will leave it there. Thank you, Chair.

2022/2743 - ULEZ Expansion

Peter Fortune AM

Answering solely on the financial impact of the proposed ULEZ expansion and not on air quality, and understanding you are seeking external funding to support a scrappage scheme you intend to implement, what financial support does City Hall, under your direction, propose to help vulnerable groups such as the disabled, charities, small businesses, many key workers and the elderly?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I have made it clear that I want to offer the largest scrappage scheme feasible if I take forward the proposal for a London-wide Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) following the public consultation. The future scrappage scheme will be informed by the Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) and responses to the consultation, but the number of Londoners we can help depends on funding and at present I simply cannot say how much money will be available.

The Government has provided scrappage funding in other cities, including Birmingham, Manchester and Portsmouth, but has not extended the same support for London. We are using our own resources to do a job that should be led by central Government through a targeted national scrappage scheme. If a national scheme is not forthcoming, I have requested specific funding from the Government for a local London scheme. Should this not be made available, we will need to understand what other funding mechanisms may be viable. Londoners will know that when I say I will provide the largest scrappage scheme possible, I mean it. When the Government failed to provide a single penny for scrappage in London for previous iterations of the ULEZ, working to achieve aims on air quality the Government claims to share, I stepped up and provided £61 million for a scrappage scheme.

It is important to me that any scrappage scheme is targeted at those who really need it to make the most of the funding pot. Our previous scrappage schemes supported low-income [Londoners], disabled Londoners, small businesses and charities to scrap over 15,200 older, more polluting vehicles. Already, more than 84% of vehicles seen driving in outer London meet the ULEZ standards, meaning the vast majority of drivers would not

need to pay anything should the expansion be confirmed. The proposals in the consultation also include extensions to grace periods, including for those with disabled tax-classed vehicles. This will help many disabled Londoners as they will no longer have to comply.

I am listening carefully to the public and stakeholders on whether more can be done to support vulnerable people while maintaining the integrity of the scheme. I have committed to providing the largest scheme feasible and will continue to work with the Government and the other metro mayors to push for a consistent national approach to scrappage that allows us and the Government to meet air quality targets and deliver cleaner air for London and the UK as a whole.

Peter Fortune AM: Thank you very much for that answer and thank you for sticking to the financial side of it as well. That is appreciated.

We are getting to a head now with the consultation around the expanded ULEZ and it is causing a lot of concern in outer London. It really is, especially for those people, as Assembly Member Bokhari was talking about earlier, who are digitally excluded and so they have not been able to take part in some of the processes.

Let us say the Government does not come forward with any financial assistance for a scrappage scheme. You have said you will commit to the largest scheme that you can put in place that is feasible. Do you have any ballpark figures for that?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): No, I could not today for a variety of reasons, anyway. If the Government hears me saying, "We have X pounds --

Peter Fortune AM: I get that. I guess what people would be concerned about is the idea of the tide going out so that there is the largest that is feasible, as you say, to put in but it is not enough to cover some of those people who are really going to need the support.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I understand that concern, by the way. What I want to say is - and I say this, hopefully, not in a polemic way and so, hopefully, there will not be a lot of noise coming from that side of the room - judge me on my record. Last time there was no money from the Government. We found £61 million, which supported the categories I mentioned: poorer Londoners, disabled Londoners, small businesses and charities. It is not possible to extend a scheme like we want to do without a scrappage scheme for the reasons that you have talked about in relation to the concern your constituents have.

I cannot give you a figure. We are still hopeful. The Government has similar ends to us in relation to zero carbon. I appreciate there may be differences in means. That is why we are hoping there will be a change of leadership and a new Transport Secretary and a new Chancellor. It is not all doom and gloom in relation to us getting progress with the new lot that come in.

Peter Fortune AM: We touched on the consultation. Do you have any idea what the consultation response rate is at the moment? What is it looking like?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): No, I have not seen it for weeks. I have been busy with other things. It closes at the end of this month and so --

Peter Fortune AM: Yes, 29 July [2022] it closes. One of the things that I would be interested in looking at is how we audit those responses as well and wherever those responses come from. Can we break out where they have come from across the country?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): This is not TfL's first rodeo in relation to consultations. There is a lot of technical expertise involved. I am not going to pretend I am on top of it. I am more than happy for TfL to meet with the Member and again, I suggest, with Deputy Mayor [for Transport] Seb Dance and anybody who is interested to talk through how they have done things in the past. I suspect they will be more than happy to meet with you and to address and alleviate any concerns you might have.

Peter Fortune AM: The technical point is interesting because we had the new Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of TfL in last week, who talked about the significant recruitment process going on in terms of getting technicians in to look at road user charging. Are you aware of that?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): He is not the CFO.

Peter Fortune AM: Yes, sorry, you are right. Patrick [Doig].

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): He would be appalled if he were called the CFO. He is doing a great job, by the way, as the Interim CFO. What is happening is it is part of the consultation. The ultimate prize is to get rid of the Congestion Charge and to get rid of the ULEZ and have a really simple system in relation to a smart road user charging scheme that we have talked about in the past. We have asked people to respond to this idea in the consultation. I am sure you have seen the document in the consultation.

We have asked TfL to start doing some work in relation to this because nobody in the world had tried the Congestion Charge before we brought it in. Nobody in the world had tried the ULEZ. A lot of it is doing the work in advance to see whether it is possible. You will remember that we spoke probably two years ago about, for example, a Greater London boundary charge and some work was done, which then could not be used because we chose not to go down that road. Similarly, we did some work in relation to a carbon charge where everyone pays X pence to use their car, which was discounted earlier on this year. It is not unusual for TfL to do pieces of work that do not necessitate anything in particular, but I am interested in --

Peter Fortune AM: It does make sense to look at it. It makes sense to look at it on a national level because there are taxation elements that go with it.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Yes. There are some good --

Peter Fortune AM: Again, just to put in, everybody is moving in the same direction, which is to get the cleanest air possible. What is the process? What is the vehicle, if you will excuse the pun, that you use to do that? When you look at some of the research papers or where road user charging has been rolled out elsewhere, you will see that you get to a tax-neutral position. For example, if you had a road user charging model in London, Londoners might expect not to be paying that fuel duty tax, vehicle excise duty and so on. That is one of the challenges with bringing in a road user model unilaterally.

This is the last point. The significant members of staff coming in are already being recruited to look at the technical aspects of road user charging. As I understand it, the model that they are looking at can only be built off the back of an expanded camera network, which we are consulting on because we have not agreed on it. If the consultation comes back that people in London are overwhelmingly negative towards it, (a) are you in a

position to say we are not going to move ahead with that and (b) if you do not move ahead with it, how do you get to the road user charging position anyway?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): There are a number of issues raised there. When I was in Government, in transport, in 2009, we looked into the issue of smart road user charging because it is attractive to the Treasury for the obvious reasons that you mentioned, particularly as more vehicles go electric and there is less money coming in through the usual way to the Treasury. I am not sure it is revenue-neutral, by the way, in relation to that.

However, the point that you make is important because of road tax. With respect, the way I would frame it is London drivers are paying a road tax and they do not get the benefits of the road tax because all of it is spent out of the city except for a small minority. On top of that, they could be required to pay smart road user charging, as well as a road tax.

What should happen, in my view, is the road tax goes for Londoners or we get back the money Londoners pay. Otherwise, London motorists are subsidising motorists outside of the city and paying a smart road user charge.

Peter Fortune AM: That is what I meant by neutral.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Yes. That is the concern. We are having a conversation with the Government on this. The good news is I know there are at least 320 people running to be the next Tory leader, but one of them in the final two is talking about this. Watch this space in relation to evolution of thought in this area.

Peter Fortune AM: I am really sorry. I have overrun my time. Thank you.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Thank you, Mr Mayor. Assembly Member Garratt wanted to come in with a supplementary to this question.

Neil Garratt AM: Thank you, Chair. For the proposal to expand the ULEZ to the whole of London, who is the decision maker to do that or not do that?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Me.

Neil Garratt AM: It is your decision whether that proceeds or not?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Yes.

Neil Garratt AM: Thanks. My question is about the cost of that. The IIA that you referred to earlier says that this expansion will make no difference to climate change, no difference to particulate emissions or particulate quality in the air and a very minor difference in nitrogen dioxide levels. When you look at the hardship that that is going to impose on people, how in your judgement is that worth proceeding with?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I do not recognise the no nitrogen dioxide, particulate matter or carbon.

Neil Garratt AM: OK. On the IIA, table 9.5 on page 165 says that, to take two places at random, Sutton's particulate level will go from 9.5 [annual mean concentration in $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$] without the scheme to 9.5 with the scheme. Croydon's will go from 9.6 without the scheme to 9.6 with the scheme and so that is no change.

Nitrogen dioxide levels will go from 19.5 to 19.2 in Sutton and from 19.0 to 18.7 in Croydon. Those are very typical levels. No real change in particulate levels from 1.5 --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): That is not right.

Neil Garratt AM: On table 9.5 on page 165 of the IIA, those are the figures.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I will look at that particular page. I do not have that page in my bundle, as you would appreciate. No, we have already seen reductions in all those things in relation to central and inner [London]. We have seen reductions in nitrogen dioxide. The expert analysis is further reductions in nitrogen dioxide should it be expanded. There will be further reductions in particulate matter and carbon emissions. I am more than happy to look at the table that the Member refers to. That is not --

Neil Garratt AM: This is the IIA that is on the page where people go to when they do the consultation. Those are the figures on that table. I have given you the table number and the page number. I do not understand how you are quibbling with those figures. That is what they are saying will be the estimated impact.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): What I am saying is I do not recognise those figures. What I can tell you is we have seen both in the central London ULEZ and in the inner London ULEZ a reduction in those things. The projections are for a further reduction should the ULEZ be expanded because we can see there are fewer noncompliant vehicles, because we can see there are fewer vehicles overall and because the air quality monitors are showing a big improvement in air quality.

Neil Garratt AM: It sounds like the decision that you are going to make to proceed is going to be based on ignoring the IIA figures.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): No. The decision I make is based on the IIA, based on the responses to consultations and other information that I have received and will receive. What I am telling you is the evidence so far is that the policy has led to better air in central London and inner London and, by the way, on the borders of outer London. We want all of London to benefit from cleaner air, not just those in central and inner.

Neil Garratt AM: You are referring to the six-month review of the previous expansion that was published on Tuesday [19 July 2022] when you say the previous research? That is the most recent research of an existing thing that has been --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): We have research that starts from 2017 going forward and so 2017 to 2019, then the research from October 2021 up until now. There is various work also done that is set out in various other pieces of work that have already been published.

Neil Garratt AM: The document that came out on Tuesday said that for all the reasons that are entirely obvious to everyone, e.g. a pandemic, a fuel shortage last year, the price spike in fuel currently, there is no way to establish whether the reductions in traffic, which is what has caused the changes in air quality, are due to the ULEZ or not.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): No, what the report says - and it is peer reviewed - is that it is unarguable that there has been a reduction in nitrogen dioxide.

Neil Garratt AM: Yes, but the question is: why is -- that is because of the reduction in traffic levels. What it says is there is no way to attribute that reduction in traffic levels to the ULEZ. That is on page 12.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): As there is a return to pre-pandemic levels of traffic, you would expect to see a commensurate increase in poor-quality air. You have not seen that because what you are seeing is fewer noncompliant vehicles. Some 67,000 fewer noncompliant vehicles must have an impact on air quality. Some 44,000 fewer diesel cars driving around must have an impact on air quality. Some 20,000 fewer vehicles overall must have an impact. Then you go to a 20% reduction in nitrogen oxides (NOx). There is the impact.

Neil Garratt AM: The reduction in noncompliant vehicles would have occurred anyway, some level of that, from cars naturally being replaced.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): There were 67,000.

Neil Garratt AM: As I say, the report that you are talking about that came out on Tuesday specifically says on page 12 that there are limitations of this analysis. It says that there is no way to tell how much of the reduction is due to the pandemic, how much was due to the price spike and how much was due to the fuel price surge and so we need to keep monitoring. It flatly contradicts what you are saying, which does not give me confidence that you are going to rely on other documents if they do not say what you want them to say.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): We are monitoring, just like, for example, we saw in inner London a reduction by 37% of NOx just from the central London ULEZ. That 37% is not completely attributable to the ULEZ in central London. Some of that is because of cleaner buses. Some of that is because of more people using public transport. I accept in relation to some of the stats that you cannot say they are all due to the ULEZ, but you cannot run away from the fact that the expansion of the ULEZ over six months has led to reduced nitrogen dioxide and, also, returns to pre --

Neil Garratt AM: It is coincident with that, but it says you cannot attribute it to that. That is what it says.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): We have a return to pre-pandemic levels of traffic, but we are not returning to pre-pandemic levels of pollution.

Neil Garratt AM: It also says there has not been a return to pre-pandemic traffic.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Sorry?

Neil Garratt AM: The report also says there has not been a return to pre-pandemic traffic. You referred to people switching to public transport. The IIA also on page 86 points out the obvious fact. It says:

“For inner London the bottom 20% most deprived areas still have relatively high levels of access to public transport, while in outer London there are much larger areas with low public transport accessibility level (PTAL) scores in areas of high deprivation.”

That is also where, it points out, you find more noncompliant vehicles. Do you think that undermines what you are talking about, which is that it induces a switch to public transport? It is not going to happen if there is no public transport alternative and, instead, it will just impose a cost of living burden. Do you recognise that in outer London?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Yes, you need to have decent public transport. One of the things we are trying to do is to improve public transport in outer London, which is really important --

Neil Garratt AM: By next August [2023]?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): -- to give people the alternatives. It depends where there is a paucity of public transport that needs improvement. In relation to the point about reliance --

Neil Garratt AM: Sorry. For my residents in Croydon and Sutton, if they have this imposed on them, what improvements will there be by August next year, when you are proposing to bring this in, 13 months away?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): A lot of your residents in Croydon and Sutton who are poorer do not own vehicles. They suffer diverse consequences --

Neil Garratt AM: If they do, they are the ones who were hit by your cost of living charge.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The cost of living charge is now what they are going to call it?

Neil Garratt AM: Yes.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): We saw similar arguments in 2021. We saw how that move ended.

Neil Garratt AM: Look, it becomes apparent because, when Assembly Member Ahmad asked you about the cost of living, you showed great sympathy for people who are struggling. When I point out or when anyone points out --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I was going to answer the question, but you interrupted it with a charge.

Neil Garratt AM: -- the imposition of this charge and the effect that will have in terms of hardship on people who are struggling and who will struggle under the burden of your ULEZ charge, you seem to show no sympathy for them at all.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Is it my turn now? OK. If you look at the car ownership in our city, not all south Londoners own cars. It is the poorest Londoners who do not own cars who suffer the worst consequences of air quality, including in Croydon and Sutton. In fact, we had an exchange, Assembly Member Fortune and I, a couple of MQTs ago where we agreed at the end --

Neil Garratt AM: Yes, I fact-checked it. You were wrong.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Assembly Member Garratt, can we let the Mayor answer the question, please? This is not a two-way conversation, by the way.

Neil Garratt AM: It is a two-way conversation, and he is not answering the question.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Can we just give him an opportunity to answer the question, please?

Neil Garratt AM: Do you recognise the cost of living burden? That is the question. If you are not going to answer it, there is no point in spending time listening to you talking about something else.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): OK. Let us move on, Chair. What is the point?

Neil Garratt AM: Good idea. Let us move on, Chair. Thank you.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): This is ridiculous.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Assembly Member Garratt, you must have the patience to listen to answers and even the answers that you may not like.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): He is behaving like [the Rt Hon] Jacob Rees-Mogg [MP, Minister of State for Brexit Opportunities and Government Efficiency]. Come on.

Neil Garratt AM: I am sorry, Chair. Are we allowing that kind of remark? Is that in order under your regime?

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Mr Mayor, we better press on, OK, because we have exhausted this.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am happy to respond but I cannot be interrupted every 30 seconds.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): I know. I am going to bring in Assembly Member Duvall to supplement this.

Len Duvall AM: Mr Mayor, do you think it is a bit hypocritical when people pick and choose which cost of living costs they want to raise in political debate and particularly in terms of this issue when we know - and actually the independent report tells us - that the extension of the ULEZ was a success? What the Member fails to realise when he cherry-picks some of the independent report is whether it is COVID. That is the question about those figures. Is that where we are? I would like your views around cost of living issues and which ones we raise in political debates and which ones we are frightened of raising in political debates.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Yes. One of the reasons the experts wanted 12 months rather than six months is because it gets out these particular fluctuations. It was pressure from the Assembly. If you remember, every month since October [2021], they have been asking for an update on the results of the ULEZ expansion. Lo and behold, we do an update six months later that has caveats and then they are criticised for the caveats. They are damned if they do and damned if they don't. I never hear this side talking about inflation at 9% or 10%. I never hear this side talking about public pay increases being less than inflation so that they are ostensibly pay cuts. I never hear this side talking about a 54% increase in energy prices or this side talking about pensioners choosing between turning on a fan or feeding themselves and parents skipping a meal so that they can feed their kids. You can understand why I am surprised when suddenly, for the first time ever, they use those three words - cost of living - and then point the finger at me as if somehow I am responsible.

Tony Devenish AM: It is not that you're responsible --

Len Duvall AM: Just remind us, in the debate that you were having with TfL --

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Hang on. Can we please listen to the debate? Can we stop, please, disrupting?

Len Duvall AM: Is this coming off my time, Chair?

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): I hope not.

Len Duvall AM: Mr Mayor, just remind me of the debate because you mentioned to this Assembly the Government's stance in terms of putting up the Congestion Charge and switching away from the air quality charge, if we can call it that rather than the cost of living charge. Can you just remind us what the Government's stance was and what it was trying to make you do?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Yes. Firstly, there was silence from this side when it did this, but the Government wrote me a letter and said, "To receive additional support, you are required to increase the Congestion Charge to £15 and it will cover all of London", which includes Croydon and Sutton. No complaints were raised by anybody there. They will not say boo to a goose.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Thank you. Assembly Members, judging the energy in the room, we have reached a halfway point now. I am going to advise that we have a comfort break of 10 minutes and we come back again at 11.50am. Thank you.

[Following the receipt of the answer to question 2022/2743, the meeting adjourned at 11.40am, reconvening at 11.51am.]

2022/2487 - Metropolitan Police Commissioner

[Joanne McCartney AM](#)

What are your key priorities for the incoming Metropolitan Police Commissioner?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The Home Secretary and I have agreed that Sir Mark Rowley [QPM] is the best person to lead the MPS as the new Commissioner [of Police of the Metropolis] at this extremely challenging time.

A series of appalling scandals alongside failing performance have not only exposed deep cultural problems within the MPS but have contributed to a crisis of confidence in London's police service. It is crucial that the new Commissioner prioritises improving performance and rebuilding the public's trust and confidence in the police, which is so vital to policing by consent. This should include root-and-branch reforms to ensure the MPS can deliver the basics better, an overhaul of disciplinary processes, and systemic changes to the MPS culture. I have been clear that the new Commissioner must have a clear plan to win back trust and confidence and address the deep cultural issues that we know exist in the police in relation to sexism, misogyny, racism, homophobia and discrimination.

It is also important that Londoners hear the new leadership of the MPS publicly acknowledge the scale and depth of the problems we have seen in the force. This will be a crucial first step for the new Commissioner to begin rebuilding trust and confidence with London's communities.

The new Commissioner will not be able to fix these problems alone and he needs to be ready to bring in outside expertise and oversight to ensure he can deliver the systemic organisational change from top to bottom that is required. He needs to ensure every rank and part of the MPS is working towards a shared goal and that all staff are being held to account for delivering on the values Londoners rightly expect from their police force.

Sir Mark has demonstrated that he is the right person to lead this change and the experience he has gained outside policing over the last four years and previously from other forces in the country will bring a valuable new perspective to the MPS. I look forward to supporting him and working closely with the Home Secretary as we work to restore trust and confidence in the police.

Joanne McCartney AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. You have been clear that you want a reforming Commissioner. [Sir] Mark Rowley says he has a 100-day plan to make change. What internal reforms do you believe are needed?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The sort of reforms that I talked about in the speech I recently delivered on police reform. I set out a number of things that need to be addressed in addition to what I said in my answer to your first question.

Yes, at the same time as getting the bread-and-butter issues right and a first-class emergency response, we need more robust vetting of new and serving police officers. Our recruitment process has to be changed to make sure we get only the best people for the job. We need to have far-ranging changes on the misconduct process. That has to happen. We need to ensure that the police have proactive measures to weed out those who should never have been allowed to become police officers in the first place. We have to address some of the issues raised by HMICFRS in relation to supervision, training, culture and overall performance.

Actually, one of the reasons why it is important is because those brave, dedicated, decent officers who are trying their best deserve the police's top leadership to get this right, as does the public. Sir Mark is working on his plan. He wants to make sure he hits the ground running. We need to do what we can to, yes, challenge the police and also support them.

Joanne McCartney AM: Thank you. You mentioned trust and confidence with the public. That is extremely low at the moment, particularly amongst Black Londoners, who have always had a lower confidence rate, but increasingly amongst women as well given recent challenges. [Sir] Mark Rowley has talked about the need for a renewal of policing by consent. What, in your mind, does that look like?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): What has been the pattern over the last four or five years? Black Londoners, women Londoners, myself and others raise issues. The police are defensive. They are in denial. We are criticised for holding the police to account. What we need is an acknowledgement and the right challenges in the police service. This is not a few rotten apples or some wrong ones, as some would claim. These are deep cultural issues that need to be addressed. That is what we hope to see from the new Commissioner as he prioritises the issues that matter to Londoners.

By the way, the more trust there is in policing, the less crime there will be, and so it is integral to policing by consent. Everyone is a winner when we can solve these issues. There is no downside, except for the criminals.

Joanne McCartney AM: Indeed. It is clear that you have oversight of the police via MOPAC but the MPS retains operational control of how it goes about doing its job. Going forward, what oversight will MOPAC have and how will you ensure that the reforms are actually taking place?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): There are a number of things. It is worth reminding colleagues that the Police and Crime Committee of the GLA has oversight of the MPS with regular bills of clean health, the Home Affairs Select Committee, the Home Secretary, the Policing Minister and of course MOPAC as well. Of those

people, only one category of those people has been consistent in expressing concerns about some of these issues that have been highlighted by the HMICFRS report.

MOPAC will work closely with the new Commissioner and his team in relation to the work we do with HMICFRS in relation to the Engage process. The Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime recently attended a meeting with HMICFRS, with the acting Commissioner, and I will be meeting with them in September [2022] with the new Commissioner to discuss the action plan to respond to concerns raised by HMICFRS in the recent report that it presented.

There has to be a separate piece of engagement directly with Londoners. Clearly, work needs to be done to ensure that the MPS staff get it and understand the expectations on them. At the same time as doing the bread-and-butter issues, continuing to progress on reducing violent crime and so forth, it is really important that the issues of the systemic challenges raised by HMICFRS and also the issues of trust and confidence are dealt with.

Joanne McCartney AM: Thank you.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Thank you. Mr Mayor, I have Assembly Member Pidgeon who wants to come in with a supplementary to this question.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Thank you. The new Commissioner, Sir Mark Rowley, brings vast experience in operational policing, but the MPS's toxic culture and organisational failings cannot be resolved just by a change at the top alone. It requires the input of experts in change management. Will you agree to appoint experts in organisational and cultural change to the MPS's management board to ensure the new Commissioner gets the expert support and advice needed to deliver the radical change required?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am always careful not to trespass into operational matters, but Sir Mark understands the importance of getting the right team around him and, also, he has acknowledged the importance of outside expertise. I will make sure that Sir Mark sees the comments raised by the Assembly Member, which may help develop his thinking around this issue.

However, at the core of what the Member is saying, you are right regarding the narrowmindedness in relation to some of the views that can happen in an organisation. Sometimes bringing somebody else in -- the MPS is not the first organisation to have issues in relation to the status quo and always knowing best. In that change of culture, outside expertise can help, whether it is ad hoc or whether it is somebody on the management board. The way you have said what you have said, it is really important for Sir Mark to see that. I will make sure that is passed on.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: In February [2022], you announced that the previous Commissioner had lost your confidence, based in part on her inability to set out the scale of reform needed in her letter to you of 4 February. On 17 June [2022], you gave a speech outlining the changes that you think the MPS needs, including things like improving training and supervision. What is so different between what was included in that former Commissioner's letter and the speech you gave? When I compare them both, they are almost identical in the direction you see, and she saw, the police going.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I can promise you the former Commissioner would never have delivered that speech that I delivered or written that speech that I delivered. If you do not acknowledge there is a big problem, how can you fix it? One of the things I said in answer to the previous question raised by

Assembly Member McCartney was about this culture of denial, not understanding there is an issue, defensiveness, a few rotten apples, a few wrong ones. It is more than that. It pains me because I know there are tens of thousands of dedicated, decent, brave officers and they are being let down, as indeed are Londoners. How can we have confidence in your prognosis if your diagnosis is wrong?

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: The diagnosis. OK. That is clear. Thank you for that. In July last year [2021], you said:

“One of my jobs as the Mayor is to provide scrutiny of the police service to help provide the checks and balances in a vibrant democracy.”

MOPAC is supposed to support you in this work, but it would appear - it certainly appears to me - to be failing to perform. Will you be reviewing how MOPAC works and its effectiveness in light of the state of the MPS?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): On a regular basis over the last six years, Members of this Assembly have criticised the size of MOPAC, even though its core budget in relation to supervision is less than other equivalent police forces around the country. You cannot have it both ways. If you want to have more people doing supervision, that means more staff --

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: I am asking whether you are now going to review it because of what has happened with the MPS.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): A lot of the issues that were raised by HMICFRS and led me to make my decision came from the work of MOPAC. MOPAC on at least two occasions has got HMICFRS involved in issues that it is concerned about. I am regularly in contact with the police watchdog in relation to issues that we have. We always review and evolve how we do stuff, not least when it comes to budget setting and so forth. MOPAC does more than simply help me in scrutinising the police. As I said, it commissions services, it provides services, and it does other work as well. We are always looking at what all our functional bodies can do better and that includes MOPAC.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: You may need some more focused support, given the period we are in with the MPS. You claimed earlier that you have been raising issues, both privately and publicly, for years about the performance of the MPS and concerns you have had and a number of us have raised for many years publicly concerns about the MPS. At the end of June [2022], you said, I quote, “I’ve been saying for some time Londoners deserve better”, but in July last year [2021] you said, “I say loudly and clearly the police have my full confidence and full support”. Given how low confidence is in London in the MPS - 49% - do you regret taking so long to arrive at the decision that you did not have confidence in the MPS’ leadership and change needed to happen?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Let there be no doubt the police have my full support and my full confidence, and you can distinguish supporting the MPS and holding them to account. I am the opposite of someone who has been defunding the police. I have given the police more funding than any Mayor in the history of our city. I support the police, giving them the right kit and supporting them when they are being attacked in ways that are unfair. At the same time, I have to hold them to account as well, and it is possible to do both. What I am not in favour of is spending all my time bashing the police, as some people do, or spending all my time blindly defending the police even when they have done wrong. When it deserves --

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Do you regret you took so long in terms of your confidence in the MPS' leadership to take that decision?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I do not regret my actions in relation to what happened with [Dame] Cressida Dick [DBE QPM, former Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis] in relation to how she went and in relation to my decision to express lack of confidence in the response she had to the serious issues that had been raised. We will have to wait and see in relation to what happens with the MPS going forward. I am confident that Sir Mark gets it, that he wants to be a reforming Commissioner, that he will not begin the job in a defensive way or in denial and that he appreciates the importance of trust and confidence to the ability of the police to fight crime and reduce crime.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: OK, thank you very much.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Thank you. Question 2022/2758 has been withdrawn.

2022/2670 - TfL Bonuses

[Keith Prince AM](#)

On 30th June the Evening Standard revealed that 597 TfL and Crossrail staff had received six-figure bonuses in 2021/22. Are there any outstanding six-figure bonuses that have yet to be revealed?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The premise of the Member's question is incorrect. To clarify, 597 TfL and Crossrail staff received total remuneration of more than £100,000 in 2020/2021, a figure that includes all elements of pay such as basic pay, overtime and voluntary severance, not just bonus payments. In fact, in my time in office the number of TfL staff on a salary of more than £100,000 has dropped by nearly 20%. The past two years have been some of the most difficult in London transport's history and staff have worked tirelessly to ensure that transport services remain safe, clean and reliable throughout the pandemic, whilst facing significant financial challenges. At the same time, TfL has been working hard to drive down operating costs and become ever more efficient as it supports the economic recovery of the city. Most recently, staff have been working on the entirely avoidable project of attempting to persuade the Government to properly fund London, all the while with little certainty about the future of their roles and the roles of their colleagues.

Given the financial pressures resulting from the pandemic, it was right that TfL suspended performance awards in 2020/21. Following that suspension, TfL implemented a revised performance award arrangement for 2021/22 and 2022/23. Bonuses are part of TfL's remuneration package and retention strategy, designed to attract and retain highly skilled staff. These staff are providing a vital public service to Londoners, often being lower paid than they could earn in the private sector. This is especially true in the engineering and tech fields where there is a shortfall in the number of specialists required to meet demand. However, since I was first elected, I have been clear that I want to see salary costs for the senior levels of staff brought down. TfL has taken action to control salaries and bonuses in recent years, including by reducing management layers and eliminating duplication to make TfL a more efficient organisation.

I have also been clear with TfL that one-off payments to departing TfL staff must be minimised. These huge departure payments are the legacy of the sky-high salaries and long notice periods agreed under the previous Mayor. All performance awards earned during 2021/22 and 2022/23 will be paid only if TfL reaches financial sustainability by April 2023, with staff needing to still be working for TfL at that point to receive the award. This has been agreed as part of TfL's funding agreement with the Government.

Keith Prince AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. That is very helpful. As you will know, Mr Mayor, the Chief Executive of Crossrail left recently. What sort of bonus do you think he can expect?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am not sure in relation to the bonus that he makes, but it is worth reminding colleagues that Mark Wild became Chief Executive of Crossrail in 2018, at a time when there was chaos in relation to the plans we inherited from the standalone company. In 2020 TfL took over Crossrail, working with Mark Wild as Chief Executive, and he delivered Crossrail in the first half of 2022, as had been promised when he took over as Chief Executive. I do not know what they are.

Keith Prince AM: Be clear that I am not making any criticism of the work that Mark did. I thought he did a great job, actually, during his time as Chief Executive, and delivered a project that was clearly behind. Can you confirm, Mr Mayor, that when Mr Wild receives his bonuses that will be a decision that was one which you took and that you have agreed?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Just to be clear, do you mean a severance payment or a bonus? I have agreed no bonus, so I am not sure what he means.

Keith Prince AM: Let us say any payment.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): If you bring in a job quicker than would otherwise be the case and you are no longer required, you receive a severance payment, and so I simply do not know what the severance payment would be for Mark Wild. He did leave sooner than would otherwise be the case because we managed to open Crossrail and because the staff in TfL, ostensibly Andy Lord [Chief Operating Officer], have taken over the day-to-day running and we did not require a Chief Executive of Crossrail to carry on doing that job.

Keith Prince AM: Sure. You will let us know, will you, Mr Mayor?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): What normally happens is all severance payments are published in a remuneration report, which is published whenever TfL publishes those.

Keith Prince AM: That is fine, and that is your decision, yes?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I think the remuneration report is published as part of the statement of accounts, which is a TfL Board decision.

Keith Prince AM: OK, thank you.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Thank you. I have Assembly Member Baker, who wants to come in with a supplementary to this question.

Elly Baker AM: Thank you, Chair. I welcome the Conservative Group's concerns about high pay and bonuses and personally look forward to their focus on how to curb high pay and bonuses in the City, which frankly dwarf those mentioned here, but that is not normally their focus. Instead, we have heard over weeks and months fixation on travel passes and decent pensions for TfL staff and those staff that kept London moving through the pandemic. Some of whom lost their lives and some are struggling with the impact of the cost of living and of working with no certain future for the organisation that their livelihoods depend on. Why do you

think ordinary staff conditions are so often the focus for the Conservative Group to attack, rather than calling for the proper funding that would allow people to have safe and secure jobs?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The other thing is you would imagine that when those aspiring to be Prime Minister are courting the votes of Conservative Members, this is a time when there is maximum power to influence a future Conservative Prime Minister, Chancellor [of the Exchequer] and Secretary of State. This is the maximum time for Members of the Assembly amongst the Conservative Party to have influence over policies in the Conservative Party. Some of the decisions the Government has made over the last two years have inhibited our ability to provide a decent service across our city and you will know of the concerns we have about a managed decline.

I make this really important point because people need to understand this. In March 2020 and in the following weeks and months, the trade unions were integral in us keeping transport running, in their staff, their members and our workers turning up to work when some of their colleagues were losing their lives. We do not hear, by the way, any concern about the 100-plus transport workers who have lost their lives in our city, many of them members of trade unions. It is worth recognising the challenges they face. In my view, one of the reasons why you are going to see concern, not just from transport workers but from those who work in the NHS, those who work in schools and other public sector workers this summer and this autumn [2022], is because their pay is not commensurate with the challenges they face in relation to the cost of living.

Elly Baker AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. Thanks, Chair.

2022/2435 - Green Bonds for London

[Léonie Cooper AM](#)

Will the Green Bond scheme represent good value for money?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am committed to making London net zero carbon by 2030 and I am clear that the GLA group should lead by example. One way of helping to achieve this is through our Green Bond scheme, which allows us to borrow now to finance green infrastructure and repay the borrowing over time, using the savings achieved from lower energy bills or related revenue streams. The GLA is a large, trusted organisation with an AA credit rating, meaning we can achieve economies of scale through this approach while achieving the best possible borrowing terms. To really make the most of this opportunity, we will offer participation to London boroughs and other public bodies so they can benefit from our economies of scale, too. Like-for-like, Green Bonds can provide better value for money with better borrowing terms than any other borrowing options because with more and more people coming to understand the severity of the climate crisis we are all facing, investor demand for assets with a positive environmental impact is increasing.

Of course, financial plans like this are always subject to market conditions and there has been a lot of upheaval in recent months. Our approach to the Green Bond scheme will respond closely to the market and the need to secure the best value for money. Alongside the £4 million to develop the high-impact green investment opportunities for the public and private sector, I have allocated £86 million specifically to support a substantial GLA Green Bond Programme, financing direct decarbonisation investment by the GLA group and its strategic partners. This investment will support projects making social housing and public buildings energy-efficient as well as clean local energy projects providing solar photovoltaic (PV), heat pumps and district heating across London. By leading the way with this initial £90 million commitment, we are working to help unlock over £500 million to finance low-carbon projects across the city. To make sure we get the biggest impact for every

pound we invest, we are in the process of assembling a small team of expert analysts, working closely with officers across the GLA group.

Léonie Cooper AM: Thank you very much, Mr Mayor. I wonder if you could set out for us how the Green Bond scheme might improve the lives of ordinary Londoners, for example, those in my constituency of Merton and Wandsworth. You just ran through a list of the kind of things that it might go towards. Could you give us a couple of examples?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): It is worth putting on record a direct benefit your constituents are facing from your lobbying in relation to a Low Emission Bus Zone in Putney High Street, which had record levels of pollution when I first became Mayor, which you brought to my attention. That was the first area that benefited from our Low Emission Bus Zones. Similarly, what we are going to do is use your knowledge of your area, through your council as well, to learn what sort of things we can do to help finance improvements in relation to energy efficiency and lower bills.

Think about social housing. Now that there is decent leadership in Wandsworth Council, maybe it will want to work with us in relation to not just more council housing but retrofitting the current existing social housing/low-cost housing. There is insulation, better glazing, and you can benefit from some of the district heating we are doing and so forth. That is the sort of thing we want to do, working with councils both through London Councils and directly. There are other local projects you may know of or you may want to tell us about - you, local MPs or the council - to help reduce the footprint in your area. You have a number of fire stations in your area, and you may want to work with the London Fire Brigade (LFB) to lobby us and similarly there is the police presence in your area as well. We are trying to work with partners in terms of the public sector. The NHS is crucial and so if you have any GP practices or health clinics who want to work with us in relation to projects they have, if not through the NHS London, we are more than happy in relation to this. The idea is to leverage in private sector finance to support reducing our carbon footprint across our city.

Léonie Cooper AM: It is really exciting to hear that, and I have no doubt that local authorities and housing associations will start to take advantage of this in this very, very practical way. I might well come to talk to you or talk to the staff who are looking at this in detail for the Henry Prince Estate, where there are roofs which could be solar and a river that runs behind. I do not know whether you have ever been to the Henry Prince Estate. You must go there sometime.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): A lot of my misspent youth was spent there and doing things I should not in the River Wandle there.

Léonie Cooper AM: Do you think though that your Green Bond Scheme is ambitious enough? Having had a look at what happened with the Government Green Gilts launch, it was oversubscribed by 12 times so there is obviously a very big appetite for this. Can you scale up this scheme if it turns out to be equally oversubscribed?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): We have to be careful, particularly with interest rates going up. I may have this figure wrong, and I do not want to give a figure in case it is wrong. The Government had to pay a lot more back in interest in the gilts over the last few weeks with interest rates rising and the same applied with London Power. You have to be careful not to jump in with both feet because you can get burnt.

Léonie Cooper AM: Sure.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): We have seen across the country other cities being burnt by their experience with their energy suppliers, and we have not been, by the way. Similarly with the Green Bonds. As it is, £9 million equates to £500 million. We will see how it works in the first year or so, the first couple of years, and see if there is more ability to pump-prime this area to act as a catalyst to get private sector money. The good news is there is a big appetite in the private sector, not just because their shareholders are demanding it and because their customers are demanding it but because they understand the future is green, in that you cannot really think about fossil fuel investments and so forth. By the way, we should be incredibly proud that we have divested from fossil fuels as far as the GLA and our partners across London are concerned. Working with mayors across the globe now, we have divested more than \$400 billion away from fossil fuels, working with 18 other cities. That shows where we lead, others follow, and the same goes with Green Bonds.

Léonie Cooper AM: Yes, I think the cautious beginning and then making decisions in the light of the emerging situation is clearly the best approach with the new Green Bond initiative, which is exactly what City Hall did with London Power. Thinking of the Government, however, we appear to have an absolute vacuum of green ideas. The only one that I have heard of so far is rival candidates, obviously now down to two, talking about removing the Green Levy on energy bills. How important is it that cities like London, Manchester and elsewhere around the country lead the way in terms of seizing these opportunities to take us to net zero in the light of the huge fires that we have seen this week and the massive pressure on infrastructure?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Let me just say, on a regular basis you challenge me, rightly so, in relation to what support I am giving Londoners to insulate their homes. A lot of the money we give in relation to the Warmer Homes Grant comes from the Green Levy. If somebody is saying, "Remove the Green Levy", unless it is replaced from general taxation, our ability to support families, poorer families and pensioners to have warmer homes through the grant will go.

Léonie Cooper AM: Can we dig into that about the insulation there just for a minute? You are talking about it in terms of warmer homes, but of course insulation, both in the loft and wall insulation, which we are very poor at - we have very leaky buildings in this country - also stops the heat from coming in.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Yes, it leads to cooler homes in the summer and warmer homes in winter and it also reduces your bills. Also, imagine if those homes, which had smaller bills - warmer in winter, cooler in summer - also had energy supply that is from renewable sources. That is whether it is what we do in north London with the heat from the Tube or whether it is investment in solar and in wind. The advantage of our power purchase agreement - again criticised by some for not being 100%; we are doing 10%, maybe 20% to start off with to make sure things work - is that it can influence the market so there is more renewable coming onstream, because TfL is the biggest purchaser of energy in London. Question: can that influence the market? The benefits will not just be felt by TfL. We could also, using the economies of scale, leverage in councils and other buildings to see them getting the benefits and they, working with us, can also influence the renewable market as well.

Léonie Cooper AM: It is just as well that London, Manchester and other mayoralities are stepping up because we have had 12 wasted years from the Government so far. Thank you very much, Mr Mayor. Thank you, Chair.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Was there a question there, Assembly Member Cooper? OK, can I move to the next question, please?

2022/2663 - LGBT+ Football

Emma Best AM

How can we work together to support London's LGBT+ football fans who are feeling excluded from football by FIFA's decision to host the World Cup consecutively in two firmly anti-LGBT+ countries?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Holding major sports events is a privilege, not a right. I am proud that London has had the privilege of hosting huge world-leading events in recent years, including the Men's Euro Finals, the National Football League, Major League Baseball and now the biggest women's football tournament finals in the world, the Women's Euro 2022 Finals. Every city or country hosting a prestigious tournament like the FIFA World Cup has been entrusted by the International Federation to deliver an event that enhances the sports reputation and broaden its popularity and appeal. London takes its responsibilities seriously and we have made sure that our sporting events show off the best of London, including our commitment to openness, diversity and inclusion.

I have been clear that I stand in solidarity with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex (LGBTQI) communities, and the record-breaking celebrations we hosted of 50 years of Pride earlier this month show how valued those communities are in London. It has been fantastic to see the celebration of Pride continue at this month's UEFA Women's Euro Finals and the Pride rainbow flag can be seen across this tournament. At times, it is in the background of the Championship logo, it is on team captains' armbands and the fan favourite Tiny Football Car has a rainbow livery. This celebration of Pride builds on wider work by the Football Association (FA) to tackle homophobia in football, including support for the Rainbow Laces Campaign, which has been adopted by professional and non-league clubs across the country. However, creating real change must incorporate activity beyond the big stadiums and that is why I have been so pleased to see extensive engagement with clubs and communities around the UEFA Women's Euro 2022 tournament. I went for a kick about with some truly diverse --

Emma Best AM: Mr Mayor, I am really sorry, but I am short on time, and it is a very important question. Please could you just answer whether you will join the collective campaign that Stonewall and the FA have already said they would be interested in, making sure that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) Londoners feel welcome during the World Cup in Qatar this year [2022]?

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Mr Mayor, can you answer the question, please?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The supplementary before I answer the main one?

Emma Best AM: Mr Mayor, I thought we would probably be on the equal footing and in the same place on this. It is a very simple question.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Assembly Member --

Emma Best AM: I would hope you would be in favour, and I am only interrupting because we are very short on time. I would hope you would agree to that today.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): OK, sorry. I want to answer the question. What is the new question?

Emma Best AM: It actually was the question before you and you are not answering it. It is whether you will join a collective campaign this December [2022]. You mentioned Rainbow Laces, and Rainbow Laces will not

be able to take place during Qatar. This is the second consecutive World Cup in which FIFA has chosen to hold a World Cup in a place where LGBT [fans] are not welcome.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Assembly Member --

Emma Best AM: Will you join that campaign?

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): You are now out of time.

Emma Best AM: Will you join that campaign, yes or no?

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): You are out of time now.

Susan Hall AM: Outrageous. Just answer.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): I have made -- hang on. Hang on. I am the Chair of the Assembly here. I make the decision. Assembly Member Best, you can write to the Mayor and I am sure we can get an answer there.

Emma Best AM: I have written. He has not responded. It is a yes or no question.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): OK. You are out of time. That is the end of it, OK?

Susan Hall AM: It will have to be a no.

Tony Devenish AM: Outrageous.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): OK, can we move on to the next question, please?

2022/2447 - Strip search of children

[Unmesh Desai AM](#)

Given the recent reports we have heard of further cases of children being strip searched that have been referred to the IOPC, can you update us on the work you and MOPAC are doing to ensure that the Met prioritise the safety and dignity of children in any interaction they have with them?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The safeguarding of children must always be a priority for the MPS. The MPS has agreed that as of 1 April this year [2022] it will review every More Thorough Intimate Parts search and check every strip search of a child in custody to ensure they are carried out properly in line with policy and that children are safeguarded. I am continuing to push the MPS to publish transparent data on strip-searching to allow greater public scrutiny of this area of police practice. Our Independent Custody Visitors pay particular attention to the use of force and strip-searching of children and vulnerable detainees and their findings inform our oversight of the MPS.

Through my Action Plan, officials are working with community organisations and young people to ensure that community-led scrutiny of the use of police powers is more robust and representative. It is essential that officers are held to account for their use of police powers, particularly where there is disproportionality, and I

welcome that the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) is now investigating the actions of officers in the case of Child Q under gross misconduct, as I had called for, rather than misconduct. I have asked HMICFRS to pay particular attention to strip-searching in its next round of custody inspections to provide further assurance and scrutiny. I also welcome the Department for Education's new advice to schools on searching pupils to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities. The MPS is implementing a series of policy changes to avoid any repeat of these incidents, including increasing the level of supervision required to authorise a strip search and the completion of a safeguarding report in each case.

Finally, I am pleased that Sir Mark Rowley has been appointed as the new Commissioner [of Police of the Metropolis]. Sir Mark has made clear to me that he is determined to be a reforming Commissioner.

Unmesh Desai AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. You have already talked about disproportionality, which was going to be my first question, but I just want to put this on record. In March [2022] we found out that for the past three years 75% of the 5,200 children who were strip-searched in custody were from ethnic minority backgrounds. This is not acceptable at all. I was going to ask you. Are you confident that the MPS is doing enough to address this obvious and clear disproportionality on racial grounds - I think you already answered that - and how are you monitoring their work on this?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): It is really important and clearly more needs to be done here. I met recently with Laurence Taylor [Deputy Assistant Commissioner for Local Policing, MPS] and I know he came to the Police and Crime Committee as well. This will be one of the issues for the new Commissioner to look into, for the reasons that you are aware of in relation to the concerns we have. The approach of the police must be child-centred, that is really important and so I am more than happy to refer your comments to the new Commissioner as well.

Unmesh Desai AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. My second and final question is around the Online Safety Bill. The dissemination of indecent images of children online is a key problem within policing at present, as the frequency with which these crimes are committed is increasing every year. How disappointed then are you, Mr Mayor, that the Online Safety Bill has been put on hold due to the Tory leadership campaign? Groups like the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) and the Board of Deputies of British Jews have already expressed their concern. The NSPCC has described this legislation as crucial in stopping hate festering online.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am really concerned in relation to safety being compromised because of not just party political interest but intra-party political interest and the chances of Candidate A beating Candidate B. I would hope that when a new leader is elected on 4 or 5 September [2022] the Government accelerates the progress that needs to be made in this area. It is also really important to understand that in the meantime the delays lead to more people suffering.

Unmesh Desai AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Thank you. Will the Assembly agree to suspend Standing Order 2.9(b), in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order 1.1(h), in order to allow the remaining business on the agenda to be completed?

All: Agreed.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Thank you.

2022/2463 - The Shared Prosperity Fund and London

Len Duvall OBE AM

If, as seems likely, government funding for revenue and capital projects across London is cut over the coming years, how can the GLA work to address the deficit?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The signs are worrying, and it is true that London is already seeing a drop in funding levels. For example, London's allocation of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is less than half the size of the European Union (EU) funding it was intended to replace. In fact, the Government recently published each region's share of all the various funds designed to support levelling up. Of the 11 major regional funding initiatives, including the Levelling Up Fund, the Regional Growth Fund and the UKSPF, London received by far the lowest amounts per capita, £76 compared to the England average of £342. The second lowest allocation was in the southeast. This Government really is anti-south.

It is clear from these figures that the Government's focus on other regions is at London's expense, and I am concerned that London's future funding prospects will follow this path. London has the highest child poverty rate in the country and if London's economy is to continue to grow and support levelling up in the rest of the UK, it will require investment in housing and in infrastructure and to reduce the capital's own substantial inequalities.

London has the potential to fund its own continuing growth if it is given the fiscal levers to do so. We do have some mechanisms for raising funding for public spending locally, including the business rates supplement and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). That is building on the work of the two London Finance Commissions, the first Commission established by [the Rt Hon] Boris Johnson [MP, former Mayor of London], the second by me. I would like to explore tax increment financing and other forms of fiscal devolution with Government to enable the capital to continue to grow, without having to rely on the Treasury grant funding. The Government should also devolve to us decision-making for London's fair share of schemes. We are closer to our communities than Whitehall and, working with boroughs, we can make decisions and cut out wasteful bureaucracy and delays.

Len Duvall AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. Of course, we are still in a state of flux of not quite knowing where the Government is going to go, or the future Government is going to go, on the Levelling Up White Paper. The White Paper itself states that it is,

"... critical that we improve productivity, boost economic growth, encourage innovation, create good jobs, enhance educational attainment and renovate the social and cultural fabric of those parts of the UK that have stalled."

There are parts of London that have stalled or are in danger of stalling. Would a suggestion of measurable targets for levelling up on an agenda help us here in London in terms of some of the cases that we need to make?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thanks for your question. London as a region is the most unequal region in the country. The level of poverty in London, if you go by ward, I am afraid we are top of the list in relation to poverty, deprivation and so forth, poverty in real terms but also in relation to the ability of people to have their potential fulfilled. If there are going to be metrics, they have to be intra-region as well as inter-region

and they have to be fair. Yes, there should be support given to the rest of the country, without a doubt, but not at London's expense. It should look at place, yes, but also people. Communities in parts of Hackney are as deprived as communities in parts of Hull and if you want to level up, you should level up those families in Hackney, just like you would in Hull.

Len Duvall AM: OK. Thank you, Mr Mayor.

2022/2488 - Renters Reform

[Len Duvall AM \(on behalf of Sem Moema AM\)](#)

On the 16 June the Government published the Fairer Private Rented Sector White Paper. Would you agree we need more concrete proposals brought forward urgently in London so that housing charities, local councils, you and all Londoners can tell the Government what they need from the new legislation?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Renters have waited far too long for these reforms, which are crucial to better balance the rights of landlords and tenants living in the private rented sector. Renters now need to see legislation brought forward with the utmost urgency so they can live safely and securely in their homes. The White Paper contains many of the recommendations set out in the London Model Tenancies Reform I published in 2019, including ending section 21 evictions, introducing open-ended tenancies with no fixed term breaks or break clauses, and reforming possession grounds so that landlords can only evict renters when they have a legitimate need to do so. I am also pleased to see the inclusion of a property portal, the landlord register I have campaigned for and which will build on the success of the Rogue Landlord and Agent Checker I published and established in London in the absence of Government action.

However, crucial elements are missing from the White Paper proposals if all renters, particularly those who are the most vulnerable and households with children, are to truly see the benefit of these reforms. These include extended notice periods, tenant relocation payments and freezing rent for the next two years, particularly during this cost of living crisis. It is really important whoever becomes the next Conservative Leader and therefore our Prime Minister commits to deliver on these as soon as possible.

Len Duvall AM (on behalf of Sem Moema AM): Thank you for that answer. Some of the proposals contained in terms of the Government's suggestions are on removing no-fault evictions and to introduce a legally binding Decent Home Standard. Would you agree with the Local Government Association (LGA) that we need to review the London Housing Allowance (LHA) rates, which would help the poorest in society and, obviously, the poorest in London if it was agreed nationally?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Absolutely, and it is worth reminding colleagues the LGA is cross-party. What has happened is that because the LHA does not track market rents, what you are seeing is those who are eligible for benefits only receiving a proportion of the rent the landlord charges them, which is a big problem if you cannot afford to pay the difference. That is why you are seeing Londoners living in overcrowded accommodation, because they can only afford to live in a property where the LHA covers their rent. Also, do not forget that the benefit cap means there is a big problem for many families who are receiving support from the Government, the housing element of the Universal Credit. Two things need to happen. Yes, what the LGA is saying about the LHA keeping track with market rents, but secondly the cap on benefits being removed is also important.

Len Duvall AM (on behalf of Sem Moema AM): OK. Would you also agree with me that the current cost of living crisis that we are facing would support the Government devolving the powers? You mentioned this in earlier questions that you and other metro mayors could introduce rent caps/rent controls.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I appreciate London is different to Burnley in relation to housing issues and a number of other issues as well. What the Government should do is let go. Give those in charge of the Londons, the Manchesters, the Bristols, Oxford and Cambridgeshire, where there are all issues around the cost of living, particularly in relation to private rents, the power to do more in this area in relation to freezing rents, rent controls, the quality of housing and so forth. Actually, there is some good news, which is the work we did in 2019. The Government has cherry-picked some of it. We are saying: go the whole nine yards and devolve to us the powers to set rent controls - some may decide not to, by the way - if we want to do so.

Len Duvall AM (on behalf of Sem Moema AM): Thank you.

2022/2526 - Housing Design Standards

[Sakina Sheikh AM](#)

In the post pandemic world, how is City Hall ensuring London's homes are designed to meet the changing needs of Londoners?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Ensuring everyone in our city has a decent, safe place to call home remains a top priority for me and my team. The only way to achieve this is to continue to build the homes Londoners need. My London Plan continues to provide a robust framework for sustainable and inclusive development in our city. This framework enables us to ensure we can deliver new homes in London that are designed to meet the changing and diverse needs of Londoners.

The Draft Housing Design Standards London Plan Guidance (LPG) sets out a number of standards to improve the quality of homes being built across London. This includes encouraging new development to provide more space for home working and to provide high-quality communal outside space that is accessible to all residents, regardless of tenure. Consultation on the draft Guidance has now closed and a final version will be published later in the year.

In November 2021, I also published the Draft Delivering Quality Homes Handbook. This document details 50 actions that housing delivery organisations can take to achieve a good standard of quality management practices and delivery of good quality homes. These actions can be applied to all homes of all types and tenures, ensuring we are continuing to address the wide-ranging needs of all Londoners.

Sakina Sheikh AM: Thank you very much, Mr Mayor. Although consultation has officially closed, it was a privilege to chair my first Planning and Regeneration Committee yesterday, discussing exactly this. The team at the GLA were there present, taking on the feedback of the guests that we had. That was a really effective and dynamic way of doing more community outreach, as well as seeing live a manifestation of how the guidance has changed and improved. That sets best practice and high standards in London about how we continue to evolve our design standards.

One thing that I wanted to particularly hone in on and ask for some thoughts from you on is how this guidance works to encourage a more equal London through accessible and shared amenities and tackling poor doors.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Yes, some of us will have seen a couple of years ago homes being opened with swimming pools that only some people could use or playgrounds in recent years which only some residents can use, and we are trying to move away that. We want quality that is tenure-blind. Everyone should have good quality homes. We want non-residential amenities accessible to all living in a development. We want the public realm and community spaces accessible and available to everyone living in a development and that is the *quid pro quo* if you want permission to build what you want to build. What we do not want is this sort of poor doors segregation that has existed for too long by allowing a *laissez-fair* approach towards development. I tell you this. The residents in the nicer parts of a development welcome it as well because they do not want to be cut off from their community. They want to be part of vibrant London and that is why they choose to live in vibrant London. We are hoping this leads to better facilities, better homes, better communities and it has been well received.

Sakina Sheikh AM: Good. I am really pleased to hear that. Particularly post-pandemic or during the pandemic, the importance of our neighbours and our community was so important to people. We realised that actually your neighbour's health is your health and having that interconnectivity as a lifeline. That cultural change, pushback on any kind of 'poor doors' that developers might want to put into developments, is essential. Building on that point in terms of how the pandemic changed people's perception of their areas and their neighbourhoods, how does your Guidance help maintain, particularly when it comes to building on small sites, an area to retain its local character so that as London's development continues, you can still have neighbourhoods feeling organically like home?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): This is one of the areas where we have deliberately not had a command and control from the centre. Look, I do not know the particular neighbourhoods in Lewisham as well as you do or the Council does, or another part of the city. We are encouraging councils to make sure that they understand their communities and preserve the heritage that they know best. Of course, that is not anti-development. That is having development that is conducive to the environment. We have made sure that we devolve as much autonomy to communities as we can. You will have seen some of the Local Plans which recognise what a council knows about its community in relation to, for example, where a tall building goes. It should only go in a designated place that the Council has deemed appropriate for a tall building. Simply preserving the heritage of a park or a community facility is really, really important. Hopefully you will see over the course of the next two/three years, as the London Plan has bedded in, we have more Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) and additional Guidance, more developments that respect the heritage of an area but also are not scared to develop and progress.

Sakina Sheikh AM: Absolutely. When I think of the 2021 London Plan, for me the thing that I feel particularly proud of about it is that it encourages that design-led approach and that gives us the capacity to continue ensuring that we design the best city in the world. Thank you very much for your thoughts this afternoon.

2022/2389 - London's Anchor Institutions' Network

[Anne Clarke AM](#)

How has the LFB been participating in the network since its inception, specifically what structured pilots and learning experiences have been undertaken?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The London Anchor Institutions' Network brings together organisations to enable them to work collaboratively and leverage their status to support the capital's recovery from COVID-19.

Since its inception, the LFB has been an active participant. The Anchor Institutions' Network is supporting three core recovery missions: support Londoners into good work, implement a Green New Deal, and support opportunities for young people. To help support Londoners into good jobs, the LFB has made a commitment to recruiting, retaining, promoting and upskilling Londoners from underrepresented backgrounds. It has been working to identify and engage with small diverse organisations and working alongside the GLA, the LFB is identifying opportunities that can be ring fenced specifically for this market.

To help deliver a Green New Deal for London, the LFB is in the process of revising its Net Zero Strategy, which will set out how it plans to achieve decarbonisation for its estate and for its fleet, including by trialling the UK's first electric hybrid fire engine later this year. To provide support for London's young people, there are now fire cadets units in every London borough, supported through £1.1 million of funding provided by my Young Londoners Fund. Hundreds more young people are now able to develop their personal and professional skills while gaining qualifications, improving their career prospects and helping their community. The LFB is currently consulting on its Community Risk Management Plan called *Your London Fire Brigade*, which details its plans to continue supporting Londoners over the coming years throughout this period of recovery from the global pandemic.

Anne Clarke AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor, good afternoon and thank you for your comments earlier about the bravery of the fire brigade in this last heatwave. I was just thinking about what you have said and about COVID-19 pandemic recovery. One thing that really struck me last night, when I was looking at the news and they had a heat map of London -- and actually I know because I live in an area where we were badly impacted by COVID, disproportionately, and also disproportionately it was hot, and it is an area where people do not have access to outdoor spaces. It is the disadvantaged that seem to continue to be disadvantaged, which is very unfortunate. In terms of the LFB maximising employment opportunities of these groups of people who are, frankly, poor, how are they going about that?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): What you are articulating are the structural inequalities that I often talk about in relation to our city, unfortunately. It is the poorest Londoners who suffer the worst consequences from the heatwave we have just seen, and probably from the flash flooding we may well see and other issues: air quality, crime and so forth. What the LFB is doing as part of the [London] Recovery Board when it comes to the new recruits that we are now recruiting is they particularly target diverse communities. To give them credit, it has key performance indicators to make sure it is taking on Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) Londoners and other Londoners who are underrepresented in the LFB. There is a piece of working taking place from the LFB, being done by Nazir Afzal [OBE], the leading expert, in relation to the culture within the LFB. Are there things in the LFB that are deterring women or people of colour from joining the LFB, staying once they have joined, or not making the progression? Question. The response from Nazir Afzal [OBE] will help the LFB develop its thinking and its practices so it can be the employer of choice for all Londoners, particularly BAME and women Londoners.

Anne Clarke AM: Thank you for that. It is a really impressive charter and quite a large range of organisations have joined, everything from Film London to Thames Water to the MPS. Overall, what is your sense of how well that is going?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): It is unprecedented. There are very few silver linings from the awful, awful pandemic. One of them has to be the greater working across London in relation to councils, LFB, the MPS, TfL and the NHS, you have mentioned some of the really good names from the private sector, the voluntary and community sector, and faith communities. We have to keep it going, even though the pandemic is behind us, in relation to recovery going forward.

Every time I meet the NHS and they tell me another trust has become a Living Wage employer, that means the lowest-paid people are getting decent pay for a hard day's work. Film London, working with Hollywood, is creating jobs that are wow jobs for Londoners who otherwise would not have access to some of the wow jobs being created, and many of these Hollywood films are made in London because of our commitment to culture and the other issues we do in our city as well. One of the things that really frustrates me when it comes to poverty is the poverty of aspiration. We have to make sure that every Londoner thinks that they can achieve anything. By working with these great private sector companies and the public sector then giving a helping hand - because not everyone is match fit to get their job - with the right ethos and values, we can get more and more Londoners who are having their potential fulfilled.

Anne Clarke AM: Thank you for that.

2022/2609 - Shifting road space away from traffic

[Siân Berry AM](#)

How are you changing the use of road space in support of your goal to reduce traffic in London?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Three-quarters of congestion is caused by demand for road space exceeding supply, with traffic on London's roads costing the capital's economy more than £5.1 billion a year. Sustainable modes such as walking, cycling and buses can move more people while taking up significantly less space than cars. More than a third of car trips made by Londoners could be walked in under 25 minutes and two-thirds could be cycled in under 20 minutes. By prioritising space for these modes, we can make them more attractive choices, reducing traffic and making the best use of the limited road space available.

TfL and London's boroughs have achieved significant increases in active and sustainable travel since I became Mayor. I have tripled the amount of protected cycle space in my first term and a further 100 kilometres plus of routes have been delivered since 2020. That is a five-fold increase since I was first elected. Upgrades to traffic signals have allowed our traffic control system to now detect 1.27 million buses every day at over 1,600 locations, meaning buses receive priority over traffic 66% of the time when they arrive at a junction. Following a trial, TfL is now making permanent the 24 hours a day/7 days a week operation of 80 kilometres of bus lanes to encourage a greater number of bus journeys.

I have also taken action to reduce the number of cars travelling into central London. Earlier this year, I made changes to the Congestion Charge to ensure it remained effective and in October last year [2021] I expanded the ULEZ to inner London which, in addition to delivering air quality improvements, has led to fewer vehicles driving in the zone. Traffic reduction is fundamental to realising the goals of my Transport Strategy. TfL will achieve these through delivery of future Healthy Streets schemes that allocate space away from traffic to vulnerable road users and public transport, supported by investment in cycle parking and cycle training to help increase modal shift. While London's population continues to grow, road space is finite. Getting more people out of cars is key to allowing the efficient movement of essential traffic, including public transport, the emergency services and people who rely on motor vehicles. It will also be critical to tackling the climate emergency. However, this goal is only achievable if TfL receives the future capital funding from Government that London needs.

Siân Berry AM: Thank you very much, Mr Mayor, and again, like my colleague, I will support you over making sure that we get decent funding for TfL so we can invest in more of this stuff.

Now all of what you said sounded positive, but I have some new ideas to put to you today. As you noted, you started this year creating, finally, a specific target to cut traffic with a goal that just over one in four journeys currently taken by car should be made another way by 2030, and your ULEZ expansion might have reduced traffic already by 2% according to this week's six-month figures. That is good, but it is not going to get us there on its own and you keep telling us that smarter, fairer road charging is some way away in time.

There is more that reducing road space for vehicles can do to contribute to reducing traffic more quickly, both directly and by making space for walking and cycling and public transport. After this week, I imagine most Londoners want a few more trees and space for those on our main roads as well. My question today is: to reach your target to reduce traffic, why are you not shifting more space away from motor traffic, specifically on your red routes, in a more rapid and concerted way?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): You will remember the work we had done in relation to cycle lanes on our red routes, and the opposition, and notwithstanding that we have carried on and made sure there are not just wider pavements but more cycling as well. If there are any particular red routes you want us to look into, I am more than happy for the Walking and Cycling Commissioner or the Deputy Mayor [for Transport] to speak to you. We are trying to do what we can within the bounds of recognising there are some parts of London where there is construction taking place. A good example is High Speed 2 in Euston causing real challenges because they require two lanes. It is causing huge problems in relation to the plans we want to do around there. Subject to things we have to do because of other pressures, I am more than happy for you to meet the relevant members of the team on individual issues that you think we could be doing more on. I do not pretend we cannot go even further and even faster so am happy to have that conversation.

Siân Berry AM: That is really positive. Just to add a bit more context here, I am not simply talking about central London here. I think we should be squeezing this traffic at its source and by that I do literally mean those huge junctions that funnel traffic from outside into our city. We need to be cutting down on the traffic on the red routes in order to make things like Healthy Streets schemes work better, so that we are not leading to more traffic on our red routes. I do want to see you squeezing down on the road space and I do not see that currently in your Strategy. At the moment, you talk about traffic reduction giving the opportunity for road space reallocation in your Cycling Action Plan, for example, and it ought to be a bit more the other way round. If you are up for talking about that a bit further, that is something is currently missing in a philosophical sense from your Transport Strategy.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Yes, let me know. I am not in favour of more congestion and so we always have to be aware of the law of unintended consequences in relation to --

Siân Berry AM: We are. We had, for example, an M4 bus lane for a while, that was got rid of and I do not think that was for a good reason. The M4 bus lane was very good for a little while there.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Even you cannot blame me for the M4 bus lane going.

Siân Berry AM: That was nothing to do with you. That was well before your time. I am out of time. I think we are missing a trick not taking away road space on the main roads and it would genuinely help in damping down traffic overall. If you are up for talking about it more, then I will do that and that is the end of my questions.

2022/2542 - Climate justice for Londoners

Zack Polanski AM

How can Londoners get effective, continued representation and have their voices heard on climate justice issues?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Climate change is affecting all Londoners. We are right now seeing the effects of extreme heat across the city. I have been clear that the climate crisis is also a social justice issue. Londoners with low incomes and BAME Londoners are likely to be disproportionately impacted by poor air quality, as well as flooding and overheating caused by climate change. I was the first major city leader to declare a climate emergency and I was re-elected on a manifesto that prioritised tackling inequalities and the climate and ecological crisis. Working to build a greener, fairer future for Londoners is one of my top priorities.

Aside from my major electoral mandate, every step we take is based on consultation with Londoners. We are currently consulting on the proposed ULEZ expansion to outer London and Londoners can always have their say on climate issues through TalkLondon, City Hall's online community, which so far this year has held surveys to inform my policies on ULEZ and rewilding.

However, we must all work together to tackle this crisis and London's boroughs have a crucial role to play on the frontline of local community engagement. The majority of councils have now declared a climate emergency, and many have sought residents' input to develop Climate Action Plans, including via Citizens' Assemblies. I am delivering several programmes that address climate justice, supporting the most marginalised and climate impacted communities, while placing local residents' voices front and centre. Last year, I published a Climate Risk Map for London to identify the neighbourhoods most exposed to climate impacts with high concentrations of vulnerable populations. Based on this evidence, I am now engaging communities in designing action.

Programmes like Grow Together in partnership with Hubbub, CLEVER Cities with Peabody Housing and Groundwork, and Future Neighbourhood 2030 all involve the GLA working with partners and local residents in some of London's most deprived communities, providing funding and support for them to develop community-led strategies to tackle environmental and social injustices. My Green Space Grant targets areas of deprivation and climate risk, simultaneously reducing inequalities in green space access and flood risk, and my air quality policies have helped to reduce the pollution exposure gap between the most and least deprived areas of London by up to 50%.

Zack Polanski AM: Thank you very much. As you know, I am always appreciative of the way that you say we should work together and I appreciate the cross-party working on this, so I want to put that out there straightaway, as always. I do think a lot of these solutions are top-down. There is a space for established leadership on climate justice, but I think we might be missing a trick in terms of how many community groups are doing work on climate justice. Now, this is not a criticism because I know that you do a lot of meeting people and also a lot of consultation; the question is slightly different. I want to know about sharing power where people can have genuine influence over your policies and City Hall policies. Can you give me any specific examples of where you have worked with a community group who are doing existing work on climate justice and shared your power?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I have given a few. Future Neighbourhoods 2030 involved communities in Camden and North Kensington. The work that Peabody is doing is with communities on Peabody housing. The work we are doing as a consequence of the Climate Risk Map is working with communities for them to help us design the solutions to their areas being more deprived. Other programmes I have set out in my answer. TalkLondon, ideas from the community about what more we can be doing. Another example is in relation to work we are doing in Camden, Croydon, Hackney, Kingston, Lambeth and Newham with the Citizens' Climate Assemblies they have there. By the way, we are doing great work with Waltham Forest, who have a Climate Commission. We are doing lots of work with Londoners, more so than any other Mayor in the history of our city, and we will carry on doing more work with Londoners in relation to addressing this challenge, which is a crisis that affects all of us.

Zack Polanski AM: It is good to see progress here and I also appreciate the fact that you have emphasised diversity there, both of women and BAME voices.

In almost all of these groups you are talking about I notice people are unpaid, particularly where we have Commissioners, and I think it is vital that people are given compensation for their time and labour because that is vital to be able to do effective and sustained social justice and climate justice issues. We do have a solution here. We have the London Housing Panel. This, as you know, is a group of community and voluntary organisations that come together, where they have been recompensed for their time and labour, and I think that is right. The question really is this: would you do the same thing around bringing together a coalition of community and voluntary organisations who are paid, grassroots and genuinely community-based, and set up a London Climate Panel?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Just so I am clear, paid for by whom?

Zack Polanski AM: Paid for by City Hall.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Right. I cannot commit to even more expenditure in this area than we have already expended. I am already criticised by some people for the money I was spending on climate change. I am criticised for wanting to improve the quality of air in outer London by investing in cameras to --

Zack Polanski AM: I think we are talking about a tiny amount of money. If we look at the London Housing Panel, for instance, I think it is between £30,000 to £40,000. Now relatively on climate justice, considering how urgent this is and how people are affected by different and unequal vulnerabilities, is that money not worth paying?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am happy to give you a list of all the money we are investing in climate justice. In answer to a previous question, I talked about £90 million - £90 million - for a Green Bond. I have also talked about money we have invested --

Zack Polanski AM: Which is brilliant, but it is top-down. How about putting some of that money to the genuinely grass roots community. That is real leadership, is it not?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I have given examples of some of the work we are doing with communities. If the Green Party wants to put forward a budget amendment, I am more than happy to look into the budget amendment in relation to this. What I cannot do is at this stage to expend more money on this area than we already have for obvious reasons that I have set, but I am more than happy to do more engagement with communities. You will be aware of the progress we have made in relation to housing, in relation to homes for

Londoners. There are other areas of work we are working with the [London] Recovery Board. Some councils are involved in their communities. Some of that is paid, some of that is not paid. I am more than happy to work with councils and other partners. Peabody, of course, are working with their residents. However, I do not want to --

Zack Polanski AM: I do think everyone should always be paid if they are giving their time and labour to make London better. Would you not agree with that?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Listen, I work closely with coaches who coach children boxing and football and cricket and scouts and cubs and swimming. Even the Green Party, who are unpaid volunteers because they are good citizens. Good citizenship? One of the reasons for a great city --

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Assembly Member Polanski, you are out of time now.

Zack Polanski AM: However, that is unsustainable unless we make --

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): You are out of time now.

Zack Polanski AM: Thank you very much, Chair.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): I have an indication from Assembly Member Cooper that she wants to come in, a supplementary to this.

Léonie Cooper AM: Thank you very much. It is just on the issue about supporting campaign groups in London. I feel that we ran out of time when Assembly Member Best was raising a really important issue earlier on. I have had another look at her original question, and it just says, "How can we work together?" It does not mention a specific group. I just wondered if perhaps Assembly Member Best and I could be in contact with your staff so that we could give some consideration as to whether or not that is a campaign that we could consider --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Sure. Of course we can work together, but if it is so important why not ask it as a first question rather than 50 minutes down the road when you have run out of time?

Léonie Cooper AM: It did make it very difficult. Assembly Member Polanski has just introduced something that I know nothing about, that might have been something we all supported in the budget, for example.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am more than happy to work with you and anybody from any party on this issue, but if that is the case, do not waste time on knockabout stuff. Shoot it as the priority it deserves rather than wasting time on nonsense.

Léonie Cooper AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. That is a positive response, thank you.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Now you have mentioned Assembly Member Best, Assembly Member Best has a right to --

Léonie Cooper AM: She does.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): She has a point of order.

Emma Best AM: Thank you. I welcome the mention of my name, Assembly Member Cooper, so thank you. The question did specifically mention the World Cup in Qatar and that is something that the Mayor did not get to in his answer. Just to put on record that there was a specific ask in how we could work on that issue as we go towards the World Cup. The Mayor knows that because he has received the letter from me on the issue so he knows exactly what I am talking about, a campaign that the FA and Stonewall are happy to pick up. I think we can work together. I would have appreciated a “yes” today from the Mayor.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair): Look, I think that we have dealt with this. I keep reminding Assembly Members to ask your question in a way which is effective. We will leave it there. Mr Mayor, thank you very much for the answers you have given us, and we note them, thank you.