

MAYOR OF LONDON

Dr Onkar Sahota AM

Chair of the London Assembly
C/o AssemblyChair@london.gov.uk

Our ref: MGLA121222-5338

Date: 31 March 2023

Dear Onkar,

London Assembly (Plenary) Meeting 1 December 2022 – Motions

Thank you for your letter about the motions agreed at the London Assembly (Plenary) meeting. Please see my reply to the outstanding motion below.

Motion 6 – Cost of Living Crisis

The rising cost of living poses a clear and significant risk to London's social and economic recovery from the pandemic, and I am determined to do all I can to help Londoners struggling to make ends meet. That is why I am currently spending more than £80m on a range of interventions including more than £50m to tackle fuel poverty through the Warmer Homes programme and energy advice services, more than £20m to improve security for private renters and house Londoners who are rough sleeping or homeless, more than £5m to connect Londoners with social welfare legal advice, and £1.1m to tackle food insecurity over three years.

In addition to this, I recently announced a historic £130m emergency, one-off funding plan to ensure that every primary schoolchild in London will receive free school meals in the next academic year. No child should be punished for circumstances beyond their control, and no child should be forced to go hungry. That's also why I announced this week emergency funding to provide free holiday meals to low-income Londoners struggling with the cost of living. This emergency injection of £3.5m will supply around 10m meals to low-income families across the capital for a year starting immediately this Easter school holidays.

And last month I also announced a £1m fund for organisations supporting vulnerable women and girls who are at increased risk of violence and abuse due to the cost of living crisis.

However, the massive and unprecedented scale of this crisis can only be addressed through government intervention. The government refuses to take the basic steps needed to help those least well-off, such as following London's lead by providing free school meals to all primary school children on a permanent basis, increasing support for people in receipt of disability benefits, and ensuring that the most vulnerable receive a basic amount of free energy. It should also grant City Hall the power to freeze private rents in London, which could save Londoners who are privately renting £3,000 over two years. I put these points to the Chancellor ahead of the Spring Budget and I will continue to call on the government to take action at every opportunity.

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My officers have also recently submitted evidence to the House of Commons Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Select Committee inquiry on 'levelling up funding' and I gave evidence to the Committee on 30 January. Deprived communities exist in all parts of the country and I made the case for investment in London.

Thank you again for writing to me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sadiq Khan', with a small '2' written below the 'h'.

Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London