

GREATER**LONDON**AUTHORITY

(By email)

Our reference: MGLA040923-5575

16 October 2023

Dear

Thank you for your request for information which the Greater London Authority (GLA) received on 3 September 2023. Your request has been considered under the Freedom of Information Act (FoI) 2000.

You requested:

Please provide all correspondence held by Deputy Mayor Shirley Rodrigues in the week between 17th August 2023 and 24th August 2023 relating to the widely-publicised story about her interactions with Imperial College London or the outlets which published it.

I trust that a broad interpretation of this will be taken, and anything relevant to that story or the media outlets who published it will be included in disclosure, including relevant context.

This would include emails, WhatsApp messages and text messages.

Our response to your request is as follows:

Please find attached the information we hold within the scope of your request. Please note that some names of members of staff are exempt from disclosure under s.40 (Personal information) of the Freedom of Information Act. This information could potentially identify specific employees and as such constitutes as personal data which is defined by Article 4(1) of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) to mean any information relating to an identified or identifiable living individual. It is considered that disclosure of this information would contravene the first data protection principle under Article 5(1) of GDPR which states that Personal data must be processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner in relation to the data subject.

If you have any further questions relating to this matter, please contact me, quoting the reference MGLA040923-5575.

Yours sincerely

Information Governance Officer

GREATER**LONDON**AUTHORITY

If you are unhappy with the way the GLA has handled your request, you may complain using the GLA's FOI complaints and internal review procedure, available at:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/governance-and-spending/sharing-our-information/freedom-information>

[REDACTED]

From: Shirley Rodrigues [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@london.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk)>

Sent: 18 August 2023 15:08

To: [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@london.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk)>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@london.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk)>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@london.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk)>

Cc: [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@london.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk)>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@london.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk)>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@london.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk)>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@london.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk)>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@london.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk)>

Subject: RE: TO CLEAR BY COP: FOI Request from the Sunday Telegraph

Fine, thanks all.

S

From: [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@london.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk)>

Sent: 18 August 2023 15:06

To: [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@london.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk)>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@london.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk)>

Cc: [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@london.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk)>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@london.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk)>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@london.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk)>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@london.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk)>; Shirley Rodrigues <[\[REDACTED\]@london.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk)>

Subject: RE: TO CLEAR BY COP: FOI Request from the Sunday Telegraph

Thanks [REDACTED]

Just adding an extra bullet to the notes as well. Grateful for further signoff.

"It is right - and standard practice in government - that we commission experts to carry out research to inform the work we do.

"The Environmental Research Group at Imperial is one of the world-leading academic institutions looking at air quality. It is normal and proper to work with these experts to ensure our policies are as effective as possible at dealing with issues such as the up to 4,000 deaths linked to toxic air in London every year.

"We maintain that the ULEZ analysis from the engineering department at Imperial does not account for the full lifetime impact of the scheme, focusing instead on its immediate impact around its launch. This isn't appropriate because the full impact of schemes such as the ULEZ are realised over many months and years in the lead up to, and following, the launch. For example, public transport (such as buses) and many businesses and residents upgrade their vehicles and change their behaviour in advance of the launch of the scheme.

"It is commonplace for academic experts to disagree with how other academic studies are interpreted, as was the case here."

- Dr Kelly and the ERG are independent academics whose work is not influenced by the many various funding bodies they work with.

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk>
Sent: 18 August 2023 14:30
To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk>; Shirley Rodrigues <[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: TO CLEAR BY COP: FOI Request from the Sunday Telegraph

An amend in red to further emphasise the point

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk>
Sent: 18 August 2023 14:21
To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk>; Shirley Rodrigues <[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk>
Subject: TO CLEAR BY COP: FOI Request from the Sunday Telegraph

Hi all,

The Sunday Telegraph have got in touch over an FOI they submitted in April about emails between Shirley and Frank Kelly in 2021 and this year. This line has been seen and cleared by environment, Shirley and [REDACTED]. Grateful for further thoughts by COP.

Thanks
[REDACTED]

A spokesperson for the Mayor said:

"It is right - and standard practice in government - that we commission experts to carry out research to inform the work we do.

"The Environmental Research Group at Imperial is one of the world-leading academic institutions looking at air quality. It is normal and proper to work with these experts to ensure our policies are as effective as possible at dealing with issues such as the up to 4,000 deaths linked to toxic air in London every year.

"We maintain that the ULEZ analysis from the engineering department at Imperial does not account for the full lifetime impact of the scheme, focusing instead on its immediate impact around its launch. This isn't appropriate because the full impact of schemes such as the ULEZ are realised over many months and years **IN THE LEAD UP TO, AND FOLLOWING, THE LAUNCH**. For example, public transport (such as buses) and many businesses and residents upgrade their vehicles and change their behaviour in advance of the launch of the scheme.

"It is commonplace for academic experts to disagree with how other academic studies are interpreted, as was the case here."

Hi,

Could you comment on a story we are hoping to run in this week's Sunday Telegraph.

We have FOI emails between the London Mayor's office and Professor Frank Kelly's Environmental Research Group at Imperial (pasted below).

They show that:

1. On November 16 2021, Deputy London mayor Shirley Rodrigues emailed Prof Frank Kelly asking him to contradict an Imperial College study which found Ulez had only a small effect on tackling air pollution. She even partly wrote his response which she asked to Tweet and send to The Times.

This was the study:

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/news/231894/london-pollution-improved-with-evidence-small/#:~:text=Corresponding%20author%20of%20the%20research,that%20it%20works%20best%20when>

2. On February 14 2023, the GLA contacted Frank Kelly asking him to 'challenge' my article suggesting that Sadiq Khan's Ulez death figures were misleading.

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/02/12/sadiq-khan-accused-using-nonsense-air-pollution-data-support/>

The emails show that Imperial's press office did not want to contradict the article.

Nevertheless, Prof Kelly asked the GLA to send him 'a favoured form of words' with which he could challenge the article, which they agreed to do.

The allegation is that Prof Kelly - whose group has received more than £800,000 from the GLA, colluded with the Mayor's office to discredit researchers at Imperial.

A comment by close of play today would be helpful, or tomorrow am if not. If tomorrow please can you cc in the Sunday Telegraph news editor [REDACTED] [@telegraph.co.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@telegraph.co.uk)

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Urgent - response to Telegraph article

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Apologies both – I was in various meetings all afternoon and only saw you emails later last night. Apparently Imperial's press office is not keen for us to put a direct contradiction to the Telegraph article but as always I'm happy to fight back.

[REDACTED] do you have a favoured form of words that you were thinking for me to use ?

I'm at my desk most of today so contact should be easier.

Regards,

Frank

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 13 February 2023 14:33
To: Kelly, Frank [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@imperial.ac.uk)>
Cc: [REDACTED]; Shirley Rodrigues
[REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@london.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk)>
Subject: Urgent - response to Telegraph article

Hi Frank

You'll have no doubt seen the attached article in today's Telegraph.

We've wondering if you will be writing to the Telegraph to challenge some of the misunderstandings in the article. Our press team have emailed [REDACTED] but she hasn't replied.

Do you have 5 mins to have a quick chat about this? My number below.

Thanks

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY
169 Union Street, London, SE1 0LL

From: [Kelly, Frank](mailto:[REDACTED]@imperial.ac.uk)
To: "Shirley Rodrigues"
Subject: RE: ULEZ study
Date: 17 November 2021 11:19:00

Amendments – accepted – sorry I'm running between meetings and lectures so it was rushed!

Happy to send to [REDACTED] at the Times – OK?

Happy for Sadiq to quote.

Regards,

frank

From: Shirley Rodrigues [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@london.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk)>
Sent: 17 November 2021 11:16
To: Kelly, Frank <[\[REDACTED\]@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@imperial.ac.uk)>
Subject: RE: ULEZ study

Thanks Frank.

This is really helpful

Could I suggest an amend

The actions undertaken by the Mayor's office to address London's air pollution challenge, including the introduction of the ultra low emission zone, collectively have dramatically reduced air pollution in London and are providing a major benefit to the health of Londoners through the ongoing improvements in air quality across the city. In this respect, London leads where others need to follow.

Would you be able to tweet and even write to the Times? And are you Ok if Sadiq is asked about the study to quote you saying this?

Thanks

Shirley

Shirley Rodrigues

Deputy Mayor for Environment & Energy

From: Kelly, Frank [REDACTED]@imperial.ac.uk>
Sent: 17 November 2021 10:28
To: Shirley Rodrigues [REDACTED]@london.gov.uk>
Subject: Re: ULEZ study

How about :

The actions undertaken by the Mayor's office to address London's air pollution challenge, including the introduction on the ultra low emission zone, collectively are providing a major benefit to the health of Londoner's through the ongoing improvements in air quality across the city. In this respect, London leads where others need to follow.

Professor Frank Kelly
Director, Environmental Research Group
Imperial college London

But happy to adapt if needed.

Best wishes,
Frank

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Subject: RE: ULEZ study

Morning

Thanks for your offer of support which is much appreciated [REDACTED] and I will follow up with you and [REDACTED]

I do appreciate that you don't want to have a "fight" with another part of Imperial but the Times and now [REDACTED] have also picked [REDACTED] report up and repeating the mistake. Is there anything you'd be happy to put on the record now in advance of doing something on the one month on report or other areas?

If not I do understand.

Cheers
Shirley
Shirley Rodrigues
Deputy Mayor for Environment & Energy
Mobile: [REDACTED]

From: Kelly, Frank [REDACTED]@imperial.ac.uk>
Sent: 17 November 2021 08:49
To: Shirley Rodrigues <[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk>
Subject: Re: ULEZ study

Dear Shirley,

I only learnt about this study yesterday and, of course, was totally dismayed about its limitations and the erroneous associated press release from another section of Imperial.

I appreciate the level of damage ensued and am pursuing options internally to offset this if possible. I would be very happy to provide the GLA with support required as you move to mitigate the damage to what I believe is a world leading air pollution policy.

Best wishes,
Frank

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From: Shirley Rodrigues [REDACTED]@london.gov.uk>

Sent: Tuesday, November 16, 2021 6:54:55 PM

To: Kelly, Frank [REDACTED]@imperial.ac.uk>

Subject: ULEZ study

This email from [REDACTED]@london.gov.uk originates from outside Imperial. Do not click on links and attachments unless you recognise the sender. If you trust the sender, add them to your [safe senders list](#) to disable email stamping for this address.

Hi Frank,

I just wanted to contact you about the ULEZ story which has received a lot of attention today. I'm sure you'll have seen the coverage on Sky, the Mail and of course on social media.

I feel that the way [REDACTED] has presented his findings is entirely misleading and is conflating a study on Central London ULEZ with the expansion. As you'll know it you can't evaluate the impact of the entire scheme based on changes in the few weeks around its implementation, but unfortunately the narrative that "ULEZ hasn't worked" now has widespread traction.

I know you and your team weren't involved with the study, and please pass on my thanks to [REDACTED] who I'm told did try to help get the facts straight internally yesterday. However, I am really disappointed that Imperial's press office chose to push ahead with press releasing these findings, ignoring advice from your own team.

I appreciate you are in a very difficult position internally. But I am deeply concerned about the damage this misleading study is doing, both to our credibility and to Low Emission Zones as a

policy instrument. The GLA will be approaching Imperial over the next few days and asking them to issue a clarification on the study. Is there anything you can do or advise to help us set the record straight? I would really appreciate any support.

Separately, [REDACTED] has spoken to [REDACTED] about additional work we now need to do to undo the damage that has been inflicted. It would be great if we could work closely on communicating the impacts of the ULEZ expansion when we publish our one month on report and also when publishing the LAEI.

If you'd like to have a chat about this I'd be happy to do so.

Thanks,

Shirley

Shirley Rodrigues
Deputy Mayor, Environment & Energy
MAYOR OF LONDON
City Hall, The Queen's Walk, London SE1 2AA

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