

Mayoral Mandate

Cleaning London's Air

Introduction

As Mayor of London, I am determined to continue tackling air pollution to protect the health of Londoners.

A comprehensive package of measures has already been delivered – including expanding the Ultra Low Emission Zone London-wide – which has put London on track to meet the legal limits for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) by the legal deadline of 2025. The legal limits for particulate matter (PM) have already been met.

These limits, however, are far higher than the health-based World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines. I have therefore committed to meet the interim WHO PM_{2.5} target by 2030, and to establish a pathway to meet the WHO's latest guidelines for NO₂ and PM_{2.5} as soon as possible.

Despite the massive improvements delivered in air quality by ULEZ and other Mayoral policies, there is still more to do to achieve these targets. This mandate commissions my City Hall team to define what more the GLA and the GLA Group, working in partnership with others, can do to achieve these goals.

I expect this mandate to be read alongside the mandates for *Delivering a Greener More Climate-Resilient London*, *Reducing Inequalities* and *Decarbonising Transport* programmes. I expect the delivery plans for these programmes to be developed in tandem to ensure that all Londoners (including those from disadvantaged groups) can breathe cleaner air and live healthier lives.

Strategic objectives

The GLA has defined a number of London-level, long-term outcomes which reflect Londoners' aspirations for the city and to which the GLA, in partnership with others, is working towards. The core outcome to which this programme should contribute is: Londoners are breathing clean air.

Alongside this, the wider London-level outcomes to which I expect this programme to make a substantive contribution are: Londoners live in a city that supports their mental and physical health; Children and young Londoners achieve the health and learning outcomes they need to thrive at every stage of development; London is a world-leading global city; and London is a net zero carbon city.

The delivery plan for this programme should recognise all the partners required to ensure success. This includes the GLA Group, London boroughs, businesses and other organisations, such as philanthropic, community and campaign groups.

I am aware that a research project is currently underway to evaluate the effectiveness of different policy options and determine how the WHO guidelines can be met. The delivery plan for this programme should reference the findings of this research.

The delivery plan should also be consistent with my commitment to keep the same London-wide ULEZ standards over the next four years and to rule out the introduction of a pay-per-mile smart road user charging system.

Programme approaches and priorities

Based on the resources and approach set out in this mandate, the delivery plan for this programme should focus on four key areas of activity:

Cutting pollution from all sources to improve health outcomes and reduce health inequality for Londoners: The GLA and TfL's direct delivery and planning powers can play an important role in reducing the emissions, and by extension the concentrations, of pollutants most harmful to health (NO₂ and PM_{2.5}) at source. The delivery plan should set out how the GLA will assess on an ongoing basis the major sources of pollution and identify and implement the most effective measures to reduce them. This may include cleaning up London's fleets, construction sites and new developments, installing active travel and EV infrastructure, and reducing exposure in schools.

Understanding the policies, interventions, powers and resources needed to achieve WHO guidelines as quickly as possible: To meet the WHO guidelines for NO₂ and PM_{2.5}, we will need to tackle more sources of emissions. Further analysis is required to select the best and most cost-effective policies and programmes for London. This will include trialling new programmes, commissioning research and learning from other cities.

Ensuring that London boroughs and other partners take effective action to reduce exposure and emissions: At a local level, the delivery plan should consider how the combination of Mayoral powers and funding, together with the provision of advice, tools and support, can most effectively be used to encourage, enable and require action.

Raising awareness amongst London's communities of the health impacts of air pollution and empowering them to advocate for local action: Effective deployment of public information and other engagement tools will be needed to raise awareness of the health impacts of pollution and to empower Londoners to reduce their exposure and advocate for local action. This may include oversight of and support for London's world class monitoring network, working with partners to ensure information reaches those who need it, and ongoing engagement of London's diverse communities.

Contribution to cross-cutting priorities

The programme should identify where it can make a substantive positive contribution to the areas identified as cross-cutting priorities for the GLA. I expect that the key areas of focus for this programme will be around:

- Net-zero – recognising that many of the policies needed to reduce air pollution will also have a positive impact on carbon emissions
- Health in all policies – recognising the damaging impacts on public health of air pollution, it is vital that work on air quality is driven by the latest evidence and integrated with wider action across London's health system
- Addressing structural inequalities – recognising that London's most disadvantaged communities are disproportionately affected by poor air quality. Ensuring policies are effectively targeted can help to address this.

Resources

In 2024-25, this programme is drawing on a GLA revenue budget of c. £1m, along with c. £3.5m of GLA capital funding. The GLA has also secured significant external funding to support air quality initiatives in recent years. It is currently benefitting from a \$1.5m grant from Bloomberg Philanthropies to fund the Breathe London programme, and it jointly manages the

Mayor's Air Quality Fund which has a budget (held by TfL) of £5.3m over three years. The delivery plan should set out how these funds can be used to support the delivery of this programme.

Recognising the significant current fiscal challenges both in London and at national level, I expect the delivery plan to be developed in this context, and to demonstrate what can be achieved within the current level of funding. This should include setting out how resources might be most effectively redeployed as flexibility emerges over the course of this Mayoral term, and any interventions aimed at securing additional funding to support delivery.

Should significant further funds be allocated to this programme (whether from GLA resources or external sources), the delivery plan should be updated to reflect this.

In addition, I am aware that the largest sums relevant to achieving the objectives of this programme are held by TfL for the delivery of pan-London transport interventions, such as investment in EV infrastructure, public transport and walking and cycling, which contribute significantly to improving air quality, alongside other benefits. A key aim of the delivery plan should be to identify how these co-benefits for air quality can be maximised.

Senior Responsible Owner

I expect the Assistant Director, Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity, to be the Senior Responsible Owner of this programme, with my Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, my Deputy Mayor for Transport, and my Walking and Cycling Commissioner to provide ongoing oversight and political direction, along with other colleagues from my office, on my behalf.

Next steps

I expect the Mayoral Delivery Board to recommend a delivery plan for this programme to me in line with our governance and oversight arrangements.

January 2025