

18th Mayor's Report to the Assembly

Mayor's Question Time – 15 January 2026

This is my eighteenth report to the Assembly, fulfilling my duty under Section 45 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999. It covers the period from 5 December – 31 December 2025.

Please note that the information in the Mayor's Report is accurate at the time of publishing.

Executive Summary

Dr Gillian Fairfield to follow-up progress review of the Met following Baroness Casey Report

Major cultural reform is underway within the Met. His Majesty's Inspectorate confirmed earlier this year that significant improvements are being made as the Met exited special measures. This is down to the hard work of the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, Met officers and staff.

Together, we've made huge strides bearing down on crime in our city and the Commissioner has started the biggest clear out of rogue police officers and staff in British policing history. However, the recent Panorama broadcast and Dr Daniels' Report have highlighted that there is still a long way to go.

I'm committed to following up on all of Baroness Casey's recommendations which is why on 17th December, the Met Commissioner and I announced the appointment of Dr Gillian Fairfield to carry out an independent follow-on assessment of the Met. This will review progress around culture and standards, as well as identify areas that need renewed focus. The findings from the Casey review in 2023 were damning and we now need an honest and independent appraisal of how much has been done to address institutional racism, homophobia and misogyny.

I've been clear that the Met must accelerate the pace of reform. Londoners and hardworking police officers and staff deserve a lasting transformation of Met culture - with no hiding place for officers who abuse their position of trust.

I'll continue to support and hold the Met to account and will not be satisfied until Londoners have the police service they deserve – one that is trusted and delivers the highest possible service to every community in our city.

Chanukah on the Square 2025

I was delighted to support the arrival of the Menorah to Trafalgar Square, as part of London's eight-day Chanukah celebrations, which this year took place from 14-22 December.

Organised by the Jewish Leadership Council (JLC), in collaboration with the London Jewish Forum (LJF), there was also a public lighting ceremony on 16 December, ChanukahLIVE. This event saw over 2,000 members of London's Jewish and wider community come together, and were joined by four of my Deputy Mayors, Dr Debbie Weekes Bernard, Kaya Comer-Schwartz, Mete Coban and Howard Dawber.

The event was opened by Keith Black, Chair of the JLC, and hosted by comedian, writer and director, Rachel Creeger. Performances on the night were from DJ Dan Kraines, Erran Baron Cohen, Chazan Pini Brown, Rapper JBC, Avi Kraus and a choir of children from schools across London, including Clore Tikva, Mathilda Marks-Kennedy, Etz Chaim and Wolfson Hillel. Doughnuts were handed out and people celebrated as the Menorah was lit for the third night of Chanukah.

This festive occasion was particularly meaningful for the Jewish community this year, given the horrific attack at Bondi Beach in Australia.

Pioneering London project to support child victims of sexual abuse and exploitation to be rolled out nationally

On 16 December, my Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime Kaya Comer-Schwartz and I joined Health Secretary Wes Streeting MP, and Home Office Minister Jess Phillips MP, on a visit to the Lighthouse in Camden, as the Government announced plans to replicate this pioneering service across the country as part of its violence against women and girls strategy.

The Lighthouse – the first and only facility of its kind in the country – provides support to children and young people who have been sexually abused or exploited, as well as providing support to their families or carers. Based on the Child House model of international best practice, it brings together physical and mental health, advocacy, social care and therapeutic services ‘under one roof’, alongside support for child victims to progress through the criminal justice and court process in a child friendly way.

MOPAC has invested over £3 million to set up and run the Lighthouse, which opened in 2018 and has provided support to over 2,000 survivors of child sexual abuse and exploitation to date. It is also funded by NHS England (London Region) and North Central London Integrated Care Board.

I want to put on record my thanks to the team at MOPAC and at all partner agencies for their passion, skill and commitment in establishing and delivering this truly impactful service for children, families and carers, in some of the most difficult circumstances imaginable.

Christmas Carol Service 2025

On 15 December, Southwark Cathedral once again played host to my annual Christmas Carol Service, where I was joined by 450 invited guests and staff. This year’s theme centred around diversity and inclusion, reminding us that no matter who you are or where you are from, Londoners are loved and wanted in our great city.

The Dean of Southwark, The Very Rev’d Dr Mark Oakley, led the service, with the Address given by the Bishop of Croydon, The Rt Rev’d Dr Rosemarie Mallett. The Pledge and Blessing was delivered by the Bishop of Southwark, The Rt Rev’d Christopher Chessun, whom I paid tribute to as this marked his last Service with us ahead of his retirement next year.

I was delighted to be joined by Alisa Cooper, chef and content creator, Len Duvall OBE, AM, Chair of the London Assembly and David Wood, who all delivered readings. David is the son of Sir Wilfred Wood, the former Bishop of Croydon, with this year marking the 40th anniversary of his consecration as the first black Bishop in the Church of England.

9-year-old Amani Prasanth from Sutton Music Trust began the event by singing beautifully the opening verse of 'Once in Royal David's City'. We also welcomed the London Community Gospel choir, whose voices resonated throughout the Cathedral as they gave us their unique renditions of 'Mary did you know?' and 'Oh Holy Night.'. The service was also supported by my Team London volunteers.

TAP London, a charity which provides shelter services for homeless people, was the beneficiary of donations received on the night.

New Met Estate Strategy published

The Met needs an estate that is fit for the 21st century and serves the needs of hardworking officers, staff and all Londoners. On 18 December, the Commissioner and I published a new 10-year Estate Strategy, which prioritises neighbourhood policing, putting officers at the heart of the communities they serve, keeping our streets safe.

Investment will create 40 neighbourhood policing hubs across the capital, will help to modernise the Met's physical and digital forensics services, provide better training facilities for firearms officers, and begin the process of replacing the Met's fleet with electric vehicles.

Despite my £1.16 billion record funding, the Met is still facing some tough choices following 14 years of underfunding from the previous Government. Half of the buildings across the Met fall below acceptable standards and need to evolve to meet the demands of modern policing.

I will continue to work with the Met Commissioner and make the case to Government for the funding the Met needs - to ensure we can continue delivering a safer London for everyone and build on the significant reductions in crime and violence we have achieved.

Andrea Simon to become London's Independent Victims' Commissioner

On 19 December, I was delighted to announce the appointment of Andrea Simon as London's next independent Victims' Commissioner.

Andrea brings an incredible wealth of knowledge, experience and passion to the role and she will stand up for survivors of crime across the capital, making sure their voices are heard and that their needs are at the heart of the work of the Met and the wider criminal justice system.

Since creating the post of London's Victims' Commissioner in 2017, we have made important steps towards ensuring we have a justice system that works for all. I know that Andrea is committed to being a strong voice for victims of crime and will work tirelessly to help reform the criminal justice system, so that it supports victims every step of the way.

The stage is set for an exceptional year of sport in London in 2026

Following an outstanding year of major sporting events in the capital in 2025 - where London was crowned the undisputed global capital for women's sport - I have committed to continue bringing the world's biggest sporting events to the city.

London played a leading role across women's sport in 2025 with over 1.4 million fans flocking to the capital some of the world's biggest events, including the Women's Rugby World Cup Final at

Twickenham this year – which set a new world record as the most attended women’s rugby match in history.

Earlier this year, I unveiled a new report revealing major sporting events delivered £230 million boost to London’s economy, attracting over 200 million global viewers.

Looking ahead, the capital is also at the centre of a number of exciting bids to bring more of the world’s biggest sporting events to the capital, with a significant focus on women’s sport.

Colindale Tube station becomes latest addition to step-free network as new ticket hall opens to customers

Colindale Tube station’s new landmark ticket hall opened to customers on 22 December, giving the station on the Edgware branch of the Northern line step-free access for the first time.

The new ticket hall, replacing the former 1960s-built entrance, includes a distinctive curved ceiling clad with laminated timber, a sustainable blue-and-green roof drainage system, and a lift giving access from street to platform.

The new ticket hall also provides additional capacity, supporting new homes and helping to future-proof the station for the projected increase in customer demand over the years to come. In addition, the area outside the new station entrance has a wider pavement for pedestrians.

Work started on the station’s major upgrade in January 2024, with funding from the Government and contributions from Barnet Council, local developers and TfL. Without this upgrade, Colindale Tube station was expected to reach passenger capacity by 2026.

Now that Colindale’s new ticket hall is open, TfL will complete the final parts of the station’s major upgrade, which includes installing an enhanced accessible customer toilet (available from mid-2026), permanent signage, new cycle parking facilities and letting the station’s new retail space.

I’m delighted that Colindale is now the 94th step-free Tube station and will benefit from a whole host of other improvements to not only improve accessibility, but also support major housing developments in the local area, as well as boosting local businesses and inclusive economic growth. More than a third of Underground stations across the capital are now step-free.

London Partnership Board

On 9 December, I co-chaired the London Partnership Board with Cllr Claire Holland, where we discussed key priorities for the capital. We explored the newly launched Inclusive Talent Strategy – the bold blueprint to unlock London’s potential by putting employers at the heart of skills development. We also discussed reaffirming London’s global narrative as the world’s most inclusive and innovative city.

We further focused on the progress across our London Missions. The meeting highlighted the Housing Mission, hearing from Cllr Grace Williams, Co-Chair of the mission, on the mission’s innovative work to accelerate housing delivery by tackling stalled sites – a crucial step toward meeting London’s housing need. These discussions showcased the energy and collaboration

powering our vision to make London the most inclusive, prosperous and forward-thinking city in the world.

TfL fares package

On 11 December, I announced plans for Transport for London fares in 2026, keeping them as affordable as possible.

When the Government awarded TfL £2.2bn in vital investment - the biggest ever multi-year funding deal for London in more than a decade - it made clear it expects TfL fares to rise by inflation plus one percent. However, I remain committed to doing everything in my power to keep TfL fares as affordable as possible because I know how the cost-of-living crisis is still hitting many Londoners hard.

That's why I announced plans for an emergency cost-of-living measure, funded by City Hall, to continue freezing bus and tram fares until July 2026. This is the seventh time I've been able to freeze bus and tram fares, and it will particularly benefit those on the lowest incomes in our city.

The plans would mean that only fares on Tube and TfL rail services would now increase from March 2026. I also plan to ensure that increases to pay as you go fares on the Tube will be capped at 20p, with many only rising by just 10p.

The record number of TfL fares freezes I've put in place since 2016 mean that under the plans Londoners would still be saving around 16 per cent on tube and rail fares and 34 per cent on bus and tram fares compared to if fares had risen in line with inflation since 2016.

Policing, Crime and Security

The Met's Children's Strategy on the agenda at the London Policing Board

On 11 December, I was pleased to chair the latest meeting of the London Policing Board. During the session, we focused on the Met's Children's Strategy, scrutinising their vital work in this space and also reviewed mid-year performance.

I want to thank all those involved to enable these important public oversight meetings to happen, as we work towards building a Met that commands the confidence and trust of all Londoners.

Working together to ensure safer Winter Nights

On 11 December, I joined Met Commissioner, Sir Mark Rowley, my Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, Kaya Comer-Schwartz, local police officers, and community representatives in Shoreditch, to see first-hand how close partnership working is helping keep Londoners safe this winter. I heard how the Met are working with local businesses and communities to ensure everyone out and about shopping, attending a Christmas party, or meeting friends for a drink, is safe after dark on their night out.

My record investment in the Met means more officers are visible on our streets and working with retailers and local businesses to drive down neighbourhood crime - with 16,000 fewer offences across the capital in the last year. Positive outcomes for shoplifting have also improved dramatically

thanks to better partnership work and collaboration. Policing in the West End has also doubled helping to drive thefts down by 25 per cent.

I'll continue to do all I can - working with businesses, communities and the police - to build on these reductions and deliver a safer London for everyone.

Transport

TfL consultation shows strong public backing for DLR extension to Beckton Riverside and Thamesmead as Government greenlights scheme

TfL's latest public consultation on proposals to extend the DLR from Gallions Reach to Beckton Riverside and Thamesmead, demonstrates strong public backing, as the Government confirmed support in the Autumn Budget.

The consultation, held between 23 June and 17 August 2025, received 1,444 responses, and sought views on the proposed route, new station locations, and how the extension could be delivered.

Key findings include:

- 76 per cent of respondents supported the proposed route from Gallions Reach;
- 66 per cent backed the proposed station at Beckton Riverside; and
- 77 per cent supported the proposed station in Thamesmead town centre

Respondents welcomed the improved connectivity and economic opportunities the extension will bring, particularly for Thamesmead. Many also suggested future extensions beyond Thamesmead to Abbey Wood or Bexley. TfL confirmed that while the current focus is on delivering the Thamesmead extension, the design allows for potential future expansion.

It follows a positive response to TfL's initial consultation held last year, where 75 per cent of respondents said that the proposals would make journeys into the wider east and southeast London quicker.

The proposed Thamesmead extension will connect two Opportunity Areas and unlock major development sites, supporting the delivery of 25,000 to 30,000 new homes, creating 10,000 jobs, and attracting nearly £18 billion in private investment. A new station will be built at Beckton Riverside, with a tunnel under the River Thames linking to another new station at Thamesmead. This builds on TfL's experience from the 2009 extension to Woolwich Arsenal, which delivered significant housing growth in Woolwich, Canning Town, and the Royal Docks.

I'm pleased that the Government is backing the DLR extension to Thamesmead - something I've long called for alongside London's businesses and communities. The project is a win-win and a massive vote of confidence in London. It will not only transform travel in a historically underserved part of the capital, but also unlock thousands of new jobs and homes.

Therapia Lane

Therapia Lane, where London Trams are based, has become TfL's first depot to remove fossil gas usage by upgrading its heating system. It has also introduced on-site solar generation.

By adapting the depot in its biggest overhaul since it opened 27 years ago, the new heating and power system prepares the site for the future and ensures operational sites play a role in reducing climate change impact.

The heating system has been modernised with a range of low-carbon, electric heat pumps and infrared panel heaters, replacing the unsustainable fossil fuel gas boilers.

The additional electricity consumption from the new heating system will be offset by using 1,800m² of solar panels on the roof of the depot, which will generate 187 kWp of energy. Energy savings will come from energy efficiency measures such as improved insulation and LED lighting, which will also create a better, brighter, and more comfortable working environment for staff.

This green transition will help improve energy efficiency and save money, showing that sites like this have an important role in reducing the impacts of climate change.

First Rail London Limited named as TfL's preferred operator for London Overground

TfL has announced its intention to award the new London Overground operator contract to First Rail London Limited (FRL), a subsidiary of FirstGroup PLC.

FRL will take over from the current operator, Arriva Rail London, on Sunday 3 May 2026, and will work closely with TfL over the eight-year contract to deliver further enhancements for customers on this hugely popular network.

Under the new concession, FRL will introduce a range of service and operational improvements designed to enhance customer experience and support staff, including:

- Extra peak-time trains on the Mildmay line from May 2026, with shuttle services between Clapham Junction and Shepherd's Bush during peak hours, providing more capacity and quicker journeys for commuters
- More frequent trains on the Windrush line from December 2026, with services through the core section of the Windrush line increasing to 18 trains per hour, reducing waiting times and improving flexibility for customers
- A relentless focus on the safety of customers and staff with upgraded help points and CCTV
- Strong collaboration with partners, such as Network Rail and Alstom, the manufacturer of the London Overground trains, to maintain high performance and customer satisfaction
- Investment in people and technology to improve reliability, manage disruption, and provide better customer information
- Targeted upgrades on the Mildmay line infrastructure to boost performance for customers
- Innovative customer information solutions, including expanding digital screens to display live travel updates for stations and nearby interchange services, such as buses across all operator-managed stations
- Continued work to improve accessibility in partnership with leading advocacy groups

These improvements will help meet growing demand and ensure London Overground continues to provide a safe, reliable, customer-focused service.

TfL joins forces with Serco to make major upgrades to Santander Cycles, with in-dock charging set to be introduced in summer 2026

TfL has awarded a contract to cycle hire operator, Serco, that will see the operating provider continue to run London's flagship cycle hire scheme, Santander Cycles until 2031, with an opportunity to extend for a further five years.

The new contract supports TfL to move forward with ambitious plans for the cycle hire scheme, to ensure it keeps pace with the extraordinary growth in rental e-bikes in recent years. The next six years will see huge improvements to the customer experience, with a new mobile app and a new QR Code bike release system to make hiring a bike much easier.

Planned upgrades to the Santander Cycles scheme will also include the introduction of an in-dock charging system across terminals in the capital. This innovative technology will enhance efficiency for both users and the scheme by ensuring e-bikes are consistently charged and ready to ride. By eliminating the issue of low charge in batteries, customers can enjoy a more reliable and seamless cycling experience. Santander Cycles terminals will also be modernised across the network to make hiring a bike easier and more accessible than ever before, supporting a more sustainable and user-friendly transport option for Londoners and visitors.

This new contract comes as TfL's cycle hire scheme has enjoyed one of its most successful years. This success has been supported by work to improve and modernise the scheme, including the increased rollout of e-bikes.

TfL sees growth in applications for world-famous Knowledge of London during its 160th anniversary year

TfL is celebrating the 160th anniversary of the Knowledge of London, the world-renowned test of geographical mastery required to become a licensed London taxi driver. Since its introduction in 1865, the Knowledge has stood as a symbol of dedication, expertise and service to Londoners.

TfL has seen a significant rise in applications, with numbers increasing from 440 in 2022 to 742 to the end of November 2025 – a 68.6 per cent increase, on track to be the highest number in a decade. This growth reflects renewed interest in the profession and follows recent Knowledge process updates aimed at making it more accessible and appealing to a wider range of people. The changes also enable dedicated applicants to progress by reducing the time between examinations called 'appearances'.

Earlier this year, TfL set out a new plan to enable the capital's taxi trade and private hire industry to meet the challenges of the next five years. The new Taxi and Private Hire Action Plan outlines 14 measures designed to support services, drive positive change across the industry and ensure it continues to deliver excellent service for Londoners.

The Knowledge has continually evolved to stay relevant in a city that is constantly changing, and the new measures form part of the commitments outlined in TfL's Action Plan. Although the process looks very different from how it did 160 years ago, it continues to ensure that drivers are

fully equipped to help Londoners travel across the city every day, and TfL remains committed to keeping the Knowledge relevant for the future.

The Knowledge of London is the most respected taxi driver qualifications in the world, and I am proud to see a renewed interest in this London icon during its 160th anniversary year. The recent increase in applications reflects the enduring prestige of becoming a licensed London taxi driver. This is a fascinating, varied career where, as your own boss, you choose where and when to work.

Environment

Lord Mayor of Melbourne visit

On 11 December, I welcomed the Lord Mayor of Melbourne to City Hall. We reflected on the C40 Cities Climate Summit at Rio de Janeiro in November, sharing insights on how global collaboration and exchanging best practice can accelerate climate action. We also discussed preparations for COP31, ensuring both London and Melbourne continue to lead on sustainability and resilience.

White storks and beavers to make historic return to East London

A breeding colony of white storks will be re-introduced to London for the first time in 600 years, as part of my £3.48million new Green Roots Fund to help make neighbourhoods across the capital greener, healthier and more climate resilient.

Driven to extinction in Britain in the 1400s, a breeding colony of white storks will soon be established in London with a £500,000 investment from my Green Roots Fund. Barking & Dagenham Council and the London Wildlife Trust plan to return them through an inclusive species recovery project in the heart of the Borough.

Eastbrookend Country Park in Dagenham will be only the second publicly accessible white stork reintroduction project in the country and the first ever in London. These majestic birds play a key role in wetland ecosystems, and the project builds on the recent restoration and maintenance of wet meadows and pastures in the area to ensure they can flourish.

The ambitious scheme will also introduce beavers to Eastbrookend Country Park. Until recently, beavers had not been seen in London for 400 years but were successfully returned to West London in 2023, through the support of my Rewild London Fund. Beavers are vital to helping other species to thrive, as they build dams, dig canals and create dead wood, creating and maintaining a habitat for other life to flourish such as water voles, dragonflies, amphibians, birds, reptiles and fish.

I launched the Green Roots Fund in June during London Climate Action Week to deliver on a manifesto pledge to support the creation and improvement of London's green and blue spaces, such as parks, community gardens, wetlands and rivers.

The Fund will invest more than £12m over three years and deliver projects that will restore habitats for nature to thrive. Following applications from projects in every London borough, a total of £3,485,081 will be invested in 26 projects in this first round of funding.

Meeting with the Chief Resilience Officer for Sydney

On 5 December, my Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, Mete Coban, met with the Chief Resilience Officer and the CEO of the City of Sydney. Both were visiting to attend the Resilient Cities Forum, an event hosted in London and aimed at bringing together global knowledge, practice and partnerships, supporting city leaders to tackle resilience challenges. Sydney faces some similar challenges to London and the meeting was an opportunity to share learning and best practice.

Resilient Cities Forum

On 8 December, my Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, Mete Coban, gave the opening remarks at the Resilient Cities Forum. The three-day event brought together global city leaders to think about the challenges facing urban environments - from climate change to inequality - and to consider the solutions. My Deputy Mayor welcomed delegates from more than 30 global cities to London, and described London's focus on collaboration, innovation and community to deliver flagship projects that make our city stronger, safer and more resilient. London Chief Resilience Officer Katherine Richardson provided the closing remarks, at the end of a full day of panels and interactive discussions.

Revolt Cycling visit

On 9 December, my Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, Mete Coban, visited Revolt Cycling studio in Holborn. Revolt Cycling is London's first sustainability-focused fitness studio. Their spin bikes convert clients' effort into electricity, which helps power the studio. Just one class (full class, 40 bikes) can produce enough power to run a British home for 80 per cent of a day. My Deputy Mayor toured the studio and discussed how businesses could embed sustainability into their business models.

Green Roots – Archbishops Amphibians Project

On 9 December, my Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, Mete Coban, visited Archbishops Park in Lambeth as part of a series of visits to promote the Green Roots Fund. He heard more about their Archbishops Amphibians project, which was the recipient of a previous green infrastructure grant fund: Rewild London Fund. The project was led by Lambeth Council in partnership with the Archbishops Park Community Trust, and the chair of the Trust, Helen Lees led the site visit, which was also attended by Cllr Donatus Anyanwu. My Deputy Mayor toured the park and visited the pond and new adjoining marsh garden with its minibeast towers and frog hotels, which were made possible through my Rewild London funding.

Tideway's Deptford Site Opening

On 12 December, my Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, Mete Coban, formally opened Tideway's new public space at Deptford Church Street with Tideway, Lewisham Council, Studio Weave and local community partners. This forms part of the £4.6bn Thames Tideway Tunnel project, which is dramatically cutting sewage discharges into the tidal Thames. This will contribute to my wider Clean and Healthy Waterways work to improve water quality and access to blue-green space. The former construction site has been transformed into a pocket park with new trees, wildflower planting, sustainable drainage features, play equipment co-designed with local

schoolchildren and public art celebrating Deptford's riverside heritage, giving residents a high-quality new place to enjoy nature next to cleaner water.

Community Energy Taskforce meeting

On 15 December, Mete Coban, my Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, attended the launch of the London Councils Community Energy Toolkit and the Zero Carbon Accelerator (ZCA) Community Energy Solar Opportunity Review, as part of my Community Energy Taskforce. My Deputy Mayor took part in a panel discussion alongside Repowering London and Councillor Rezina Chowdhury, Vice Chair of London Councils' Transport & Environment Committee. The event underscored the ongoing collaboration between the GLA and London Councils to support boroughs in working with community energy organizations to help achieve London's net zero goals.

Greenpeace boat

On 16 December, my Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, Mete Coban, visited Greenpeace's newest vessel, Witness, when it arrived in London. The Witness is a working sailboat which is used for a range of activities, including research and storytelling. Mete toured the vessel and met with the crew to discuss the importance of action on the climate crisis.

Sea Lanes Project

On 16 December, my Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, Mete Coban, met senior representatives of Canary Wharf Group to discuss their proposed Canary Wharf Lido (Sea Lanes) at Eden Dock. They discussed how the scheme can support my Clean and Healthy Waterways Plan by offering safe, year-round open-water swimming with inclusive pricing, community programming and ecological design features, such as natural filtration and floating habitats, that benefit wildlife as well as local residents and workers.

Visit to St Paul's Church with Minister McCluskey

On 18 December, Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, Mete Coban, visited St Paul's Church in West Hackney with the Minister for Energy Consumers, Martin McCluskey MP. Mete and the Minister toured the church and viewed their solar panels, heat pumps and battery storage capacity.

Growth and Skills

Adult Skills Fund Mayoral Board

I chaired the Adult Skills Fund Mayoral Board on 10 December. The Board endorsed the reconciliation approach for the Adult Skills Fund (ASF) and Free Courses for Jobs (FCfJ) grant funding for the 2024-25 academic year, and the reconciliation of Jobs and Skills for Londoners funding for the 2024-25 academic year.

The Board then discussed and endorsed the proposed indicative ASF and FCfJ grant allocations for the 2026-27 academic year. This discussion also included proposed amendments to the 2025-26

GLA ASF Funding and Performance and Management Rules to fund a proportion of over-performance for all ASF grant providers at the 2025-26 reconciliation stage.

Finally, the meeting closed with an update on recent ASF programme activity since the last meeting.

London Skills Development Network Visit

My Deputy Mayor for Business and Growth, Howard Dawber OBE, visited the London Skills Development Network (LSDN) in Croydon on the 16 December. LSDN is one of our Pan-London Youth Trailblazer partners working with Croydon Council, testing new ways to help young people into work and training by breaking down barriers and improving how services work together.

Housing

Land sale at Barking Riverside

I'm thrilled to announce that Barking Riverside Ltd have completed the sale of 210A & 210B at Barking Riverside to L&Q. The scheme will deliver 651 new homes with start on site programmed for early next year. This is the first completion since 2022, the first of the land sales unlocked through the Homes England BIL grant funding and a brilliant end to the year.

Ending Homelessness Accelerator Programme

I am pleased to announce that the GLA and London Councils have announced the launch of a new London Ending Homelessness Accelerator Programme – bringing together more services to better prevent homelessness and get people help when they need it the most.

This is backed with a new £3.5 million investment secured by City Hall and London Councils from Government, which will enable the testing of innovative approaches to preventing homelessness, as well as supporting a team to drive forward key reforms.

The Accelerator Programme will support London government to work together and improve services for Londoners at risk of all forms of homelessness, whether forced to sleep rough or living in temporary accommodation.

Through a strong partnership between City Hall, London boroughs, and national government, the programme aims to ensure that public services and resources are joined-up and available to prevent homelessness early and sustainably, costs are reduced, and improvements are made to the supply and quality of temporary and supported housing.

New Floating Hubs

I'm proud to announce £1 million in funding for new Floating Hubs in hotspot areas across 17 locations in the capital, ensuring long-term rough sleepers in the greatest need receive the support they need such as accommodation.

This new pioneering initiative will provide a local, time-limited and intensive intervention to a targeted group of people experiencing long-term rough sleeping.

This is part of my wider, strategic approach to improving the effectiveness of services and to end rough sleeping for good in London by 2030.

The Economy, Business and Enterprise

Launch of Orbit Clipper

On 5 December, I launched the UK's first fully electric zero-emissions ferry, which will operate between Rotherhithe and Canary Wharf, alongside my Deputy Mayor for Business and Growth Howard Dawber and my Walking and Cycling Commissioner Dr Will Norman. The ferry is being phased into service to replace the existing diesel vessel, providing a fast and green service for thousands of Londoners and visitors. It will significantly increase space for bicycles, giving cycling in London a further boost.

London is a global leader for clean tech innovation, with a green economy worth almost £50bn a year. Investing in clean, smart transport supports London's future growth and my commitment to making London a net zero carbon city by 2030. Orbit Clipper was built on the Isle of Wight, helping to boost the economy outside London too.

Business engagement and support

Throughout this period, my Deputy Mayor for Business and Growth, Howard Dawber OBE, continued to work with key stakeholders on implementation of the London Growth Plan and support for businesses, including:

- On 5 December, attended and spoke at the Annual Newham Business Awards.
- On 6 December, travelled to 21 London Boroughs to celebrate and champion London's Small Businesses on Small Business Saturday – some highlights included:
 - Big Mum's Samosas in Richmond on their opening day, a Grow London Local supported business.
 - Oru Space in Sutton, supported by my Good Growth Fund and Grow Back Greener Fund.
 - Chez Maitre in the Royal Borough of Greenwich.
 - Mirage 2 Diner in the London Borough of Bromley.
 - Little Bangla Market, London Borough of Newham.
- On 8 December, spoke at the High Streets Data Service 'Data Day' with partners to discuss the importance of data to London's economy.
- On 10 December, provided remarks and participated in a roundtable hosted by The Crown Estate on The Future of Global Cities.
- On 12 December, attended a Business Crime roundtable with my Deputy Mayor, Kaya Comer-Schwartz, and the Met Commissioner, alongside leading businesses from Central London, on our efforts to target crime hotspots.
- On 12 December, met with Christopher Clements-Davies, Chairman, SkyLifters Ltd, to discuss the company's' growth journey.
- On 15 December, met with Rob Perrins, CEO, Berkeley Group, to discuss London's housing challenges in the context of the London Growth Plan.
- On 15 December, chaired a meeting of the London Business Forum, to discuss delivery of the London Growth Plan and activity in 2026.

- On 17 December, met with Mayor of East Midlands, Claire Ward, to share our respective local growth plans and discuss opportunities for collaboration.

Civil Society and Sport

International Volunteers' Day

On 5 December, my Deputy Mayor for Communities and Social Justice, Dr Debbie Weekes-Bernard, marked International Volunteers' Day, where she shared her support and appreciation for volunteers across our city.

Access to Sports Leisure Facilities

On 11 December, officers from my Sports Team met with UK Active and selected leisure providers to agree a pilot programme to provide free access to facilities for children and young people.

The pilot programme will be delivered from February 2026 in several targeted London boroughs, as part of my commitment to work with partners to expand free access to sports facilities and to improve the mental health and wellbeing of young people.

This pilot scheme will help to provide safe spaces and positive opportunities for young people aged 11-16 to attend as after-school activities.

HandsOn Wrap Up London Volunteering

On 17 December, my Deputy Mayor for Communities and Social Justice, Dr Debbie Weekes-Bernard, and my Deputy Mayor for Environment & Energy, Mete Coban, visited HandsOn London to volunteer at their annual Wrap Up London winter clothing campaign.

Wrap Up London mobilises thousands of volunteers each year to collect, sort and distribute warm clothing to vulnerable Londoners. During the visit, my Deputy Mayors helped sort and pack winter coats for distribution to homelessness charities across the city. The visit also provided an opportunity to learn more about the charity's impactful work and to thank the volunteers who give their time and energy to support those facing hardship over the winter months.

World Basketball Day Celebration

On 21 December, my Civil Society and Sport team partnered with the Brixton Topcats basketball club to host a World Basketball Day celebration at the Brixton Recreation Centre. This event, commissioned by my Basketball Taskforce for London, showcased basketball's international cultural relevance and its role in promoting inclusion and community cohesion. It brought players from teams across London for two mixed basketball games and delivered a wheelchair basketball exhibition.

The day brought together young people supported by various basketball projects, coaches from my London Coaches partnership with the NBA, basketball taskforce members, as well as representatives and players from London's teams and clubs. Attendees also enjoyed interactive competitions and an awards ceremony recognising outstanding players and contributors.

Culture

Meeting with Baroness Twycross

On 9 December, my Deputy Mayor for Culture and Creative Industries, Justine Simons OBE, met Baroness Fiona Twycross, Minister for Museums, Heritage and Gambling, to discuss heritage skills and endangered craft. Endangered crafts are part of London's cultural identity and creative economy. Supporting these crafts aligns with Mayoral priorities on culture, skills, and inclusive growth.

Communities and Social Policy

Southwark Stands Together event

On 8 Dec, Dr Debbie Weekes-Bernard, my Deputy Mayor for Communities and Social Justice, spoke at the Southwark Stands Together event at Southwark Cathedral. Through her speech, Debbie reiterated my messages of unity and belonging through the Loved and Wanted campaign, reaffirming that our diversity is our biggest strength, and that all Londoners, no matter their background, are valued and welcome in this great city.

UNESCO Global Forum against Racism and Discrimination

On 9 and 10 December, my Deputy Mayor for Communities and Social Justice, Dr Debbie Weekes-Bernard, attended the UNESCO Global Forum against Racism and Discrimination in Paris. The Deputy Mayor was joined by global civil society leaders, politicians and others, to explore how challenging racism through coordinated global action could work.

Interfaith Chanukah ceremony

On 17 December, my Deputy Mayor for Communities and Social Justice, Dr Debbie Weekes-Bernard, attended an interfaith Chanukah ceremony at the Liberal Jewish Synagogue. All major faiths were represented in a display of unity and discussed the importance of interfaith dialogue and solidarity.

Children and Young Londoners

National Youth Strategy launch

On 9 December, my Deputy Mayor for Children and Families, Joanne McCartney and the Director of London's Violence Reduction Unit, Lib Peck, attended the launch of the government's National Youth Strategy at Peckham Levels.

The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, Lisa Nandy MP, launched the government's new 10-year plan, designed to ensure every young person across the country has a safe place to go, someone who cares for them and a community where they feel they belong. The National Youth Strategy will deliver up to 250 new or refurbished youth centres, 50 Young Futures Hubs (aligned to the prevention partnerships and panels that the VRU is leading across London), and new support for youth workers, backed by over £500 million of investment.

In their discussions with youth sector leaders and Metro Mayors, Joanne and Lib championed the interests of London's youth sector to be embedded in the National Youth Strategy.

My Supporting and Inspiring Young Londoners mandate directly aligns with the objectives of the National Youth Strategy. As Mayor, I have been committed to making London the greatest city in the world to grow up in. Since 2016 I am proud to have invested more than £100 million and delivered over 500,000 positive opportunities for young people across every London borough. I will continue to build on that work and investment in youth work by helping young Londoners access a further 250,000 positive opportunities this term.

New Deal for Young People project visit to HDMT Music

On 11 December, my Deputy Mayor for Children and Families, Joanne McCartney, visited HDMT Music, a mentoring project funded by my £34 million New Deal for Young People. Joanne attended Roundwood School and Community Centre, a Pupil Referral Unit in Brent, where she saw first-hand how my investment has delivered high-quality mentoring for young people most in need. She also heard from young people about the importance of mentoring and how they have benefitted from the project.

The project uses music, creative arts and entrepreneurial sessions to help young Londoners' personal development – particularly those who are at risk of exclusion from school, criminalisation, or who have recently been in custody or released.

Deputy Mayor visit to a Maggie's Centre

On 15 December, my Deputy Mayor for Children and Families, Joanne McCartney, visited Maggie's, a charity dedicated to providing free practical, emotional, and psychological support to people affected by cancer and their families. The visit took place at a Maggie's centre in St Bartholomew's Hospital in the City of London, which is designed to offer a calm, non-clinical space where individuals can access expert advice, including counselling and benefits advice, and connect with others.

During the visit, Joanne spent time speaking directly with people who use the service, listening to their experiences and stories. Joanne joined conversations with staff and volunteers to understand how Maggie's tailored support helps families navigate the challenges of cancer. Joanne also toured the centre, gaining insight into how its environment fosters comfort and community.

Health

GIANT Conference

My senior health adviser, Dr Tom Coffey, represented me at the GIANT Health Event 2025 – a two-day health technology innovation conference. Dr Coffey highlighted why our city is a front runner to become the new world capital of life sciences and innovation. London is home to first-rate universities and research institutes, with the population diversity to provide the perfect testbed and a rich source of health data through the Secure Data Environment.

London is also rapidly upskilling our workforce with the skills employers need, including £147 million in new funding, through our Inclusive Talent Strategy. And importantly, London's health

and care system is working hard to create a better and more effective ways for our industry partners to engage and bring innovation to London. This was an excellent opportunity to highlight NHS innovation and promote the need to dramatically increase its scale, speed and spread.

London Legacy Development Corporation

Chair of the London Legacy Development Corporation

I announced my intention to appoint Keith Morgan as the new chair of London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC). Keith has extensive experience in banking and asset finance. He was the founding Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of British Business Bank plc, the UK's economic development bank for business and an Executive Director of UK Financial Investments Limited (UKFI), which managed the government's shareholdings in the nationalised banks.

He joined UKFI from Banco Santander where he was an Executive Director of its US business and was previously a member of the Executive Committee of Abbey National in the UK. Keith is also an Advisory Board member at Soho Square, providing strategic, investment and corporate counsel, and Trustee of the Design Council.

The London Assembly held a confirmation hearing to assess the proposed appointment of Keith and agreed to recommend the appointment.

ABBA Voyage Social and Economic Impact

A new report published by global research and strategy consultancy, Sound Diplomacy, shows that ABBA Voyage generated £2.06bn in turnover, with 88.6% of spending happening outside the arena, supporting businesses across Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and the surrounding boroughs.

The show has attracted over 3 million visitors, with international guests making up 31% of spend and UK visitors outside London contributing 62%, helping boost the capital's economy by £1.51bn.

ABBA Voyage has also created £70m+ in social value through community initiatives, local partnerships, and educational outreach, while supporting inclusive growth, creating over 2,000 local jobs. With its cutting-edge motion capture technology and digital avatars, ABBA Voyage cements the Park as a world-class destination at the forefront of innovation, creativity and social impact.

Stand Up to Cancer Drone Show

On 11 December, Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park hosted Stand Up To Cancer's drone show, where 200 drones took to the air for a 10-minute aerial performance to raise money for life-saving cancer research. The live broadcast featured on Channel 4.

Inaugural Winter Adventure Programme

This December, Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park hosted Winter Adventure – a festive programme that brought the Park to life with seasonal events, inviting visitors to explore its spaces in new ways while celebrating the spirit, creativity and vibrant communities of east London.

Sports at Copper Box Arena

Baller League returned to Copper Box Arena for its second season, with returning managers Gary Lineker, John Terry and Tobi from Sidemen, along with all new teams led by Idris Elba and Chloe Kelly. The games took place every Monday until 29 December.

Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation

West London Waste Plan – consultation

On 11 December, consultation started on the West London Waste Plan.

The current West London Waste Plan (WLWP) was adopted in 2015 by the London Boroughs of Brent, Ealing, Harrow, Hillingdon, Hounslow, and Richmond upon Thames, as well as by OPDC (reflecting the Brent and Ealing parts of the OPDC area).

An updated WLWP has now been developed as a joint document, based on a similar arrangement used to prepare and adopt the 2015 WLWP.

The participating authorities are seeking to submit the updated WLWP to the Secretary of State of State by December 2026.

Energy Centre for OPDC Heat Network – resolution to grant planning approval

On 11 December, OPDC's Planning Committee unanimously resolved to grant planning permission for 1 Minerva Road to become the purpose-built energy centre building for the Old Oak and Park Royal Energy Network (OPEN).

Construction on the Energy Centre is expected to start in late 2026.

Planning and Regeneration

Silvertown Planning Application Approved

I am proud to announce that the London Borough of Newham's Planning Committee unanimously resolved to grant planning permission for the new Silvertown Masterplan. This will deliver up to 7000 homes and a new local centre for the Royal Docks. The first 106 affordable homes have now been completed, with some residents being in their new homes in time for Christmas.

Local Plans

On 12 December, GLA Officers responded on my behalf to the Hammersmith and Fulham Regulation 18 consultation. They broadly supported the vision and objectives of the draft Plan response and acknowledged that several evidence base documents were still in preparation. My officers provided guidance to positively inform the on-going preparation of the Local Plan and ensure that it aligns with the London Plan, as well as delivering the Council's objectives.

New London Architecture (NLA) awards

I'm delighted that four projects supported by my Good Growth Fund won awards at this year's New London Architecture (NLA) awards.

1. Brixton Rec – NLA Award for Culture (built) Winner 2025
2. Charlton WorkStack – NLA Award for Industrial & Logistics (built) Winner 2025
3. Cockpit Deptford – NLA Award for Retrofit (built) Winner 2025
4. Neasden Town Centre CPP strategy – NLA Award for Masterplan and Place Strategies Winner 2025

Planning Decisions (Stage 1 referrals)

I have asked officers to send letters with comments on the following Stage 1 referrals:

GLA Number	Development Name	Local Planning Authority	Decision date	Decision
2025/0954	Barking Logistics Centre	Barking and Dagenham	05/12/2025	No Strategic Issues
2025/0981	Grand Union	Brent	16/12/2025	No Strategic Issues
2025/0982	Grand Union	Brent	16/12/2025	No Strategic Issues
2025/0925	3-30 Cedar Way	Camden	08/12/2025	Does not fully comply with the London Plan
2025/0927	120-136 Camley Street	Camden	08/12/2025	Does not fully comply with the London Plan
2025/0967	Regis Road	Camden	08/12/2025	Does not fully comply with the London Plan
2025/0940	Honey Monster	Ealing	08/12/2025	Does not fully comply with the London Plan
2025/0956	2 Scrubs Lane	Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation	15/12/2025	Does not fully comply with the London Plan
2025/0961	Ley Street Gardens	Redbridge	15/12/2025	Does not fully comply with the London Plan
2025/0905	The South Quay Building	Tower Hamlets	15/12/2025	Does not fully comply with the London Plan
2025/0904	Lea Bridge Gasworks Site	Waltham Forest	08/12/2025	Does not fully comply with the London Plan

2025/0943	Chelsea Barracks Phase 5	Westminster	08/12/2025	Does not fully comply with the London Plan
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Planning Decisions (Stage 2 referrals)

Letters have been issued for the following statutory Stage 2 referrals:

GLA Number	Development Name	Local Planning Authority	Decision date	Decision
2024/0251	Purley Leisure Centre	Croydon	15/12/2025	Allow LPA to approve
2025/0469	International Trading Estate, Southall	Ealing	15/12/2025	Allow LPA to approve
2024/0283	Rotherhithe Gas Holder Site	Southwark	08/12/2025	Allow LPA to approve
2024/0723	Southwark Underground Station	Southwark	08/12/2025	Allow LPA to approve

Key engagements

Among my additional engagements since my last report were the following:

- I attended an event to launch the Orbit Clipper, the UK's first fully electric, zero-emissions passenger ferry on 5 December
- I met with Assistant Commissioner Laurence Taylor on 8 December
- I met with the prospective Chair of the London Legacy Development Corporation on 8 December
- I attended the London Partnership Board on 9 December
- I attended the GLA Group Collaboration Leadership Event on 9 December
- I attended the opening of the 41 Moorgate office on 9 December
- I chaired the Adult Skills Fund Mayoral Board on 10 December
- I met with the Downing Street Chief of Staff on 10 December
- I attended the London Policing Board on 11 December
- I joined a frontline policing patrol with the Metropolitan Police Commissioner and met with local businesses in Shoreditch on 11 December
- I met with the Lord Mayor of Melbourne on 11 December
- I attended the Mayor's Christmas Carol Service on 15 December
- I took part in a Chanukah lighting on 15 December 2025.
- I visited the Lighthouse in Camden to launch the government's Violence Against Women and Girls strategy on 16 December
- I attended the Metropolitan Police Christmas Carols on 17 December
- I appeared at Mayor's Question Time on 18 December
- I met with King's College London and their London Essay winners on 18 December
- I attended Police and Crime Committee on 19 December
- I visited the Choose Love store on 22 December
- I attended the New Year's Eve fireworks on 31 December