

MAYOR OF LONDON

Leonie Cooper AM

Chair of the Economy Committee
C/o Lauren.Harvey@london.gov.uk

Our ref: MGLA260121-4644

Date: 17 March 2021

Dear Leonie,

Thank you for writing to me on 26 January, as Chair of the London Assembly Economy Committee, to highlight key economic issues and share your recommendations. I am sorry for the delay in replying.

Since the start of the pandemic I have worked with the Government, including through the co-chairing of the London Transition Board. My Deputy Mayor for Business is represented on the Business Reopening Strategy Group, which continues to meet, alongside Minister for London, Paul Scully MP. A review of transition and recovery governance structures is currently underway. My Deputy Mayor for Business has also chaired a weekly Strategic Coordination Group Subgroup focused on Business and Economic Impacts for many months, which is attended by Government officers. This Group has provided a mechanism to monitor, identify, assess, and report impacts of business-related issues and has supported the provision of better information and insight, reassurance and dialogue to help lessen the short, medium and long-term economic impacts of COVID-19 on London.

Together with key stakeholders, I created a [Roadmap to the Full and Safe Reopening of the London Economy](#), which is continually updated to take into account the changing circumstances. A cross-GLA working group is tracking the progress of this work with key partners such as London Councils and London & Partners. I have shared this Roadmap with the Government and asked for its support in ensuring that London's economy is able to bounce back as soon as it is safe to do so. Within the Roadmap, and in many letters to Government, I have routinely lobbied Ministers for vital assistance for businesses, such as extending the business rates holiday and VAT relief throughout 2021, as well as providing targeted investment to address the devastating impact that the huge drop in tourism has had on the capital, particularly the Central Activities Zone (CAZ), and therefore the UK's economy.

I also recently [commissioned a major piece of research](#) into the future challenges and opportunities facing the CAZ, which will inform understanding of the long-term impacts on the central London economy. Above all, I have been clear that the CAZ needs targeted, financial and fiscal support from Government. No amount of public confidence messaging from the GLA family, its partners, and London businesses, will return pre-pandemic levels of footfall to central London and this is likely to remain the case for a long time, with international business and leisure tourism likely to remain very limited.

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I continue to advocate for London's businesses with the Government, noting that London urgently needs much more government support for the sectors of our economy that are being hit the hardest including hospitality, culture, and leisure. Before Christmas, I wrote to Ministers and asked that they urgently put in place a compensation scheme for all lost income, based on last year's returns, for any businesses affected by the further restrictions over the crucial festive period. However, the Government did not do so, and as a result, many businesses suffered catastrophic losses.

I am determined to do all I can within my power to support London's economic recovery, and I continue to provide grants and support directly to business across the capital. This includes through my London Business Hub, and I have also launched various support schemes such as the Culture at Risk Fund, Pay it Forward Scheme, and Back to Business Fund. Over 24,000 individual donations have been made by Londoners through the Pay It Forward London platform helping to raise over £1.8 million for over 440 small businesses.


I note your recommendation to review the Good Work Standard. The Good Work Standard community continues to grow and is now over 90 organisations strong and covering 210,000 employees in London. The Good Work Standard's core principles remain more relevant than ever during this difficult time. The pandemic has also brought forward new challenges and questions about the nature of good work and the support provided to employees. My Good Work Standard outlines a range of measures and resources to help employers adopt flexible working practices for their employees that are particularly relevant at this time.

As we come to understand the longer-term impact of the pandemic on Londoner's working lives and the changes it has brought about, my officers will work with employers, unions, and HR professionals to understand best practice and to see what changes will need to be made to the Standard, in the context of its design as an evolving Standard. My team will continue to engage with the TUC on the issues they raised. They will also continue to engage, encourage and support employers in sharing and developing best practices for their workforce whilst they work from home. My teams promote the Good Work Standard side by side with the London Healthy Workplace Award, which is currently being updated to better reflect the current context.

I stand ready to work alongside the Government to ensure that London, as well as the rest of the country, once again returns to pre-pandemic levels of prosperity.

Thank you again for writing to me.

Yours sincerely,



Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London