

London Assembly Mayor's Question Time – Thursday 21 March 2019
Transcript of Item 5 – Questions to the Mayor

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): We now go to the questions to the Mayor which are set out in the priority order paper.

2019/6251 - Brexit

[Andrew Dismore AM](#)

Given where we are on Brexit, what do you consider the implications are for the London economy and for Londoners?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): On 14 February [2019] Members of Parliament (MPs) voted to reject the Government's bad Brexit deal. Last week MPs voted again to reject the very same bad Brexit deal. It is noteworthy that the Prime Minister thinks that MPs should get a second or even third say, but not the British public. Over and over again, Government has failed to deliver promised breakthroughs from its hopeless Brexit negotiations. This deal would worsen life chances and reduce opportunities in London and across the UK for future generations. The Prime Minister needs to put our city and our country first and withdraw Article 50. It is time to give the public the final say on Brexit with the option of remaining in the European Union (EU).

With our partners in the London Resilience Forum, I have taken the steps we can to ensure the capital is prepared in the event the UK leaves the EU with no deal in place. However, the Government's uncoordinated approach to the planning for a no-deal has made this very difficult. For many businesses, it has been nigh on impossible for them to plan ahead. I am helping business owners to access information and support that is available through the Brexit Business Resources Hub and a new programme will launch shortly to help those who need face-to-face advice about navigating Brexit. For EU Londoners, especially for the vulnerable and hardest to reach, I am particularly concerned that the Government is not doing enough to prepare them for the biggest change in rights and immigration status for a generation. I have developed an EU Londoners Hub to provide EU citizens and their families with the latest information about their rights post-Brexit and to direct them to expert legal advice and support services.

Andrew Dismore AM: Thank you for that answer, which I think is a very important one. Would you agree that the problem actually is that three years after the referendum it is still the case that no one knows where we are going to end up, leaving Londoners and London businesses in no place to prepare for what may or may not be coming, with or without an extension which may or may not be granted? In any event, Mrs [Theresa] May's [MP, Prime Minister] rejected deal completely ignores the 80% of our exports, those in services, which are not mentioned in it at all. We are still at risk of a no-deal crash-out, are we not, despite the Parliamentary vote?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): We are probably at the greatest risk we have been since 23 June [2016] of leaving the EU without any deal whatsoever. That would be catastrophic for businesses, catastrophic for the National Health Service (NHS), catastrophic for construction, and catastrophic for how Londoners feel in their future as well. We have never been closer to that possibility than we are now, not just because of the proximity to 29 March [2019] but because of the way the Prime Minister is handling negotiations. The idea that a Prime Minister who has failed to get the support of Parliament should make a speech at a lectern

outside No. 10 Downing Street hectoring and lecturing MPs, almost calling them enemies of the people by implication, to try to get their support, I find astonishing.

Andrew Dismore AM: With potentially only a week to go due to the stubborn incompetence of the Prime Minister, who seems to be far more concerned about the future of the Conservative Party than of the country, she is still refusing to engage constructively with other parties and, as you say, slags off MPs instead. Even though the Speaker correctly says she cannot bring back her failed plan for a third time, is it not time to explore support for other options, for a softer Brexit as proposed by Labour or better still to go back to the country in the People's Vote, a second referendum to break the impasse? Will you be joining me and others at the protest on Saturday?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The best thing the Prime Minister can do, bearing in mind we are sleepwalking towards exiting the EU without any deal whatsoever, is to stop the clock running. It is possible to stop the clock running by withdrawing or revoking Article 50. That stops it. The Prime Minister or her successor can then have a game plan in relation to what sort of relationship they want to have with the EU; negotiate with the EU; get a deal that we are happy with, that does not damage our economy, our businesses and our country; and then re-serve Article 50.

Another alternative is to get an extension or withdraw and, bearing in mind Parliament is in gridlock, to give the British public a say in relation to what we think the future should be. I make this point. The Prime Minister is willing to go back to Parliament with the same deal again and again and again to give MPs another chance to change their minds knowing what they know now, but is scared to give the British public that same right, that same say. I cannot think of anything more democratic than giving the British public a say, "Do we accept the terms for exit she has negotiated?" with the option of remaining in the EU. I am not sure what she is scared of.

Andrew Dismore AM: I agree with you. We have seen the likes of Jacob Rees-Mogg [MP] with his Conservative European Research Group cronies, former Mayor Boris Johnson [MP], who should know better but for his overweening personal ambition, the Democratic Unionist Party, and no doubt the UK Independence Party (UKIP) will be speaking next, argue that the World Trade Organisation (WTO) is the panacea that will allow free trade. However, they are being disingenuous, are they not? While we could implement zero tariffs on imports it does not mean that other countries must do the same, so our exported goods will be more expensive overseas. Businesses could go bust and as the WTO Article 24 only covers goods and not services, the restrictions 80% of our exports face are completely unknown. What does Article 24 of the WTO rules, in the event of a no-deal Brexit, mean for London's economy, which is so heavily service-based?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Can I just remind Assembly Members why this discussion is so important? One of the statutory responsibilities we have is to promote our economy and Brexit is intrinsically linked to our economy. Those Conservatives hectoring over there need to understand that this issue is the most important issue the GLA has faced since we were formed in 2000. There is no part of London life not affected by this decision. That is why it is really important for you to be asking these really important questions.

Those who want us to leave the EU without any deal whatsoever use the WTO as the reason - the fig leaf, if you like - why things are going to be OK in the future, and you are right to ask about Article 24. The first thing is that WTO rules do not address the non-tariff barriers in relation to the services that we trade in so much. We have a trade surplus in relation to services, 90% of London's economy is in the service sector and 90% of our country's economy is in the service sector. The deal negotiated by the Prime Minister does not address any of that but WTO rules will not help us in relation to non-tariff barriers to services.

The idea that the EU will give us zero-tariff deals in relation to us leaving the EU without any deal whatsoever because of WTO is ridiculous because it would mean they would have to give the same zero-tariff terms to the rest of the world. Why would they do that? Similarly, if we were to agree a zero-tariff deal with the EU we would have to do the same with the rest of the world as well. It is nonsense when those Brexiteers say, "Do not worry about leaving the EU without any deal whatsoever, we can rely on the WTO". It is nonsense.

Andrew Dismore AM: Thank you.

Unmesh Desai AM: After the result of the [Brexit] referendum in 2015 there was a spike in hate crime and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) has warned that there is a real possibility there will be a similar increase in reports in the coming months. I have raised this before with you. Do you share my and HMICFRS's concerns over this possibility?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I do. It is just worth reminding ourselves that there is a direct link between so-called mainstream politicians demonising immigrants, demonising others, and the increase and spike in hate crimes. When you see posters that say, "Breaking point" linked to immigration, which mainstream politicians are promoting to win a referendum, do not be surprised if there is a spike in race crime because some people think it is acceptable to behave in a certain way. I am concerned about the possibility of an increase in race crime or a spike because of what happens in relation to us leaving the EU and some of the discourse taking place in the public arena by so-called mainstream politicians, amplified by the media and by social media companies as well. It is really important that we prepare for that, we are vigilant, and we do what we can to support those communities.

Unmesh Desai AM: Thank you for that. The New Zealand Prime Minister has called for a global fight to root out racist right-wing ideology. I agree and clearly this needs to be done at all levels. Sports is an example. What do you see as the role of London sporting institutions in tackling hate crime and challenging groups like the so-called Democratic Football Lads Alliance (DFLA), with their hate-fuelled rhetoric? Will you join me in calling upon clubs like West Ham United Football Club to take a clear, unequivocal and unambiguous stand against the activities of such groups?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Can I just say, Chairman, through you, that Assembly Member Desai has a long history of campaigning against racism going back many decades? I know of work you did just this weekend in relation to the march through London to raise awareness of some of the challenges facing our diverse and wonderful communities across London.

We have to do a lot more in relation to stamping out racism. Some of our football clubs have a role to play. You are right, the community work West Ham does is very good. The community work many of the clubs do is very good. But in their name, some of their so-called fans behave in a disgraceful manner and it is really important that clubs call out their fans when they are behaving in a disgraceful manner. You are right to put on record the good work in the community that West Ham does.

Unmesh Desai AM: Absolutely. I commend West Ham, and indeed all other Premier League clubs and London clubs, for the work they do to combat race hatred, but as I said, they need to go a step further and take a clear and unambiguous stand against people like the DFLA.

Very quickly, Mr Mayor, I will finish on this note. Your predecessor-but-one [Ken Livingstone] supported events like the Rise festival to bring London and Londoners together. Will you consider supporting mass

initiatives such as Rise and the newly-formed London United, which is a coalition of the London trade unions, to bring Londoners together to fight hatred in all its forms?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): One of the reasons why I have London's first ever Deputy Mayor for Social Integration and Communities is to do this sort of work. It is really important. Diversity is our strength but diversity is not the same as integration, bringing people together, and one of the roles of Dr Debbie Weekes-Bernard is to bring people together using culture, music, arts and other things. You would have seen in the London Borough of Waltham Forest the great work the Council is doing there with London's first ever Borough of Culture. Next year [2020] it is going to be Brent. I am more than happy, Assembly Member Desai, for you to speak to the Deputy Mayor about other things we can be doing to bring people together.

Unmesh Desai AM: You set a great example in the way that you champion pride in London. Thank you, Mr Mayor.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you.

Len Duvall AM: EU migration has dropped to its lowest levels now almost for a decade. I think we have asked this question but can you just remind us and can you just check on any latest information on what impact this is having on the various sectors within our economy in London, both public and private?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Your question gives me a good opportunity to say what you believe and I believe, which is to remind ourselves of the huge benefits, economically, socially and culturally, brought to our city by waves of immigration over successive generations. It is really important to remind ourselves of that. The bad news is, I am afraid, we are already starting to see adverse consequences from net migration from the EU going down.

I will give you some examples of the numbers. In construction, 34% of our construction workers are EU citizens not from this country. Speaking to those on construction sites, they have seen fewer people coming from the EU than in previous years. In summer normally people return to their country of origin and then come back. Some have not come back and they are very worried about our ability to build the homes we need because of the impact on construction. Many of those construction workers who are British citizens are at retiring age, a big number, so it is a big problem for us.

You look at some of our other industries, like hospitality. 28% of hospitality - I am talking about hotels and restaurants - rely on EU workers. They are also worried about the ability for them to be profitable, bearing in mind fewer people are coming, and that is before the Government brings in the £30,000-a-year rules in relation to immigration. What the Government is proposing is that unless you earn more than £30,000 a year, it will be very hard for you to be able to come here and work. That will decimate many of the industries across London. Think of construction, think of retail, think of hospitality, think of public administration. The NHS has a record number of vacancies. Why? Because they are finding it very difficult to fill them, and one of the reasons is because there are fewer citizens coming from the EU. I do not think people have woken up to the consequences already for our city of the referendum vote and the impact of fewer people from the EU coming to our city.

Len Duvall AM: These are strange times, Mr Mayor, and the points you have just made tell us some of the challenges we face. In these strange times, even the CBI, the Confederation of British Industry, which used to be a cheerleader for the Conservative Party, is starting to damn this Government and its approach towards Brexit, in particular about EU migration. One of the issues that surprises me in the chaos and confusion that

we now face, where the Government cannot even get members of its own party to vote for the direction of travel it wants to go in, is that if we were told that we were going to fill some of these jobs through EU migration, through 'homegrown', if I can use that term, in the last two years there has been no signalling from Government about changes in direction or how we train and reskill people to move into some of the vacancies that are going to be created. Do you think that adds to the confusion and the debacle that we are in, and in the coming days as we leave?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): We have talked about this, the importance of training homegrown young people to have the talents for the jobs that are being created. There should be a greater sense of urgency but you will be aware, from the businesses we have spoken to, of their concern around the Apprenticeship Levy, their concern about the lack of investment in schools, their concern about the cuts being made in further education (FE), their concern about the impact of cuts in the Education Maintenance Allowance, and I could go on. This is a perfect storm of bad news for businesses in our city. At the same time as there are fewer people from the EU coming here, who we need, the Government is failing to skill up the youngsters for the jobs that will need to be filled by somebody. It is a big challenge. That is why it is really important that we continue to lobby the Government to do the right thing, the right thing in terms of (1) how we exit the EU; and (2) how we train Londoners to have the skills we need to do these jobs.

Len Duvall AM: Thank you.

David Kurten AM: Mr Mayor, I was in the People's Question Time last week and sitting very near to you and I remember hearing you say at one point, "Brexit may provide opportunities for small and medium-sized businesses". I nearly fell off my chair --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I think Onkar [Sahota AM] did!

David Kurten AM: That was a wonderful piece of positivity from you about Brexit, Mr Mayor, and I thought, well, perhaps from spending nearly three years in the same room as me on occasions, I might have given you some of my optimism about Brexit. Unfortunately, today I have heard too much pessimism, I think. The language that some people use about Brexit is far too pessimistic. You talk about sleepwalking towards a cliff, crashing out and so on, but the people voted to leave the EU because the people were right in being optimistic. The people see this not as those things but as breaking our shackles and walking into freedom. Do you not agree with the language of the majority of people in this country, the 17.4 million people who voted to leave, that leaving the EU will be a good thing with lots of opportunities?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): No.

David Kurten AM: Well, there is a succinct answer, Mr Mayor, but we are leaving and the majority of the people in this country are very happy about that and are looking forward to it. It is going to be the most glorious day in your four years in office next week on 29 March [2019]. The right thing to do for London and for you as a Mayor is to take down the flag of the EU which you put up three years ago to mark our exit from the EU. Are you going to remove the flag?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Let us wait and see if we do leave the EU, and then we can have that conversation.

David Kurten AM: The good news is that in law, we are going to leave next Friday, 29 March [2019], if our MPs do not change the law, mess it up and betray democracy. One thing you did say earlier is that we do have

a very high probability that we are going to leave. I know you may not want to take down the flag yourself, the starry ring of the EU, but if you do not maybe someone else can take it down. Certainly the curtains are coming down on the EU. Would you like me to take it down for you, if you do not want to do it yourself?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chairman, I would be concerned that the Assembly Member may hurt himself whilst doing so. God forbid that should happen.

David Kurten AM: Thank you for your concern for my health and safety, Mr Mayor. You are a gentleman as always. Thank you.

2019/6426 - Maritime and Coastguard Agency Consultation

[Tony Arbour AM](#)

What analysis has TfL carried out on the likely impact on London's river traffic if the Maritime and Coastguard Agency's proposals for older UK passenger boats go ahead?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you very much for your question. TfL and I both recognise the important role that passenger vessels operating on the river play in contributing to London's economy. Safety must always be the top priority. With the projected growth on the Thames combined with my Vision Zero approach to injuries and deaths on the transport network, it is essential that all vessels using the river have effective safety measures in place in the event of an accident. River policy in London is split over several different bodies, including TfL, the Port of London Authority (PLA), the Environment Agency and the GLA. In this case, the PLA and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), which is under the auspices of the Department for Transport (DfT), set the regulatory and licence requirements for vessels operating on the tidal Thames.

Since summer 2018, TfL has been working closely with the MCA, PLA and Marine Policing Unit through the Thames Partner Safety Group. This group has come together to work collaboratively and share best practice to ensure the expected growth on the Thames happens in a safe and sustainable way. It has identified several issues which require further consideration, one of which is the operation of heritage vessels in busy stretches of the River Thames. I am aware that the MCA has recently carried out a consultation on its proposals for older UK passenger boats and that some of the heritage riverboat services that operate on the River Thames could be affected. TfL was not formally consulted by the MCA on the proposals for historic passenger vessels and as such they did not contribute to the consultation.

TfL, as part of the emerging Passenger Pier Strategy, intends to review the use of TfL-owned passenger piers to ensure the safe operation of these assets in line with any proposed change brought by the PLA and MCA. The Deputy Mayor for Transport has written to Colliers Launches, who are in Assembly Member Arbour's constituency, who operate historic boats on the Thames, and confirmed that TfL would welcome discussions with them as part of any review process. I am committed to working with all parties to continue the growth in passenger numbers the River Thames has seen over recent years. TfL will work with its partners and the Thames and London Waterways Forum to ensure that growth is safe and sustainable.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): Thank you very much for that, Mr Mayor. I did not fully understand what your line is going to be as Chair of TfL. Are you likely to support these proposals, which could well mean the end of the heritage vessels on the Thames?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): One of the things we are doing is making sure that we make clear to the DfT that if, as a consequence of their changes, there are new financial burdens on these heritage boats, they should be provided financial assistance. One of the reasons why Deputy Mayor [for Transport, Heidi] Alexander has made the offer to some of the vessel companies affected is to speak to TfL as part of the second review process so TfL can feed into that. What we do not want is any heritage vessels going out of business because they cannot afford the additional burdens placed upon them by the requirements that you are aware of.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): Would it not be a sensible thing to do for you to contact the Secretary of State [for Transport] on this matter and suggest to him that he takes the same line as his Department takes through the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency, saying that historic vehicles are currently exempt from the MOT test? Would it not be an appropriate approach for you to suggest that historic vessels, which have never had an accident on the river through any of the proposed changes that this regulation is supporting -- would it not be the way to ensure that the heritage vessels survive on the river?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am very happy for TfL to look at the evidence. I am well aware of the history of river disasters on the River Thames and one of the things you will be aware of is the grandfathering rights there are with historic vessels. If it is the case that there are no safety concerns around historic vessels and the DfT and MCA have it wrong, then of course they should re-look at the evidence. The evidence I have is that the MCA carried out this consultation. There were some consequences that I am not sure were intended or unintended. We are going to make sure we do not have vessel companies going out of business because they cannot afford to make the adaptations required.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): Mr Mayor, this would be a way of saving the Secretary of State from himself if you draw his attention to the fact. I have here a kind of roll call of the ships - I think it is fair enough to call them 'ships' - that would perhaps no longer sail past this place. We would lose the *Southern Belle*, we would lose the *Yarmouth Belle*, we would lose the *Clifton Castle*, the *Connaught*, and the *Viscountess*. They will be no more. Are you aware and will you draw to the Secretary of State's attention that maybe through ignorance, he could perhaps be doing to these boats what Dr [Richard] Beeching [author of Government reports on rail infrastructure] did to the branch lines and cut them off unnecessarily?

I am exercised by this because most of the companies are based in my constituency. It is not just Colliers. These are tens of thousands of people who use TfL piers. That will mean lots of income will be lost to TfL. More than that, it may mean that there is insufficient business on the TfL piers. Even worse than that, we only have two proper boatyards on the river, most of which spend their time on repairing these historic boats. If they are unable to afford to carry out the works which are required by these proposals, we will lose those boatyards. If we lose those boatyards that is absolutely contrary to your London Plan. Therefore I am suggesting that it really is an absolute no-brainer that we cannot lose this thing. I am suggesting to you - and certainly I should do this but I fully acknowledge I do not carry the weight that you do, even though he is my own Minister - that you should say to the Secretary of State, "There is an escape clause here. Do for the historic boats what you do for historic vehicles".

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): There are three points I would make. It has clearly come to things when the Chairman thinks I have more influence over Chris Grayling [MP, Transport Secretary] than he has. Secondly, it would not be right for me to comment on the ignorance or otherwise of the Secretary of State, as was alluded to by the Chairman in his question. Thirdly, the Chairman is very persuasive in relation to the points he has made. Can I take away and consider the points he has made? The other point that occurred to me as you were speaking was some sort of financial assistance to those boats that do need to make a

transition. I have read some of the things said by the vessel owners about the cost of adapting these, almost £250,000 for some of these ships, which is clearly not affordable to any of these companies. Why don't I reflect on the points that have been made, craft a letter, add any other points I think are sensible and work with Assembly Member Arbour to make sure we make representations to the Secretary of State on behalf of these companies, who are very often small businesses, family businesses, and providing a great service as well?

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): I am very grateful to you for that. I would like to draw to your attention, of course, that it is not the companies who ought to be most concerned about this, it is ordinary Londoners. If those boats disappear from the river, much of the interest there is in the river will also disappear and we will simply have bland - I do not want to be rude to the clippers - but we will simply have bland clippers rather than these characterful steamers. It is a matter not of importance just to a tiny part of London but really it is a matter for all of London. Thank you, Mr Mayor.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Understood.

2019/6077 - Improvements from your fast-track planning route

[Sian Berry AM](#)

Could you provide new data to show how your Supplementary Planning Guidance fast-track offer is working to incentivise developers to provide more affordable homes?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The level of affordable housing in planning permissions across London's boroughs fell to a pitiful 13% under the previous Mayor. That is why our pioneering fast-track route for planning applications, which both increases the level of affordable housing and gets homes built more quickly, was so urgently needed. The fast-track route is a key feature of my new Draft London Plan, which is currently at its Examination in Public. Until my Plan is adopted we have to work under the previous Mayor's London Plan but we are determined to go as far as possible as quickly as possible, and so rather than wait until my new Plan is adopted, we began developing an Affordable Housing and Viability Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) as soon as I was elected.

Since this guidance was formally adopted in August 2017, more than 50 applications referred to me have followed the fast-track route and the data shows it is clearly having a positive impact. In my first year as Mayor we secured 22% affordable housing in schemes that were referred to me; this, by the way, secured even withstanding the previous Mayor's planning rules. New data shows that last year [2017/18] we managed to increase this even further to 34%. That is with my tougher guidelines on what counts as genuinely affordable, rather than the previous Mayor's dodgy definition. The fast-track is helping make this happen. In 2018, more than half of the referable schemes included 35% or more affordable housing. Our approach has been welcomed by councils, developers and Londoners. Crucially, it avoids protracted viability debates and provides certainty to developers when buying land about how much affordable housing they should deliver.

An important next step is the adoption of my London Plan, which as I mentioned is currently being considered at its Examination in Public. When it is adopted, the Plan will give further strength to my definition of 'genuinely affordable', my fast-track approach and my commitment to review the 35% threshold in 2021. This means you will be able to take my approach to affordable housing further. That is the right thing to do and the data shows it is clearly working.

Sian Berry AM: Thank you very much, Mr Mayor. Can I ask for some clarification on some of the numbers you just gave me? You said that 34% was the amount of affordable housing coming out of referable

applications last year. That is the same number as you gave to Assembly Member Copley in February 2018. By “last year”, do you mean during the calendar year 2018?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I think it is the same, 34% from last year --

Sian Berry AM: That was 2017, in fact?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): No, 2016/17 was 22%, 2017/18 was 34%.

Sian Berry AM: 2017/18 was 34%. OK. Thank you very much. I am quite happy to see such progress - up from 13% to that is good - but at the moment the threshold is set to stay at 35%, which is well below the target that we are setting in the new London Plan and well below London’s need. I know you are currently planning to review the threshold in 2021. I hope you will not mind if whoever is the next Mayor reviews it as soon as they get elected in 2020?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am not sure if that is a hustings speech or a question.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): I am not sure.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Well, I am hoping to be the next Mayor so we will review it in 2021.

Sian Berry AM: If you are the next Mayor you will not review it until 2021 but if anyone else is, they can step in like you did with the SPG and change it then?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chairman, I am not really sure how to respond. Are we going to have 13 months of this?

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): I do not like to deal in fantasy, Mr Mayor.

Sian Berry AM: Just to clarify, Mr Mayor, you are not considering reviewing it any sooner than 2021 even if it is successful?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): It is just worth reminding ourselves that we are currently still operating under the previous Mayor’s London Plan and I have to act within the law. We did something quite bold in publishing an SPG within the constraints of the previous Plan, trying to persuade developers to go faster. Some people said we could not do it, and you know who I mean by that. She is signed up to be the next Mayor. We are doing it and seeing the progress made. If you are saying we are the victim of success because my policies are working and I should be more ambitious, I should take the compliment but I also want to look at the evidence. We will have a new London Plan coming into play next year [2020]. It could well be the new London Plan, which is far more ambitious in relation to affordable housing, leads to a further change of behaviour from developers, but we need to make it attractive to make the fast-track route work for developers. That is why I am going to review it in 2021, when we will have a year’s operation of the new London Plan but also have seen the progress made with the fast-track threshold.

Sian Berry AM: Thank you. I will be following the numbers very closely myself too. Thank you.

2019/6328 - Violence Reduction

Joanne McCartney AM

With levels of violence rising across the country, including London, has the Government's response been good enough?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): First, I would like to express my condolences to those who have lost loved ones. Every death as a result of violent crime is an utter tragedy, leaving lives destroyed and families heartbroken. As you know, Chairman, I often meet those bereaved families who have lost loved ones as a result of violent crime.

Sadly, the simple answer to your question is no, the Government's response has not been good enough. Without excusing criminality, the causes of violent crime are extremely complex and involve deep-seated problems like poverty, inequality, social alienation and a lack of opportunities for young people. This has been made far worse by the Government's huge cuts since 2010 to our police and preventative services like youth services, local councils, mental health services, schools and charities. As a direct consequence of Government cuts, the number of police officers on our street has fallen and we have seen the decimation of the very services that help to address the root causes of crime.

It was absurd for the Prime Minister [Theresa May MP] to claim recently that cuts to police officer numbers are not linked to the rise in violent crime, something that the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) Commissioner [Cressida Dick], other senior police officers and rank-and-file officers across the country have said is just not true. Cuts have consequences and we are now seeing the devastating reality of this across the country. I welcome the very limited extra funding to tackle knife crime that the Chancellor announced in the Spring Statement last week but frankly this is just a drop in the ocean compared to what is actually required. Let us put this into context. The Government has promised an extra £100 million for police forces across the entire country, but here in London the Prime Minister has already forced the MPS to cut £850 million since 2010 with £263 million worth of cuts still to come by 2022. This is on top of all the cuts the Government has made to preventative services like mental health, youth services and schools.

As Mayor, I am doing all I can and leading from the front to tackle this problem in our city with a relentless focus on both arresting violent offenders and tackling the root causes of crime. We have funded a new dedicated Violent Crime Task Force with nearly 300 police officers focusing on the areas worst affected. The Task Force has already seized 1,479 dangerous weapons and arrested 3,632 suspects. We have also established a new Violence Reduction Unit (VRU), bringing the police together with local councils, the health service, community groups and others to work on a shared public health approach to prevent people from turning to violent crime in the first place, and we have created a £45 million Young Londoners Fund to provide young people with positive alternatives to crime and to help Londoners to get out of gangs and violence into employment and training. However, it is becoming clearer than ever in recent weeks that this is a national problem that cities like London cannot solve alone.

Joanne McCartney AM: Thank you. It is that latter point I want to delve into a little bit further. Last week the Home Secretary [The Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP] talked about the need for a public health approach to tackle this issue, which is something you are instituting in London, but on that same day you had the Health Secretary [The Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP] dismissing such an approach. As you are quite rightly saying, the Prime Minister [The Rt Hon Theresa May MP] has said there is no link between police officer numbers and certain crimes, which was roundly denounced by police chiefs. Chair of the National Police Chiefs' Council Sara Thornton [CBE QPM] has said that the rise in knife crime is a national emergency. Do you get the sense

that Government is coordinated enough and understands the drivers of this well enough to elicit a national response?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I do not think this Government is coordinated when it comes to fighting violent crime. I do not think they understand the importance of a national response. Let me give you a compare and contrast. In 2002 we saw a massive increase in street crime. The Prime Minister at the time, Tony Blair, called a COBRA meeting, put the various Secretaries of State around the room together plus the Chief Constables, demanded action and said, "We will meet every week to make sure we get a grip on this". Tony Blair as the Prime Minister would attend those meetings every week and would ask the Secretary of State for one Department to make sure he or she works with another Department so that they could not be working inconsistently, nor using different policies nor passing the buck. Within six months there was a 10% reduction in street crime.

When have you seen this Prime Minister lead that sort of action? When have you seen COBRA being convened? What you are seeing is the Home Secretary having to lobby his colleagues, his peers, to take action, and as you have seen, the differences have been exposed. The Home Secretary is saying, "Public health approach". The Health Secretary is saying, "No public health approach". That is where the Prime Minister has to get a grip, lead this and fight this. Every day there are new victims and I think there are preventable victims if there was action taken from the top.

Joanne McCartney AM: You have called for COBRA to be instituted. Have Government listened to those calls? Have they given you a response?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): As we saw last night with the Prime Minister's press conference, she has a tin ear. She has a tin ear when it comes to Brexit and she has a tin ear when it comes to fighting violent crime. The Chancellor, by the way, also has a tin ear when it comes to fighting violent crime. The idea that £100 million spread across the country is going to make any impact is ridiculous.

Joanne McCartney AM: Thank you. Now, in the last few days we have had your predecessor, the previous Mayor of London, [The Rt Hon] Boris Johnson [MP], saying that he wants money to be taken away from victims of child abuse. He does not see the need to look at historic child abuse investigations. At the same time you have the Policing Minister [The Rt Hon Nick Hurd MP] distancing himself from that view. I am going to quote the Policing Minister. He states, "I don't want it to be a choice". His priority was to get more resources into policing and he made the comment that policing was "too stretched", particularly in London. Has it come to a case where we have to choose between investigating crimes against children or tackling these issues? Should it be the case that a Commissioner has to make those decisions?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The police will not stop investigating child abuse cases. They very much will and it is important they do. What you are seeing now is national politicians finally waking up to the consequences of their cuts. I will tell you this. The comments from [The Rt Hon] Boris Johnson [MP] in relation to child abuse cases are disgraceful. There are some people in this room who consider him to be their putative leader [of the Conservative Party]. They should be condemning his comments rather than staying silent and thereby condoning them. They are disgraceful.

2019/6382 - Temporary Accommodation on Hainault Estate Play Areas

Keith Prince AM

In view of the importance of children's play space in the London Plan, are you aware of Redbridge Council's plans to build temporary accommodation using converted containers on two of the Hainault Estate's children's play areas, and the impact this could have on the protection of play space in London?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am aware of plans by Redbridge Council to provide temporary accommodation for homeless households on two sites in their borough which Assembly Member Prince asked a written question about last month. I expect all boroughs to take account of the policies in the Draft London Plan but I would have no say over these schemes as they would not be referred to me.

I understand from the Council that the site at Woodman Road has been occupied by a disused health centre that has now been demolished. The other site at Bocket Way contains a multi-use games area and was designated for housing when Assembly Member Prince was a councillor and cabinet member at Redbridge Council. This is not a new designation by the Council. I understand though that the local Labour councillors have worked effectively with the Council leadership to agree an alternative location for the temporary accommodation. This means that Bocket Way will now be withdrawn from the Council's plans without damaging the Council's important efforts to help homeless households. Even Assembly Member Prince would, I am sure, accept the huge and urgent pressure that Redbridge and other councils face finding homes for homeless households.

The Government's damaging approach to welfare and housing means that more and more Londoners are spending long periods of time in limbo in temporary accommodation, often away from their local area. Most such households are parents with children, which makes the situation even more distressing. We are giving councils all the support we can. For example, City Hall is funding the Pan-London Accommodation Collaborative Enterprise, which enables meanwhile sites to be used as accommodation for homeless families. We also fund the work behind Capital Letters, a scheme through which councillors can collaborate to secure private rented housing for homeless households.

However, fundamentally, Government Ministers must reverse the policies that have forced so many Londoners into homelessness. First, the Government must properly fund councils' work to prevent homelessness and must reverse their damaging welfare cuts. Second, they must radically overhaul the private rented sector to make it more secure and affordable. Finally, the Government must invest far more in council and social rented housing as that is the only long-term solution to the crisis of homelessness and housing more widely that we face in London.

Keith Prince AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. That is very helpful indeed. Just to confirm, you will do all you can to defend children's play areas in London?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Those that are in my power, of course.

Keith Prince AM: Yes? Lovely. OK, thank you very much.

2019/6296 - Girls and Gang Association

Florence Eshalomi AM

How will you ensure that the Violence Reduction Unit considers ways to combat the exploitation of young women by gangs?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you for this question, and I would like to thank you for all the work you are doing to highlight this important issue. I know Assembly Member Eshalomi hosted the launch of the *Girls, gangs and their abusive relationships* report by Samantha Jury-Dada, which shows some of the often hidden abuses that gangs can inflict on young women. To help ensure that issues such as this are identified and tackled, a core commitment of the new VRU is to embed community involvement throughout and to hear from voices that are often overlooked. I have always been clear that the new London VRU will tackle all forms of violence through a public health approach and this includes violence against women and girls, including the exploitation of young women by gangs. I am delighted that Lib Peck, the former London Councils Executive Member for Crime and Public Protection, who led London boroughs' cross-party work to keep Londoners safe, has now joined to lead the unit as she has a strong track record in this area.

You will be aware that one of the primary risks for young women from gangs is sexual exploitation. A report from the Children's Commissioner found that 65% of young women they interviewed were being pressurised or coerced into sexual activity. There are a wide range of existing programmes I fund to support young women in such circumstances. In February [2019] we announced an additional £15 million of funding to respond to the increase in demand for the services for women and girls who had been the victim of violence. This is on top of the record £44 million investment through my Strategy to end violence against women and girls. City Hall also funds four rape crisis centres across London, supporting women who have experienced sexual violence. Alongside this, I have provided funding to the Empower programme, providing specialist one-to-one support services for young women who have experienced sexual exploitation. City Hall also funds a swap scheme which helps young women fleeing violence to get housing.

We are also supporting services that are working to directly tackle gangs, such as the London gang exit programme response and rescue, which is working to combat county lines as well as a range of projects through my new Young Londoners Fund.

Florence Eshalomi AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor, and thank you for citing that report, which I hope you will have a chance to read. I appreciate you are busy. One of the things that we highlighted in the report was the fact that when we look at violence the focus on girls is sometimes hidden, but we know that women and girls play an important role in that they are often the ones who are picking up the pieces, they are often the ones who are supporting some of these young boys and men, and they are often the first people at an incident when an incident has been committed. When we look at the services, they are not commissioned towards women and girls. How do we tackle this culture, where we see the fact that women and girls who are associated with gangs or violent youth crime are not being addressed properly in terms of the services out there for them?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): First, I have already had a chance to look at the executive summary and I will read the report thoroughly. It is a really important piece of work. One of the things that I was shocked to discover is last year [2018], because of lack of services across London, many of these service providers had to close their books. Some had a six-month waiting list for some of the most vulnerable Londoners to receive the advice and support they need, which is why I announced the additional funding of £50 million, so they could open their books and see vulnerable young Londoners who need assistance. They are girls and women. When

you hear the stories – and you have heard the stories – I challenge you not to be heartbroken by some of these stories. The Children’s Commissioner has also recognised the large number of girls and young women being exploited sexually. You are right, we have to recognise that there is a big issue in relation to violence against women and girls. That is why the VRU will be looking also at this really important issue. It will be embedded in their work.

Florence Eshalomi AM: One of the other things that came up was around the role of the police. We know that there are issues with some parts of the community in trusting the police and coming forward with that information, and again a number of our young women and girls do hold vital information in terms of helping the police to solve this really complex issue. It is fantastic that this month and all throughout this year we will be celebrating 100 years of women joining the MPS. How can we work with the MPS and frontline community workers to make sure we are giving women that confidence to come forward to report crimes and speak with the police in terms of addressing this really big issue?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): There are a number of answers to your question. First, we have to make sure we raise awareness of these crimes and let people know they are crimes and people should be reporting them. That means giving people confidence that the police will respond to a report being made.

We have to make our police service look more that the community that seeks the police. We need more women in our police service and more black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) people in our police service so that our police service looks like the community we are policing. At the moment we have a record number of female police officers but it is still, roughly speaking, only 26% or 27%. We need to do far, far better. In relation to the new recruitment we are doing as a result of our funding from City Hall, we are hoping to get more women joining our police service. That will make it easier in relation to girls and women reporting some of these crimes. We need to make sure we change the culture in the police service, and we are. The Commissioner [of Police of the Metropolis, Cressida Dick CBE QPM] is determined to make sure we learn the lessons from previous HMICFRS reports to make the police service more responsive.

The final thing is the role of the Victims’ Commissioner. Claire Waxman has done a really good job of making sure the whole of the criminal justice is more receptive to victims and takes their concerns more seriously.

Florence Eshalomi AM: Just the last thing, Mr Mayor. I know – and rightly so – there is a review of the Gangs Matrix. There are some women involved in that but only 0.58% of people on the Gangs Matrix are female. Could I ask that when we are looking at reviewing that, the people on the matrix, there is a gender-based solution in terms of how we deal with some of the women on the matrix?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chairman, I can make sure those points are taken on board by the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime and that is taken on board in relation to the review as well.

Florence Eshalomi AM: Thank you.

2019/6359 - Performance

[Andrew Boff AM](#)

What is the biggest failing of your mayoralty?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you, Chairman. I am immensely proud of what we have been able to achieve at City Hall since I became Mayor. Our actions are already making a tangible difference to

Londoners' lives. This includes starting to build record numbers of new social rent and council homes, giving residents and tenants the right to vote on estate regeneration projects, helping record numbers of homeless people by doubling City Hall's outreach teams, making commuting more affordable by freezing all TfL fares and introducing an unlimited Hopper bus fare, getting the Night Tube and Night Overground up and running, reducing the number of strike days on the Tube by around 65%, tackling air pollution by cleaning up our bus and taxi fleets, creating Low Emission Bus Zones, setting up the most comprehensive air quality monitoring of any city in the world, and from next month introducing the world's first ULEZ. We are also tackling both crime and the causes of crime in the face of huge Government cuts by investing in the MPS Violent Crime Task Force, creating the VRU and establishing the £45 million Young Londoners Fund.

However, the past few years have not been easy for London. We have had a series of terrorist attacks, the Sandilands tram crash and the awful Grenfell Tower fire, and have seen the increase in violent crime like the rest of England and Wales. We have also seen continuing austerity from the Government that has damaged our public services, and the chaos of Brexit has caused real damage to our economy and our communities. As Mayor, it can be extremely frustrating when I am unable to tackle some of the challenges we face due to inadequate funding or lack of powers.

For example, I am doing everything possible to tackle the rise of violent crime, but our hands are partially tied because of the Government's continued cuts to the police and preventative services since 2010 and because we do not control many of the services that contribute to preventing crime from happening in the first place. Similarly, we cannot go as fast as I want towards tackling the crisis in housing because the Government refuses to devolve the necessary powers and its funding for affordable housing in London. It is still less than half of what it was in 2010. We are also being held back on cleaning up London's air because of the Government's refusal to fund a diesel scrappage scheme or give Londoners control over emissions from the River Thames or construction.

All these problems have been made much worse by a Government that is been preoccupied on Brexit to the exclusion of other issues ever since I became Mayor.

We have also started, Chairman, to fix many of the failings of the last Mayor, which certain Assembly Members in this Chamber encouraged and supported, such as stopping new social homes from being built, allowing TfL fares to rise by 42%, wasting money on water cannons that were never used, a Garden Bridge that was never started, an Estuary Airport that did not go anywhere, a new Routemaster bus costing twice as much as regular double-decker buses, and more than £700 million converting the Olympic Stadium to a loss-making football stadium.

Andrew Boff AM: Mr Mayor, thank you so much for that --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I could go on about my successes.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): I am sure you could.

Andrew Boff AM: You often do go on, Mr Mayor. What I have asked for is your biggest failing. Do you have one?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): No.

Andrew Boff AM: The first issue that you mentioned, Mr Mayor, was that you claimed record numbers of social homes were being built. You claimed that 12,526 GLA-funded homes were started last year [2017/18] and that just meet the lower end of the target that you had agreed with the Government following on from the record amount of money that it had given you to build those homes. Yet in January [2019] you responded to me that 1,256 of these homes - 10% - were actually restarts and not new starts at all.

Do you think, Mr Mayor, it would have been more honest for you to have reported the real figure of 11,270 to the Government and to Londoners?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Ours is the accurate figure. I am just sorry that the previous Mayor had dodgy figures. We have made sure the figures are correct. The figures we have are record numbers of starts on affordable homes since these powers were devolved, more than 12,500. A promise made; a promise delivered; record broken.

Andrew Boff AM: Are you saying that your answer to me in January was factually wrong when you said to me that a total of 1,256 affordable homes started in the financial year 2017/18 were restarts from previous years? Which is right: what you have just said or what you replied to me for that question?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I have just said that the number of homes started under the previous Mayor was incorrect and they were taken off --

Andrew Boff AM: I have not asked about that, Mr Mayor. I have asked about restarts. Have you included restarts in that figure of 12,526 GLA-funded homes? Have you included the over-1,200 restarts?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The 12,500-plus starts in that year [2017/18] are starts according to the Government's criteria set by it. That does include taking the dodgy figures from the previous Mayor's year out from the previous Mayor, which were wrong and will not satisfy the criteria, and making sure we have those right.

Andrew Boff AM: Mr Mayor, does your Housing Policy - bearing in mind that it has failed to meet targets - really spark joy for you?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I do not accept the premise that it has failed to meet its target. The target was to break a record of 12,500. That has been done. The target is to start 116,000 homes by 2022. We are on course to do that. The target this year [2018/19] is to break that record again by starting 14,000 homes and I am hopeful and confident that by the end of April [2019] when we have the figures that we will have met that target as well. Bearing in mind the --

Andrew Boff AM: Mr Mayor, you are halfway through the year and halfway through the period of funding for the 116,000 homes that Londoners need. We are halfway through that funding period and yet you have built less than a quarter of the homes that are required. Is that a policy you are proud of, Mr Mayor?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am really proud of Londoners being able to finally afford to live in London rather than luxury penthouse flats being built and bought by foreigners to use as gold bricks for investment. I am proud that we have ditched the dodgy definition of a home costing £450,000 being affordable when it is clearly not. I am proud that the dodgy definition of homes that are 80% of market value being considered affordable has been dumped in the bin. I am proud that my definition of affordable for a

home that is either a council rent, a social rent, a London Living Rent or a home that is in shared ownership is leading to more homes being built with harder criteria.

By the way, in relation to percentage terms, we have made more progress this year [2018/19] in relation to starts than last year [2017/18] at this stage and last year we met the target and broke it. I am confident and hopeful that this year we can do the same.

Andrew Boff AM: Do you think, Mr Mayor, when you next declare figures, you can do so without fiddling those figures to make it look like more?

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Deputy Chair): No, that cannot be right.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chairman, this is a very serious allegation made by an Assembly Member against officers who work so hard in this building.

Andrew Boff AM: No, I made no allegations against officers whatsoever.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I would ask, Chairman, for that remark to be removed because he is basically criticising officers who cannot defend themselves and he should be ashamed of that.

Andrew Boff AM: Not at all. Mr Mayor, they are your figures. They are your figures, Mr Mayor, and you have included 1,256 restarts to justify your housing --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The officers cannot be here to defend themselves. It is outrageous. It is outrageous.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): Mr Mayor, these figures are published in your name and so he must be referring to you.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chairman, I know it has become a habit of yours to defend Conservatives, but let me just explain the role of a chair.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): No, that is outrageous. That is completely unacceptable, Mr Mayor.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am glad you find that unacceptable. It is funny what you find unacceptable, is it not?

Len Duvall AM: Point of order, Chairman.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): Assembly Member Duvall.

Len Duvall AM: If you are going to make rulings about whose figures they are, also can you remind the Assembly that they are the Government definitions? That is the same argument that was put back in the past of why those figures were in order and they were corrected later on. The Government determines how those figures are compiled, not the Mayor. They may be in the Mayor's name, but you also ought to make that ruling clear to this Assembly.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): OK, you have made your point.

Andrew Boff AM: In that case, has the Government expressed concerns with you about the pace of development of your housing programme?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): No, the Government has been really pleased that, for example, in the last year we had more starts for social rents than the rest of England put together. We had more starts last year in relation to social rents than the previous four years put together. The Government could learn a lot from London.

Andrew Boff AM: Mr Mayor, I look forward to seeing the next release of figures and we will be going over them with a fine-tooth comb to make sure --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Can I just say, Chairman? The only people who are hoping that we do not build enough affordable homes are the Conservatives. That is a disgrace. They would rather for electoral reasons see housebuilding fail. That is disgraceful. They are willing us to fail. How shocking that is.

Andrew Boff AM: Mr Mayor, I would like you to cite where that has been the case because, if it were a Conservative Mayor, we would be building at least double what you are producing because you are spending more time on press releases and not enough time on delivering homes for London.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Here we go, Chairman. I will tell you where that has been the case. When it was the case that we set the target for 12,500 starts on genuinely affordable homes, not a dodgy definition, they said we could not do it and were willing us to fail. We did it. Rather than celebrating it, they are looking for holes to try to make out as if we did not do it.

Andrew Boff AM: Mr Mayor, you are not answering the question.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): This year [2018/19] we have an even more stretching target of 14,000. They say we cannot do it and they are willing us to fail. You know what? We are going to do it, we are going to celebrate it, and they are going to wish we had failed. That is how shocking these Conservatives are. They would rather see us failing than building homes Londoners so desperately need. They should be ashamed.

Andrew Boff AM: Yes, and indeed, Mr Mayor, figures will be massaged to try to justify your next press release. Thank you very much, Chairman.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Again, Chairman, let me be clear. Let me be clear, Chairman --

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): No --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Well, that is a question. Try to be impartial for five seconds, Chairman.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): That will do, Mr Mayor.

Steve O'Connell AM: Point of order. Can I just intercede? I am actually - unusually - very irritated by the Mayor's personal abuse against you as the Chairman. In previous years when Jennette Arnold [OBE AM] chaired very ably, we never heard that sort of abuse towards the Chair. I am shocked by this and I would like to go on record. Mr Mayor will attack us and others perhaps if he chooses to, but not the Chairman of this Assembly.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chairman, I just wish Conservative colleagues defended the Speaker of the House like they defend you in this Assembly.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): How glad I am that I am not Mr Bercow [Speaker of the House of Commons]. Can we now please --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chairman, I think Labour MPs are glad you are not Mr Bercow as well.

Tom Copley AM: Mr Mayor, I heard the word 'failure' and for some reason the first person I thought of was Boris Johnson [MP, former Mayor of London], your predecessor and of course their Mayor. You have highlighted very helpfully in your answer to Assembly Member Boff some of Boris Johnson's massive achievements: £320,000 of taxpayers' cash wasted on water cannon he could not legally use, £40 million on overpriced buses that overheated and were basically mobile saunas, and of course £43 million on the botched Garden Bridge.

Do you think that perhaps their mistake is thinking that a mayor should be judged favourably based on how much public money they waste?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): You are absolutely right. You can imagine what would have happened if a Labour mayor had wasted that amount of taxpayers' money, but I appreciate that he is their putative leader. I appreciate that was part of his leadership campaign, but you have not mentioned the Estuary Airport. You have not mentioned the double-decker buses. You have not mentioned some of these other projects that led to huge problems across our city.

Tom Copley AM: The cable car.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The cable car is another example. We are living with the legacy of having to clean up the mess left by the previous Mayor, but at the same time making fantastic progress across our city. You would have thought they would be willing us to succeed. You would have thought they would be wanting us to do even better. Instead of that, we have carping from the other side and defending the previous Mayor. Now he leaves the room, probably to text him to say, "These are some of the issues that will need to be addressed during the leadership contest that is coming up in the Conservative Party".

Tom Copley AM: Of course you do not benefit from Government Ministers like George Osborne [former Chancellor of the Exchequer] and David Cameron [former Prime Minister] bending the rules to ensure that cash is committed to these vanity projects. You are a Labour Mayor fighting a Conservative Government that is cutting your budgets.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Absolutely. We in London since 2016 have not simply had to deal with a Government that has been making massive cuts to our city or a Government whose Prime Minister regularly refuses to meet with the Mayor, but also a Government that has been dealing with the chaos of Brexit and neglecting core business like policing, like the NHS, like public investment, like transport, like air quality, like skills. If Boris Johnson had operated in that environment, I just dread what could have happened to our city. It is really important that we continue to work together to try to do the best for our city, even though we have the most anti-London Government I can remember in my lifetime.

Tom Copley AM: Thank you.

Gareth Bacon AM: Mr Mayor, earlier on in answers to questions from Assembly Member Boff, you said that your administration had no failings. That may have been a rush of blood. It may have been on the spur of the moment. Do you stand by that?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The question was to me.

Gareth Bacon AM: It was to you, yes. You said you had no failings.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am sure that on reflection we can always do things better and differently. I go to bed every night reflecting on the day and thinking about how I could have done things differently and improve on the next day. I am sure there are things we could have done in a different way.

I wish, for example, that the previous Chair of Crossrail [Sir Terry Morgan] had been held to task far more by the DfT and TfL and that we did not rely upon the information he had given us and brought in independent experts sooner than we did. We brought them in only in the summer [of 2018] because that was when the new trustees got onto the board. Had we had reason to get them on earlier, we would have, I am sure, uncovered more stuff. There are things all the time that you think of that you can improve. I probably wish I had been more effective at lobbying the Government to realise that violent crime is a national issue that demands national solutions and asked earlier for COBRA to convene.

There are always things you reflect on that you can do differently. I am sure when I am lying in bed there are other things I can think of.

Gareth Bacon AM: That is fair enough. That is a revision of what you said earlier on, which is reasonable. Do you regret your failure in preventing the increases in violent crime in London?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): This is a really important point. We have a situation where in the course of the last few weeks we have had the Chair of the National Police Chiefs' Council criticising the lack of national leadership, we have chief constables from across the country talking about a national issue in the increase in violent crime, but also we have finally the Government accepting there is a link between cuts it has made and the increase in violent crime.

As far as we in London are concerned, we have done a huge amount, which other parts of the country are now learning from. We should be encouraged by the fact that it was me, unlike the previous Mayor who froze or cut council tax, who increased council tax in all three years to support our police to manage the decline in police numbers. That has led to the new Violent Crime Task Force making more than 3,500 arrests and taking 1,500 weapons off our streets and more. It has paid for making sure we have a new VRU doing a huge amount of good bringing different services together. Also, we have the Mayor's Young Londoners Fund supporting young Londoners and giving them constructive things to do rather than getting involved with criminal gangs.

In London, there is always more we can do, but we are doing a huge amount, which, by the way, when I attend the Home Secretary's Serious Crime Taskforce, other parts of the country are emulating. We had a situation just two weeks ago when the Chancellor [of the Exchequer] referred to the VRU, England's first here in London, asking others to emulate that with the funding that he has announced.

Gareth Bacon AM: You talked about police resources. You have mentioned it many times, Mr Mayor. You know - because we have said it in public and we have said it at the Budget and Performance Committee - that we support your call for more funding for the MPS, but of course there are --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): That is not true. That is not the case, though, because you voted against our budgets.

Gareth Bacon AM: Yes, but you know very well, Mr Mayor, that we cannot vote for or against a budget line-by-line. We have said it umpteen times in this room, at the Budget and Performance Committee, at Mayor's Question Time and in Plenaries repeatedly that we do support the call for more funding --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chairman, there is a problem with that --

Gareth Bacon AM: Hang on. Let me finish my point, Mr Mayor. We do support more funding for the MPS, but there are things that you could do yourself. You do have the ability to move money around with your budgets and you have chosen not to do that. Why is that, Mr Mayor?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chairman, two things. Number one: the same Members who now claim to support me giving more money to the police also supported the previous Mayor who froze council tax at a time when he knew the amount of money coming from central Government was dropping. From 2010, when Number 10 had a certain advisor advising them on youth and crime, the amount of money coming to London from central Government has been dropping. The previous Mayor could have planned for that and increased council tax to support our police, to manage the decline and to make sure it does not go down, but also to divert money elsewhere to support our police. He failed to do so and was supported by the very same people who now support me when it comes to the resources I want to give to the police, claimed today. Rewriting history does not help. That is number one.

Number two: we have already seen in London money from elsewhere being used in the police service and money from business rates being used to support our police. Police officers from Roads and Transport are being moved to support the Violent Crime Task Force. We already are prioritising resources to give the police the maximum support we can.

Gareth Bacon AM: Mr Mayor, I know you like to deflect when people ask you questions and talk about your predecessor or talk about the Government or talk about rap music or whatever else it is, but you do have the power to move your money around. The GLA Conservatives Group did table an amendment. Without any cost on the taxpayer at all, you could have moved £83 million into the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), which would have funded an extra 1,378 police officers. You refused to do that. Why was that?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The numbers do not stack up, Chairman. We have a situation --

Gareth Bacon AM: Yes, they do stack up, Mr Mayor. You know that that is not true.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chairman, at least sometimes let me answer the question and step in without crossing your arms and watching as a spectator. The situation is this: I am asked a question, I try to answer and then I am interrupted.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): Mr Mayor, my job is to hold the ring. You are a capable debater; he is a capable debater. You do not need me to intervene under those circumstances.

Gareth Bacon AM: Mr Mayor, it is not possible to table a budget amendment in this place unless it is factchecked by the finance department in advance to make sure that the numbers do stack up.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): It is interesting, Chairman --

Gareth Bacon AM: There are all sorts of reasons why you might not want to support it, but because the numbers do not add up cannot be one of them.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Here is the ridiculousness of this proposition. On the one hand, we have the Conservatives criticising the very same officers who prepare the figures and factcheck them. On the other hand, we have other Members of the Assembly holding up as a virtuous thing the fact that officers check the figures. I am pleased to see that Assembly Member Bacon is holding to task Assembly Member Boff for criticising officers.

Gareth Bacon AM: No. Sorry, Chairman --

Andrew Boff AM: Point of personal explanation. Mr Mayor, at no point did I criticise an officer. I criticised the Mayor because it was his foul-up, not an officer's.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chairman, by the same token --

Gareth Bacon AM: The Mayor is deliberately wasting time here by bringing up --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Hold on a second --

Gareth Bacon AM: It is a procedural rule that all budget amendments tabled in this place have to be factchecked by the finance department to make sure that the budget balances, which is the only reason why I mentioned officers in that context. The Mayor said something that factually is not true and not possible. Assembly Member Boff did not mention officers one bit. It was the Mayor who mentioned officers and said that Assembly Member Boff had made an allegation --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am shocked, Chairman, that you sit silently by because the figures that I present are prepared by officers.

Gareth Bacon AM: You are deliberately trying to deflect away from my questions. Chairman, could we please stop the clock?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): They are prepared by officers.

Andrew Boff AM: Whose figures are they?

Gareth Bacon AM: Hang on --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): They are figures prepared by officers.

Gareth Bacon AM: We have stopped the clock. Let him just go on.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): They cannot have it both ways, Chairman.

Gareth Bacon AM: Can we come back to the question?

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): I do not know what the “both ways” are that you are talking about. As I understand it, on his point of order, Assembly Member Boff said he mentioned only you, and Assembly Member Bacon says that figures that are presented on the Budget have to be factchecked, and so I --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Let me explain, Chairman, to help you in your ruling. Assembly Member Boff said I had dodgy figures.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): Yes, he did.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The point I make in a respectful manner is that those figures are prepared by officers and so indirectly he is calling the officers dodgy.

Gareth Bacon AM: No.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Right? Assembly Member Bacon is claiming that his figures cannot be wrong because they are checked by officers.

Gareth Bacon AM: No. Chairman, again --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): What is sauce for the goose, Chairman, what is sauce for the goose.

Gareth Bacon AM: Chairman, point of order --

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): We are going off on a tangent.

Gareth Bacon AM: Yes, which is exactly what he wants.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Deputy Chair): Stop. This is ridiculous.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): This is turning into a sixth-form debate. Although I quite like sixth-form debates, I am not sure that Londoners want to see their time wasted in that way. Can we stick to the point?

Gareth Bacon AM: Can we get back to the point? All right.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): It is about time we had a decent ruling from the Chairman.

Gareth Bacon AM: Can we stick to the point, Chairman, which is what we were trying to do in the first place before the Mayor deliberately tried to sabotage it?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): It is not going well, is it, Gareth?

Gareth Bacon AM: The budget amendment, which was tabled by the GLA Conservatives Group without any cost to the taxpayer would have transferred £83 million directly into MOPAC, which would have allowed you to provide an extra 1,378 police officers, and you refused to accept it. Why?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Firstly, Chairman, I am astonished that the Assembly Member does not realise that I do not get a vote on that budget. It was Assembly Members. I would have thought that as Chairman you would have corrected him on that point. That is the first point. I was not in the room when the vote was taken.

If the Assembly Member was not able to persuade colleagues to vote for his motion, he is watching Theresa May [Prime Minister] too much. What he should do is try to persuade colleagues to vote for his amendment. Had I been in the room and had I had a vote, I would have voted against that amendment because it does not recognise what policing means. Policing means having funding in perpetuity. It means not cutting resources from elsewhere that are really important in providing other services that City Hall does. It means making sure we can invest in the preventative services that were so lacking under the previous Mayor that are needed there. It means making sure that we have a budget that adds up not just this year but in years to come. I am not in favour of making cuts in other important services that City Hall provides for the sake of getting a headline to suit a mayoral campaign from Assembly Member Bailey. What I am in favour of is supporting our police in whatever way I can, either financially or by giving them the support and powers they need.

Since I have been Mayor, Chairman - and the figures will confirm this - our police from City Hall have had more resources in my three years as a consequence of tax-raising powers and other switched spending from business rates than in the previous Mayor's eight years. That is because I believe in supporting the police and putting my money where my mouth is.

In the first year, we increased council tax to the maximum I was allowed to do by the law to give the police funding. I was criticised by the Government because the previous Mayor the year before had not raised the council tax as he was allowed to do. London suffered because of a decision made by the previous Mayor not just in the year he made it but in the subsequent year as well. In my second year, I raised council tax to the maximum I was allowed to do, £12, plus I used business rates money to support our police. In my third year, I raised council tax to the maximum then allowed, £24, and also used resources from elsewhere.

I am supporting our police on a regular basis, not simply by virtue of an amendment for a press release to get some attention.

Gareth Bacon AM: Mr Chairman, the Mayor has just confirmed in this Chamber that he made a choice not to support the extra 1,378 police officers that would have been funded by our budget amendment and would have had no cost to the taxpayer. That is very noteworthy and so I will stop there. Thank you very much.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): All right. Thank you very much --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chairman, is that a question or, again, are you making a ruling that speeches are allowed from --

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): Do you know, if I had to make rulings on people who grandstand here and spend their time making speeches rather than asking questions, we would never get anywhere at all. The truth

of the matter is that Members must manage their own time. If he chooses to phrase a question in a way that I cannot know in advance is not a question --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): It was not a question. It was a speech.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): If I cannot know in advance whether or not he is going to come to a question, how can I possibly make a ruling?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): You can give me a chance to respond.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): Only if he asks a question. All right. Let us go to the --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): He is grandstanding, Chairman.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): No. Let us go to the next the next question, please, which is from Assembly Member Pidgeon on community policing. Let us hope that it is proper question-and-answer.

2019/6037 - Community policing

[Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM](#)

What is the Metropolitan Police's new Partnership Plus scheme?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The introduction of Partnership Plus last month was an operational decision made by the MPS Commissioner [Cressida Dick CBE QPM] as it relates to the deployment of officers. The scheme allows local authorities to purchase additional police officers at a reduced rate, allowing local authorities to focus the work of officers to their local priorities. It replaces the previous MPS Patrol Plus scheme.

The scheme has changed because the Government has already forced the MPS to make savings of £850 million, with a further £263 million worth of cuts still required by 2022. These cuts are having a real impact, forcing officer numbers down from 33,260 in 2010 to 29,869 now. On top of that, Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) and police staff numbers are also down. Under the previous scheme, officers were provided on a so-called 'buy one, get one free' basis to local authorities, but in reality this cost the MPS an additional £9 million each year, an amount that, due to Government cuts, simply is not sustainable.

At a time when the MPS is facing increasing demands, a lack of Government funding and falling officer numbers, the Commissioner was clear that greater flexibility was needed over police officers in order to respond to critical incidents such as violent crime. Nevertheless, the Commissioner remains committed to working in partnership, recognising that tackling local priorities requires co-operation.

Therefore, the Commissioner has revised the scheme, alleviating the issue of cost and inflexibility while maintaining the principle that local authorities can invest in local policing. The new scheme is sustainable for the MPS, yet it enables local authorities to purchase police officers at a reduced rate of £57,000 per Constable. This represents a discount of over 21% on the full cost of an officer. Any purchased officers will be additional to the Basic Command Unit (BCU) workforce complement and will be ringfenced from normal aid provision or other local abstraction. The MPS will continue to honour all existing MPS Patrol Plus agreements until their natural expiry. There will also be a three-month transition period beginning at the end of March [2019] to enable local authorities whose contracts expire time to decide whether to invest in the new scheme.

Partnership Plus will enable local authorities to continue to purchase additional police officers while remaining viable for the MPS.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Thank you very much for providing that detail. Under the old Patrol Plus scheme, boroughs could, as you say, benefit from effectively a 'buy one, get one free' offer, which basically was a 50% discount. Under this scheme they are being offered only about 21% discount. The boroughs I have been talking to think that this is not a good deal. Also, you cannot even guarantee that the officers that a borough purchases will remain in that borough. Do you understand that some boroughs may now walk away from the scheme entirely?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am clear that the MPS Commissioner [Cressida Dick CBE QPM] has a difficult task to do. As I said, the number of officers has gone down from 33,000-plus to lower than 30,000. There is an impact in relation to both MPS costs - because they subsidise this scheme - and flexibility. Therefore, I fully support the decision made by the Commissioner. I can understand that if the scheme is less attractive to local authorities because they get less discount, they may decide not to do so and use the money elsewhere with wardens or other things that they can afford.

What is clear for us to realise is that this is a subsidy given to councils by the MPS budget and also there is a lack of direction and control because local authorities get to say where the officers go. I can understand that at a time when there were more officers there was an ability to have inflexibility and to subsidise this. When there are fewer officers and less money, the MPS Commissioner must be able to use her officers as she sees fit.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Do you think this new scheme should also maybe cover PCSOs? Surely allowing boroughs to purchase PCSOs at a discounted rate would also help with some of the issues around vacancies with PCSO posts. Is that something you would put to the Commissioner to consider?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): No, because the Commissioner is quite clear that she needs more Constables. She needs more police officers. Although we are recruiting PCSOs, that is to fill the current cohort we have. You will be aware that in 2010 we used to have in each ward one designated Sergeant, two designated Dedicated Ward Officers and three PCSOs. By the time I became Mayor, that was down to one and one. It is really important that I was able to increase the amount of Dedicated Ward Officers to two with one PCSO as well.

What the MPS Commissioner does not believe we should be doing is recruiting a cohort of many more thousands of PCSOs because we need to recruit many more thousands of police officers. That is the priority.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: You do have vacancies in PCSOs and you are looking to start some sort of recruitment programme?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): We are. I beg your pardon. Sorry, that was my fault.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Therefore, I was wondering whether having an offer to local authorities that might be attractive might help them to pay for some of these posts.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): My understanding from speaking to council leaders is that because a PCSO does not have the same powers of arrest as a Police Constable, they cannot do the same things. Some councils are using the money, rather than paying for a PCSO, to pay for a Borough Warden or another form of

uniformed council staff who have similar powers to a PCSO. The councils have more control. Some councils are going down that route rather than the PCSO route.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: I am wondering whether you might consider working with the Commissioner to review this new offer to at least ensure that the officers boroughs could buy will remain in their own boroughs rather than going to the wider merged BCU and whether potentially PCSOs could be considered as part of this in the future?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The Commissioner is always looking for new ideas and I am happy to pass the words of the Assembly Member to the Commissioner and to Deputy Mayor [for Policing and Crime, Sophie] Linden as well.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Thank you very much.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): Thank you. That was an exemplary session.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chairman, I am not sure if you are having a pop at Assembly Member Bacon or at me, but Mr Bacon could learn a lot from Ms Pidgeon.

Steve O'Connell AM: Returning to that earlier subject, if I may, Mayor, I will give you a more graphic example. I am proud to be a member of the Croydon Town Centre Business Improvement District (BID) Board on an advisory basis. In the budget last year [2017/18] under the previous scheme, they were able to add, in essence, six officers to the town centre to keep Croydon town centre safe within the budget that they had. Within the same budget this year [2018/19] under the new scheme, they could buy two-and-a-quarter officers. They could add two officers to the town centre. This is a great disappointment to them and to their subscribers, the businesses in Croydon.

Can I support Caroline [Pidgeon MBE AM] and ask you very much in your discussions with the Commissioner to ask that this scheme is reviewed? I do understand the reasons you gave earlier for the changes in the scheme, but the movement of officers and the reduction of officers for BIDs and for local authorities is very difficult. I just wish that when you reconsider the scheme, perhaps the next iteration of the scheme, which we may see next year, will be a better scheme than this one.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chairman, only if there is more support financially from the Government and the MPS has many more thousands of officers. The point is that when we had 33,000-plus officers, you can understand why 'surplus' officers could be doing the additional policing that BIDs and boroughs would want them to do. When you have so few officers, the MPS Commissioner and Borough Commanders must have priority over the fewer officers to do what is operationally required rather than what is an added extra. That is why there is a problem.

If there comes a stage in the future when we get to 33,000-plus officers and we have resources, then I am sure we would be able to consider that scheme, but it means the MPS subsidising financially councils and BIDs and also having less flexibility operationally with what they can do with those officers. I fully support the Commissioner's conundrum and the decision she has taken. If the question is whether we can at a future stage reconsider when there is more money and more officers, of course we will.

Steve O'Connell AM: OK. I will take that.

2019/6407 - Opportunities

Shaun Bailey AM

What difference have you made to ensure that the untapped talent in London have the opportunities to reach their potential?

Thank you, Chairman. London gave me and my family the opportunities we needed to fulfil our potential, a secure job for my dad that paid a decent wage, a council home giving my family security and my parents a chance to save for a place of their own, a decent state school for me and my siblings and an affordable university education, and a supportive community in which to grow up in.

My burning ambition as Mayor is to ensure that all Londoners get the opportunities they need to fulfil their potential, too, and I am extremely proud that we are already delivering tangible results to make this happen, despite opposition from Conservatives on the Assembly. We have started building a record number of new social rent and council homes. We have frozen TfL fares and introduced the unlimited Hopper to make commuting more affordable to millions of Londoners struggling with the cost of living. We have supported London's businesses to create more than 200,000 new jobs since I became Mayor. We have presided over an increase in the London Living Wage from £9.40 an hour to £10.55 and have worked to ensure more employees pay the London Living Wage. We have launched the 45 million Young Londoners Fund to create positive opportunities for young Londoners, already helping over 63,000 young people. We are ensuring that from this year any Londoner who is earning less than the London Living Wage will be able to get fully funded skills training to help them get out and get better work. We are ensuring that our £71 million European Social Fund programme will support some of the most disadvantaged Londoners to gain the skills they need to get good quality jobs. We are using the power of culture and the creative industries to improve opportunities with my flagship projects offering chances for young people to take part in positive activities.

I have campaigned against the Government's chaotic handling of Brexit, which poses a big threat to opportunities for the next generation. All of our progress in London has come against the backdrop of a Government supported by the Conservatives on the Assembly that is reducing opportunities for the next generation with its failed austerity agenda. This includes cuts to youth services, leading to youth centres closing down across our city; cuts to local councils, who have faced in real-terms funding cut of 60%; cuts to Sure Start Centres, which give a head start in life to those who need it the most; cuts to funding for our schools and FE; cuts to funding for new affordable housing in London; and real-term cuts to working age benefits.

It is worth pointing out that as Special Adviser for Youth and Crime in Downing Street, Assembly Member Bailey helped to implement many of these damaging cuts.

Shaun Bailey AM: Thank you for that answer, Mr Mayor. I would like to concentrate on the opportunity there is in the police force recruitment, retention and career advancement. Currently, as you mentioned earlier, 26% of the police force are female ladies, but when you look at the rate of Detective Constables, it is 37%, which has been a great success for the MPS.

Are there any lessons that they can learn there about retention of staff and also putting people through the right support so that they can boost their careers?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Can I just check? When you said "ladies", did you mean women?

Shaun Bailey AM: Yes, I said “women” beforehand.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): OK. He meant women, not ladies, by the way.

There are lessons we can learn in relation to mentoring and sponsorship for female officers and also BAME officers to get them up the progression in the MPS. We are fortunate that the leader of the team is a woman, the current leader - who is soon retiring - of the National Police Chiefs’ Council is a woman, and the National Crime Agency (NCA) has a woman leader as well.

There is a role for sponsorship and mentoring. The Our Time programme we have set up in City Hall - which the MPS, the London Fire Brigade and others are now taking advantage of - will help, I hope, that next generation of officers moved to Detective levels. The direct entry scheme also is encouraging because it is leading to more women who are graduates coming into the police service. You can now become a Detective directly into the police service rather than the normal route up.

The MPS is trying innovative ways to get more woman police officers being Detectives and having other roles and making progress in the MPS. I want the MPS to be the best employer in the world, particularly for police officers.

Shaun Bailey AM: Are some of those lessons being ported over to BAME communities? There is in London a shared goal to have the police force more accurately reflect the population in London. Is there anything specific that we are doing to persuade people from BAME backgrounds to come into the police force and then also hold onto them and retain them so that they can go up the ranks?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The MPS is doing a lot of work to try to make sure that we recruit from London’s diverse communities. Unfortunately, one of the things the police have had to do temporarily is to remove the requirement to be a London resident to be eligible to join the police service to try to get more police officers joining. Obviously, if they are recruiting from an area that is less diverse, it could lead to the pipeline coming through being less diverse.

The Commissioner [Cressida Dick CBE QPM], the Deputy Commissioner [Sir Stephen House] and all those in charge of recruiting are keen to make that sure we recruit a diverse workforce - that means not just more women but also more BAME recruits as well and other parts of our community not properly represented in the police service - and once we have them to make sure they progress up the police service.

One of the things the MPS noticed was that often people express an interest in joining the police service and for a variety of reasons do not carry it through and do not end up joining the police service. We are trying to see what the issue is. Is it an issue with the test? Is it an issue with the delay? People have to get a job and pay the bills. Is there an issue with the training? They are looking at the issues by speaking to people who have not carried it through about what can be done to keep them going through.

They are trying everything they possibly can, including learning lessons from other police forces around the country. The bad news is that there is no police force around the country that does this brilliantly and so we cannot just nick the idea from them in relation to this, but there is nothing that is not being considered by the police service to make it more diverse.

Shaun Bailey AM: Just one last small point. The Police Cadets has been very successful, particularly when you look at diversity. Is there any initiative to help those young people consider a career in the police? Have the police again looked at why that service finds it far easier to recruit from a diverse background?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chairman, I have the pleasure of spending time with police officers every day, but last week I had the pleasure of spending an afternoon at the MPS Excellence Awards and there were great cadets there from all across London. We have more than 5,000 Police Cadets across London. In fact, one of the awards was to our Police Cadets and one of the recipients had now gone on to become a police officer at only 18 years old. We are trying to encourage both in the fire service and the police service a way in, guiding people in from being a Police Cadet or a Fire Cadet first to joining their service, whether it is the fire service or the police service. For the fire service, as a consequence of City Hall funding in my recent budget, opposed by Conservatives, we are going to increase the number of Fire Cadets across London so that every single borough will have Fire Cadets as well. We are trying to learn the lessons to get more young people doing constructive things but also using it as a way of getting better recruitment into our police service and fire service too.

Shaun Bailey AM: Thank you. Thank you, Chairman.

Len Duvall AM: Mr Mayor, I feel that the Assembly Member might need to employ me as a researcher because the Assembly did a report on the very issues that you raise. It is very good report and I commend the Assembly --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Can I just say? If you want a referee for that job, I am not sure I will give you a good reference to be the researcher for that guy. You want to work for somebody with a future.

Len Duvall AM: In terms of the question that was put to you, Mr Mayor, let us cut to the chase. The difference to be made is one of untapped talent. We touched on this earlier. Is one of the biggest problems that we face in a number of days' time moving to no deal? That Assembly Member there has been asked. He has been asked where he stands on the position of no deal or May's [Theresa May, Prime Minister] deal and what he believes in and what they all think over there. No, I do not want to be pessimistic about it but there are risks with no deal about opportunities for young people and talent pipeline that the Assembly Member usually refers to in this issue and, even more, the rhetoric in this place and the reality on the ground.

Mr Mayor, I want to bring to your attention a secondary school in my constituency that has 19 school assistants. We rightly talk about and value the support that we give to teachers in our schools. We very rarely give it to support staff. They are going down from 19 to eight because of the direct consequences of Government policy in reducing opportunities to the people who need it: the learning needs students who get the support of those school assistants. That is the real issue that we face. I am surprised at some of the important issues that he raises with the police but glosses over other challenges that we face here in London.

Do you think the Member needs to think about some of these lines of questioning that he is put into you or widen out some of the issues, and also needs a reality check of what is happening on the ground in London and what people are facing in their everyday struggles around opportunities?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Absolutely. I may hire you as a researcher! You are right. One of the things that not just the MPS but others are concerned about is whether people are match-fit to apply for the job, and the people you are talking about get them match-fit by supporting them in school, by giving them

good careers advice, by having them fulfil their potential, and then they become ready to apply for these jobs and to get these jobs.

That is why cutting support for our schools, reducing the support for youth work, reducing the amount of support staff in schools, lack of assistance to those children with special educational needs, and a situation where headteachers are not getting the support they need to stop a child reaching a situation where he or she is having to be excluded all contribute to a situation where young Londoners are not having their potential fulfilled.

You would have thought that anybody running to be the Mayor of this great city would stand up for London and call out the Government rather than being a patsy --

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): No, you are electioneering. You cannot do that.

Len Duvall AM: Thank you very much for your answer, Mr Mayor.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): That is an interventionist Chairman. It is funny how he wakes up now, is it not?

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): Do not give me any of this, Mr Mayor. I bend over backwards to be objective. If only you knew how difficult it is for me to resist; nevertheless I have been objective. You must not --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The Chairman's true colours have been exposed there.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): You must not mention Assembly Members' aspirations --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): He is leaving anyway. He has had enough. He is leaving the pitch. He has the red card from the Mayor!

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): No. This is abuse --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): There he goes. Let us give him a wave, everyone. Let us all wave him goodbye!

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): This is abuse of process.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chairman, we now know he has a weak constitution as well as weak policies.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): That is absolutely disgraceful, Mr Mayor --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I think he is a disgrace!

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): -- that you should use this place as a platform for this. I have just said to my Deputy [Chair] that next year [2019/20] she is going to have a very difficult time indeed.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chairman, can I just say?

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): Yes.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I could have said that his chances of winning have just gone down the toilet, but I did not say that. I didn't say that!

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): You know you can do better than that.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Deputy Chair): Yes, let us rise a bit higher.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): So can you with your candidate!

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): Assembly Member Sahota's question.

2019/6339 - Helping asthma sufferers breathe easier

[Dr Onkar Sahota AM](#)

The death rate for young people with asthma in the UK is twice as high as the next worst European country. How are you working with health, transport, planning and other services to improve this picture in London?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chairman, can I thank Dr Sahota [AM] for this question? It is simply unacceptable that young people in London and across the UK are experiencing a higher death rate from asthma compared to other European countries. Our illegally polluted air is known to increase the risk of asthma and trigger asthma attacks, which is why I am determined to take the action needed to improve air quality once and for all.

To help clean up our toxic air, we have already delivered the T-Charge in central London for the oldest polluting vehicles and are cleaning up the bus and taxi fleets. These measures are working. In central London we have seen a reduction in nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) concentrations of around 8%. The seven Low Emission Bus Zones have so far reduced nitrogen oxides (NOx) emissions by an average of 90%.

Despite opposition from the Conservatives, on 8 April [2019] I will launch the ULEZ in central London. From this date, vehicles traveling into the ULEZ will need to meet tough emission standards or pay a daily charge. It is expected that within the first two years the central London ULEZ will reduce harmful NOx emissions from road transport by 45%, improving air quality for millions of Londoners.

TfL's Healthy Streets approach and Liveable Neighbourhoods programme will help to further reduce children's exposure to poor air quality, as well as making it easier and safer to walk and cycle to school. Our air quality audit programmes are helping to deliver improvements at 50 schools and we are working with the boroughs to roll it out more widely. Our Draft London Plan is tackling air quality through tough standards for new buildings and by ensuring that the location of new education and childcare facilities reduces exposure to poor air quality.

While air pollution is a key factor in the exacerbation of asthma, high death rates are also partly due to a lack of awareness about the seriousness of the condition and patients missing out on basic asthma care. I am in regular discussions not just with Dr Sahota [AM] but with other senior health leaders in London and have endorsed the Healthy London Partnership's #AskAboutAsthma campaign, which supports London's health and care professionals to reduce hospital admissions by ensuring every young person with asthma has an asthma management plan, knows how to use their inhaler and has an annual asthma review.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: Mr Mayor, thank you very much. Of course, worldwide 9 million people die due to poor air quality and 7.3 million people die because of tobacco smoking, but yet we have a choice about smoking or not smoking. We have no choice about the air we breathe.

You are to be congratulated. This is another success you can add to your list. You have taken air quality seriously, unlike your predecessor, who ignored the facts. I want to congratulate you on the great effort you are making in this regard.

Of course, we know that there is a huge variation across London in asthma admissions and asthma attacks. What are you doing to look at these inequalities that exist across London?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): This is a big issue. You are right that many of us who have asthma have no choice. You cannot patient-blame in relation to this issue. It is a big concern that I have, particularly when I know that those who suffer the worst consequences from poor air are the poorest Londoners. That is one of the reasons why we are promoting a range of policies.

I make this point about the ULEZ that has been opposed by the Conservatives. This will benefit the poorest Londoners the most --

Gareth Bacon AM: Point of order.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): Yes, point of order.

Gareth Bacon AM: Under Standing Order 4.4: the Mayor has repeatedly said this morning that the GLA Conservatives Group is opposed to the ULEZ. It is a matter of fact that we are not. It has been in the public domain repeatedly. We published two policy papers on this, the first in January 2017, the second one in October 2017. The ULEZ, which was not conceived by this Mayor but by his predecessor Boris Johnson [MP, former Mayor of London], was supported by all parties and we have not resiled from that position. Our opposition is to the Mayor rushing it in a year early and expanding it to the North and South Circulars. It is very important to get that on the record. It is not something that has been hidden. It has been in the public domain for two years and the Mayor and the Labour Group have been deliberately misrepresenting that. It is important that that is corrected.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Let me be clear, Chairman. It is really important because that is just not correct. The Conservatives oppose my plans on the ULEZ. The Conservatives oppose the ULEZ beginning on 8 April. That means that the Conservatives oppose us fixing the air as soon as we can. The Conservatives will have their heads in the sand while the air in London gets worse. The Conservatives do oppose my plans for the ULEZ. He can use his time --

Gareth Bacon AM: Chairman, Standing Order 4.4.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): This is again the Chairman being complicit in an abuse of process.

Gareth Bacon AM: Chairman, Standing Order 4.4.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): No. We do have rules here. They may appear to have deteriorated at this meeting, I am afraid. Despite what I said at the beginning of the meeting, the infection has spread.

Gareth Bacon AM: Under Standing Order 4.4, Chairman: the Mayor has just repeated that we are opposed to the ULEZ. It is a matter of verifiable fact that we are not opposed to the ULEZ. The policy papers where we have said that we acknowledge and accept the ULEZ, which are in the public domain, were published in January 2017 and October 2017. We also supported the consultation that was undertaken by this Mayor's predecessor, which had exactly the same ULEZ but it was going to be introduced one year later than his proposal. We have set out our position and the Mayor has misrepresented it again, seconds after I corrected him.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): All right. Can we move on from arguing amongst ourselves, "He said this, he said that"? Perhaps you can deal with the important question that has been raised by Dr Sahota [AM].

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Dr Sahota, what you have just seen now is a smokescreen from the Conservatives, who are failing to take action to clean up the air that has helped to cause the asthma. The Conservatives are opposed to my plans to bring in the ULEZ on 8 April. The Conservatives are opposed to us cleaning up the air sooner rather than later. The Conservatives would have a situation where we have polluting vehicles coming into the heart of London and making our air worse for a long period of time. Thanks to our policies, opposed by the Conservatives, the ULEZ will begin on 8 April. When it is a success, they will give the impression they supported it all along.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: Mr Mayor, thank you very much for that very strong statement of great leadership in this area, which asthma sufferers across London will very much appreciate. Also, let me say that asthma sufferers need to take their medications every day.

Are you confident that the Government's plans for maintaining the supplies of this medication after Brexit are enough to give people confidence that they will have the medicine available to them?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): That is a really important question. I know you are being heckled by the Brexiteers from the Conservative Group, but it is really important that we plan for the possibility of leaving the EU without any deal whatsoever. There are concerns about the availability of medicines. Many of our medicines are imported through the EU. I have been told by the NHS that it has enough medicines for six months and they are advising patients and others not to stockpile medicines. I have regular discussions with the NHS. Fiona Twycross [AM and Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience] chairs the London Resilience Forum and meets regularly with colleagues from the NHS. I am confident at the moment from the information we have been given - and we rely upon the information we are given - that the Government has plans in relation to a no-deal Brexit and the availability of asthma pumps to those who need them, like me, like many of your patients and like many Londoners, particularly the poorest Londoners, who will benefit the most from my plans for the ULEZ, opposed by the Conservatives. We need to make sure the Government does not have a no-deal Brexit situation and we support all Londoners who will be affected by a no-deal Brexit.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: Mr Mayor, about 12 children die from asthma in London every year and 170 children are admitted to intensive care units every year because of asthma. A new scheme providing all state schools in Merton and Wandsworth with emergency asthma kits could help this. Do you support this programme being expanded right across London?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): It is a cracking scheme. It is in my area. St George's [University Hospital] and the NHS in Wandsworth and Merton deserve huge credit for this scheme. This scheme is really good. It will provide an emergency inhaler and will also raise awareness of asthma in schools by educating schools

about how to help children who may have asthma and what to do if there is an asthma attack. What I would like to see is this rolled out across London. We have seen how it can work in Wandsworth and Merton. As you explained, these are illnesses caused through no fault of the patient that are preventable, but some of the worst consequences are also preventable as well. This is a good example and thank you for bringing this example to our attention. I will make sure we do we can to amplify it.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: Good. Thank you, Mr Mayor.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): Assembly Member Arnold?

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Deputy Chair): Yes, Chairman. A point of personal explanation. As an asthma sufferer, I recently could not get a script filled fully. I had to go back a second time. There was another drug related to my asthma condition and I had to go to about four major outlets from a national chain before I could get half of that script filled. I would urge you to pick this up, Mayor, because it is an issue that now people are experiencing.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chairman, that is noted. We will follow that up.

2019/6234 - Help to buy

[Tom Copley AM](#)

Recent news stories have shown developers making record profits on the back of Help to Buy. With the scheme set to run another four years, do you think it is right that the Government is guaranteeing the bottom line of developers who aren't building enough affordable homes?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I have been clear that all developers must to build their fair share of social rented and genuinely affordable homes. This applies to everyone, including those developers whose businesses rely on Help to Buy.

Help to Buy has been a major feature of London's housing market since 2016 when 40% equity loans were introduced. Last year more than 5,000 households in London used Help to Buy and in some boroughs over a third of new homes were bought using it. This means that last year the Government invested £848 million in Help to Buy equity loans in London. That is more than the total annual funding of around £700 million that it has given to our Affordable Homes programme.

While Help to Buy has helped some Londoners onto the housing ladder and has helped building to continue after the financial crisis, its scale risks pushing up prices and making it unsustainable in the long term. There are far better ways we could spend the money that goes to Help to Buy, but we are now in a difficult position as a result of the Government's failure to manage the scheme properly, which has left developers addicted to the current approach.

That is why I have been clear to the Government that we must see a smooth transition to a successor scheme that delivers far greater public benefit. This successor scheme should support a new housing supply without pushing up prices. It should incentivise better practices and higher standards among housebuilders. Crucially, I am also clear that homebuilders who benefit directly from state financial support through Help to Buy must deliver far higher proportions of affordable homes. In future, if the Government is willing to spend this level of money on building new homes, it must be directed towards genuinely affordable housing. My team will make

this clear in any discussions with Government officials about the future of the scheme and City Hall is happy to work with Ministers on developing a successor scheme that achieves this goal.

Tom Copley AM: Thank you very much for that answer, Mr Mayor. It is worth just highlighting some of the big figures in terms of profits here. It was reported recently that large housebuilders Persimmon and Taylor Wimpey posted record profits of £1.1 billion and £811 million respectively and that these have been inflated by the Government's Help to Buy scheme. Persimmon made a 13% increase in profit in 2018 versus 2017 and 48% of its customers used Help to Buy, although they are less active in London. Taylor Wimpey's profits were up 18% and 29% of its London sales were with Help to Buy. Berkeley Homes made a £930 million profit before tax in 2018 and has increased its profits every year since 2014. Yet in 2017/18 developers in total contributed just 1,467 affordable home starts in London through Section 106 [of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990] agreements compared to the record 12,555 funded by City Hall.

I am pleased to hear in your response to Assembly Member Berry's question that the percentage of affordable homes being granted planning permission is increasing thanks to your threshold approach, but are there any other further levers you can use to ensure that private developers contribute their fair share?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The figures you have quoted in your question should wake people up to the broken housing market because developers are doing very well and landowners are doing very well, but those who so desperately need a new home on an average salary are doing very badly. The lack of genuinely affordable homes should be a source of worry to all of us. If you speak to big employers who employ people on decent salaries, they cannot afford to live in London. That is why we need to build far more genuinely affordable homes. That is one of the reasons why we ditched the dodgy definition.

We are doing a number of things, even without the powers that I need and without the resources that I need to try to help this along. Some of it is in the new draft London Plan, which is currently going through the Examination in Public. Some of it is in the Housing Strategy. It is also working with councils who decide the schemes below a certain threshold that do not come to us. I am speaking to councils as well and that can lead to some progress as well. There are many good councils as well.

I am also speaking to developers. Developers understand that there is a problem in the housing market and they recognise that the countercyclical way housing works gives an opportunity in relation to more affordable homes. I am hoping that with an additional grant from the Government to housing providers and developers, rather than them relying on cross-subsidy, we can have more genuinely affordable homes that way as well. That is one of the points I made to the Chancellor [of the Exchequer] when I last met him.

Tom Copley AM: Thank you very much, Mr Mayor.

2019/6411 - Croydon Town Centre

[Steve O'Connell AM](#)

What is your assessment of the delay to the redevelopment of Croydon Town Centre?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Croydon's town centre is an Opportunity Area in our Draft London Plan and has a key role to play in delivering good growth for Londoners due to its strategic location in the trams/Brighton Main Line corridor with important links to central London, Gatwick and beyond.

A key scheme for Croydon's transformation is of course the Croydon Limited Partnership's mixed-use redevelopment of the Whitgift centre. Good progress has been made since the outline planning consent was achieved in January 2018. In September last year [2018] the compulsory purchase order process commenced, which is crucial for the land acquisition process for construction of the new development. My understanding is that whilst a start onsite date has slipped from autumn 2019 and a new date is yet to be confirmed, the developers have said they remain committed to the scheme and still plan for it to open in late 2023.

Structural changes in retail and the uncertainty related to Brexit will undoubtedly have an effect on this project. I also understand that the developers are currently refining the proposals to ensure that they are best equipped to deal with the challenges facing the retail sector. Despite the setback, I remain optimistic about the regeneration of Croydon town centre.

In April last year [2018] the Croydon Growth Zone was initiated. This will capture growth in local business rates for 16 years and help to fund the £500 million package of critical infrastructure required to deliver the wholesale renewal of the retail court. At least 10,000 new homes of different tenures will be built and there will be 23,500 new long-term jobs with a further 5,000 jobs created during the construction phase. The GLA and TfL will continue to work closely with Croydon Council on the Growth Zone to ensure that the required infrastructure is delivered at the appropriate time --

Steve O'Connell AM: All right. Thank you, Mr Mayor. Sorry, I am running out of time.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I beg your pardon. I am sorry. I will write to you.

Steve O'Connell AM: I accept that. I have lived and breathed this for some years now. However, your response, which I welcome, is somewhat of the sunny side. It is not an overstatement to say that I believe the prosperity of Croydon and large swathes of south London is predicated on this successful scheme. This is a cross-party lobbying point and I have a Labour Croydon Council colleague here in the Chamber today.

However, there is major concern about the slippage in this scheme. This scheme is going to deliver something like 1,000 jobs towards your target, something like 15,000 construction jobs and something like 5,000 retail and office jobs. There is real concern locally.

Mr Mayor, you did talk about earlier comparisons about pulling everyone together, having all the key players in one room and knocking heads together. You used the COBRA example. The previous incumbent here held meetings in this building when things were looking a bit tricky, frankly. He called in the top people, be it the council, be it TfL, be it elsewhere, and said, "We need to move this on".

Mr Mayor, in the context that there is a delay and a significant slippage, putting this at risk, will you call a meeting in this building and try to put on your mayoral pressure to get this project moving?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chairman, I am always happy to use my convening powers. Can I, with your agreement, Chairman, speak to the Leader of the Council and Assembly Member O'Connell to see if there is a way we can help facilitate progress on this scheme? It is so crucial to Croydon's future. I am more than happy to do that, Chairman.

Steve O'Connell AM: I am pleased to hear that. Thank you very much, Mr Mayor.

2019/6430 - London's economic development

Tony Devenish AM

What are you proactively doing to attract big firms, like Amazon, to London to indicate that London is open for business?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): As Mayor, I have been promoting London to ensure we continue to be the most competitive, attractive and innovative city in the world for business. Despite opposition from the GLA Conservatives Group, I continue to fund London & Partners (L&P) to promote London to business leaders and investors around the world and spread the 'London is Open' message.

In relation to Amazon, last year I met with Amazon's Senior Vice President Jay Carney and UK Country Manager Doug Gurr for a positive discussion about Amazon's future plans in London. In 2017 Amazon opened a new headquarters (HQ) in Shoreditch and has expanded to over 5,000 staff here in London. I was pleased that Jay Carney and Doug Gurr highlighted the business commitments they have to London during our meeting. These are the kinds of conversations I regularly hold.

I have also had meetings with the likes of Tim Cook, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Apple – that is Tim Cook, not Tim Apple – Jamie Dimon, CEO of JPMorgan, and senior leaders from other big businesses from Google to Goldman Sachs. In the face of opposition from the Conservatives on the Assembly, we have also supported L&P to open new overseas offices in six key cities to ensure London attracts further investment. I am proud that since I have been Mayor, Google has announced it is opening a new building in King's Cross, housing 4,500 staff. I was pleased to perform the ground-breaking ceremony for this last year [2018]. Apple will open a new London HQ in Battersea. Facebook is leasing three new offices in King's Cross.

I am determined, Chairman, to ensure that the prosperity of our city is shared so that all Londoners can feel the benefits. This means making sure that big businesses in London are also good corporate citizens and they play by the rules and protect workers' rights.

Tony Devenish AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. We have seen again the hard left, who opposed Amazon killing 25,000 jobs in New York. How will you stop this poison spreading across London under Jeremy Corbyn [Leader of the Labour Party]?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): What a remarkable question.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): I cannot help.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Here we have a west London Assembly Member asking the Mayor of London in City Hall to give a running commentary on what is happening across the pond in relation to jobs in New York.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): I am sorry, you are out of time. We are not going to be able to hear you deal with that mystery problem.

Andrew Dismore AM: I might clear some of that up. Mr Mayor, we all know that the Brexiteer Conservatives and UKIP are keen to see the UK as a low-tax, low-regulation, low-standards Singapore-style offshore economy with appalling labour standards, but do we really want New York's castoffs like Amazon, which have pulled out of New York City after criticism of its scheme to set up there? Can I remind the Conservatives that

whilst Amazon's UK sales rose to more than £11 billion in 2017, the tax they paid, if any, on these sales is not publicly known because their sales are routed through Luxembourg, and that Amazon has paid only £61.7 million in corporation tax in 20 years, and that they have also been criticised for their poor warehouse working conditions, which are well documented? Would not it be better to encourage to come to London those businesses that pay their fair share of taxes and are known for good working practices? Is the real barrier to inward investment not Brexit uncertainty, for which the Conservatives are responsible?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): One of the reasons why I spend so much time speaking to global CEOs and businesses is because of the threat of Brexit and the concerns business have in investing in London. You are right. Our future as a city and as a country is not in low-paid, low-skilled jobs. We do not want a race to the bottom. We should be looking at high-skilled, well-paid jobs, and that means having good corporate citizens coming to London who play by the rules and protect workers' rights.

That is one of the reasons why we have set up the new Good Work Standard and we will be encouraging more and more employers to sign up to that. It is really important not just that businesses do well in London but also that Londoners do well from businesses being in London as well?

2019/6324 - Child Yield estimates and Play space

[Nicky Gavron AM](#)

Your Housing Strategy finds that there are 380,000 families in London living in overcrowded conditions. Will you commit to an updated child yield study to reflect this, and to ensure that new developments plan for enough play space for children and informal recreation space for under-18s and that boroughs can plan for school spaces and other services?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you, Chairman. Overcrowding in London affects around a quarter of a million households. This includes more than one in five children. The lack of room to play can significantly inhibit children's development and educational achievement. Safe and stimulating play is essential for children and young people's mental and physical health.

My new Draft London Plan Policy S4, play and informal recreation, requires residential developments likely to be used by children and young people to provide at least ten square metres of play space per child. This is the first time a London Plan sets a space requirement for play space per child rather than a benchmark and guidance.

To support this, my team is finalising updates to the GLA population yield calculator, which gives an indication of the possible number and age of children that could be expected to live in a new housing development of a given bedroom or tenure mix. These updates will improve the calculator's usability and layout and will be published alongside the methodology document in the next few weeks.

My team is scoping the potential to make better use of data that has become available since the 2011 Census to reflect patterns of occupation in new-build homes more accurately prior to the release of the new 2021 Census data. They will also be updating the Shaping Neighbourhoods: Play and Informal Recreation SPG following the adoption of the London Plan to give additional guidance on how play space can be incorporated into new developments. My new London Plan also requires boroughs to plan for appropriate school provision and facilities in London's Opportunity Areas, where significant growth and demand is expected.

Nicky Gavron AM: This is absolutely excellent news. I want to congratulate you on putting ten square metres per child and young person of play space and informal recreation space actually in the Plan because it now has much more weight or, rather, it will have when it has gone through the examination-in-public, which is on 3 May [2019]. It will not go through uncontested and so I will do everything I can on behalf of the Assembly to make sure that we make the case in the way you have now.

I just want to check. You said that the calculator is being updated in the next few weeks?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Yes, correct. We will publish that in the next few weeks, Chairman.

Nicky Gavron AM: That is really important because the current calculator underestimates the number of children, as you said. It is really out of date. It goes back to the last two censuses and, therefore, it is eight or 17 years out of date.

It also makes strange assumptions. For instance it assumes that most people who live in two-bed flats will not have children. This is partly why we have these overcrowding figures. You will see that the English Housing Survey, which came out in January [2019], says that across the whole of the private and social rented sector, all rented sectors are now at a record level of overcrowding. What you are doing is so important.

However, I just want to check. You are doing it in advance of the Census figures coming out and then you are going to do it again when the Census figures have come out?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Correct. We are scoping the potential to do it before the Census comes out - because 2011 was a long time ago and there have been big changes - and making the service available to local authorities as well when it comes to them considering applications that are below the threshold that come to me as well.

Nicky Gavron AM: That is brilliant. Then it will of course have to be done again once the Census figures do come out, but it is so important to do it now. We cannot waste time.

My other ask really - and you have you have answered my first ask - is that while of course you are quite rightly putting a lot of emphasis on youth service provision and the cuts that there have been, here is an idea. Those ten square metres in aggregate could be used in a different way for young people and what you could have is a situation where the children and the young people could be involved in all sorts of different activities. It could be safe, accessible and of course free informal space for children.

We have all seen when we go around housing estates, "No ball games", "No ball games". Yet I have seen it myself because I was Chair of the Broadwater Farm Community Centre for quite a few years. There we had midnight football. We had all sorts of activities. Just having five-a-side or just having basketball nets and all that can make a huge difference.

My ask is that you produce a best-practice guide to go with what you are now doing so that local authorities can ensure when are developments come forward that they consult the young people themselves and use that space for proper recreation and sport activity for young people.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chairman, as ever, those are really good points from Assembly Member Gavron. I answer by saying that I am going to ask my Deputy Mayor Joanne McCartney [AM] to go away and look into the idea from Nicky Gavron, speak to not just the Deputy Mayor for Planning

and Regeneration but also Deputy Mayor for Social Integration [Social Mobility and Community Engagement] Debbie Weekes-Bernard and see what we can do. That is a cracking idea. Some sort of best practice for councils would really go along the way and also developers will then know what is expected from them and they could build this into schemes at an early stage. If you get involved at an early stage of the design phase, these things are possible. Can I take that away, Chairman, and respond offline to Assembly Member Gavron through Deputy Mayor McCartney [AM]?

Nicky Gavron AM: Thank you.

2019/6078 - Solar power on the Transport for London estate

Caroline Russell AM

What are you doing to maximise solar photovoltaic (PV) deployment on the Transport for London (TfL) estate?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you, Chairman. Our Solar Action Plan sets an ambition for London to achieve 1 gigawatt of installed solar capacity by 2030 and TfL is directly contributing to this. Through the RE:FIT programme, part of my Energy for Londoners programme, TfL has committed to deliver 1.1 megawatts of generating capacity by retrofitting solar panels across its larger existing rooftops. Work is underway to deliver on this. When constructing new buildings, TfL is integrating solar PV into the design where feasible. Solar PV has been incorporated into the Whitechapel Elizabeth line station and the Old Oak Common Depot.

However, the lack of support from the Government for solar severely undermines our efforts to deliver solar on a large scale on buildings across London. The removal also of the feed-in tariff for new solar applications this month, coupled with the Government's increase in business rates for buildings, makes solar schemes less commercially attractive. I am lobbying the Government to improve the affordability of new solar, to address the business rates issue and to minimise the gap between the removal of the feed-in tariff and the introduction of the proposed Smart Export Guarantee.

However, despite these setbacks, there is still huge opportunity for solar and other renewables across the whole of the TfL estate, not just the buildings. Using funding from my Decentralised Energy Enabling Project, TfL has commissioned a study of its land holdings and track sites that could offer potential for solar. This study is underway and will be completed later this year [2019]. TfL will progress the most promising sites for further development. In fact, that was a point made by the Assembly Member at People's Question Time, a good point made last week.

My Environment Strategy also sets an ambition for all the electricity powering TfL's rail services to be zero-carbon by 2030. At the end of 2018 TfL undertook a market engagement exercise to understand the potential for third parties to directly supply low-carbon electricity to TfL.

Caroline Russell AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. There is huge variability in the number of solar panels installed on station buildings. In 2012 Blackfriars Station became the world's largest solar-powered bridge and it provides 50% of the station's energy needs. It is a really good example. You mentioned you have managed to get solar at Whitechapel and at Old Oak, but there are a lot of recent station redevelopments like Tottenham Court Road, Farringdon Underground and Paddington Station, for example, where there are very few solar panels included.

Have you considered putting solar panels on all new Crossrail 2 stations that have outside buildings and platforms to maximise their solar generating capacity?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chairman, I would be astonished if, in relation to the Crossrail 2 stations, that was not the case because there is no alternative. We have to be making sure we have more ways to reduce the carbon --

Caroline Russell AM: That is great. In that case, could you ask someone to get back to me with any details on that?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Can I agree to write to the Assembly Member? Is that all right?

Caroline Russell AM: Yes. Thank you.

You mentioned the mapping exercise to assess the whole TfL building portfolio for potential solar generation capacity alongside an assessment of TfL-owned undeveloped and trackside land. It was reported in November last year [2018] - and you alluded to this - that TfL's Senior Energy Strategy Manager said that the problems of installing solar panels trackside have been overcome and that investors were waiting to fund it, which sounds great. Did you look at the solar generating potential of the entire 450 miles of train tracks in London?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chairman, I am sorry. I do not have that information. I am really sorry. Can I write to you with that? I do not have that here.

Caroline Russell AM: Please do write to me. That is it for my questions. Thanks very much.

2019/6146 - Freedom of Speech

[David Kurten AM on behalf of Peter Whittle AM](#)

I was troubled to learn of the arrest of Christian street preacher Oluwole Ilesanmi outside Southgate Underground Station on 23 February 2019. Having viewed the arrest on social media and the confiscation of his Bible, I understand he was then taken five miles away by police car and dumped in Wrotham Park. I am disappointed that any members of the Metropolitan Police would think it appropriate to behave in this manner. What is your view of the actions taken by the police on this particular occasion?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you, Chairman. I can confirm that a man was arrested outside Southgate Station on 23 February [2018] as a result of a complaint made by a member of the public. He was later released without charge. It has been widely reported that Mr Ilesanmi was arrested and subsequently de-arrested and released by the police at a different location some distance from the place of arrest. Following the police's handling of this matter, a complaint has been received and this is now being reviewed by the borough's Professional Standards Unit. I expect the police to take this matter seriously and I can write to Members once an update on this investigation has been received.

As there is a complaint that is being investigated, it would be inappropriate for me to comment on the specific case, but I will say this, Chairman. It has always been clear that freedom of speech is critical and must be protected, but also that the police must be able to investigate when allegations are made of a criminal offence. Police officers have to strike a difficult balance on this issue on a regular basis and in complex circumstances, such as policing protests and public order incidents. The Commissioner and MPS police officers appreciate these sensitivities and take these duties seriously. The Commissioner and I both believe that the law should be applied equally to all Londoners irrespective of their background and beliefs and without fear or favour. As part of this, our police officers are rightly expected to always uphold the highest standards.

David Kurten AM: Thank you for your answer, Mr Mayor. I am glad you are saying that you will uphold freedom of speech and that is a very important right that we have in this country.

There were some things that I and many other people found very disturbing about the arrest of Mr Ilesanmi. First of all, his *Bible* was taken away from him and he was accused of being racist. You say you cannot comment on that specific case, but is there guidance to the police in dealing with Christian street preachers like Mr Ilesanmi so that this kind of thing will not happen again?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chairman, I want to be very careful not to talk about this because there is an ongoing complaint, but I am a firm advocate of freedom of expression and freedom of speech. It is enshrined in the Human Rights Act. Article 10 is quite clear about this. You look at the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. That is also quite clear about this. There are balances to be struck. I appreciate the police have an incredibly difficult job when it comes to policing protests and banners being held up or situations where a complaint has been made by a member of the public. Often they have to make split-second decisions. It is not for me to second-guess that decision taken in the heat of the moment of that difficult time and the considerations they have in relation to public order offences or breaches of the peace.

All I can say to the Assembly, Chairman, is that I understand the importance of holding this really important freedom. It is also a common law freedom, by the way, not simply a statute freedom. In this particular case, once I have an update, I am happy to write to not just the Assembly Member but others if others have an interest to give them the outcome and stuff. I understand why this question is being raised and I can understand the concerns.

David Kurten AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. I would appreciate you writing to me.

There is another thing that maybe you can answer in a general term. This is in the public domain. Originally there was a statement put out that he was walked 200 metres and then de-arrested, but the statement was then later changed. The police are now saying that he was driven some miles away, left a long way away from the scene where he was arrested and then de-arrested, and so he had not done anything wrong.

Is that something that you think is acceptable or is that something that you think should not be happening?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chairman, again, I have to be very careful because I am being asked to comment on a case about which there has been made a complaint.

In general terms, the police often will remove somebody who may be causing a breach of the peace away from the area to prevent a breach of the peace. I am talking in general terms. The police may do that to avoid having to make an arrest and a charge and a prosecution. It just takes the heat out of the situation.

I simply cannot comment on this particular case. One of the things that the investigation into the complaint will be looking into is the appropriateness or otherwise of the police's actions, including proportionality as well.

David Kurten AM: Going back to the issue of freedom of speech, there have been street preachers from many different religions in this city for many years, centuries even, particularly Christian street preachers. Now there is a worry or a fear among people that the freedom of speech that you speak about is being undermined.

Would you be able to say that Christian street preachers have the freedom of speech to read from any part of the Bible in this city without fear of being arrested?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): One of the great things about living in a democracy is this ability to debate and discuss and have a discussion, sometimes an argument. That is one of the joys of living in London and we should protect that. It is a special thing we have.

The challenge the police have is that sometimes that can go into behaviour that can lead to public order concerns or breaches of the peace. It is a very difficult balance they have to strike. There is not an unlimited right to freedom of expression or free speech. There are limitations and there is balancing to be done.

I am quite clear in my own views that we should go as far as we can to uphold that really important and sacred principle, and that includes discourse about religion. It is a great thing about our city that we can have these healthy debates and it does not come to blows or lead to animus but is healthy debate.

One of the great things about our city, by the way, is the response from the Christian community to what happened in Christchurch [New Zealand]. That solidarity shown by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of London, the Christian communities, the Jewish communities, the Hindu communities and the Sikh communities to the Muslim communities is one of the reasons we should be proud to be Londoners. That is why I do not want to end that debate that takes place and curtail that healthy debate.

David Kurten AM: Of course, discourse between religions about religious ideas is specifically protected in the Public Order Act. Specifically what Christians would like to know after this incident and also in any guidance that might come out is specifically whether they are allowed to speak or read out any part of the Bible in London without fear of being arrested.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chairman, I have to confess that I have not read the Bible, not all the versions, and I am not sure. That is a question really for a lawyer or the police, not for me as the Mayor.

David Kurten AM: OK. Maybe you have answered as much as you can. Thank you for your answers, Mr Mayor.

2019/6295 - Staffing at Transport for London

[Florence Eshalomi AM](#)

Transport for London will reduce their back and middle office costs by 30 per cent over the next three years at the same time as delivering a better service. What estimate has TfL made on the likely reduction in headcount?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you, Chairman. I am committed to providing a safe, reliable and affordable transport service for all Londoners while placing TfL's finances on a sustainable footing for the long term. TfL is working to deliver an operating surplus by 2022. To do so, it is managing significant challenges. This includes an average £700 million annual reduction in Government funding - we have seen the Transport Salaried Staffs' Association union campaigning on this at City Hall today and I was pleased, like you, to meet them this morning - a subdued economy affecting its revenues, and the delay to the opening of the Elizabeth line. TfL has therefore taken a range of actions to reduce operating costs and to secure other sources of revenue. This includes utilising TfL's property estate and developing its consultancy services in order to protect frontline transport services.

At this stage is not possible to say what will be required to achieve the 30% target in middle- and back-office functions over three years. Any proposals directly affecting staff will be subject to consultation with staff and trade unions and could involve both staff and non-staff costs. I understand TfL will seek to reduce the impact on staff through reductions in non-permanent labour and through not filling existing vacancies.

Since I became Mayor, TfL has been delivering efficiency savings, having already redesigned 30 business areas. This has had a significant impact on reducing costs. We have reduced recurring annual savings of £111 million. TfL is on track to exceed its planned savings targets for this financial year [2018/19].

A tangible example of these recent efficiencies has been the creation of a new business services function, which has brought together operational activity that was previously within human resources and finance. By bringing these teams together, there will be further opportunities to streamline common processes and look for other ways to deliver a better service at a reduced cost.

Florence Eshalomi AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. Again, just to be clear, we do know that the main culprit and the reason TfL is in this position is because we do not have that central grant from the Government.

In your role as Chair of TfL, Mr Mayor, I am worried about some of the issues in terms of these job cuts. The majority of the job losses that have already happened are from lower grades and we have not seen a reduction in the number of directors. In terms of the headcount from 2015 to 2017, there was a 30% reduction in senior management. How much of that reduction over the next three years, Mr Mayor, will be in senior staff?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Are you projecting forward?

Florence Eshalomi AM: Yes, going forward.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Before we get to that stage, there will be lots of work done to plan, to design and then to consult not just with the executive team but also with the trade unions. I cannot give you those figures at this stage and nor could TfL because that work has not been done to break down how many will be senior staff, how many will be middle or lower staff and how many will be non-staff as well in relation to the savings to be made. That part of the work will take place during the course of the business plan.

Florence Eshalomi AM: That is great. Again, I know that you have been very keen in terms of making sure TfL reduces the day-to-day bill on consultants, but as we all know consultants do not appear in TfL's figures. Can we make sure that we look at how we can address that going forward?

Lastly, a number of these roles that may be cut are back-office functions including engineering, maintenance, health and safety, and delivery of major projects. They may not seem like frontline cuts, but they play such a key service. How are we going to ensure that if those cuts do go forward, it will not adversely impact the day-to-day running and provision of services across London? Safety has to be paramount.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Yes. That is a key point you raise. We are going to make sure we keep frontline staff, but you are right. Back-office staff have a huge role to make the front-office staff do their work. That is why I said it would be unwise for me to give a figure in relation to staff cuts and senior staff cuts as well because that design work has to take place. The key thing is to make sure that TfL continues to be reliable, safe and also affordable. Safety is the most important out of those three issues. As part of the design work but before we get to proposals, they will be looking at those sorts of issues, but safety is of paramount concern. The consultation that we now do is far superior than done before.

I have been criticised by the Conservatives for spending time talking to trade unions and the facilities and time given, but TfL is undertaking the biggest reorganisation in its history. If we do not talk to our staff and consult with them and those who represent the staff, do not be surprised if that leads to concern, frustration and anxiety from those hardworking staff. I do not apologise for the facilities and time. I do not apologise for meeting trade union leaders. I do not apologise for consulting those who work in TfL.

Florence Eshalomi AM: Great. Thank you, Mr Mayor.

2019/6218 - Sustainable heating

Leonie Cooper AM

Given the Committee on Climate Change recently recommended no new houses be connected to the gas grid from 2025, and your plans are more ambitious than those on which this recommendation is based, is it time for London to accelerate transition to new heating methods?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you, Chairman. For too long we have relied on fossil fuels like gas to heat our buildings and so I welcome the Committee on Climate Change's clear position on the need for high-quality new homes that are not reliant on gas. We do need to move, though, towards renewable and low-carbon ways of heating London's buildings. To make this happen, we need to transition away from gas boilers, which are worsening climate change and polluting our already toxic air, to zero-carbon technologies like renewable heat pumps and heat networks supplied by renewable sources.

As Assembly Member Cooper rightly points out, in London we are being more ambitious than the Government in doing this. In 2015 the Government's scrapped its zero-carbon home standard, which would have driven more low-carbon heat in new homes. The recent Spring Statement suggests the Government is revisiting this, but its inaction is resulting in a decade of lost action on low-carbon and renewable heat. In London, we have been the exception to this. We kept the zero-carbon home standard for new buildings when it was scrapped across the rest of the country and we plan to apply it to non-domestic buildings when the new draft London Plan is adopted this year [2019]. These policies are already helping new buildings in London to transition away from gas boilers to more efficient low-carbon and renewable heat sources like heat pumps.

Leonie Cooper AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. As you know, before Christmas [2018] we asked you to declare a climate emergency, which you did. We are in quite a difficult position now. We are moving ahead in terms of reducing emissions from vehicles, but household fuels already form 58% of emissions nationally and of course, in terms of London, carbon emissions from buildings now have gone from 42% in 2008 to 47% now because of other emissions coming down, and the same with NO₂. It is an increasing percentage; it has gone from 19% up to 25%. I just wondered if you were having any success in lobbying the Government to think about investing in national infrastructure and seeing moving away from fossil fuels as an important national infrastructure project. Is there anything they are thinking about doing to incentivise, so that we can really start to scale up quickly? We really need to get a wriggle on, as you know.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): My officials have had good conversations with Government officials. We have had decent conversations with Government Ministers but there is a lack of action from Government and frankly the Government is in paralysis because of Brexit. No decisions are being taken and everything is being kicked down the road, which is catastrophic for climate change, catastrophic. You have seen young Londoners march to make sure our generation gets the message from them and their frustration with the delay from us responding.

I have to say this, though. Our powers are limited. Our resources are limited. We are doing what we can and according to independent analysis going much further than any previous administration, than other global cities across the world. I speak regularly to C40 to get ideas that I can pinch and that we can emulate in London, but it is difficult. Unless the Government steps in with more powers and more resources, we will not be able to make the progress we need to make. We are in a climate change emergency. I have seen no evidence that the Government currently gets that.

Leonie Cooper AM: It is quite disgraceful, as you say, to see that the House of Commons is empty when there is a debate about climate change and that it is actually school children who are bringing the issue of climate change to the top of the agenda by undertaking school strikes.

You have done a lot of interesting work with your teams on heat networks, particularly in the larger new developments. I just wondered if there had been an analysis done of what we can do to fit individual heat pumps because that is an area that we have not really pushed ahead on as much. Is that an area that officials are looking into?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): We are looking at the issue of retrofitting heat pumps into homes. The key thing is the energy efficiency market is not fit for purpose. We need to restart the stalled market. There has to be regulatory powers introduced from Government to make it work. Also, for us to encourage existing heating systems to be replaced with heat pumps, we need to have funding provided for a roll-out of low carbon and renewable heating systems that go beyond 2021. As long as the Government is in paralysis, I am afraid we are not going to see the progress we need in this area.

Leonie Cooper AM: Obviously we need to scale up in terms of insulation because you cannot really fit heat pumps unless you have very energy-efficient buildings. The other issue with heat network properties is that it is quite hard, if you have a heat network, for individual residents to then switch supplier. Effectively you cannot. You are on the network.

Is there anything that is being looked at by your team in terms of residents' rights and how they can be protected in those circumstances?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): One of the things we are asking Government to do is to work closely with the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (Ofgem) in relation to this area because regulation is lacking but Ofgem can step in. The difficulty in switching suppliers is a problem in London with dense areas and the challenges that we have. We are supporting the better regulation of heat networks so they are properly designed, but also, to make it easier for consumers to switch, we are seeing if Ofgem can do something to step in there.

Leonie Cooper AM: Finally, Mr Mayor, you recently published a research report on the impact of NOx pollution from boilers. How will you be taking forward the outcomes of that research into action to tackle this as we tackled London's toxic air in general?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Disclosure: it was a small-scale study. It was not as comprehensive a study as we would have liked. It was done because we were concerned about real-world emissions versus claimed emissions. We saw the Dieselgate fiasco with cars. The preliminary response we have is it seems like there are not the same issues with cars as there are with boilers. Roughly speaking, real-world emissions are the same as those that are claimed. One of the things we are talking to the Government about is if they can do further

work in this area to make sure we can be reassured by the claims made by companies in relation to the emissions. That will give us the confidence we lack in relation to cars.

Leonie Cooper AM: OK, so something that has been picked up with Government. Thank you, Chairman. Thank you, Mr Mayor.

2019/6201 - Adult Education Budget

Jennette Arnold AM

The delegation of the £311 million Adult Education Budget to London this summer is in its final stretch and has proved to be a successful collaboration between the Greater London Authority and Government, particularly the Department for Education. Will you be continuing to lobby for the delegation of 16-18 funding?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you, Chairman. The Skills for Londoners Strategy sets out our ambition to create a single integrated skills and adult education offer for London to deliver a more strategic, whole-system approach to post-16 skills. While devolution of the Adult Education Budget is an important and welcome first step, the Government must go further. We need a bespoke devolution deal that is responsive to London's economy considering our scale, the impact of Brexit on the supply of talent, and other skills challenges, particularly the technological challenge.

I am going to carry on lobbying the Government to devolve further powers to London including 16-18 provision, career services, Apprenticeship Levy funds and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, the domestic successor to the European Structural and Investment Funds. We are also doing some stuff already to help young people with the new Young Londoners Fund, through the European Social Fund (ESF) programmes aimed at young Londoners who are not in education, employment or training, and a £7 million digital technology pipeline helping young Londoners with talent without the opportunity.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Deputy Chair): Thank you, Mr Mayor, I welcome your answer. Can I just add my appreciation for your commitment to supporting young people, especially those aged 16-18, and those young Londoners who are not in employment, education or training for whatever reason? Do, please, continue the dialogue, yourself and your deputy and officers, with the Department for Education (DfE) because, as you say, the devolution must go further if we are to get the funding and to be able to have that seamless offer for our young people. As you mentioned, we do have a problem on the horizon around the 16-18 year old package because much of that comes from the ESF, which, regrettably, will end in 2020 because of Brexit.

Now, Mayor, a key pillar of your Skills for Londoners Strategy is your adoption of the impact-based approach to commissioning adult education in London and it is an approach that I welcome. From the feedback that I have received, it has been welcomed by the FE sector. Can I ask you to urge Deputy Mayor [for Regeneration, Planning and Skills, Jules] Pipe [CBE] to publish a six-month progress report so that the Assembly's Education Panel can start with scrutiny of this innovative approach?

If Members do not know what this approach is, they can ask me later.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): In short, it is making sure that we have colleges and trainers incentivised to make sure that people who go through their system can get a job, a sustainable job, and to look at the impact of the work the colleges are doing.

Can I respond this way? We want to make sure we are transparent but also use the expertise around this room. I will ask Jules Pipe to work with Assembly Member Arnold to work out the best way of giving you the information you need to properly improve and help us raise our game. For the first year we are limited in what we can do because of the conditions of the devolution. We have already made sure British Sign Language is being taught but also we are providing assistance for those who are in work, not getting the living wage, who could do with some additional training. In fact we have done that already. We did that in year one. You are right, from year two we can do a lot more and we have a lot more scope. We will work with you in relation to what we can do to work with providers to make sure the courses they are providing are really adding value to Londoners to get the jobs they need.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Deputy Chair): Thank you.

2019/6079 - Apprenticeship Levy

[Fiona Twycross](#)

Is the Government's Apprenticeship Levy working for London's businesses and residents?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The Apprenticeship Levy is not currently working for London's businesses and residents. Apprenticeship starts in London have fallen by 14% since the introduction of the levy in April 2017, compounding London's historic low rates of apprenticeship starts. Many London businesses are telling us that they have not fully utilised their Apprenticeship Levy contribution. For instance, a survey of London employers by London Councils and the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry found that 42% of the capital's levy-paying businesses did not expect to use any of their levy funds in the next year.

Deputy Mayor Jules Pipe, together with London Councils, London First and the London Chambers of Commerce and Industry, has sent joint letters to the Chancellor of the Exchequer [Philip Hammond MP] and the Minister of State for Apprenticeships and Skills [Anne Milton MP], lobbying them in relation to what changes need to be made. I have also worked with the metro mayors to lobby the Government for us to be given some of the resources that are currently unspent but also, for us to be given the powers that Wales and Scotland currently have that we do not.

Fiona Twycross AM: Thank you. What changes would you like to see the Government make to ensure that their apprenticeship policy works better for London?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): A number of things. We want to be allowed to pool apprenticeship funding to invest in the city's talent pipeline. We want the levy funds to be able to be used for pre-employment training to support people to get into the workplace, to get them match fit for that position. Sub-skills, people call them. We also want some of the money, a small amount, to be used for some of the administration that small employers cannot do that is required for having apprenticeships as well.

We also - and this is something you have been pushing for for some time - want to have more part-time and flexible apprenticeships. It is really difficult for some private sector employers to provide those. If we were in charge of this, we could do far more in relation to this area as well.

Fiona Twycross AM: Excellent, thank you. You have been pushing for the Government to allow you to receive unspent Apprenticeship Levy funds in London. If you were to receive this funding, how would you spend this money and is progress being made in this area?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Not the progress being made that we think needs to be made. It is not simply London; other parts of the country have unspent Apprenticeship Levy as well. It is something like £1.3 billion. It is a lot of money. What we are hoping it can be used for is in making sure we can help small businesses in particular. There are small businesses that would love to have an apprenticeship but cannot because they are not ready. The bigger businesses will help them and if we had some of this unspent money we could get that coordination working well.

There are many other ideas we have. These ideas do not come from us in City Hall, they come from speaking to employers, businesses and young Londoners about what sort of scheme would help them the most. I genuinely believe we can do a better job than the civil service in Whitehall. I have nothing against the civil service in Whitehall but we know our city far better than they do.

Fiona Twycross AM: Yes, I would agree on that. We have seen the numbers, both for proportion and percentage, for construction apprenticeships increase in 2017/18 and we finally have some women undertaking construction engineering apprenticeships compared to zero in 2015/16. That is welcome. What will you do to continue to work towards the end of gender stereotyping in apprenticeships and what will you do from here in City Hall?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): It is really important. TfL does a huge amount of work in relation to getting young women, Londoners, to get their apprenticeships in engineering and in the sort of industries not traditionally seen as women-friendly industries. It is a huge amount of work TfL are doing. In City Hall, if you look at the numbers of our apprenticeship intake we have lots of women, diverse Londoners, including ethnically diverse but also working class Londoners from poorer communities as well. It is really important we use apprentices as a way in.

Higher education is OK for some people but not for everyone. We have to get rid of the snobbery around apprenticeships as well and emulate some of the German experience, where apprenticeships have the same esteem as academic education. We are doing our bit from City Hall and the GLA functional bodies as well.

Fiona Twycross AM: Thank you. I think that would be very welcome. There is a bit of a theme of the day around no-deal Brexit. What impact do you think a no-deal Brexit could have on the number of apprenticeships being started in London, and how is the funding you announced in November [2018] to create new apprenticeships in hospitality and construction helping to mitigate that?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): We have, in the most recent funding we have given, announced £1.3 million towards three apprenticeship pilots. We have deliberately chosen those three areas, construction, hospitality and retail, for a variety of reasons, not least for the reasons that, as Assembly Member Duvall alluded to, with fewer EU citizens coming here - we know that has happened - and possibly even fewer coming in the future, there is now an urgency to make sure we accelerate Londoners to get the skills through apprenticeships for these areas. That is why we are doing this piece of work in those industries.

The sort of work we are doing is to help employers get some funding that they are needing to help them create apprenticeships, and to see if we can transfer some of the levy funds to employers in these sectors and supply chains locally to help apprenticeships in these areas. It is really, really important.

Fiona Twycross AM: That is great, thank you.

2019/6079 - Car Free Day

Caroline Russell

How will you and Transport for London (TfL) support Car Free Day with the £1 million funding allocated in the 2019-20 budget?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you, Chairman. TfL, my Deputy Mayor for Transport [Heidi Alexander] and my Walking and Cycling Commissioner [Will Norman] are developing plans for how London will celebrate Car Free Day on Sunday, 22 September [2019]. I support an event that sees our streets open up so that Londoners of all ages, backgrounds and abilities can enjoy walking, cycling and being active in a safe, traffic-free and unpolluted environment.

Car Free Day will showcase culture, sport and healthy fun activities in a significant area of central London, enabling people to see parts of the City that are often dominated by traffic from a different perspective. We will also be working with boroughs and community organisations to activate other neighbourhoods across the City. We are hoping to have an estimated 10-12kms of London's roads closed to private vehicles. TfL is talking with several boroughs to identify the best place in London to hold it. Over the next five years £2.3 billion will be invested in making London streets healthier, safer and more welcoming. I am determined to encourage more Londoners to walk and cycle.

We know that other major London events such as the Marathon, Ride London and New Year's Eve result in a drop in particulate matter, NOx and NO₂ pollution. We will work with a wide range of partners including local authorities and community groups to deliver on this event. We are also going to make the most of other events that are taking place on the same day including Totally Thames and our annual celebration of the River Thames and Open House. Last year TfL supported boroughs with around 50 streets across London from Greenwich to Hackney to Ealing organising Car Free Day's events, and the charity London Play, who organised Play Street, will do this again this year [2019].

I would invite all London boroughs that want to get involved to contact TfL.

Caroline Russell AM: Thank you very much, Mr Mayor. It is really good that you are working on Car Free Day now. I would love to see people walking, cycling and scooting all over London on traffic-free streets as you described. Now, Paris has been really ambitious with its Car Free Day. They have opened up whole areas of the centre to people, not just linear streets. Will you ensure that your Car Free Day is properly ambitious, showcasing the possibilities for our city with whole neighbourhoods having far less traffic?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): First, can I thank you for your support in this area? It has been really helpful. Paris started earlier than us. They started in 2015. This is our first real year of doing this and so I have to be honest, we are not going to get to those sorts of levels yet, but I am impatient for change, transformative change and with your support, councils' support and Londoners' support I think we will get there.

Caroline Russell AM: That is great. I think the important thing is the network of streets so that people see that.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I agree.

Caroline Russell AM: The other thing is to make sure that we learn from it, so we measure pollution on the day and also the traffic levels on the day.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Absolutely right.

Caroline Russell AM: A final thing about Paris is that they have actually moved forward to make their car free events monthly from last October [2018]. Will you consider making Car Free Day a monthly thing going forward?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Can I just say this, and I say this as somebody who is friends with, genuinely, the Mayor of Paris? Do not believe all the hype in relation to what you read about other cities and what they are doing. I have a list here of what Bogota, Paris, New York, San Francisco and Singapore claim to do and what they really do. I have to be very careful, Chairman, because many of the leaders of these cities are friends of mine.

All I would say is we are trying to learn from the best around the world. I am hoping this year [2019] will be a huge success and it makes it far easier when we have got support from other party colleagues and councils as well. You are right about joining up to make sure it works across the entire city.

Caroline Russell AM: It is the area-wide thing but do, please, think about the monthly thing. I think I am pretty much out of time now. Thank you.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): Thank you very much, Mr Mayor, for your answers.