

# MAYOR OF LONDON

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM**  
Chair of the London Assembly  
City Hall  
The Queen's Walk  
London SE1 2AA

**Our ref:** MGLA240719-8424

**Date:** 05 NOV 2019

*Dear Jennette,*

Thank you for your letter of 23 July about the motions agreed at the London Assembly (Plenary) meeting on 6 June. I am sorry for the delay in responding. My reply to each motion is set out below:

## **Motion 1**

I support your call on water companies to develop sustainable solutions to secure London's water supply.

In my formal responses to London water companies' plans, and in letters to the Chief Executive of Ofwat, I have set out my preferred twin track approach to water resource management for London, where water demand is reduced alongside delivering new water infrastructure. Reducing water demand requires increased roll out of water meters, while ensuring vulnerable customers are protected, and improving water efficiency in homes and businesses through awareness raising and installation of water saving devices. I support the National Infrastructure Commission's recommendation of a 50 per cent reduction in leakage by 2050 and have pushed for water companies to use innovative approaches and technology to achieve this.

I also convene the Water Advisory Group for London which is chaired by Shirley Rodrigues, Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy. This group comprises: the four London water companies; industry and consumer groups; water regulators (Ofwat and Environment Agency) and the Risk Management Authorities for flood risk. The remit of this group covers water resources and supply, wastewater and drainage, water quality and flood risk issues. This group brings together the key stakeholders for London to identify actions on current water resource levels; data sharing; managing flood risk; helping vulnerable customers and maximising innovation.

London's water companies all have programmes for domestic and commercial water efficiency improvements and the Water Advisory Group helps companies share best practice and innovation ideas to increase the delivery of these programmes. Large scale smart meter rollout, installation of water saving measures and awareness campaigns are most effectively delivered by the water companies. However, I am also taking action by delivering water efficiency measures, promoting water conservation and metering through my Energy for Londoners retrofit programmes. I have supported social housing providers to install measures saving up to 16,771m<sup>3</sup> of water from domestic households per year. Through my Fuel Poverty Support Fund, I have been providing advice on accessing social tariffs for water and will be providing additional advice on water debt and billing disputes.

# MAYOR OF LONDON

I monitor water resource levels for London closely and regularly and am committed to providing additional information and advice to Londoners when there are concerns over drought measures being introduced for London.

I welcome your call on Thames Water and Affinity Water to continue to develop alternative water resource options such as canal transfers. I support the need for a major new water resource, to be shared by London's water companies, to supply London and the south east of England. I recently responded to consultations on 25-year water resource management plans from Thames Water and Affinity Water, calling on them to work together to plan and share water resources to ensure a more resilient supply.

I also welcome your call on Ofwat and the Environment Agency to grant permission and Thames Water and Affinity Water to construct the Abingdon Reservoir as soon as is practicable, with completion no later than 2037. In my responses to the consultations on 25-year water resource management plans, I called for the proposed shared reservoir completion date to be brought forward from 2043 to 2037. New shared water resources will help bolster London's future resilience to drought and support the needs of neighbouring water companies that also supply London. I set out that water companies should focus on innovative delivery and funding models, that general taxation should be considered to deliver this nationally significant piece of infrastructure and that planning needs to start now.

## **Motion 2**

I recognise that police officers do a very difficult job on behalf of all Londoners. However, it is right that they are held accountable and that where necessary are thoroughly investigated. In this case, following the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) investigation, the independently chaired Misconduct Hearing found PC Sutton's actions did not amount to misconduct. It is disappointing that this case took such a long time to conclude and this is likely to have had a negative impact on PC Sutton's wellbeing. Sophie Linden, Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, meets regularly with the IOPC London Regional Director and discusses a range of matters relating to conduct and complaints, including the time taken to complete investigations, which is in fact reducing.

## **Motion 3**

I am clear that any criminal act which is brought to the attention of the police – including personal assaults or threatening, aggressive or intimidating behaviour on or offline – must be thoroughly investigated with the aim of bringing offenders to justice. I encourage anyone who has suffered any criminal offence, no matter the circumstances, to report it to the police immediately so that they can take the appropriate action.

## **Motion 4**

I have noted your comments regarding the hopper fare and freedom pass.

## **Motion 5**

As the Assembly has acknowledged, this devastating incident was a long time ago and there has been significant change in the way deaths following police contact are handled, most notably that they are managed by a separate organisation, the IOPC.

# MAYOR OF LONDON

The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) remains regretful that they were not able to conclude specifically who was responsible for Blair's death. It is worth acknowledging the significant amount of material that has been released into the public domain by the MPS: [www.met.police.uk/foi-ai/af/accessing-information/met/investigation-into-the-death-of-blair-peach/](http://www.met.police.uk/foi-ai/af/accessing-information/met/investigation-into-the-death-of-blair-peach/). I suggest the Chair contact my Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, to discuss the content of any proposed letter to the Home Secretary and what can be achieved by a public inquiry some forty years on.

## Motion 6

I welcome the Assembly's decision to also adopt the All-Party Parliamentary Group's working definition of Islamophobia. City Hall adopted this definition in March following the atrocious terror attacks in New Zealand. Adopting the definition is an important step towards recognising, naming and ending Islamophobia. I note the Assembly's request for me to continue contributing to the debate on understanding Islamophobia. I continually assert that London is Open and there is no space for hate and discrimination in our city. Hate Crime Awareness week last month provided another opportunity for us to collectively speak out against far-right rhetoric.

## Motion 7

I agree that teaching assistants and other support staff provide crucial support to our London pupils in many of the capital's schools, alongside great teaching and strong school leadership.

I share the concern raised during Question Time in March about cuts to teaching assistant posts, with the example cited of Halley Academy School in the Royal Borough of Greenwich. I reiterate that cutting support for our schools, reducing funding for youth work, reducing the proportion or numbers of support staff in schools, the woeful lack of assistance to those children with special educational needs or disability (SEND), 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 denied the opportunity to fulfil their potential.

Just last month there was media coverage that the Government's own report found the crisis in education funding is leading to major cuts in numbers of teaching assistants nationally. A study commissioned by the Department for Education found 38 out of 60 schools quizzed have either cut the number of teaching assistants in the past two to three years or intend to reduce them in the coming year. This is at a time when many schools continue to struggle with teacher recruitment. Through Teach London and Getting Ahead London programmes, I have been working with teaching schools, boroughs and others to improve the recruitment and retention of London teachers, and helping to build up the number of teachers staying in London and entering senior leadership and headship roles. That is why I am heartened to see the opportunities increasingly being taken by London schools to encourage some of their own teaching assistants to develop their careers by training to become teachers.

London's schools faced £99 million in real terms cuts in the 2018-19 school year alone. As you highlight, teaching assistants play a vital support role in classrooms where pupils have additional needs including SEND. But we are facing a huge growth in demand for support for children under the age of 16 with SEND along with considerable funding shortfalls. In March of this year, I called on the Government to reverse these damaging cuts and give schools the resources they need to support London's most vulnerable children and young people. My Violence Reduction Unit, education and health teams and my Office for Policing And Crime have been working closely with local communities, schools and the education sector to learn more about what challenges they face in supporting children who are at risk of exclusion or going missing from school. Truancy and exclusion are risk factors in serious violence, and vulnerable children are also more likely to be

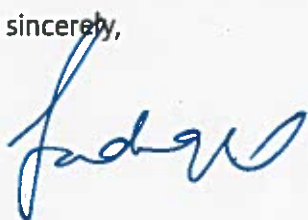
## MAYOR OF LONDON

either excluded or not attending school. I want off-rolling practices to be banned and the cuts to early intervention services reversed, with local authorities given more oversight and responsibility for exclusions to ensure a more coordinated strategic response.

I am developing a strand of work to support schools, boroughs and others to reduce the number of young people excluded and missing from mainstream education and develop approaches for supporting young people at difficult points in their school journey that can be adopted more widely. This would include supporting vulnerable children's transition from primary to secondary school, building on my successful Stepping Stones programme, which over two academic years will support 1,500 vulnerable pupils to make a smooth transition from primary to secondary school and an additional 600 Year 10 pupils acting as mentors.

Thank you again for writing to me.

Yours sincerely,



**Sadiq Khan**  
Mayor of London