

# MAYOR OF LONDON

**Navin Shah AM**

Chair of The London Assembly

C/o [Davena.Toyinbo@london.gov.uk](mailto:Davena.Toyinbo@london.gov.uk)

**Our ref:** MGLA050221-5499

**Date:** 17 March 2021

Dear Navin,

## **London Assembly (Plenary) Meeting 4 February 2021 - Motions**

Thank you for your letter of 5 February about the motions agreed at the London Assembly (Plenary) meeting on 4 February. My reply to each motion is set out below.

### **Motion 1 – Emergency Services Cenotaph**

The Government would lead on any national memorial, and I will, of course, support any proposal that consults with the NHS and other emergency services, key workers and the public.

The commemoration of key workers and Londoners who have lost their lives to COVID-19 is an important priority for me. Last November, City Hall announced plans for a permanent London memorial to commemorate the lives of key workers and Londoners that have been lost due to COVID-19. Working together with the National Trust, the site will see a ring of blossoming trees planted in Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park to develop a lasting space for commemoration and remembrance for Londoners. With the site due to open this spring, these blossom trees will provide a space for reflection, where we can collectively remember those we have lost and create a lasting memorial for years to come.

City Hall also worked closely with community groups and young people dealing with the profound impact this virus has had on their lives to shape plans for the memorial.

### **Motion 2 – International Decade for Peoples of African Descent**

As the Mayor of this great city, I am passionate about promoting diversity and equal opportunities for people of African heritage. Racial discrimination and structural inequalities continue to have a huge impact on Londoners' lives, and I am actively working to address these issues. My vision continues to be that London is a city where everyone can share in its prosperity, culture and community – and none of us are stopped from reaching our full potential.

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To support this, I have called for a more inclusive curriculum in schools and the London Curriculum's history resources are being refreshed to ensure its content provides a more complete perspective on the capital's Black history. My Education Team and I want to support London teachers with the knowledge, tools and confidence to teach the history of the peoples of African and Black heritage throughout the entire academic year and not only during Black History Month. It is also important to note that the history of the presence and contribution made by those of African heritage to London is not just Black history but British history. Related to this, I have also set up a Commission into Diversity in the Public Realm, responding to concerns brought to the public's attention by the Black Lives Matter movement last summer. This Commission will enable a broader conversation, involving all of our communities, about what London's public realm should look like, what it should commemorate and who it should represent.

I have celebrated or commemorated the many legacies of the African diaspora, such as Windrush and the International Slavery Remembrance Day and will continue to look at how these important events are marked. I have listened closely to concerns of Black communities about policing and, in November 2020, I published a policing action plan on accountability and transparency. I have scaled up my Workforce Integration Network to work more deeply with businesses to change practices and support a larger number of young Black men into the sectors where they are typically underrepresented, such as construction and technology.

These are examples of work on race equality already underway, but there is more we must do to help drive a new social contract that advances the twin causes of racial and economic equality. The events of the past year have shown us this is needed more than ever. Therefore, I welcome the Assembly's request that I formally accept the motion to recognise the UN's Decade for Peoples of African descent. The actions that form this motion will help strengthen the recognition of the power we have in our city's diversity and drive our work on race equality forward.

In October 2020, I was very proud to announce my partnership with The Black Curriculum who have since led an expert review of all three of the London Curriculum's history units: 'World City', 'Social Reform in Victorian London' and 'London at War'. The Black Curriculum consulted with diverse young Londoners from my Lynk Up Crew and Peer Outreach Workers as it was crucial to listen to young voices. We were very grateful for their time and thank them for helping us gain a deeper understanding of their school experiences and sharing their ideas for improvements. We are now progressing with the recommendations put forward to update the three resources.

All London schools have free access to the resources in the London Curriculum and since 2014, two-thirds of London's secondary schools and over a third of primary schools have engaged with the programme. This includes more than 2,000 teachers accessing resources and events. The Black Curriculum is also due to deliver a free online CPD training webinar for London teachers this spring. This will explain what changes were made and why and provide guidance on how to embed Black history into the curriculum throughout the academic year. I am therefore confident that this will help ensure educational histories and narratives of Black people are properly taught and celebrated in schools across London all year round.

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Thank you again for writing to me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sadiq Khan', with a small '2' written below the 'h'.

**Sadiq Khan**  
Mayor of London