

MAYOR OF LONDON

Dr Alison Moore AM

Chair of the London Assembly Transport Committee

BY EMAIL: alison.moore@london.gov.uk

Our ref: MGLA300620-6223

Date: 4 August 2020

Dear Alison,

Thank you for your letter of 29 June following the Transport Committee meeting on Monday 15 June 2020. Please accept this as a joint response on behalf of Transport for London (TfL) as well.

Details of the methodology and scenarios underpinning TfL's budget proposals for the second half of 2020-21

TfL recently approved its revised budget at the TfL Board. The presentation can be found online at <https://tfl.gov.uk/corporate/publications-and-reports/board-papers>. This contains details of the methodology used to produce this budget.

At the start of the crisis, TfL responded to the Government's call to encourage people not to travel, to stay at home and to save lives, playing its part in the national effort to defeat coronavirus. Instead of encouraging people to use public transport, we were actively seeking to dissuade them from doing so. In line with the gradual easing of lockdown and in line with the requirements of our funding and financing agreement with the Government, TfL has worked quickly to return service levels back to near normal levels.

Prior to the crisis, TfL had made huge strides to improve its financial resilience. It had built up healthy reserves and was on track to reduce its operating deficit for the fourth consecutive year, with a plan to breakeven in 2022/23.

In 19/20, the latest forecast of TfL's net cost of operations would be over £1bn better than it was in 15/16, if the Government grant is excluded. However, 80 per cent of its income comes from fares and commercial revenue. This compares to 38 per cent in New York and 47 per cent in Madrid's transport system. This meant TfL's financial model was simply not built to withstand the coronavirus pandemic.

TfL has delivered huge improvements to London's transport network over the past 20 years. Upgrades have been made to the Tube, dramatic improvements have been made to London's air quality, and the London Overground network has expanded. Should sufficient financial support be forthcoming from Government in the next round of negotiations, TfL's revised budget will enable it to maintain its statutory obligation to balance its budget, keep its assets safe and operable, and

progress an investment programme focused on safety, active travel and completing the projects that aid social distancing or support significant economic growth.

TfL has reviewed a number of revenue scenarios, based on people's willingness to travel for a variety of purposes, and their willingness to use public transport when travelling. Since the beginning of lockdown, TfL has been building its understanding of the nature of the virus, economic trajectory, government policy as well as travel demand implications and their interrelationships. TfL has drawn on expertise from independent bodies to inform its revenue modelling, including the Department for Transport, the Office for Budget Responsibility, the Bank of England, as well as advice from Public Health England and others. TfL has also used benchmarking comparators allowing it to learn from other cities across the world.

What is clear is that London now needs more than ever long-term certainty of funding from Government, which will allow TfL and London to play its full part in the nation's economic recovery.

An overview of all TfL's capital projects including any revised completion dates, and the financial impact of stopping or starting any such projects, once that information can be made available at the end of July

At the meeting of the Programmes and Investment Committee (PIC) of the TfL Board on 20 July, a paper on the management of TfL's investment programme during the coronavirus pandemic was considered and may be of interest to the Committee. The paper is available online at <http://content.tfl.gov.uk/pic-20072020-agenda-public.pdf>.

The financial and programme impacts of coronavirus are being assessed and will be presented at a future meeting of the Board and the relevant update will also be shared with the London Assembly Transport Committee.

As you know, TfL produces a quarterly Investment Programme Report (IPR). The report gives a progress update on the major projects and sub-programmes that seek authority each year (unless extraordinary approvals are needed) from the Programmes and Investment Committee each year. For each major project or programme, the financial and milestone data represents the position at the end of the quarter and TfL includes commentary for key achievements and progress made. The report also contains, as far as possible, updates on any notable progress made after quarter end. Given the unprecedented impact of coronavirus on TfL's delivery of capital projects and the decision to furlough a quarter of its workforce, no IPR has been produced for the fourth quarter of 2019/20. However, a 2019/20 Annual Report is in production and can be shared with the Assembly once available.

If the Committee has questions arising from the routinely published material, TfL will be pleased to answer any specific questions you might have.

Further details on proposed new designs for track fastenings in the Pimlico area and proposals to install such measures

In March 2020, following the coronavirus outbreak, TfL temporarily suspended its residential noise monitoring programme in order to focus on safety critical activities and comply with guidance regarding social distancing. TfL has now restarted noise monitoring and has been in contact with local residents in this area, in order to arrange for readings to be taken. Additional protocols have been put in place to comply with social-distancing guidelines.

Over 23-25 May 2020, TfL carried out rail grinding in the Pimlico area, and we believe that a number of local residents feel that noise levels have reduced following that work.

However, we acknowledge that some residents do not feel they have experienced any reduction in noise levels as a result of these works, while others feel that a further reduction is required.

TfL has been investigating the feasibility of installing Delkor 194 baseplates on the Victoria line, including this section of the track, as a potential long-term solution to Tube noise. TfL's engineering team has now carried out a detailed review of this product and undertaken multiple site inspections to understand the layout and characteristics of the Victoria line. Unfortunately, following this work, TfL has now concluded that Delkor 194 for timber sleepers is not suitable for use on the Victoria line, at either this location (or in Islington where similar problems are being experienced) due to the spacing of the sleepers.

As the sleepers on the Victoria line are spaced around 1 metre apart, adding Delkor 194 would lead to flex in the rail. This is a safety issue as it potentially increases the risk of a rail failure. Flex in the rail can also cause corrugation. As corrugation is the root cause of residential Tube noise in both of these locations, TfL does not believe that installing Delkor 194 would be effective in reducing noise.

I appreciate that this news will be disappointing for Assembly Members and local residents. TfL is now considering whether it can carry out more regular rail grinding in this area, up to two times a year.

TfL has also considered whether Deep Tube Reconditioning (DTR) could be carried out in this area. This involves removing the sleepers, and then installing a continuous concrete base (which a Delkor rail fastening then sits upon). When this work is carried out it is only possible to replace around 1-3 metres of track per night (dependent on access to the track, while other key maintenance works are carried out). Each metre of DTR costs approximately £7,000-8,500.

Coronavirus has had a severe impact on our finances and there is currently no funding available in the short term for this DTR work, though this will be kept under review.

Subject to agreement by Government, to share with the Committee the minutes of the London COVID-19 Transport Task Force and sub group

At the London COVID-19 Taskforce, TfL provide an update on our network operations as well as information on how we are supporting the Government's phased easing of restrictions. These meetings are convened by the DfT and a short note of action points is circulated. I personally raised the issue of whether these notes could be shared publicly after the Transport Committee's request at one of the Task Force meeting and made clear that I personally had no objections to this (as I said at the Transport Committee hearing). This this was not a view shared by Government.

To clarify whether the suspension of concessionary travel (both for the over 60s and the Under 18s) would be for a limited period, as indicated in briefings

There has not been any information forthcoming from Government as to when the temporary removal of concessionary travel will end. This will be subject to future discussions with Government.

To consider what additional measures could be taken within the emergency budget with regards to toilet provisions at stations and hand washing facilities

I agree that it is vitally important for public toilets to be readily available at all times of day, particularly for those with children, older people and people with disabilities. As lockdown measures are eased and more journeys are undertaken across London, TfL is looking at how it can improve the availability of toilets at stations. This will include reviewing how toilets facilities can be managed effectively and in line with the current government guidance so that customers can use them safely. Information about toilet facilities on the TfL network is published online at <http://content.tfl.gov.uk/toilets-map.pdf>.

At the start of the pandemic, we introduced enhanced daily cleaning on 10 March across the network.

In addition, hand sanitizer points were rolled out across the transport network in May, with points installed at every Tube and TfL rail station. They are also installed in all bus stations and the Victoria Coach Station, and at TfL River Piers, the Woolwich Ferry, Emirates Air Line and at all London Overground and DLR stations where it's safe and secure to do so.

Toilets on the TfL network safely reopened in early July.

I hope this information is of interest to you and the Committee.

Yours sincerely,



Heidi Alexander

Deputy Mayor for Transport

cc: Laura Pelling, Committee Clerk