

# MAYOR OF LONDON

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM**  
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**Our ref:** MGLA140915-4270

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Dear Jennette

**Re: London Assembly (Plenary) Meeting 8 September 2015 – Motions**

Thank you for your letter of 14 September. My response to the London Assembly's motions is set out below. I apologise for the delay in responding to you.

**Motion 1**

I welcome the recognition by the majority of Assembly Members of the folly of Heathrow expansion. The evidence published by the Airports Commission makes clear the pitfalls of a third runway and Sir Howard Davies, in his appearance before the Assembly, could not mask the flaws in his own recommendation. Heathrow expansion will expose as many as a million people to severe aircraft noise and will likely create the worst nitrogen dioxide blackspot in the whole of Greater London, jeopardising the UK's ability to meet its legal obligations on air quality.

Our connectivity would suffer if expansion at Heathrow occurred with domestic routes falling from seven to four. At most, only 12 additional long-haul destinations would be served – fewer than the number of destinations we should be seeking to serve in China and India alone.

A third runway goes nowhere, it does not provide the enhanced access to global markets that the UK economy needs, it does untold harm to public health, and it fails economically and environmentally. I encourage others to follow the Assembly's example and recognise that Heathrow expansion will never be the answer.

I would also like to take this opportunity to proffer my gratitude to Assembly Members, and especially the Labour Group, for their complimentary comments about Transport for London (TfL) in the face of what appeared to be gratuitous and unfounded questioning by Sir Howard of their professional competence.

**Motion 2**

I fully support the Government's position that the transition to the new system of Individual Electoral Registration (IER) – a much improved and more robust process than the old 'head of household' process – should be completed by the end of December 2015.

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Carrying forward electors who have not yet registered under IER would undermine the accuracy of the register. Electoral registers that include an unknown number of redundant entries are bad for democracy: it would increase the risk of electoral fraud, including of the kind we have seen in Tower Hamlets; potentially compromise the integrity of elections in May 2016, including those for the Mayor and for the London Assembly; and impact negatively on the parliamentary boundary review.

By ending transition in December 2015, it is possible to achieve both accuracy and completeness. It is worth remembering that the carry forward group of electors has decreased significantly in size; that by December they will have been contacted at least nine times to encourage them to register individually; and that the Government is providing £3m of additional funding to Electoral Registration Officers to target electors yet to register under IER.

## **Motion 3**

I have made several representations to Government on this matter. I have stressed my concern about the impact that the office to residential permitted development right (PDR) initiative has had on occupied office space, including the effect it has had on businesses and employment. I also underlined the importance of maintaining the exemptions that we currently have including the Central Activities Zone, Tech City, north of the Isle of Dogs, the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea and the Royal Docks Enterprise Zone in order to protect these nationally and internationally significant business locations.

The Government announced on 13 October that offices to residential permitted development rights will be made permanent and those areas that are currently exempt from the rights will have until May 2019 to make an Article 4 direction if they wish to continue determining planning applications for the change of use.

I am now providing strategic support for a co-ordinated approach to the introduction of Article 4 Directions by the relevant boroughs to ensure that London's key business locations are safeguarded. Greater London Authority officers met with the relevant London boroughs in August to discuss how we can best support cases for Article 4 Directions. In my consultation draft Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) for the Central Activities Zone I published further guidelines on the range of evidence that can be used to support Article 4 Directions. Beyond the locations currently exempted, selected geographically targeted areas can be included in Article 4 Directions where these can be justified by local evidence. A number of boroughs have already, or are in the process of, bringing forward such Directions for parts of their areas and we will continue to work together constructively to ensure that London's office space is protected where necessary.

## **Motion 4**

TfL and I agree with the Assembly that female-only carriages are not the right answer for London. All of TfL's customers have the right to travel without fear of any kind of attack. The focus should be on the perpetrators and their unacceptable behaviour. This is why TfL works closely with the police on Project Guardian, with officers across the network out deterring, detecting and catching offenders. Encouraging victims of any unwanted sexual behaviour to 'Report it to Stop it', with the confidence that it will be investigated, is helping break down the barriers to reporting such crimes and enabling us to build up the necessary intelligence to rid our network of such vile behaviour.

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It should be noted that crime on the Underground is at its lowest ever level, having decreased by over 12 per cent in the last year alone, at a time when passenger numbers have risen. There are around 700 uniformed police personnel on the Tube and DLR networks, forming part of the 2,500 strong group of TfL-funded officers who work across the TfL network keeping customers safe.

## **Motion 5**

London is a leader on climate change and environmental improvement. I am committed to reducing harmful carbon emissions in London, as evidenced by the ambitious target in my Climate Change Mitigation and Energy Strategy – a 60 per cent reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from a 1990 baseline by 2025. My delivery programmes RE:NEW and RE:FIT, continue to support retrofitting of homes and public buildings respectively.

I am currently examining the impacts on the London Plan of the Government's decision to scrap zero carbon homes. I remain committed to the current London Plan policy which requires a 40 per cent improvement over Part L of the Building Regulations 2010 (deemed broadly equivalent to 35 per cent improvement over Part L of the Building Regulations 2013) for both residential and commercial developments.

There are many aspects of the vehicle excise duty (VED) changes I welcome, not least the commitment that only zero emission vehicles are eligible to pay zero VED. This will help tackle dieselisation while giving a clear signal of Government's support for zero emission vehicles. I also believe the first year rates are well structured, with a new £2,000 first year rate for the most polluting vehicles. Furthermore, I welcome the Chancellor's commitment to using VED receipts to build vital new roads and infrastructure across the UK, and will be making the case to ring-fence funding from vehicles registered in London to support the ambitious plans set out by my Roads Task Force. In other areas I will continue to lobby the Chancellor to make further changes to ensure that the changes to VED and other fiscal incentives prevent the further dieselisation of the vehicle fleet and encourage the early adoption of ultra low emission vehicles.

As I stated in September's MQT session, I am also concerned by the proposed changes to the Feed in Tariff potentially to negatively affect the UK's deployment of solar PV. I am talking to the solar industry in London in order to better understand the likely impacts of the government's proposals on businesses, jobs and deployment, and will reflect these views in my response to the consultation.

## **Motion 6**

London has a proud history of providing refuge to those seeking sanctuary. It is right that we should continue to welcome people fleeing persecution and those plainly in fear for their lives.

London Councils' Chair, Mayor Jules Pipe, and I held an extremely useful meeting with officials from the Home Office, DCLG and local authority leaders where we agreed that London stands ready to play its full part in helping some of the most vulnerable refugees fleeing war and persecution in Syria.

However, there are significant on-going costs associated with resettlement, particularly in light of high housing costs in London, and whilst we welcome the Government's commitment to meet costs in the first year, we are urging them to provide more detail, and clear assurances over funding in future years.

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City Hall will continue to work with London Councils, the Boroughs and Government to ensure London can play its part.

Thank you again for writing to me.

Yours ever,



**Boris Johnson**  
Mayor of London