

MAYOR OF LONDON

Darren Johnson AM
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Date: 26 MAR 2014

Dear Darren

London Assembly (plenary) meeting 4 December 2013 – Motions

Thank you for your letter of 11 December 2013. I apologise for the delay in responding to you. I will respond to each of your Motions in turn:

Motion 1

I have spoken to Mayor de Blasio and extended my congratulations to him on his victory. I am very happy to work with the new Mayor of New York, as I was with the previous Mayor, on all issues of mutual benefit. My office is keen to share the knowledge and experiences gained from successful policies we are putting in place in our great city and equally keen to hear about any implemented in New York that could be adopted in London.

Motion 2

As I set out in my letter to you of 5 December 2013, there is already much good quality research on this subject from within the industry. It is difficult to see what any additional research, at the expense of the taxpayer, would add to this debate.

Motion 3

It is not appropriate for me to intervene in a national dispute over firefighter pensions. I have full confidence in the contingency arrangements put in place in the capital by the London Fire Commissioner to cover the strike period.

Motion 4

Living costs are particularly high in the capital and it is a struggle for some Londoners to make ends meet, particularly with regards to housing and childcare. I do not favour a mandatory London minimum wage – the voluntary nature of the London Living Wage is critical to its success, it is right and proper that businesses should pay the Living Wage having considered that doing so makes good business sense.

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The GLA's business engagement team is working closely with the Living Wage Foundation to promote the London Living Wage and its benefits to employers. I have also written personally to many businesses to encourage them to commit to paying the Living Wage.

Our work to promote the London Living Wage is having a huge impact, something which the Living Wage Foundation also acknowledge. When I came to office there were just 27 companies paying the London Living Wage, a figure that has increased by 692 per cent, to 214 accredited employers. This does not even include the number of employers who have committed to paying the Living Wage but do not wish to pursue accreditation. In my 2012 manifesto, I committed to increasing the number of accredited employers to 250 and we are on the way to meeting and exceeding that target. In the past year alone, the number of accredited employers has risen by 174 per cent.

Independent research from Queen Mary, University of London indicates that close to 19,000 employees have benefitted from their employers voluntarily committing to paying Living Wage. Their research also indicates tangible benefits to accredited employers beyond reputation, in terms of increased productivity, improved staff morale and decreased staff turnover.

Clearly, I want to see these numbers increase further over the coming years, but I also acknowledge that not all small and medium-sized businesses are able to pay the Living Wage. As such, it is important that the scheme remains voluntary while we focus our efforts on those large employers who can afford to pay.

Motion 5

First, I would like to commend the Assembly for its continued support for the establishment of an independent aviation noise regulator.

Aircraft noise has a truly devastating impact on the quality of life of those living near our airports. According to the Government's own figures this is 766,000 people around Heathrow alone, 28 per cent of all those affected across Europe. The reading age of local school children is directly impacted by the level of aircraft noise to which they are exposed; in adults, noise exposure can result in sleep disturbance which can have a knock-on effect on their productivity at work. A recent study by academics at Imperial College found that 100,000 people living around Heathrow exposed to the highest levels of noise are up to 20 per cent more likely to suffer a stroke or heart disease. The importance of this issue must not be understated.

The Airport Commission's Interim Report, published in December, recommended the establishment of an Independent Aviation Noise Authority. While on the face of it such a move is to be welcomed, further examination of the substance of the proposals shows that it falls disappointingly short of what is required. The noise authority envisaged would provide statutory *advice* and *input* into the planning process, conduct research and surveys and mediate between airports and the local communities; but the proposed authority would not have any effective enforcement powers, such as the ability to impose fines.

I will continue to press both Sir Howard Davies and the Secretary of State to follow the example of many other European countries and look to establish a credible noise regulator with the powers to set specific noise targets and monitor and enforce subsequent compliance. This is the only way to ensure that airports are held to account for the noise they emit and to help begin to restore the trust of the local communities suffering from the blight of aircraft noise today.

In the long term, the only way to effectively address the dire noise impacts on Londoners while safeguarding the UK's connectivity needs is to relocate our hub to a significantly less densely populated area to the east of London. I am therefore delighted that the Airports Commission has

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taken the sensible and pragmatic decision to further develop proposals for a new hub airport at the Isle of Grain and I look forward to working with my team at Transport for London (TfL) to make the case.

Motion 6

In June last year I published *Safe Streets for London – my Road Safety Action Plan for London 2020*. The plan includes my target to reduce the numbers of people killed and seriously injured on London's roads by 40 per cent by 2020. Its wider aim is to work together towards roads free from death and serious injury.

We are already delivering on those commitments; the long term trend in Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI) casualties in London is downwards, with the number of KSI casualties in 2012 down by 17 per cent against the 2005-09 baseline. This is the baseline against which TfL measures progress towards my target of a 40 per cent reduction in KSIs by 2020, as set out in the Safe Streets for London Road Safety Action Plan.

In TfL's recent business plan, investment into road safety was increased across the board. We are doubling investment in the road network from £2bn to £4bn over the next 10 years, and a total of £913m, as set out in my Cycling Vision, will boost cycling provision in the Capital. Funding for the Better Junctions programme is increasing five-fold from £19m to £100m. On top of this, funding for specific road safety initiatives on the red routes has trebled to £47m, tackling high risk areas that are not being dealt with under other programmes. I have protected the £147m Local Implementation Plan (LIP) fund in recognition of the vital role the boroughs play in the local delivery of my Transport Strategy. Furthermore, TfL has awarded an additional £17.3m to London boroughs for cycling improvements over the next three years.

In recent months you will have heard about the progress we have made with a range of initiatives – including engineering improvements on-street, education, marketing and training for road users of all ages, and enforcement activity targeted to those behaving in an illegal, dangerous or antisocial way on our roads.

In just the last few weeks TfL has unveiled the UK's first low-level traffic signals, designed specifically for cyclists, as part of the 'early start' system at Bow Roundabout. These would not be in use had TfL not lobbied for regulatory change on this and many other issues.

I have long supported boroughs with the implementation of 20mph zones where appropriate through the TfL Local Implementation Plans programme, which has helped fund more than four hundred 20mph schemes on borough roads. More than 20 per cent of the Capital's streets now have 20mph limits. The City of London last month announced a consultation to make all of its roads 20mph, and as part of this, TfL is introducing a trial of 20mph speed limits on the TLRN through the City, including London and Blackfriars bridges. It is also looking at other locations where this would be appropriate.

I recently announced my intention, alongside London Councils, to ban dangerous lorries from the Capital's streets, with a Safer Lorries Scheme. In the same week, Andrew Gilligan led a lobbying mission to Brussels to campaign for changes to EC legislation on lorry design. Late last year I launched the Construction Logistics and Cycle Safety Code of Practice, working with industry to improve standards from within.

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Operation Safeway, the highly visible on-street enforcement activity conducted by the Metropolitan Police Service and TfL between last November and January, was hugely successful and both agencies are working on plans to build on this foundation.

On 26 February, I announced that thirty-three of London's biggest road junctions will be transformed in a £300 million programme to make them safer and less threatening for cyclists and pedestrians. On 10 March, I announced that three outer London boroughs – Enfield, Kingston and Waltham Forest – have been selected for full mini- Holland status, receiving a share of £100 million for transformational changes.

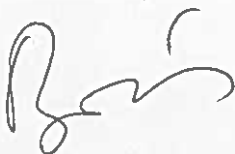
These are just a few of the many workstreams all combining to deliver against my target. Over the coming months we will be publishing our detailed action plans for each of the vulnerable road users groups (pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists).

I am writing to the London Assembly Transport Committee inviting them to an informal briefing session to update them on our road safety plans. I would of course be more than happy to extend this invitation to all members of the London Assembly. If this is of interest to members, then I would suggest that they contact my Deputy Mayor for Transport, Isabel Dedring.

Motion 7

I note your concern and expect all those retained in London immigration detention centres to be treated with the highest possible standard of care and for their human rights to be respected.

Yours ever,



Boris Johnson
Mayor of London