

## Is the Mayor listening?

Report of the London Assembly's Reaching Out Investigative Committee on the Mayor's consultation with Londoners

April 2002



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**Greater London Authority  
April 2002**

Published by  
**Greater London Authority  
Romney House  
Marsham Street  
London SW1P 3PY  
[www.london.gov.uk](http://www.london.gov.uk)  
enquiries 020 7983 4100  
minicom 020 7983 4458**

**ISBN 1 85261 363 7**

**Cover photograph credit**  
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## Foreword by the Chair of the Reaching Out Investigative Committee



The reasons for becoming involved with the Greater London Authority from the start – as an elected politician, a professional officer, or a member of the public – must have been quite varied. But we must all have been conscious of the need for London's new government to be good government.

Certainly I was – and am – aware that the GLA carries a responsibility to seek to contribute to reversing the trend of public disengagement from the political process. The new organisation should be an exemplar in involving citizens in the decisions that shape our city. It was with this in mind that I suggested to the Mayor that looking at his consultation process, using the Assembly's scrutiny role, would be a useful way into the issue. He agreed.

We are still in the early days of the GLA as an organisation, though half-way through the first electoral term. We started with a lot of goodwill, a point powerfully expressed by many of those who have given us their views. Equally powerful has been the warning that this is vulnerable – goodwill will be retained only if it is earned.

We recognise that there is a lot of good work being done within the GLA to consult Londoners in an effective fashion, though its co-ordination and evaluation can perhaps be described as work in progress.

Our greatest disappointment was with what the Mayor had to say. It has been disconcerting, indeed perplexing, to find that his personal views do not tally with his early commitments. Did we get the Mayor on a particularly bad day? The scrutiny process ought in most cases to be one of constructive criticism and I hope that the Mayor will not be dismissive of our comments but now give an active lead to the GLA in consulting Londoners on his strategies and policies and in listening to what they have to say.

The GLA moves soon to City Hall. The new building has been designed to reflect the transparency and accountability which are hallmarks of good modern government and to encourage access to that government. I would like to see the physical space matched by a renewed commitment to involving Londoners.

My thanks go to all who have taken part in this work – those who have given evidence in writing or orally, the Assembly officers who have been so helpful, and my colleagues on the committee. This is an issue that will remain high on our agenda.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sally Hamwee". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Sally Hamwee**

Chair of the Reaching Out Investigative Committee  
April 2002

## *The Reaching Out Investigative Committee*

The Reaching Out Investigative Committee was established by the Assembly on 11 July 2001 with the following membership:

Sally Hamwee (Chair) – Liberal Democrat  
Tony Arbour – Conservative  
Jennette Arnold – Labour  
(The Green Group did not take up their place)

The Terms of Reference of the Committee were as follows:

- To scrutinise the effectiveness and extent of the Mayor's consultations with Londoners, and to consider whether it is good value for money.
- To learn lessons for future reference by both the Mayor and the Assembly in their engagement with Londoners.

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## **Executive Summary**

This is the final report of the London Assembly's investigative committee on the Mayor's consultation and engagement with Londoners.

The Greater London Authority was established almost two years ago with the promise of "a new style of politics ... which is modern in its outlook, inclusive in its approach, relevant to Londoners and, above all, democratic and accountable". Ken Livingstone, in his election manifesto, promised that if elected he would "introduce the most open, accessible and inclusive style of government ever seen in the UK". We fully support this vision and believe genuine consultation and engagement to be a crucial element of any healthy democracy. Proper consultation results in more effective policies, helps to build consensus around priorities for our city, and ensures that the Mayor can be held properly to account for his actions.

### **A Failure of Vision**

Whilst there are examples of effective consultation exercises that have been conducted by the GLA officers, the evidence we received indicated that there is growing doubt among Londoners as to whether the results of consultation are actually taken into account by the Mayor.

The Mayor's statements to the Committee demonstrated a narrow view of the value and purpose of consulting Londoners. He seemed to see consultation simply as a means to canvass opinions on policy questions and raise the profile of the Mayoralty (and his holding of the office). In this report we urge the Mayor to commit himself to a much broader vision of consultation which seeks to gather not only opinions but also information about the experiences, needs and aspirations of Londoners and which uses that information to inform his decisions.

### **Improving the Process**

We make a number of practical recommendations to improve the consultation process immediately. These relate to:

- the timing of consultation periods;
- the organisation and accessibility of public meetings;
- the provision of information in a range of formats;
- a clear role for stakeholder groups established by the Mayor; and
- a proper system of evaluation so that lessons learned during consultations may be fed into future exercises.

### **The Need for a Consultation Strategy**

More fundamentally, we call on the Mayor to renew his manifesto commitment to "a new style of politics, a new style of government" by producing a strategy for consultation that embraces the full range of engagement and consultation activities, sets out a clear vision of the value of consultation, and contains guidance on when, how, who, and on what matters the GLA should be consulting. Failure to do this would raise serious questions as to the value of almost £1 million each year spent by the Core GLA on consultation and engagement. More importantly, if the GLA does not adopt a more strategic, coherent and meaningful approach to consultation, it runs the risk of squandering goodwill, losing credibility, and missing out on opportunities to make a real and positive difference to the lives of Londoners.



# 1. Introduction: “A new style of politics”?

- 1.1 The Greater London Authority was established almost two years ago with the promise of ‘a new style of politics ... which is modern in its outlook, inclusive in its approach, relevant to Londoners and, above all, democratic and accountable’.<sup>1</sup> In his election manifesto, the prospective Mayor, Ken Livingstone, pledged that if elected he would introduce ‘the most open, accessible and inclusive style of government ever seen in the UK’.<sup>2</sup> He wanted, he said, to encourage ‘participation and engagement by all of London’s communities in the work of the Mayor and Assembly and in developing policies and strategies for the improvement of London.’<sup>3</sup>

***“I will introduce the most open, accessible and inclusive style of government ever seen in the UK.”***

*Ken Livingstone, Mayoral Election Manifesto, May 2000*

***“I can honestly say that consultation with the public has not got into my top four [priorities] certainly since I was elected as Mayor. I think we’re doing all right. If we start to get it wrong it will zoom straight up my order of priorities.”***

*Mayor’s oral evidence to the Committee, 21 February 2002*

- 1.2 This vision is one we fully support. Democracy is not simply a question of holding an election every four years. Effective government can only be achieved through genuine and ongoing engagement and discussion with those affected by the policies and actions that are implemented on their behalf. Londoners should be provided with opportunities to have a clear and direct input into the development and implementation of policies that shape their lives.

## Why consult?

- 1.3 The evidence we have received points to three main benefits from good quality consultation:
- **Good intentions do not necessarily result in relevant or successful policies. Consultation improves the quality of policy detail and implementation.** The Mayor and his officers cannot assume, simply because they have a mandate in principle to implement manifesto commitments, that they also know how best to put their promises into practice. There is a wealth of expertise and knowledge within London communities. Consultation can draw on this experience to improve policy proposals and avoid predictable problems in implementation. The Black Londoners Forum stated, “the earlier people are brought in, the easier it is to point out the pitfalls and develop joint solutions or alternatives”.<sup>4</sup>
  - As the Mayor’s submission acknowledges,<sup>5</sup> **consulting London organisations and individuals builds consensus around the final shape of policies for our city.** For example, the Association of London Government noted that where they and the borough councils have been involved at an early stage in the development of proposals, the outcome for all concerned has been more positive.<sup>6</sup> A candid process which provides high quality information on the challenges for London, allows people to raise their comments and indicates why final decisions were made is more likely to improve people’s understanding of issues and assure them that the decision was reached after full consideration of their views.<sup>7</sup>

- **Consultation is an essential ingredient of any modern democracy.** A Mayoral election every four years is simply not enough to reflect people’s views, a point that was acknowledged by the Cabinet Office<sup>8</sup> and by GLA officers.<sup>9</sup> The health of representative democracy is derived from elected representatives who are willing to listen to those who elected them. In the case of the Greater London Authority, encouraging Londoners to provide their views and clearly identifying where the Mayor has reacted to them demonstrates that the Authority is properly accountable for its policy-making.<sup>10</sup> It also encourages people to respond the next time that they are asked.

**1.4 We believe that consultation with Londoners should be an integral part of the work of the GLA as it formulates policies and strategies for the benefit of London. Genuine engagement with Londoners is not only an essential ingredient of a healthy democracy. It also helps to ensure that the Mayor’s policies are relevant, effective and have broad support.**

***Consultation is a necessary part of the democratic process and throughout the period between elections it has to be an ongoing process.***

*Oral evidence to Committee from GLA officers, 9 October 2001*

***“The big consultation is Election Day...That is, in a sense, the best form of consultation.”***

*Mayor’s oral evidence to the Committee, 21 February 2002*

- 1.5 We were appointed by the London Assembly to examine the extent and effectiveness of the Mayor’s consultation with Londoners. In doing so, we have drawn extensively on written and oral evidence from the public, the Mayor and his officers, experts in the area of consultation and a range of government, voluntary, community and business organisations. Annex B provides further details of oral and written evidence received. We also commissioned a survey of London Civic Forum members (LCF Survey), which gathered the views of 160 of its member organisations about their experience of the Mayor’s consultation process.
- 1.6 Our report focuses on consultation and engagement exercises undertaken by the Core GLA, which consists of around 490 staff who assist the Mayor and Assembly in exercising their duties. We concentrate mainly on consultation on the executive side of the GLA, since that is where most of the money is spent. However, many of the lessons for the Mayor are applicable to the work of the Assembly. Some of our comments will also be relevant to the GLA Functional Bodies (the Metropolitan Police Authority, the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority, the London Development Agency, and Transport for London), although we have not examined their consultation activities in detail.
- 1.7 The GLA is about to undergo a best value review of its consultation efforts to date. In this Report, we make recommendations for matters to be considered as part of this review, and we trust our comments will feed constructively into that process.
- 1.8 Our investigation has focused on the extent to which the GLA is delivering the vision of a new, inclusive style of government for London. In the most recent financial year, the Mayor allocated the Core GLA a budget of £880,000 for consultation and engagement. This is in addition to the £1.7 million spent on consultations on the draft transport and economic development strategies. We want to ensure that money is spent in a way that achieves maximum value and impact. This involves not only an examination of the

policies and processes that are in place to engage Londoners, but also an assessment of the extent to which they have had an impact on decisions made by the Mayor.

- 1.9 **In this Report, we demonstrate that, despite early promises and high hopes, the Mayor seems to have lost his enthusiasm for engaging Londoners in London government. As a result, we argue that the admirable efforts made by some officers within the Greater London Authority to conduct good quality and meaningful consultation exercises may well turn out to be a waste of time and money. Sadly, this is borne out in the evidence we have seen of growing disillusionment among Londoners with the consultation process.**

### **Consultation: with whom, on what, when?**

- 1.10 The Mayor has obligations to consult certain Londoners under certain circumstances, as set out in the Greater London Authority Act 1999 – the Act of Parliament that established the GLA. For Mayoral strategies that are required under the GLA Act, like the Mayor’s Transport Strategy and the Economic Development Strategy,<sup>11</sup> the Mayor is required to consult with:
- the London Assembly;
  - each of the functional bodies;
  - every London borough council and the Common Council of the Corporation of London; and
  - any other body or person whom he considers it appropriate to consult. The Act requires that consideration should be given to consulting bodies representing voluntary bodies, the interests of different racial, ethnic or national groups, different religious groups and business in Greater London. However, if he considers consultation inappropriate in the circumstances, he is not obliged to consult them.
- 1.11 If the Mayor wishes to develop policies and strategies in addition to the statutory strategies (for example the energy strategy, which is additional to the strategies the Mayor is legally required to produce), he has a duty to consider consulting any of the above groups.<sup>12</sup>
- 1.12 For the purposes of more general engagement and accountability, the GLA Act also requires the Mayor to hold two People’s Question Times a year (jointly with the Assembly) and an annual State of London Debate, and publish an Annual Report.
- 1.13 In addition, the Core GLA and each of the four functional bodies are Best Value Authorities and are therefore required to consult on a wide range of local and other interests.<sup>13</sup>
- 1.14 Only the Mayor has executive powers. The London Assembly has scrutiny responsibilities and may report on matters of importance to Greater London; its opportunities for consultation are more limited but nevertheless important.
- 1.15 The GLA Act clearly reflect Parliament’s intention that the organisation develop and implement policies on the basis of consultation with Londoners. We would not, of course, expect the Mayor to consult every Londoner on every single issue. We want to see a strategic, targeted and significant effort to ensure that policies and strategies are developed on the basis of a good understanding of the views and needs of those affected. In our view, the requirements set out in the GLA Act constitute a minimum

level of consultation. We believe that the Mayor's consultation activities should go significantly beyond these requirements.

- 1.16 Consultation should be ongoing, open, and accessible to all those affected by the policy in question. It should be genuine, in that the comments received are properly considered in the decision-making process, and, related to this point, consultation should take place at an early stage in policy discussions so that respondents may have a genuine opportunity to influence the debate. Furthermore, the GLA should not simply act as a passive recipient of representations from organised and politically-aware groups. The GLA should be reaching out to those who are marginalised or not organised into lobby groups. The Mayor told us of the difficulties of achieving this aim when he gave evidence to the Committee. But difficulty is no excuse for inaction, and we would expect the GLA to be acting creatively and innovatively to fulfil the vision of a "new style of politics, and new kind of governance".
- 1.17 GLA officers told the Committee that the GLA had indeed gone far beyond the minimum statutory requirements to consult on the Mayor's strategies and policies<sup>14</sup> and had sought to engage a wide engagement of citizens, communities and sectors. We examine this further in later sections of this Report.

### **What is 'consultation'?**

- 1.18 The GLA Act does not include any definition of 'consultation', nor any guidance on what it should entail. Therefore, whatever definition is accepted by the Mayor dictates to some extent what is done and how it should be managed - subject, of course, to minimum standards developed by the courts. The Mayor's submission to the Committee noted that these common law standards require that consultation is a genuine invitation to the consultee to give advice and seeks a genuine receipt of that advice by the consulting body, at a time when proposals are still in their formative stage.<sup>15</sup> Failure to follow these common law rules could form the basis of a legal challenge to the legal validity of the particular strategy, policy or decision in question.

***"[The Mayor's] approach to consultation is to encourage the fullest participation and engagement by all London's communities in developing the GLA's policies and strategies"***

*GLA written submission on behalf of the Mayor*

- 1.19 We would expect to see the GLA disseminating detailed information about policy proposals and consultation exercises, in addition to basic branding and general awareness-raising initiatives. The GLA should be seeking out information, as well as opinions, about the various needs and interests of particular groups within the population of London, and applying that knowledge to policy development and implementation decisions. And we would expect there to be opportunities for Londoners to make unsolicited representations to the Mayor and his officials, as well as taking part in focused consultation exercises.
- 1.20 **The Mayor told us that he had learned nothing new from consultation exercises undertaken so far.<sup>16</sup> This suggests to us that his understanding of the purpose and value of consultation is much more limited than our own and that of our witnesses. It appears to us that the Mayor sees consultation mainly as a means of gathering opinions and raising public awareness about the Mayoralty (and his holding of the office). We urge the Mayor to commit**

**himself to a much broader understanding of consultation, including a range of activities, each with a differing purpose. These should include the following four key elements:**

- **Gathering information from Londoners about their experiences, needs and aspirations, to inform decision-making in the Authority.**
- **Canvassing public opinion on policy proposals and priorities.**
- **The provision of information to Londoners on the work, policies and consultation exercises of the GLA. This should vary from general awareness-raising campaigns to detailed explanations of policy developments and proposals.**
- **Providing opportunities for Londoners to make unsolicited representations to the Mayor on matters of importance to them.**

**This would allow the GLA to benefit from the huge pool of knowledge and experience that exists among communities in London, and to develop policies that are more effective and relevant as a result.**

1.21 If Londoners' views are to be genuinely sought, we heard in evidence that five broad principles need to be observed:

- Information about the GLA and opportunities to provide comments should be accessible and timed to allow a considered response.
- There should be a range of ways for Londoners to provide their views to the Mayor. Particular efforts should be made to hear from those who are less able, or less willing, to provide their views (the traditionally marginalised).
- The results of consultation should be demonstrably considered and taken into account. This includes the need to provide feedback on both the comments received and how they are considered within the decision-making process.
- The consultation process and its effectiveness should be monitored by the organisation to identify improvements and ensure best practice.
- Finally, there must be commitment at the highest level in the organisation to consultation, and a clear corporate vision of the purpose and value of consultation, along with guidance on best practice in conducting it.

1.22 In the remainder of this Report, we first put forward practical suggestions to increase the impact and effectiveness of the GLA's consultation and outreach work. We then discuss the fundamental need for commitment, leadership and vision at the top of the organisation. We argue that this should be articulated in a consultation strategy that will enshrine a renewed commitment to open, accountable and participatory London government, and ensure a coherent, coordinated and effective approach to consultation across the GLA.

## Chapter endnotes

<sup>1</sup> *White Paper on a Mayor and Assembly for London*, Department of Transport, Environment and the Regions, 1998, 1.7

<sup>2</sup> Ken Livingstone's Election Manifesto, May 2000

<sup>3</sup> Ken Livingstone's Election Manifesto, May 2000

<sup>4</sup> Memorandum – Black Londoners Forum

<sup>5</sup> Memorandum – GLA (written on behalf of the Mayor) p.5

<sup>6</sup> Memorandum – Association of London Government (ALG)

<sup>7</sup> *Guidance on Enhancing Public Participation in Local Government*, Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, 1998, p.22

<sup>8</sup> Minutes of Evidence 30 January 2002, 3.22

<sup>9</sup> Minutes of Evidence 9 October 2001, 4.10

<sup>10</sup> M Bartram, *Government Consultations: Not just a paper exercise*, National Consumer Council, 1997, p.2

<sup>11</sup> Please note that the statutory process for the Spatial Development Strategy has a more detailed process which has not been addressed in this report.

<sup>12</sup> Note, the Mayor is only under a duty to consider consulting these groups if the policies and strategies are being developed using the Authority's general powers under s.30 of the GLA Act.

<sup>13</sup> *Local Government Act 1999*, Section 3.

<sup>14</sup> Mayor's Briefing Paper, 21 February 2002

<sup>15</sup> Memorandum – GLA (written on behalf of Mayor) p.19

<sup>16</sup> Minutes of Evidence 21 February 2002, p. 4

## 2. “Open and accessible to all”?

*Raising awareness about the GLA’s activities is a prerequisite for encouraging greater involvement. This chapter examines the availability of information from the GLA, whether it has encouraged a considered response and whether opportunities to participate have been accessible to all Londoners.*

### **How does the Mayor inform people about the GLA’s responsibilities?**

- 2.1 We believe that the provision of accurate and relevant information about the GLA, its events and activities is a crucial first step towards effectively consulting citizens. The most recent Annual London Survey (a survey of Londoners commissioned by the Mayor and conducted by MORI) reported that 75 per cent of Londoners feel that the GLA gives them little or no information about the organisation.<sup>17</sup> It is clear from this that much work remains to be done to raise awareness about the role, responsibilities and activities of the GLA among Londoners, let alone about opportunities to participate in its policy processes.
- 2.2 The Mayor told us that he shared our concern about the apparent lack of awareness among Londoners about the GLA,<sup>18</sup> and said that he was taking steps to try to improve the situation (such as, for example, increased branding of services provided by TfL). The GLA provides information about its activities through its website ([www.london.gov.uk](http://www.london.gov.uk)), GLA newsletters (for example, Londonline which is distributed monthly to 15,000 stakeholders and ON magazine which is sent twice a year to 2.3m London households), leaflets, the Mayor’s Annual Report, GLA events and advertising.
- 2.3 The GLA has had some success in its efforts to raise awareness about opportunities to contribute to the policy making process. For example, the London Civic Forum survey found that 80% of its members were aware of opportunities to provide its views to the Mayor.<sup>19</sup> However, other witnesses were more critical. A representative from the Gooch House Tenants’ and Residents Association noted that neither he nor any Tenants and Residents Associations representatives he had spoken to had been informed about any opportunities to participate in questionnaires, question times, Meet the Mayor events or other GLA forums.<sup>20</sup> He suggested that more information about the GLA should be provided in regular local authority publications. This suggestion was supported by the findings of the Annual London Survey, which suggested that Londoners would like to receive more information about the GLA through local methods – for example, leaflets and local papers.<sup>21</sup>

#### **Recommendation 1**

Despite work already undertaken, it seems that awareness among Londoners of the role and activities of the GLA is pitifully low. The Mayor told us that he was taking steps to try to improve the situation. In order to galvanise these efforts, we recommend that the Mayor set a performance target for improving awareness of the GLA and its activities among Londoners, and in particular of opportunities to participate in policy discussions. This could be monitored through the GLA’s Annual London Survey.

## Advertising and publications

***“If consultation is to be genuine, it shouldn’t be part of the re-election process.”***

*Oral evidence to the Committee from Paul Greening, Head of Consultation Policy Team, Cabinet Office.*

- 2.4 Advertising and widely distributed GLA publications will have an obvious role to play in increasing Londoners’ understanding of the GLA and generating interest in its work. The Mayor indicated to the Committee that he would be looking at expanding the frequency and circulation of GLA magazines and was keen to heighten awareness of the GLA through branding.<sup>22</sup>

***“I was assured by the advertising company that I am associated with London, and that [my face] drew people’s attention. Therefore I was prepared to put up with a little personal embarrassment. [Laughter]”***

*The Mayor’s response to Members’ questions about the widespread use of his image in Transport Strategy advertisements, Mayor’s Question Time 4 April 2001*

- 2.5 We acknowledge that the Mayor’s image can focus attention on the GLA’s activities. However, extensive use of the Mayor’s own profile – for example, as was seen as part of the draft Transport Strategy – or excessively ‘glossy’ magazines can generate a perception amongst Londoners that the process is simply another political exercise aimed at re-election rather than a genuine commitment to hearing people’s views or informing them about the GLA’s activities.

### Recommendation 2

If advertising and publications are to be more than Mayoral self-promotion, they must make clear their purpose and always indicate how Londoners can get in contact with the GLA to provide their views or obtain more information. Furthermore, they must make clear that the views of Londoners are not just welcome, but are actively sought and valued by the Mayor.

### New technology

- 2.6 The potential of the internet as a means for informing Londoners about the GLA was demonstrated by the 99,600 hits on the draft Transport Strategy from the GLA website. However, while 63% of Londoners have access to the internet at home or work, only 5% say that they currently obtain information about the GLA in this way.<sup>23</sup> A redevelopment of the GLA website to improve access to information about the Mayor’s policies and proposals is currently under way. The new site will be launched in Spring 2002. The GLA has also been in talks about using text messaging to inform young people about the GLA and the Mayor is eager to make more use of webcasting of GLA meetings.<sup>24</sup>
- 2.7 We emphasise that different approaches will be required for different groups, a point that was acknowledged by the Mayor. For example, while young people may keen on text messages, only 6% of London Civic Forum (LCF) members surveyed stated that they would like greater use of text messaging to keep them informed about opportunities to provide their views.<sup>25</sup>
- 2.8 On the other hand, the LCF survey also demonstrated clear support amongst London organisations for greater use of emailing to distribute GLA documents and publicise opportunities to participate. In addition, almost all responses from London borough councils noted that greater use of emailing of consultation documents, particularly to

relevant officers, was their preferred way to receive information from the GLA.<sup>26</sup> There may also be potential benefits to be gained from placing information on internet sites that cater for particular interest groups.

- 2.9 Many submissions also suggested that the GLA website should contain more information on the progress of draft strategies, feedback on responses to consultation, a timetable for future consultation and, where possible, advance notification of forthcoming meetings<sup>27</sup>.

### **Recommendation 3**

We recommend the establishment of a specific area on the GLA website which provides detailed information about the Mayor's consultations, including timetable of forthcoming consultations and feedback. We also suggest that reference to the location of this information should be publicised in the Londonline magazine.

We also note requests made by our witnesses for information about the GLA to be provided through a variety of methods. In particular, we suggest that the Mayor examine ways of increasing the use of email to inform organisations and London borough councils and greater use of local papers to inform Londoners about GLA activities.

## **Accessibility of information and opportunities to participate**

- 2.10 There are a number of practical steps that should be taken to increase the likelihood and quality of responses to consultation exercises. In this section, we discuss measures to encourage maximum participation of those wishing to make a contribution.

### **Adequate timing for consultation and notice for meetings**

- 2.11 Although only a quarter of London Civic Forum members surveyed had difficulties providing their views to the Mayor, of those who did, the majority cited a lack of time to respond to submissions, lack of notice about meetings or inconvenient timing of meetings as reasons.<sup>28</sup> Our discussions with the ALG and voluntary and community groups indicated recurrent problems around the time provided for consultation, lack of notice about changes to consultation timetables and a need for certainty about when and on which issues the Mayor would be consulting.
- 2.12 By law, the Mayor must notify the public of the time, place and date for statutory public events (ie the State of London debate and People's Question Time) at least a month in advance. There are also statutory requirements to publicise his draft strategies. To date, written consultation periods on the Mayor's statutory strategies – the Transport, Economic Development, Air Quality and Biodiversity Strategies - have been roughly 13 weeks. This is in line with the Government minimum period of 12 weeks.<sup>29</sup> The Mayor told us that he considered this to be a reasonable period, and we agree. However, we found that there were concerns among witnesses about notice of meetings and consultation exercises relating to non-statutory GLA initiatives (for example, the Refugees and Asylum Seekers statement).
- 2.13 We heard that inadequate time reduces the capacity of some groups to participate effectively. Smaller organisations lack the resources to respond within very short timeframes, which can reduce input from smaller groups and individuals. Umbrella organisations made the point that they require substantial time if they are to effectively reflect the views of their members and relay invitations to meetings.<sup>30</sup> The Chair of the

Black Londoners Forum also noted that for those groups who have in the past been marginalised, short timescales are particularly damaging since they appear to undermine the Mayor's commitment to seek the views of these groups.<sup>31</sup> There is also a risk that some organisations or individuals will be discouraged from responding at all if the consultation period is too short. As one submission noted, short time frames 'risk the whole concept of wide consultation' and tend to result in the GLA only hearing from the 'usual suspects'<sup>32</sup> who are well-resourced and vocal.

***"Longer consultation time has to be given. To allow just 21 days for a response, as has happened, mitigates against full participation"***

*Respondent to London Civic Forum Survey*

- 2.14 On the issue of timing, the Committee has also heard examples where GLA documents were provided at very short notice. In particular, it was very disappointed that the document for discussion as part of the first State of London debate in June 2001 was only released on the morning of the debate itself<sup>33</sup>. Providing information at this late stage provides little opportunity for Londoners to consider the report or to provide an informed response.

**We note that short notice of written consultation deadlines and meetings and late provision of documents has caused difficulties for those wishing to take part and undermines the value of consultation exercises.**

#### **Recommendation 4**

We recommend that, wherever possible, a standard consultation period should be set for draft strategies (including those which are not statutorily required). We suggest that the Mayor start by establishing a standard period of 12 weeks, whilst still allowing an appropriate amount of flexibility where necessary.

#### **Recommendation 5**

We note that there is a statutory notification period for People's Question Time and State of London debate. We recommend that the Mayor establish guidelines to ensure that adequate notice is given for other public meetings.

#### **Accessible information**

- 2.15 We heard that there have been considerable teething problems around providing information in appropriate formats.<sup>34</sup> As one example, we were informed that the draft Transport Strategy was originally not provided in accessible formats for the visually impaired.<sup>35</sup> The low numbers of London Civic Forum members surveyed who cited problems with format, clarity or accessibility of documents and the comments from witnesses seem to suggest that better systems and additional staff have eased these problems. Translations and documents in alternative formats are also now available on request and signers and palantypists are provided at events.
- 2.16 However, we heard that there are still areas for concern. The Royal National Institute for the Blind's submission expressed frustration at the confusion amongst GLA officers over whether large print or braille formats are available and delays in getting material to attendees for GLA events.<sup>36</sup>

- 2.17 An ongoing obstacle to coherent provision of accessible information is the lack of a policy for the GLA which deals with translations and the provision of documents in other formats.
- 2.18 The London Assembly produced its own translation policy in July 2001. The Mayor provided a draft Accessibility Strategy to our Committee in March 2002 and we look forward to further discussions between the Mayor and the Assembly on developing a joint approach. We also welcome the Mayor's commitment to provide information in accessible formats as part of the GLA Equalities Framework.

#### **Recommendation 6**

We recommend that:

- all information provided by the GLA should clearly indicate how people can obtain copies in alternative formats
- all consultation documents issued by the GLA family should be made available in alternative formats, in accordance with the proposed Accessibility Strategy
- registration forms for all GLA events should ask in what format participants want to receive information

#### **Accessible venues**

- 2.19 Generally, we did not find that people had problems accessing venues for meetings, particularly People's Question Time. Still, at least two organisations suggested more use of venues with induction loops and wheelchair access, indicating that the issue has not been completely resolved.<sup>37</sup>
- 2.20 The timing of events should provide maximum opportunity for those who are interested in the event to attend. We support, for example, the decision to move the start time for the most recent People's Question Time from 6.30pm to 7.00pm to allow people coming from work to attend. Age Concern noted that Londoners using the Freedom Pass to travel to venues cannot attend meetings which start at 9.00am and that long meetings are also unsuitable for many people, especially older Londoners<sup>38</sup> and those with children.

#### **Recommendation 7**

We support the examination of accessibility as part of the evaluation of suitable venues for GLA public meetings. We recommend that the timing of GLA events should be set so as to allow the fullest participation by Londoners.

## Chapter endnotes

- <sup>17</sup> MORI, *Annual Survey of London 2001*, p.46
- <sup>18</sup> Minutes of Evidence 21 February 2002, p.2
- <sup>19</sup> London Civic Forum, *Reaching Out Questionnaire Report*, February 2002, p.7
- <sup>20</sup> Memorandum – Gooch House Tenants’ and Residents Association
- <sup>21</sup> MORI *Annual Survey of London 2001*, p.46
- <sup>22</sup> Minutes of Evidence 21 February 2002, p.2
- <sup>23</sup> MORI *Annual Survey of London 2001*, p.47
- <sup>24</sup> Minutes of Evidence 21 February 2002, p.5
- <sup>25</sup> London Civic Forum, *Reaching Out Questionnaire Report*, February 2002, p.13
- <sup>26</sup> See Memorandums – Barking and Dagenham, Bromley, Camden, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Richmond Upon Thames and the Corporation of London
- <sup>27</sup> See for example, letter from CPRE London to Brigitte Gohdes and Memorandum – London Civic Forum
- <sup>28</sup> London Civic Forum, *Reaching Out Questionnaire Report*, February 2002, p.10
- <sup>29</sup> Minutes of Evidence 30 January 2002 3.19
- <sup>30</sup> Minutes of Evidence 18 December 2001 3.18
- <sup>31</sup> Minutes of Evidence 18 December 2001 3.19
- <sup>32</sup> Memorandum – Age Concern
- <sup>33</sup> See ‘Mayor makes the case for a fairer deal for the Capital’, GLA press release GLA/ 2001/269, 25 June 2001
- <sup>34</sup> See for example, Age Concern Letter 3 January 2001
- <sup>35</sup> Memorandum – Royal National Institute of the Blind (RNIB). A copy in accessible format was eventually provided and the deadline for a response was extended from 30 March to 20 April 2001.
- <sup>36</sup> Memorandum – RNIB
- <sup>37</sup> Memorandums – D Hart and London Forum
- <sup>38</sup> Memorandum – Age Concern

### 3 How to hear more from Londoners

*In this chapter, we note the need for a diverse range of consultative tools and focus particularly on the use of meetings, new technology and how the Mayor has sought views from stakeholders, especially the borough councils and the traditionally marginalised.*

- 3.1 Evidence to the Committee stressed the need for a ‘tool kit of consultation’.<sup>39</sup> That is, effective consultation demands a multifaceted approach and a range of ways in which the Mayor can obtain the views of Londoners. As advice from the Cabinet Office noted, there is no single ‘right’ method for consulting; approaches should be tailored according to whom you want to reach and what you want to achieve.<sup>40</sup> Importantly, methods should avoid consultation being monopolised by a small number of well-organised groups and encourage a range of responses from the community.

***“Formal channels [to consult] appear on occasion to be poorly developed and not yet adequately publicised. I understand, of course that these are still early days for the GLA.”***

*Letter from CPRE London to GLA officers*

- 3.2 The Mayor and his officers have sought to gather Londoners’ views through a variety of channels. These include:
- statutory public meetings – that is, People’s Question Time and the State of London debate;
  - non-statutory public meetings early in the Mayor’s term – for example, the Meet the Mayor events which were attended by around 1,500 Londoners;
  - questionnaires and surveys – for example, the annual London Survey which gathers the priorities and perspectives of 1,400 Londoners and opinion polling on the appropriate level for the congestion charge and precept;
  - invitations for comment on draft strategies;
  - workshops and focus groups – for example, on the development of the London Partnerships Register;
  - through advisory bodies – for example, the Mayor’s Advisory Cabinet which comprises some of the key players in London government and society to advise the Mayor on his decisions or the Mayor’s Policy Commissions which bring together experts from the community to focus on key strategic areas like housing, equalities, crime and health;
  - stakeholders lists – that is, mailing lists of London organisations grouped by common interest (for example, faith groups).

***“The summary documents with ‘popular’ questionnaires suffered from too much simplicity as well as ambiguity...They seem worded in a manner to obtain the maximum support for what the Mayor is proposing to do.”***

*Memorandum from London Forum of Amenity and Civic Societies*

- 3.3 Obviously these approaches serve different purposes and will result in different kinds of responses. For example, opinion polls and surveys are useful for

gathering quantitative information about people's priorities but may allow only a narrow range of responses to complex issues<sup>41</sup> and often don't promote deliberation. To be effective, their use should be balanced with other means of consultation. At the moment, we do not consider the GLA's consultation activities to be sufficiently varied or focused.

### **People's Question Time**

- 3.4 We received a number of comments relating particularly to People's Question Time. A number of witnesses suggested that it has the potential to be more proactive, more high profile and encourage greater deliberation of issues.<sup>42</sup>
- 3.5 Four People's Question Time meetings have been held so far in central London, Croydon, Newham and Kensington. Attendance for the first two Question Times was around 700 – 1000 people; more recently, attendances have been just over 400 people. Participants can send in questions in advance or ask questions on the night. Following each People's Question Time, a record of the meeting, highlighting key topic areas, is posted on the GLA website.
- 3.6 The Mayor told us that he is 'informed' by the issues raised at People's Question Time.<sup>43</sup> Submissions to the Committee indicated that more could be done in this forum to demonstrate this. For example, the London Forum suggested that People's Question Time should be followed by 'summaries of points made, issues accepted, studies or actions initiated and feedback on changes to decisions made'.<sup>44</sup> They also suggested that attendees should be given a paper listing three key issues under consideration for them to respond to, together with one point of their own.

### **Using new technology**

- 3.7 The GLA has promised that 'technology will be used routinely to give Londoners unprecedented access to and influence over the key decisions taken on their behalf by the Mayor' by 2005.<sup>45</sup> It is clear to the Committee that there is further scope for using the GLA website to develop its potential not just for accessible information but genuine consultation as well. For example, several witnesses suggested that online question sessions where the Mayor or his staff would be available to respond to Londoners' questions<sup>46</sup> could supplement the Mayor's monthly radio slots. Others suggested online discussion forums be established for citizens to provide their views on the Mayor's key areas of responsibility – for example, planning, culture or transport. If these forums are to be successful, they will require support from GLA officers to respond quickly to queries and to feed participants' views into the decision-making process.<sup>47</sup>
- 3.8 We believe the Mayor and his officers could benefit from the experience of local authorities who have undertaken work in this area. For example, we draw the Mayor and his officers' attention to Barnet Council's moderated online discussion forums<sup>48</sup> and online polls and questionnaires by Islington Council<sup>49</sup> and Tameside Metropolitan Borough.<sup>50</sup> We also note the Government's establishment of forums and specific web-pages which detail government consultations.<sup>51</sup>
- 3.9 We caution though against information technology in its current form being the 'future of consultation'. Not everyone has access to the internet or email and there are major issues about ensuring that views are representative and

relevant.<sup>52</sup> As one submission summarised it – ‘there is and will be considerable resistance from other groups [to Information Technology], and no survey of opinion, behaviour or experience taken solely by such new technology will be representative in the near future’.<sup>53</sup> Information technology should be used as one of a number of consultative tools.

#### **Recommendation 8**

We note that establishing interactive online forums was one of the Mayor’s election commitments. We recommend that the GLA explore options for creating these forums, starting by looking at local and central government examples.

### **Listening to stakeholders**

#### **The Mayor’s relationships with the borough councils and the Association of London Government**

- 3.10 Under the GLA Act, the Mayor is required to consult with the borough councils on all of his statutory strategies. As the Mayor acknowledges, London’s local authorities are key in the successful implementation of these strategies – particularly the Waste and Transport strategies<sup>54</sup> and many non-statutory policies as well.

***“The way in which the Mayor has consulted with boroughs and the ALG has been indiscriminate and unreliable.”***

*Memorandum from the Association of London Government.*

- 3.11 Several borough councils stated that they wanted to work more in partnership with the Mayor and suggested that the benefits extended beyond their expertise in the Mayor’s areas of responsibility. Through their own consultation processes, they could offer scope to extend the GLA’s ‘reach’ and work collaboratively on projects of interest- for example, by collaborating on polls of citizens’ priorities.<sup>55</sup> To do this, borough councils required greater clarity about, and earlier involvement in, the Mayor’s consultation processes, particularly the statutory strategies. In evidence to the Committee, the ALG considered that more formal consultative mechanisms with the GLA might achieve some of these goals.
- 3.12 The role of the Association for London Government in facilitating these relationships will need to be carefully considered. In his oral evidence, the Mayor noted the ‘overwhelming contempt’ for the ALG he had observed amongst borough chief executives and leaders and stated that his office was now dealing directly with borough councils and bypassing the ALG.<sup>56</sup> He did not see the need for any formal mechanisms for consultation given the high level of contact already existing between borough councils and his officers.<sup>57</sup>
- 3.13 The submissions from London borough councils provided a more complex picture. Only five of the sixteen responding councils agreed that the ALG should be the main conduit for GLA consultation. That said, almost all supported the role that the ALG plays in coordinating meetings, reducing duplication and providing a London-wide perspective on some issues.

## **Recommendation 9**

We welcome the Mayor's commitment to maintain a good relationship with London borough councils which is crucial to the successful implementation of his strategies.

However, we recommend that the Mayor re-examine his wholesale dismissal of the ALG as a body to be consulted. In doing so, he runs the risk of duplicating coordinating work already being done by the ALG and ignoring a considerable pool of expertise and contacts within London.

### **Engaging with those who are traditionally marginalised**

- 3.14 There are particular groups within the community who may be less likely to provide their views unless they are deliberately sought. These include young people, members of ethnic and minority groups, those suffering long-term illnesses, older people,<sup>58</sup> people with disabilities, those with literacy problems and, perhaps surprisingly, those in demanding or time consuming occupations. Obtaining the views of these groups is a difficult but essential role for a strategic pan-London body like the GLA.
- 3.15 If the Mayor is to reach these groups, approaches need to be specifically tailored. For example, he should consider matching gender and ethnicity of interviewers to particular groups, use active approaches (for example workshops and forums) rather than self-completion forms and - particularly for young people - make sure that the issues are relevant to them.<sup>59</sup>
- 3.16 We heard that reaching the traditionally marginalised has been one of the successes of the Mayor's consultation process to date. For example, the Royal National Institute for Deaf People's submission noted that it was 'delighted with the consultation process undertaken by the GLA'<sup>60</sup> which had included two Question Times specifically for deaf and hard of hearing Londoners to provide views to the Mayor. Several people also commented on the two hour GLA workshops involving representatives from the GLA, academic and voluntary sectors which sought children's views about the Economic Development, Transport and Spatial Development Strategies.<sup>61</sup> We note that the forthcoming Equalities Framework commits the GLA to seek the involvement of the traditionally marginalised through 'imaginative and diverse' methods.<sup>62</sup>
- 3.17 We also support the GLA's particular interest in 'using available technologies to better engage marginalised groups in the democratic process.'<sup>63</sup> As we have already noted, new communication methods can assist the GLA in hearing from certain audiences – younger people in particular. New technology is, we were told, also potentially useful for involving people who may be unable or unwilling to attend GLA meetings in the evenings<sup>64</sup> and the GLA website was highlighted as an important avenue by which some people with disabilities can participate.<sup>65</sup>
- 3.18 However, concerns were raised with the Committee about how children and young people would be consulted in the future. For example, the Office of Children's Rights Commissioner for London highlighted the lack of a GLA stakeholder group for children and the reduced priority being given to engaging children and young people within the GLA's External Relations Group.<sup>66</sup> While engaging this age group is a difficult task, we stress that GLA officers should continue to seek innovative ways of seeking young people's views.

## Recommendation 10

We congratulate GLA officers on their work to date and support the development of innovative ways to obtain the views of those who are traditionally marginalised. We strongly support the commitment in the GLA's Equalities Framework to ensure that the Mayor receives a wide cross-section of Londoners' views.

We recommend particular attention be given to continuing to seek input from young people and children in future strategies.

### Stakeholder engagement process

- 3.19 The Mayor has established a specific group to manage relationships outside the GLA. Through its Stakeholder Policy Team, this External Relations Group is responsible for managing ways of consulting with groups identified in the GLA Act and hearing from the traditionally marginalised. To do this, it has:
- developed a database of 'stakeholders' reflecting the common interests of each organisation. For example, the young persons' stakeholder list includes representatives from youth parliaments, youth workers with local authorities and London youth organisations.
  - sought to work with existing umbrella organisations – for example, the London Higher Education Consortium and the London Business Board.
  - encouraged the development of representative London-wide structures, in some cases through funding – for example, the London Civic Forum which brings together private business, public services and institutions, voluntary and community organisations, black and minority ethnic and faith organisations.
- 3.20 GLA officers told us that these processes facilitate communication, project development, the development of key policies and strategies, media relations, research, and cultural events.<sup>67</sup> As we heard, stronger links with stakeholders can be a useful way for the GLA to draw on a wealth of expertise and obtain the views of a very broad cross-section of Londoners, especially those not reached by other methods.<sup>68</sup> GLA officers have contended that its processes allow stakeholders to shape the Mayor's policies, 'not merely as consultees but as actors in the policy development process'.<sup>69</sup>

***"Having set these things up, [stakeholder groups] have a life of their own, and I am sure the bulk of what they do is very good."***

*Mayor's oral evidence to the Committee, 21 February 2002*

- 3.21 However, there seems to be a lack of clear sense among the stakeholders themselves of what the Mayor is trying to achieve by closer engagement and little sense of what impact the views of stakeholder groups and forums have on the Mayor's policy decisions.<sup>70</sup> When we raised this confusion with the Mayor, and asked him why stakeholder lists and certain forums were established, the Mayor responded that they fulfilled his legal obligations to consult and were primarily for the benefit of his policy advisers.<sup>71</sup>

3.22 From our discussions with the Mayor and GLA officers, there appears to be no systematic development of stakeholder lists, no examination of whether particular bodies are representative and no evaluation of the success of stakeholder processes and particular forums. When GLA officers were questioned on the establishment of these stakeholder lists they acknowledged that there was not yet a protocol for identifying stakeholders and stated that it was not the Mayor's business to dictate how stakeholder groups organised themselves.<sup>72</sup>

***"The GLA seems unsure about why they want to engage with the voluntary sector and thus the process is unfocused."***

*Respondent to London Voluntary Service Council survey*

3.23 A survey of over 20 voluntary organisations conducted by the London Voluntary Service Council<sup>73</sup> indicated that this confusion is reducing the willingness of groups to remain involved with the GLA. For example, one respondent noted that they had met with an officer in External Relations but 'nothing has happened since' and they had therefore stopped working with the GLA. Since many of these groups represent a broad section of the community and this stakeholder process has been identified as one of the Mayor's main mechanisms for reaching the traditionally marginalised, continued uncertainty and dissatisfaction will have obvious implications for the GLA's ability to involve Londoners in the future.

#### **Recommendation 11**

The purpose and criteria for membership of stakeholder lists should be clarified by the Mayor. In addition, the process by which stakeholder lists are compiled should be made more systematic.

The Mayor should also commit himself to evaluate and disseminate successful approaches to involving stakeholders in the decision-making process.

## Chapter endnotes

- <sup>39</sup> Minutes of Evidence 30 January 2002 4.20
- <sup>40</sup> *How to consult your users: An introductory guide*, Cabinet Office, 1998, p.9
- <sup>41</sup> Memorandums – London Forum, Professor G Jones
- <sup>42</sup> Minutes of Evidence 4 & 18 December 2001
- <sup>43</sup> Minutes of Evidence 21 February 2002, p.12
- <sup>44</sup> Memorandum – London Forum
- <sup>45</sup> GLA, *Implementing Electronic Government Statement 2001*, August 2001, p.4
- <sup>46</sup> Minutes of Evidence 18 December 2001 3.24 & 3.25
- <sup>47</sup> Minutes of Evidence 4 December 2001 4.29
- <sup>48</sup> See [www.barnet.gov.uk](http://www.barnet.gov.uk)
- <sup>49</sup> See [www.islington.gov.uk](http://www.islington.gov.uk)
- <sup>50</sup> See [www.tameside.gov.uk](http://www.tameside.gov.uk)
- <sup>51</sup> See for example ‘Your Say’ page ([www.number10.gov.uk](http://www.number10.gov.uk)) and [www.ukonline.gov.uk](http://www.ukonline.gov.uk)
- <sup>52</sup> Minutes of Evidence 30 January 2002 3.23
- <sup>53</sup> Memorandum – Dr R Waller
- <sup>54</sup> Minutes of Evidence 21 February 2002, p.14
- <sup>55</sup> Memorandums – London Borough of Hillingdon, London Borough of Camden.
- <sup>56</sup> Minutes of Evidence 21 February 2002, p.13
- <sup>57</sup> Minutes of Evidence 21 February 2002, p.14
- <sup>58</sup> Memorandum – London Civic Forum
- <sup>59</sup> Minutes of Evidence 4 December 2001 4.34
- <sup>60</sup> Memorandum - RNIB
- <sup>61</sup> Mayor’s Briefing – 21 February 2002
- <sup>62</sup> *Equalities Framework 2002-04*, Greater London Authority, April 2002, p.21
- <sup>63</sup> GLA, *Implementing Electronic Government Statement 2001*, August 2001, p.19
- <sup>64</sup> Minutes of Evidence 4 December 2001 4.30
- <sup>65</sup> Memorandum – D Hart
- <sup>66</sup> Memorandum - Office of Children’s Rights Commissioner for London
- <sup>67</sup> Mayor’s Briefing Paper 21 February 2002
- <sup>68</sup> Memorandum – London Civic Forum
- <sup>69</sup> Mayor’s Briefing Paper 21 February 2002
- <sup>70</sup> Memorandums – London Civic Forum, London Voluntary Service Council
- <sup>71</sup> Minutes of Evidence 21 February 2002, p.10
- <sup>72</sup> Minutes of Evidence 9 September 4.19
- <sup>73</sup> ‘Consultation Response from London Voluntary Service Council’, LVSC, 2002

## 4 Providing feedback

*A vital component of effective consultation is explaining to the public what the results of the consultation were and why an authority has chosen to take a particular decision after considering these results. This chapter notes the failure of the Mayor generally to provide sufficient feedback and suggests clear guidelines.*

***“Consultation is only effective if action is not only taken but perceived to have been taken.”***

*Memorandum – Dr R Waller*

- 4.1 As many submissions stressed to the Committee, lack of feedback on consultations has severe repercussions for their ongoing involvement of Londoners with the GLA. One witness commented that feedback was essential to motivate people to get involved again<sup>74</sup> and others have added that lack of feedback can be demoralising to organisations.<sup>75</sup> The point was repeatedly made to us that feedback assured people that their contribution had been seriously considered as a part of the decision process.<sup>76</sup> If the Mayor doesn't provide such information, the lack of transparency in his decision-making puts in jeopardy both the goodwill of Londoners and their willingness to participate in future consultation processes.<sup>77</sup>

***“[Consultees’] comments do not have to be accepted but where they are not, a rational reason is required for not accepting them.”***

*GLA written submission on behalf of the Mayor*

***“The information supplied seems to just disappear into a huge hole and nothing ever comes back and nothing seems to change as a result, which makes it all seem a bit pointless”***

*Respondent to London Civic Forum survey*

- 4.2 The submission provided on behalf of the Mayor states that ‘invitations to respond to consultation documents make clear that replies will not be made to individuals’<sup>78</sup> and cites two examples of summarised forms of feedback to responses on the draft Transport<sup>79</sup> and Economic Development<sup>80</sup> Strategies. Feedback from surveys is generally provided through the media, Londonline newsletter or the website.

***“Feedback demonstrates to individuals and organisations the value of responding to strategy consultations and builds into the process a necessary degree of transparency.”***

*Memorandum – London Voluntary Service Council*

- 4.3 We found that Londoners do not feel that this is enough. The London Civic Forum's survey of its members indicated that only 18% of respondents who had participated in a Mayoral consultation felt they had received any feedback;<sup>81</sup> this was corroborated by the overwhelming majority of submissions which cited lack of feedback as their main criticism of the Mayor's consultation process to date.

- 4.4 Some groups proposed that feedback should be based around common themes that had emerged from consultation and the practice of Government green and white papers was suggested as one possible format. An alternative approach suggested by one witness was that feedback should reflect both the complexity of the strategy and the level of detail of the responses.<sup>82</sup> Others suggested following the good practice adopted for the GLA's Domestic Violence Strategy which highlighted where changes between the consultation and final documents had occurred.

***“London’s Black and Minority Ethnic communities are often consulted and very rarely provided with information on what recommendations have been taken on board and where recommendations have not been taken on board, why not.”***

*Memorandum – Black Londoners Forum*

- 4.5 We appreciate that detailed feedback can require considerable resources. However, this must be balanced against the risk that little or no feedback will eventually alienate Londoners from the process and undermine the legitimacy of the outcome.

***The 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector Alliance welcomed the GLA consultation process but commented that its main concern was about feedback.***

*Evidence to Committee, 18 December 2001*

- 4.6 Having considered both the needs of consultees and the demands on GLA officers' resources, we believe that there needs to be a clear commitment to acknowledging receipt of views and providing adequate feedback. At the very least, we support an expanded version of the model used for the Transport Strategy consultation which provided a summary of points raised as part of the consultation process as well as the reasons why these points were or were not been accepted. This feedback should be made available on the GLA website and copies should be available in local libraries, as well as an appendix to the final report.

**We note the demand for feedback from Londoners and the overwhelming view that the Mayor is not providing sufficient feedback on the views he has received or how he intends to consider these views as part of his decision-making process. This is creating considerable disillusionment about the value of responding to the Mayor's consultation and scepticism as to whether he is considering Londoners' views at all.**

#### **Recommendation 12**

We recommend that feedback should be provided to all written consultation processes in the form of a summary of main points raised and reasons why they have or have not been accepted.

This summary should be publicised, provided as an appendix to the final report and available in local libraries and on the GLA website (see Recommendation 2)

## Chapter endnotes

<sup>74</sup> Minutes of Evidence 30 January 2002 3.17

<sup>75</sup> Memorandum - NSPCC

<sup>76</sup> Minutes of Evidence 4 & 18 December 2001, Memorandum – A Bosi

<sup>77</sup> See for example Minutes of Evidence 18 December 2001

<sup>78</sup> Memorandum – GLA (written on behalf of the Mayor) p.15

<sup>79</sup> *Mayor's Transport Strategy: Report on Public Consultation on the Draft Transport Strategy*, MORI, July 2001

<sup>80</sup> Annexes B, C & D, *Economic Development Strategy*, GLA 2001

<sup>81</sup> London Civic Forum, *Reaching Out Questionnaire Report*, February 2002, p.12

<sup>82</sup> Minutes of Evidence 30 January 2002 3.17

## 5. Evaluation: Checking the success of the work

*Evaluation has been highlighted as an essential element of good consultation since it enables an organisation to assess its success, builds a body of best practice and provides a guide to the cost-effectiveness of its activities. This chapter notes the lack of any consistent evaluation framework within the GLA.*

- 5.1 There is currently no consistent framework by which the success and cost-effectiveness of the Mayor's consultations are evaluated. This relates partly to the lack of corporate vision as to the value and purpose of consultation.

***"Give it time and I should imagine there will be a GLA house procedure for consultation. But we're not there yet."***

*Mayor's oral evidence to the Committee, 21 February 2002*

- 5.2 In the absence of a framework, GLA officers have used a range of mechanisms to evaluate individual initiatives, including evaluation forms for attendees at People's Question Time, regular user surveys of the GLA Partnerships Register and feedback forms (including basic demographic information) for those participating in workshops and forums. On other consultations, evaluation tends to rely on broad comparison. For example, the Mayor claimed that consultation on the draft Transport Strategy was a success because 44% of the public were aware of the campaign and 118,500 contacts had been made with the GLA about the document – 'more than six times' the response to the government consultation on the creation of the GLA.<sup>83</sup> Yet this assessment makes no distinction between the numbers simply accessing the website (84% of contacts) and, for example, those who provided written comment on the strategy (7% of contacts).
- 5.3 Such *ad hoc* evaluations do not give much detail about the impact of consultation on policy development or implementation, nor do they provide any meaningful lessons for the GLA to apply to future consultation exercises.
- 5.4 In 2001/02, the Mayor allocated £880,000 specifically for spending on consultation and engagement. Due to delays in the publishing of strategies, actual spending was approximately £700,000,<sup>84</sup> with a further £325,000 spent on marketing. In addition, the Transport and Economic Development Strategy consultations cost approximately £1.6m and £134,000 respectively.
- 5.5 We are concerned to see that this money is being spent efficiently and effectively by the GLA. However, any effort to conduct such an analysis has been hampered by a lack of a framework or clear performance indicators by which to gauge the success of consultations. It has also been constrained by a failure by GLA officers to evaluate the effectiveness of different approaches. As several witnesses noted, different consultative mechanisms produce different results and we would like to see greater evaluation, not just of total expenditure but also of whether an alternative approach could have encouraged a greater or more detailed response.
- 5.6 We are not alone in our observation. Not only did the District Audit Report express difficulty in accurately establishing the level of expenditure on

consultation, it also commented that ‘the setting of realistic achievable expectations for consultation activities needs to be developed. Otherwise, there is a danger that consultation becomes an end in its own right’.<sup>85</sup>

**We agree with the conclusions of the District Audit Report and criticise the lack of a consistent framework for evaluating Mayoral consultations. We understand that the Best Value Review is expected to recommend building in ways to evaluate consultation and improve performance as part of its report. We look forward to the outcome of this review, and trust it will propose a more useful framework for assessing the effectiveness and efficiency of the GLA’s consultation work in future.**

**Recommendation 13**

We recommend that the Mayor identify his objectives in relation to consultation and engagement. Only then will it be possible to assess properly the extent to which the GLA has been successful in achieving its aims.

**Recommendation 14**

We also recommend that the London Assembly’s Budget Committee should pursue more detailed expenditure figures on the GLA’s consultation and monitor expenditure.

## Chapter endnotes

<sup>83</sup> Mayor's Question Time , response to Q149/01, 4 April 2001

<sup>84</sup> The Mayor's Memorandum noted that 'it was not possible to provide a detailed breakdown on the cost of consultation exercises.'<sup>84</sup> (p.17). The budget for specific consultation for 2001/02 was £880,000 (£530,000 managed by the Policy and Partnerships for consultation and stakeholder engagement and £353,000 for public consultation used to support strategy and policy development managed by the Communications Directorate). Due to delays in publishing strategies, £180,000 of the Policy and Partnerships budget was used to fund additional research for statutory strategies.

<sup>85</sup> A Hartley-Walder, *Consultation: Greater London Authority Audit 2000/2001*, District Audit, 2001, p.10

## 6. Reflecting a genuine commitment to consult

*If consultation is to make any difference to the decisions of an organisation, it needs to be supported and valued at the highest level. This chapter notes that the Mayor's oral evidence to the Committee did not reflect the commitment demonstrated in his public statements or written evidence.*

- 6.1 Despite a lack of coordination and evaluation and some early problems around timing and accessibility, it is apparent to the Committee that many GLA officers are 'passionate' about and committed to developing methods and mechanisms which seek Londoners' views.<sup>86</sup> The GLA's Equalities Framework, released in April 2002, commits the Mayor to improving consultation and information, particularly with traditionally marginalised groups.<sup>87</sup>
- 6.2 However, a good consultation process is not an end in itself. As many witnesses noted, a crucial element in evaluating the success of the Mayor's consultation is the extent to which the views provided affect the Mayor's final decision.<sup>88</sup>

### The Mayor's commitment to consultation

- 6.3 We found little to reassure Londoners that the Mayor was committed to seeking out and acting on their views.

***"All the results [of the consultation on the draft Transport Strategy] were absolutely predictable... We could have guessed them but we would have no doubt been legally challenged by somebody if we hadn't gone out and consulted".***  
*Mayor's oral evidence to the Committee, 21 February 2002*

- 6.4 The Mayor did note the importance of listening to the views of citizens when managing a city and acknowledged that he should try to consult more.<sup>89</sup> However, he was ultimately 'rather cynical' about consultation; he would consult where he had to but his preference was to lead. In his words, 'at the end of the day, I have been elected to do what I believe to be right and I will do it'<sup>90</sup>. If his decisions were unpopular, this would be reflected at the ballot box. As he noted, 'the big consultation is Election Day...That is, in a sense, the best form of consultation'.<sup>91</sup>
- 6.5 In contrast to the broader commitment of his manifesto, his view was framed largely in terms of his statutory responsibilities to consult. For example, he noted on the draft Transport Strategy that had 'by law to consult' and that he was happy with that consultation process because 'the answers were, by and large, what [he] wanted'.<sup>92</sup> Similarly, his primary reason for establishing stakeholder lists and forums was not because they offered valuable expertise and links to London's communities but because the GLA Act required him to consult.<sup>93</sup> We were left in no doubt that many of the consultative processes established by GLA officers would not exist if the Mayor did not believe he was statutorily obliged to conduct them.

***"Throughout the GLA Act there is a legal stricture again and again that I must consult. Therefore I do. My preference would be to lead".***  
*Mayor's oral evidence to the Committee, 21 February 2002*

- 6.6 As the District Auditor observed<sup>94</sup>, these views are significantly at odds with those of his officers. Indeed, the Mayor seemed uninterested in the work his officers were conducting to seek Londoners' views. As he acknowledged, 'my administration is getting on and doing [consultation activities]. Perhaps some of it I wouldn't agree with - I don't know - but I'm never going to have the time to get involved.'<sup>95</sup> This lack of awareness about the work of his own officers reinforces the doubts voiced by many witnesses that their responses are not being taken seriously by the Mayor.

***"Politicians used to have no problems about taking a decision and being judged by it. Over the last generation, both here and in America, everyone is so terrified of losing an election or alienating someone that there's consult, poll, how can you change this, shift that? I actually have total contempt for all that and, at the end of the day, you do what you believe is right. If you can persuade the public, you will get re-elected. If not, they get rid of you."***

*Mayor's oral evidence to the Committee, 21 February 2002*

- 6.7 The Mayor expressed his personal preference for hearing from Londoners through 'a well researched opinion poll which tells you, as accurately as anything else, what people are thinking.'<sup>96</sup> This raises concerns about his willingness to hear from Londoners through the various mechanisms available. As we have previously noted, opinion polls are one means by which the views of a population as large as London can be gathered. However, consultation should not just be about getting responses on a narrow range of proposals; it should include opportunities for Londoners to raise their own issues and provide more detailed factual information for policy makers. The fact that the Mayor has not yet published the questions or results of some of his 'snap' opinion polls (for example, a poll conducted on the level of the precept<sup>97</sup>) also raise questions about the transparency and accountability.
- 6.8 Finally, it appeared that the Mayor has no clear plans on how to improve the level of engagement with Londoners. He argued that the small number of direct services that the GLA provides and the size of its constituency meant that engaging with Londoners is not easy<sup>98</sup> and seemed resigned to the fact that Londoners are generally not interested in getting involved. When asked specifically about the difficult task of gaining the views of young people, the Mayor noted that 'the sort of young people who are interested in politics turn out to grow into William Hague'<sup>99</sup> and suspected he would have 'more effect changing the number of buses we have on the streets than the engagement of youth'.<sup>100</sup>

***"I am happy when [stakeholders] agree with me but when they don't agree with me its not necessarily going to change my mind"***

*Mayor's oral evidence to the Committee, 21 February 2002*

- 6.9 Whether he has been overwhelmed by the volume of work or simply underestimated the efforts required, it is obvious to the Committee that the Mayor has lost his enthusiasm for his promise to encourage 'the participation and engagement by all of London's communities' in the GLA's policies. There

was nothing in the Mayor's evidence which gave any indication that responses from Londoners have had any real impact on his decisions nor that the Mayor is interested in improving the ways in which he seeks Londoners' views, particularly the traditionally marginalised. The numerous consultative mechanisms established by his officers appear to be operating in isolation to the policy processes they were expected to inform.

**We believe that properly conducted consultation leads to better policies and a better government for London. We are therefore very concerned that the Mayor appears to be retreating from his previous commitment to encourage greater involvement and participation in his strategies and policies.**

**The Mayor's apparent indifference to the work of his officers in seeking people's views and his characterisation of consultation as a largely statutory requirement, make it very difficult for the Committee to believe that the Mayor is genuinely considering Londoners' views before making his decisions. Left unchecked, this indifference will profoundly affect the extent to which Londoners believe that the GLA represents, and reflects, its views.**

#### **Recommendation 15**

We urge the Mayor to honour his commitment to encouraging the fullest possible participation and involvement of Londoners in the policies and strategies for their city. He must do more than simply support the work of his officers; he must show genuine leadership and vision if the GLA is to be seen as an open and inclusive government for London.

## Chapter endnotes

<sup>86</sup> Minutes of Evidence 9 February 2001, 4.5

<sup>87</sup> *Equalities Framework 2002-04*, Greater London Authority, April 2002, p.20

<sup>88</sup> See for example, memorandums – Barnet, Lambeth and Islington and documents: *Guidance on Enhancing Public Participation in Local Government, DETR, 1998* and A Barker, 'Evaluating individual consultation exercises', Improvement and Development Agency, 1999.

<sup>89</sup> Minutes of Evidence 21 February 2002, p.11

<sup>90</sup> Minutes of Evidence 21 February 2002, p.6

<sup>91</sup> Minutes of Evidence 21 February 2002, p.6

<sup>92</sup> Minutes of Evidence 21 February 2002, p.4

<sup>93</sup> Minutes of Evidence 21 February 2002, p.10

<sup>94</sup> A Hartley-Walder, *Consultation: Greater London Authority Audit 2000/2001*, District Audit, 2001, p.5

<sup>95</sup> Minutes of Evidence 21 February 2002, p.16

<sup>96</sup> Minutes of Evidence 21 February 2002, p.3

<sup>97</sup> Minutes of Evidence, 21 February 2002, p.7

<sup>98</sup> Minutes of Evidence, 21 February 2002, p.3

<sup>99</sup> Minutes of Evidence, 21 February 2002, p.3

<sup>100</sup> Minutes of Evidence, 21 February 2002, p.3

## 7. The way forward

*This chapter suggests that clear guidelines on timing, accessibility, feedback and the need for a framework for evaluation be brought together under a corporate consultation strategy. It also proposes changes to the organisational structure of the GLA to better integrate the organisation's approach to consulting Londoners.*

- 7.1 The strategic role of the GLA and the size of London present particular challenges. As we heard, it is easier to involve people in the development of direct services rather than broader strategies<sup>101</sup> and to engage smaller constituencies in local issues. However, neither this, nor his preference for an election every four years to guide his decision-making, excuses the Mayor from his commitment to encourage full participation.
- 7.2 Oral and written evidence to the Committee has made it abundantly plain that there is considerable goodwill within London communities, largely due to the efforts that GLA officers have made to involve Londoners. We have heard that Londoners welcomed the establishment of the GLA and are keen to provide their views on strategic issues if they are convinced that their engagement will make a difference to the final decision and their own quality of life.<sup>102</sup> We are very concerned that the Mayor's personal lack of commitment endangers this goodwill.
- 7.3 As we noted in the last chapter, if goodwill is lost, it will affect not just the Mayor but the GLA as a whole. If Londoners feel that the Mayor's consultation process is not genuine or that there is no point in providing their views, the legitimacy of the GLA itself will be undermined.

***"If the opportunity [is] missed to show people that they are valued and a valuable part of the process then goodwill will be lost."***

*CBI London, oral evidence to the Committee*

- 7.4 The Mayor is approximately halfway through the development of his statutory strategies; public consultation is currently occurring on the Air Quality and Biodiversity Strategies and will start this year on the London Plan and the Noise, Waste and Culture Strategies and his non-statutory Energy Strategy. In addition, the Mayor will be required to consult on any significant revisions to his current strategies and to consider consulting on any further non-statutory policies or strategies he develops. Therefore, to prevent further erosion of goodwill, significant changes need to be made now.

***"There needs to be a clear understanding of what is expected from citizen involvement"***

*London Civic Forum, oral evidence to the Committee*

- 7.5 First and foremost, the Mayor needs to fulfil his promise to listen to Londoners and give them an opportunity to comment on decisions affecting their city. At the same time, there must be a transparent, accountable and open process by which people can be assured that their views will be valued as part of the decision-making process. This will require improvements to the stakeholder engagement process, to the level of feedback the Mayor provides and to the avenues by which Londoners can provide their views. The London Assembly has

a crucial role to play in ensuring that these improvements are made and the Mayor fulfils his commitment to Londoners.

- 7.6 One way for the Mayor to demonstrate his commitment, and solve some of the problems arising from the lack of a coherent vision or policy across the GLA, would be the production of a comprehensive Consultation Strategy – which itself would need to be the subject of consultation! This Strategy should contain an accepted definition of what consultation means for the Mayor and the GLA and what it will entail for Londoners.
- 7.7 The District Audit Report Action Plan outlined a Consultation Strategy, consisting of a framework that:
- contains guidelines on good practice;
  - ensures efficient use of resources;
  - addresses issues of equality;
  - links consultation to decision-making; and
  - makes best use of working in co-operation with other functional bodies and other authorities.<sup>103</sup>
- 7.8 We support these principles and believe that a comprehensive consultation strategy will address the danger that consultation is marginalised within the organisation.
- 7.9 We note that the GLA has started work on a Best Value review of the Greater London Authority's consultation process. One of its key outcomes will be a comprehensive consultation strategy for the Core GLA which will be dovetailed with those of the Functional Bodies. Of course, this Strategy will also need to be the subject of consultation!

***“The [Best Value Review] should produce a comprehensive consultation strategy for the core GLA...and built-in ways to evaluate consultation and improve performance.”***

*GLA Listening to London Best Value review, December 2001*

- 7.10 It will also be essential that Functional Bodies, as well as all core GLA staff, are made aware of the Strategy, particularly the corporate definition of consultation and the value of feedback and consulting effectively. Without accepted definition and values, a consistent approach across the GLA will be impossible to achieve.

**We agree with the District Auditor's recommendation that the GLA produce a consultation strategy. This is being considered as part of the Best Value Review and should be implemented sooner rather than later, in order to have meaningful impact on the consultation processes relating to the remaining statutory strategies to be produced by the Mayor and any further initiatives.**

### **Recommendation 16**

We recommend that the proposed Consultation Strategy should clearly outline a definition of consultation and its value and how the Mayor and GLA officers propose to include Londoners' views as part of the decision-making process.

- 7.11 Development of a Consultation Strategy will assist in giving the Core GLA a clarity of purpose; this should also be reflected at an organisational level.
- 7.12 Responsibilities for consultation and engaging with Londoners are currently managed by two separate parts of the GLA. The External Relations Group which deals with ongoing consultation with external stakeholders, is based in the Policies and Partnerships Directorate. Specific consultation on policies and strategies, as well as information and marketing is based within the Communications Directorate.
- 7.13 In our view, this fragmented organisational structure is not leading to a strategic approach to consultation. The Mayor informed the Committee that he would be considering a proposal to combine these two areas to create a Directorate of External Affairs which would have responsibility for 'virtually all the relations between the GLA and the outside world'.<sup>104</sup>
- 7.14 Several witnesses suggested benefits from merging these two directorates. A representative from the Cabinet Office noted that, to be effective, consultation should be closely connected to the policy-making areas. A number of voluntary organisations also indicated that merging the two areas would add credibility to the consultation process and overcome the impression that consultation and policy-making are two separate activities. Others suggested that bringing the two directorates closer together would enable those involved in developing consultation processes to better exploit the knowledge of officers in the Stakeholders Policy team and assist with the evaluation of responses from consultees.<sup>105</sup> Such a merger would also go some way to addressing the District Auditor's concern that 'the GLA ensures a joined up approach that secures effective and efficient use of resources and that can identify both short term and medium term consultation priorities'.<sup>106</sup>

**The current arrangements, where responsibility for different types of engagement lie in the GLA separate but closely related departments, are not achieving a coherent or coordinated approach.**

### **Recommendation 17**

We recommend that the Mayor consider merging the External Relations Group and Consultation & Public Liaison Unit into a single body with a clear purpose and objectives in order to take the GLA's consultation work forward.

## Chapter endnotes

<sup>101</sup> Minutes of Evidence 4 December 2001 4.15 & 30 January 2002 3.15

<sup>102</sup> Minutes of Evidence 30 January 2002 3.15

<sup>103</sup> A Hartley-Walder, *Consultation: Greater London Authority Audit 2000/2001*, District Audit, 2001, p.AP4

<sup>104</sup> Minutes of Evidence 21 February 2002, p.12

<sup>105</sup> Minutes of Evidence 18 December 2001 3.15

<sup>106</sup> A Hartley-Walder, *Consultation: Greater London Authority Audit 2000/2001*, District Audit, 2001, p.9

## Annex A: Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations

### Recommendations for the Mayor

**We believe that properly conducted consultation leads to better policies and a better government for London. We are therefore very concerned that the Mayor appears to be retreating from his previous commitment to encourage greater involvement and participation in his strategies and policies (p.32).**

**The Mayor's apparent indifference to the work of his officers in seeking people's views and his characterisation of consultation as a largely statutory requirement, make it very difficult for the Committee to believe that the Mayor is genuinely considering Londoners' views before making his decisions. Left unchecked, this indifference will profoundly affect the extent to which Londoners believe that the GLA represents, and reflects, its views (p.32).**

- A. We urge the Mayor to honour his commitment to encouraging the fullest possible participation and involvement of Londoners in the policies and strategies for their city. He must do more than simply support the work of his officers; he must show genuine leadership and vision if the GLA is to be seen as an open and inclusive government for London. (Recommendation 15, p.32)
- B. Despite work already undertaken, it seems that awareness among Londoners of the role and activities of the GLA is pitifully low. The Mayor told us that he was taking steps to try to improve the situation. In order to galvanise these efforts, we recommend that the Mayor set a performance target for improving awareness of the GLA and its activities among Londoners, and in particular of opportunities to participate in policy discussions. This could be monitored through the GLA's Annual London Survey. (Recommendation 1, p.11)
- C. We recommend that the Mayor consider merging the External Relations Group and Consultation & Public Liaison Unit into a single body with a clear purpose and objectives in order to take the GLA's consultation work forward. (Recommendation 17, p.36)
- D. We welcome the Mayor's commitment to maintain a good relationship with London borough councils which is crucial to the successful implementation of his strategies. However, we recommend that the Mayor re-examine his wholesale dismissal of the ALG as a body to be consulted. In doing so, he runs the risk of duplicating coordinating work already being done by the ALG and ignoring a considerable pool of expertise and contacts within London. (Recommendation 9, p.20)

**We agree with the District Auditor's recommendation that the GLA produce a consultation strategy. This is being considered as part of the Best Value Review and should be implemented sooner rather than later, in order to have meaningful impact on the consultation processes relating to the remaining statutory strategies to be produced by the Mayor and any further initiatives. (p.35)**

- E. We recommend that the proposed Consultation Strategy should clearly outline a definition of consultation and its value and how the Mayor and GLA officers propose to include Londoners' views. (Recommendation 16, p.38)

- F. We recommend that the Mayor identify his objectives in relation to consultation and engagement. Only then will it be possible to assess properly the extent to which the GLA has been successful in achieving its aims. (Recommendation 13, p. 28)
- G. We recommend that feedback should be provided to all written consultation processes in the form of a summary of main points raised and reasons why they have or have not been accepted. This summary should be publicised, provided as an appendix to the final report and available in local libraries and on the GLA website (see Recommendation 3, p.13). (Recommendation 12, p.25)
- H. We recommend that, wherever possible, a standard consultation period should be set for draft strategies (including those which are not statutorily required). We suggest that the Mayor start by establishing a standard period of 12 weeks, whilst still allowing an appropriate amount of flexibility where necessary. (Recommendation 4, p.14)
- I. We note that there is a statutory notification period for People’s Question Time and State of London debate. We recommend that the Mayor establish guidelines to ensure that adequate notice is given for other public meetings. (Recommendation 5, p.14)
- J. The purpose and criteria for membership of stakeholder lists should be clarified by the Mayor. In addition, the process by which stakeholder lists are compiled should be made more systematic. The Mayor should also commit himself to evaluate and disseminate successful approaches to involving stakeholders in the decision-making process. (Recommendation 11, p.22)
- K. We recommend that all information provided by the GLA should clearly indicate how people can obtain copies in alternative formats; all consultation documents issued by the GLA family should be made available in alternative formats, in accordance with the proposed Accessibility Strategy; and registration forms for all GLA events should ask in what format participants want to receive information (Recommendation 6, p.15)
- L. If advertising and publications are to be more than Mayoral self-promotion, they must make clear their purpose and always indicate how Londoners can get in contact with the GLA to provide their views or obtain more information. Furthermore, they must make clear that the views of Londoners are not just welcome, but are actively sought and valued by the Mayor. (Recommendation 2, p.12)
- M. We support the examination of accessibility as part of the evaluation of suitable venues for GLA public meetings. We recommend that the timing of GLA events should be set so as to allow the fullest participation by Londoners. (Recommendation 7, p.15)
- N. We congratulate GLA officers on their work to date and support the development of innovative ways to obtain the views of those who are traditionally marginalised. We strongly support the commitment in the GLA’s Equalities Framework to ensure that the Mayor receives a wide cross-section of Londoners’ views. We recommend particular attention be given to continuing to seek input from young people and children in future strategies. (Recommendation 10, p.21)
- O. We recommend the establishment of a specific area on the GLA website which provides detailed information about the Mayor’s consultations, including timetable of forthcoming consultations and feedback. We also suggest that reference to the location of this information should be publicised in the Londonline magazine. We also note requests made by our witnesses for information about the GLA to be provided through a variety of

methods. In particular, we suggest that the Mayor examine ways of increasing the use of email to inform organisations and London borough councils and greater use of local papers to inform Londoners about GLA activities. (Recommendation 3, p.13)

- P. We note that establishing interactive online forums was one of the Mayor's election commitments. It recommends that the GLA explore options for creating these forums, starting by looking at local and central government examples. (Recommendation 8, p.19)

### **Recommendations for the London Assembly**

- Q. We also recommend that the London Assembly's Budget Committee should pursue more detailed expenditure figures on the GLA's consultation and monitor expenditure. (Recommendation 14, p.28)

## **Annex B: Evidentiary hearings and written evidence**

### **Evidentiary Hearing 1, 9 October 2001**

#### **Witnesses**

- Redmond O'Neill - Senior Policy Adviser, Transport and Stakeholder Relations, Greater London Authority (GLA)
- Clodagh O'Donnell, Manager, London Stakeholders, Policy and Partnerships Directorate, GLA
- Brigitte Gohdes, Head of Public Liaison and Consultation, Communications Directorate, GLA
- Aleyne Friesner, Head of Policy Support, Policy & Partnerships Directorate, GLA

### **Evidentiary Hearing 2, 4 December 2001**

#### **Witnesses**

- Martin Pilgrim - Chief Executive, Association of London Government
- Nick Johnson - Head of Programme Office, Association of London Government
- Robin Clarke - Senior Research Fellow, Public Involvement Team, Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR).

### **Evidentiary Hearing 3, 18 December 2001**

#### **Witnesses**

- Noel Vallely - Chair, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector Alliance
- Paula Jones - Director, Age Concern London.
- Dawn Stephenson - Director, Black Londoners Forum
- Simon Woolley - Chair, Black Londoners Forum
- Lucinda Turner - Senior Policy Adviser, CBI London
- Sean Baine - Chair, London Civic Forum
- Darryl Telles - Director, London Civic Forum
- Peter Eversden - Chair, London Forum
- Dr Peter Pickering - Assistant Secretary, London Forum
- Sally Copley - GLA Liaison Officer, London Voluntary Service Council

### **Evidentiary Hearing 4, 30 January 2002**

#### **Witnesses**

- Dr Colin Copus - Lecturer in Local Government Political Management, Institute of Local Government Studies (INLOGOV), School of Public Policy, University of Birmingham
- Mr Paul Greening, Head of Consultation Policy Team, Cabinet Office

### **Evidentiary Hearing 5, 21 February 2002**

#### **Witnesses**

- Ken Livingstone - Mayor of London

## **Written Evidence**

Written evidence was received from the following organisations and members of the public:

Age Concern London  
Barking & Dagenham Council  
Barnet Council  
Bexley Council  
Black Londoners Forum  
Mr A Bosi  
Bromley Council  
Camden Council  
Chinese Chamber of Commerce  
City Approach Residents Association  
Corporation of London  
CPRE London  
Gooch House Tenants' and Residents Association  
Government Office for London  
Greater London Authority (written on behalf of the Mayor)  
Mr D Hart  
Havering Council  
Hillingdon Council  
Hounslow Council  
Islington Council  
Professor G Jones, London School of Economics  
Kensington and Chelsea Council  
Lambeth Council  
London Civic Forum  
London Forum of Amenity and Civic Societies  
London Voluntary Service Council  
Ms J Matthews  
Newham Council  
NSPCC  
Mrs J O'Ware  
Office of Children's Rights Commissioner for London (OCRCL)  
Richmond Upon Thames Council  
Right to Ride Network (Croydon)  
Royal National Institute for Blind (RNIB)  
Royal National Institute for Deaf People  
Mr D Shepherd  
Professor J Stewart, University of Birmingham  
T & G (South East and East Anglia)  
Dr R Waller  
Wandsworth Council  
Weir Hall and District Ratepayers Association  
Westminster Council

## Annex C: Orders and translations

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If you, or someone you know, needs a copy of this report in large print or Braille, or a copy of the summary and main findings in another language, then please call us on 020 7983 4100 or email [assembly.translations@london.gov.uk](mailto:assembly.translations@london.gov.uk)

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## **Annex D: Scrutiny principles**

The powers of the London Assembly include power to investigate and report on decisions and actions of the Mayor, or on matters relating to the principal purposes of the Greater London Authority, and on any other matters which the Assembly considers to be of importance to Londoners. In the conduct of scrutiny and investigation the Assembly abides by a number of principles.

Scrutinies:

- aim to recommend action to achieve improvements;
- are conducted with objectivity and independence;
- examine all aspects of the Mayor's strategies;
- consult widely, having regard to issues of timeliness and cost;
- are conducted in a constructive and positive manner; and
- are conducted with an awareness of the need to spend taxpayers money wisely and well.

More information about the scrutiny work of the London Assembly, including published reports, details of committee meetings and contact information, can be found on the GLA website at [www.london.gov.uk/assembly](http://www.london.gov.uk/assembly)

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