

Caroline Pidgeon AM, Chair of the Transport Committee

London Assembly
City Hall
The Queen's Walk
London, SE1 2AA

Boris Johnson
Mayor of London

16 March 2012

Dear Mayor

Transport for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games

I am writing, on behalf of the Transport Committee, to set out our key concerns at this stage in relation to the transport arrangements for the Games. This letter follows-up our report, *Clearing the Hurdles* (April 2011) and subsequent work on 2012 transport. Since our report, we have received quarterly written update reports from London 2012 and TfL on progress with 2012 transport plans and held two public meetings on this issue with the Deputy Mayor for Transport, ODA, LOCOG and TfL on 15 November 2011 and 13 March 2012.

Over the last year we note that good progress has been made with many parts of the 2012 transport plans and we very much welcome the hard work that is going into making the Games a success. We still have a number of areas of concern at this stage including performance of the Jubilee line and road congestion during the Games as detailed below.

Performance of the Jubilee line

As you will be aware, during 2010/11, the Jubilee line was the worst performing line when the Tube network as a whole suffered a 20 per cent increase in delays.¹ Since then, London Underground performance has improved and TfL reports that the network as a whole is on track for its most reliable year since 1999.² However, on the Jubilee line delays caused by infrastructure failures have increased by 12 per cent between March to December 2011 compared with the same period in 2010.³ By contrast all the other London Underground lines recorded a drop in delays due to infrastructure failures over the same period.

We note the comments of the Deputy Mayor for Transport who told us the increase in infrastructure failures on the Jubilee line related to the upgrade work taking place.⁴ We also recognise that when TfL took over Tube Lines' contract there were significant issues with the Jubilee Line upgrade that TfL has worked hard to overcome. However, this is clearly not where we wanted the Jubilee line to be at this stage: a fully upgraded Jubilee line that could be tested ahead of the Games was the aim; this has not been achieved. To date the full service on the Jubilee line is not yet in place. From Sunday 25 March a further increase in frequency of service and extra trains will be operated in peak

¹ Transport Committee report, *State of the Underground*, September 2011

² TfL press release, PN 68, 2 March 2011

³ These include delays attributed to automatic train operating systems, fleet, signals, track and stations. In March to December 2010, 2.8 million lost customer hours on the Jubilee line were attributed to this cause compared to 3.1 million in March to December 2011

⁴ Transport Committee meeting on 13 March 2012

hours on the line.⁵ The introduction of this enhanced service only a few months before the Games leaves limited time for testing.

We have heard about contingency arrangements should the Jubilee line not operate as planned during the Games. The ODA, LOCOG and TfL have highlighted that they have developed alternative routes to venues such as the Olympic Park should there be disruption on any given route. TfL has reported that if there is disruption on the Jubilee line during the Games there are a range of measures which could be taken including: delaying people's departures from venues; providing additional bus services; and operating a shuttle service on the line.⁶ While these contingency arrangements are to be welcomed, it is clear they will not be able to meet the demand that could be met by a fully functioning Jubilee line.

In light of the problems on the Jubilee line, we ask that you publish details of the actions that you will be asking TfL to take to improve the performance of this line before the Games. TfL should also provide details of all the resources that will be deployed to improve the Jubilee line's performance and how the line will be fully tested before the Games.

Road congestion during the Games

Last year we identified the potential for the Olympic Route Network (ORN) to have a detrimental impact on all road users. Although the core ORN will only operate on one per cent of London's road network and the Games lanes will form just one-third of the ORN, it remains likely that there will be road congestion during the Games. TfL has rejected the suggestion that there could be a 33 per cent increase in congestion during the Games but information on the *GetAheadoftheGames* website shows the potential for significant road congestion in certain areas of London on certain days.

We note there could be various road congestion hotspots during the Games. These may include the Mall where LOCOG's plans for closure are still subject to discussion⁷, and the Blackwall Tunnel, which the ODA told us would need careful management.⁸ More road congestion than forecast could have a detrimental impact on air quality in London. TfL's recent report on the potential impact of the ORN on air quality suggested that, at as of early 2012, "London is forecast to meet the limit values for PM₁₀ [particulate matter], although a small number of areas have been identified as potentially at risk... For NO₂, however, many areas of London still exceed the relevant limit values."⁹ The report suggested that the ORN could result in some small increases in PM₁₀ and NO₂ concentrations in a number of locations but these are not considered likely to give rise to material changes in relation to compliance with the relevant air quality limit values.¹⁰ However, the Clean Air in London Campaign has argued that the air quality laws could still be breached if some areas of the capital have increased pollution during the Games.¹¹

Every effort should, therefore, be made to reduce road congestion. It is important that the ORN and Games lanes are operated flexibly to ensure London keeps moving. We consider that emergency vehicles should have access to the Games lanes and that the public should also be able to use the Games lanes whenever possible. At the same time, it is important that the Games family uses public transport instead of the Games lanes whenever possible and the Games family only comprises those people who absolutely need access to the Games lanes. Motorists should also receive sufficient information about the ORN to ensure they are familiar with its requirements. We have highlighted

⁵ Agenda item 4 for TfL Board meeting 15 March 2012, Commissioner's report, p1

⁶ Transport Committee meeting on 13 March 2012

⁷ London Assembly plenary meeting, 7 March 2012

⁸ Transcript of Transport Committee meeting on 15 November 2011, p28

⁹ TfL, The emissions and air quality impacts of the 2012 ORN and related traffic management arrangements, 5 March 2012, p3

¹⁰ TfL, The emissions and air quality impacts of the 2012 ORN and related traffic management arrangements, 5 March 2012, p29

¹¹ BBC website 5 March 2012 and Clean Air Campaign written submission, 26 February 2012

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the need to provide on-street signage for the ORN as well as the Games lanes to assist motorists.¹² TfL has reported that it is currently reviewing the feasibility of further general signage on the ORN.¹³

Alongside these broad concerns about road congestion, it is also clear that there remain local road issues to resolve with individual London Boroughs. London Councils has highlighted problems with TfL's plans for enforcement of the ORN given the apparent need to provide for up to 400 illegally parked vehicles being towed away per day. London Boroughs may not have sufficient space in their vehicle pounds to accommodate these vehicles. TfL told us it is now working through the arrangements for enforcement of the ORN. It also reported that there remain a small number of outstanding issues about the operation of the ORN to resolve with some boroughs but it is confident these issues will be resolved in the near future.¹⁴

On the local area traffic management and parking plans around venues, London Councils suggests that there are unanswered questions about how the vehicle access checkpoints will work. It also argues that the proposed virtual vehicle permit system could be costly and ineffective.¹⁵ We have received some information about the vehicle permit system which does imply it could be very complicated.¹⁶ In the past we also expressed our concern about the delays in publishing the local area traffic management and parking plans for consultation. The publication of the proposals just a few months before the Games has limited the scope for local residents and businesses to contribute to the development of effective arrangements.¹⁷

In light of our concerns about road congestion, we want to see you make every effort to ensure that the ORN is open for use by emergency vehicles and the public, and that the Games family is encouraged to use public transport whenever possible. We also want TfL to ensure there is specific on-street signage for the ORN and not just the Games lanes to assist motorists. We, therefore, ask that TfL report back to the Assembly on the signage that will be installed following its review. In relation to local road issues, we call on TfL and LOCOG to work more closely with London Boroughs to resolve the outstanding concerns about the ORN, including in relation to enforcement, and about the operation of local areas traffic management and parking plans.

We have also identified some other 2012 transport issues which are summarised below. Many of these issues draw on comments received from other organisations and we enclose details of their recent correspondence with this letter. We ask that the ODA, LOCOG and TfL consider these issues as they deliver the 2012 transport plans.

- Small businesses may still have concerns about the impact of the Games on their transport requirements. We note that work is taking place to assist businesses in relation to receiving and making deliveries at different times of the day. However, London Councils suggests that many small businesses may struggle to receive deliveries at night because of a lack of storage and the cost of employing staff.¹⁸
- Further actions may be needed to ensure more spectators walk and cycle during the Games. The London Cycling Campaign has commented on the potential impact of the closure of the towpath along the River Lea to the west of the Olympic Park from May until September. It argues that the closure of this route which was one of the designated, and upgraded, walking and cycling routes to the Games (marked on the new 2012 cycle route map) along with the closure of the popular Greenway route from Wick Lane in May could mean walkers and cyclists could be forced to use busy roads including Bow roundabout. This is a cause of concern given the outstanding issues about cyclists' safety at this junction and other major junctions across London although we note

¹² London Councils written submission 20 February 2012

¹³ London 2012 and TfL addendum, 1 March 2012, p2

¹⁴ Transport Committee meeting on 13 March 2012

¹⁵ London Councils written submission, 20 February 2012

¹⁶ Transport Committee meeting on 13 March 2012

¹⁷ Transport Committee meeting on 15 November 2011

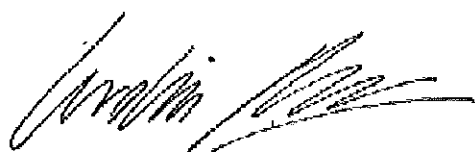
¹⁸ London Councils written submission 20 February 2012

that, as the Deputy Mayor for Transport told us, some improvements to Bow roundabout are due to be made before the Games.¹⁹ Sustrans has also suggested that the 2012 Active Travel Programme could be undermined by a lack of investment, advertising and awareness. It has suggested that details of this programme should be sent to spectators with their tickets to increase awareness.²⁰

- Londoners with reduced mobility not going to the Games may experience difficulties in making trips this summer. Transport for All suggests that Capital Call has said that it cannot guarantee them taxi trips during the Games and that there is limited 2012 travel advice for them online and at bus and train stations to help them plan trips on public transport.²¹

We trust the issues raised in this letter and in the organisations' correspondence will be taken into account as transport arrangements for the Games are finalised over the next few months. We look forward to receiving your response.

Yours sincerely



Caroline Pidgeon AM

Chair of the Transport Committee

Cc: Isabel Dedring, Deputy Mayor for Transport; Mark Evers, Director, Games Transport, TfL; Hugh Sumner, Director of Transport, ODA; and Richard George, Director of Transport, LOCOG

Enc.

¹⁹ Transport Committee meeting on 13 March 2012

²⁰ Sustrans written submission, February 2012

²¹ Transport for All written submission, 1 March 2012