

MAYOR OF LONDON

Andrew Boff AM

Chair of the London Assembly

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Date: 23 June 2021

Dear Andrew,

London Assembly (Plenary) Meeting (4 March 2021) – Motions

Thank you for the letter from your predecessor of 5 March about the motions agreed at the London Assembly (Plenary) meeting on 4 March. I apologise for the delay in responding. My reply to each motion is set out below.

Motion 4 – Cycleway Renaming

Transport for London's (TfL) current strategy for signing London's cycling network is to use the Cycleways branding. This approach supersedes the Quietways and Superhighways branding because extensive customer research highlighted that the use of multiple brands could be confusing and misleading for existing and potential users.

Existing and new cycle routes across London are gradually being combined into a single unified Cycleways network, comprised of numbered "Cycleway routes" and unnumbered "Cycleway links". None of these routes have a name.

Previous customer research has provided compelling evidence that a simple numbering system that avoids codes or new terminology works best for existing and potential users.

Motion 5 – Pedestrian Crossings

I am absolutely determined to do everything I can to eradicate all deaths and serious injuries on London's streets. I, therefore, welcome this motion and agree that it is unacceptable that there are still such a high number of junctions that are so difficult to cross. Redesigning streets to enable more people to walk is a central tool for the green and fair recovery that London needs.

TfL works both on the Transport for London Road Network (TLRN) and with boroughs to reduce road danger and make streets easier to cross. 77 pedestrian crossings were created or improved through TfL's local schemes programme between 2016 and 2020. A further 12 crossings were delivered in the financial year 2020/21. The boroughs, working with TfL, upgraded 608 junctions and built 616 new signalised crossings between 2016 and 2020. Many more new crossings have been built for both pedestrians and cyclists through our Cycleways programme.

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In 2021/22, subject to funding, TfL plans to deliver or start construction on new crossings at Battersea Bridge, London Road Roundabout in Richmond, Blackheath Hill, Clapham Common south side, Camden Road, Streatham Hill, Streatham High Road, and Brownhill Road/Torridon Road in Lewisham.

TfL is also continually improving existing crossings to benefit people walking, reviewing the timings of over 5,000 sets of lights in the last three years. In 2018, TfL collaborated with Living Streets on a study that showed that pedestrian experience has improved at locations where TfL had reviewed the timings.

Because many pedestrian collisions also occur away from junctions, our wider Vision Zero work also focuses on reducing speeds, reducing road danger at source through measures such as our Direct Vision Standard vehicle safety scheme and Intelligent Speed Assistance technology on buses, and creating more pedestrian-friendly environments.

Last year we completed the rollout of 20mph limits on the TLRN in central London. During the pandemic, a further 15km of TfL roads have had speed limits reduced to 20mph, with 30km more planned for 2021/22. Lower speeds are proven to reduce both the likelihood and severity of collisions.

My commitment to Vision Zero means that we will continue to accelerate our efforts to eradicate road danger. As per this motion, I have asked TfL to commence a review of junctions where no priority is given to people walking, or where there is no signal control for pedestrians, with a view to rebalancing our streets towards people, not traffic.

Motion 6 – COVID-19 Impact on People with Disabilities

I welcome the Assembly's motion on the impact of COVID-19 on disabled people. The impact of COVID-19 on this community has been shocking. I commissioned a rapid review of the inequalities in relation to COVID-19 in London across groups with protected characteristics. The report by the University of Manchester is available on the [website](#). It points to issues surrounding the risk of infection, access to health and care services, employment and education, discrimination and loneliness and mental health.

I convened two roundtables with charities representing clinically vulnerable groups in London in January and February 2021. This included charities representing disabled Londoners and those with learning disabilities. The first, which I attended, focussed on wider financial support and access to essential supplies, the second, chaired by my Health Advisor, Dr Tom Coffey, was run jointly with the NHS (Sir David Sloman and Joint Chief Nurse, Martin Machray) and focussed on access to NHS services and the rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine. This provided the charities with the opportunities to raise their concerns directly with NHS leaders in London. Points raised with the NHS included accessibility of information around the vaccine, especially for those with learning disabilities, access for carers and personal assistants, and challenges around 'digital first'.

Georgia Gould (Chair of London Councils) and I, as co-chairs of the London Recovery Board, are fully committed to ensuring that London builds back better and fairer and that London's recovery is inclusive of all our diverse communities, including deaf and disabled people. Recognising and addressing structural inequalities is a cross-cutting principle of all our recovery work and action will be overseen by the Recovery Board, with expertise and advice provided through the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Group.

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In addition, the London Health Board (LHB) has established the Health Equity Group (HEG), jointly chaired by Professor Kevin Fenton, Regional Director Public Health England (PHE) London and Will Tuckley, Chief Executive of Tower Hamlets council. Sir David Sloman is represented on the HEG by Dominic Dodd, a member of his Executive Team. To date, HEG's work has been focussed on ensuring the wide inequalities in health exposed during the first wave of the pandemic were not repeated in the second wave, working with partners to support their work mitigating risks. PHE's London team is developing plans for a strategic overview including literature review, data review (including deaths), service delivery review in order to identify gaps and needs across London's diverse communities. Work is underway to align the HEG's role with the London recovery cross-cutting principles and missions. The LHB receives regular updates on the work of the HEG. I will ensure that the disproportionate impact of COVID on Londoners with learning disabilities is raised at the LHB.

Indiscriminate use of 'do not resuscitate' (DNR) orders without informed consent is deeply shocking and has no place in our health and care system or wider society. The Care Quality Commission has completed its review of the blanket use of DNR and published the findings and recommendations on its [website](#). In addition, I understand that NHS England commissioned the University of Bristol to look at deaths of people with learning disabilities between March and June 2020 to learn lessons and identify what changes were needed. In response, they have committed to work with partners across the NHS to make sure that people with a learning disability who get coronavirus receive better treatment and care. Specific actions for general practice and health and care organisations/Integrated Care Partnerships have been identified and guidance and resources disseminated across the system. Further information is available on their [website](#).

Motion 2 – London Boundary Charge

I am grateful to the Assembly for its support in calling on the Transport Secretary to let London retain the Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) raised in the city to fund its transport network. As you know, London is far more reliant on fares revenue for day-to-day transport operations than most other global cities. Before COVID-19, 72 per cent of TfL's income came from fares, with the maintenance of the TLRN funded from this TfL income.

This meant that bizarrely, Londoners using public transport have been cross-subsidising maintenance of roads. Londoners pay £500m worth of VED every year, which is then spent on maintaining roads outside the capital. The Government must allow London to retain its share of VED to support the capital's transport system properly like other global cities. If the Government is not prepared to play fair, then other options may need to be considered. TfL is looking into the feasibility of a Greater London Boundary Charge for non-Londoners, which could reduce traffic and emissions as well as raise revenues that could be reinvested in London's transport network. No decision has been taken about whether to proceed with such a proposal – the feasibility study is at this stage simply an exploratory exercise.

Motion 3 – KPMG Report

As I set out in my letter to the Budget and Performance Committee of 24 February, I have been clear with the Department for Transport, who commissioned this £1.2m, taxpayer-funded report, that it should be published after TfL has had the opportunity to fact-check it. I share the Assembly's disappointment that this has not happened. As the Assembly has acknowledged in agreeing this motion, publication of the report would reassure Londoners that vital long-term funding decisions are informed by accurate information.

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Motion 7 – Permitted Development Rights

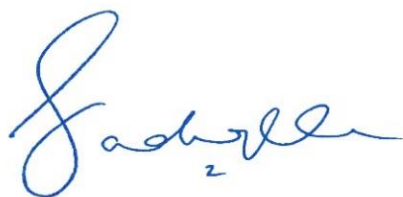
I fully support this London Assembly motion. In the absence of mitigation measures, the new permitted development rights to allow the conversion of any shop, restaurant, office, light industrial premises, nursery, medical centre, or indoor sports centre to residential use would be highly damaging for London. Whilst the Government made some welcome amendments to the original proposals in response to our feedback, I remain concerned that the rights will still have a serious negative effect on high streets, town centres and London's Central Activities Zone, resulting in the eviction of high street businesses and disruption to thousands of jobs. I am also concerned that the new rights will not provide genuinely affordable homes in London, and that the homes delivered would be poor-quality and fail to provide contributions toward essential infrastructure that growing communities need.

We have seen how communities have come to rely on their local high streets during the COVID-19 pandemic. We know that the recovery must be a green recovery and that new ways of working are beginning to emerge, which will require commercial space to be available in order to be reused creatively.

The new permitted development rights, however, could undermine all of this at the worst possible time, forcing people to use their cars more as local shops and childcare disappear; driving up the rents of creative businesses and small enterprises as they seek to invest in future growth; fragmenting high streets with sterile, in-active frontages, just as local shops and restaurants try to get back on their feet; and destabilising the recovery of central London. To mitigate some of the impacts of the new rights, I am working with London Councils and local planning authorities to introduce targeted Article 4 Directions to remove the new permitted development rights in appropriate circumstances.

We all want to increase the supply of homes and recognise that high streets, town centres and city centres have a significant role to play and I will continue to work with Government, local authorities and other partners to help them adapt and evolve in response to the challenges and opportunities that they face.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sadiq Khan', with a small '2' written below the name.

Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London