

# MAYOR OF LONDON

**Roger Evans AM**  
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**Our ref:** MGLA181214-4917

**Date:** 18 MAR 2015

Dear Roger

## **London Assembly (Plenary) meeting 9 December 2014 – Motions**

Thank you for your letter of 12 December 2014. I apologise for the delay in responding to you, however I wanted to respond in full to each of your points:

### **Motion 1**

I share the Assembly's enthusiasm for the acceptance of Oyster pay as you go and contactless payments for passengers travelling from all London's airport.

I have been campaigning for Oyster to be extended to Gatwick for years. After extensive lobbying, the Department for Transport (DfT) agreed in 2013 that Oyster and contactless payments should be extended to Gatwick and five other stations between Coulsdon South and the airport. Transport for London (TfL) has worked hard to overcome numerous technical and commercial obstacles to make this happen. It is now for DfT to endorse TfL's approach and give the final go ahead.

I would be happy for TfL to facilitate the acceptance of Oyster and contactless payment for services to Luton, Stansted and Southend, it is very clearly up to the DfT to make this happen as part of its new franchises. My officers continue to press DfT very hard to finalise this. I would welcome the Assembly's support in pressing the case.

### **Motion 2**

As you know, I am fully supportive of the Assembly's motion about the four-tracking of the West Anglia Main Line, and indeed this is something I have raised repeatedly with Network Rail and the DfT at the most senior level. Consequently, I was very pleased to be able to announce with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on Friday 20 February that we are setting up a West Anglia task force to push forward this scheme.

As you know, the Upper Lee Valley is one of the biggest Opportunity Areas in London with potential for over 25,000 new homes and 9,000 new jobs in the catchment area of the stations alone. London is growing faster than anybody predicted and new housing is needed in all available parts of the city to give Londoners affordable homes and a decent quality of life, while enhancing London's powerhouse economy and status as a global city.

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The West Anglia Main Line capacity scheme will unlock around 9,000 much-needed homes in the Upper Lee Valley. The scheme, which will be completed in March 2018, will see the introduction of a third track and enable a four trains-per-hour (tph) service to call at stations between Stratford and Angel Road.

While this is, of course, an essential first step, housing growth could more than double with a number of key interventions, of which four-tracking between Coppermill Junction and Broxbourne Junction is by far the most important.

Four-tracking at this location would enable a metro service of at least eight tph to operate, the minimum train frequency required to realise this level of housing growth, along with up to 15,000 additional jobs.

The London Stansted Cambridge Consortium, London First, Stansted Airport and the London Stansted Cambridge All Party Parliamentary Group are all in agreement with the Greater London Authority that a faster and more reliable train service to Stansted Airport and Cambridge, and increased train frequencies to towns inside and outside London will support economic growth in the whole region. Furthermore, as you rightly point out, the infrastructure is an essential precursor to the Crossrail 2 regional option.

Work is ongoing with partners across the region, including TfL, to develop a business case which captures all potential for economic growth and make the case to bring forward early investment in the line. A key part of this work is to identify opportunities to part-fund the line through value uplift capture. Officers are working with Network Rail and the DfT to progress the business case and this work will help inform Network Rail's final Anglia Route Study, due to be published in summer 2015.

However, the work will not stop there, and the case will continue to be made until we obtain a positive outcome. I regularly make the case for four-tracking to the Chancellor, DfT and Network Rail. Last autumn, I wrote to the Chancellor to emphasise the importance of starting development works now to implement four-tracking on this route in Network Rail's Control Period 6 (2019-24) and I am calling for Government's support to implement enabling works such as level crossing closures, land acquisition and new bay platforms at Stratford in Control Period 5 (2014-19).

## **Motion 3**

I share your concerns over the prospect of sharp rent increases for New Era tenants, and my Deputy Mayor for Housing and Land, Richard Blakeway, has been working hard in partnership with the London Borough of Hackney and others to find a solution. The owners have agreed to sell the New Era Estate to an affordable housing landlord, which has in turn announced a moratorium on any rent increases until 2016. I am delighted that we have been able to achieve the best solution possible for London.

I have put in place a wide range of ambitious policies to improve the private rented sector. This includes setting the first professional standards for landlords and agents to meet, and promoting improved tenancy arrangements.

Across London as a whole, private rents have risen more slowly than general price inflation in recent years. However, many people still find it very difficult to afford housing in London, so I have funded the delivery of over 80,000 affordable homes for Londoners on low and middle income since 2008, and I will have delivered 100,000 by the end of my second term. In the long term the

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best solution to high housing costs is to increase housing supply, and to that end I have announced detailed plans to double the number of houses built in London each year.

## **Motion 4**

You have detailed the Assembly's belief that improving enforcement of the National Minimum Wage should be made a key priority of the Government and that I should champion a means by which enforcement can be improved in London.

I support the Assembly to call on Government to improve enforcement of the National Minimum Wage. However, whilst it is a nationally set rate, its enforcement is a matter for Government to resolve. I am committed to the promotion of the London Living Wage (LLW) to businesses in the capital and continue to work towards making this the norm by 2020.

The GLA is working closely with the Living Wage Foundation to engage and increase the number of employers in the capital to pay the rate, which has almost reached 500. The Living Wage Foundation frequently monitors employers with LLW accreditation or who are working towards accreditation to ensure that they are complying with living wage pay commitments and/or that plans are in place for respective employers to move towards paying the living wage rate to all staff.

The GLA Group is leading by example and is committed to paying the LLW to all staff members including contracted staff. MOPAC is accredited with the Living Wage Foundation and their agreement covers the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS). The MPS is currently undergoing phased implementation of the Living Wage. This means all staff directly employed by the MPS receive the Living Wage and they are rolling it out across contracts as they come up for renewal. MPS currently expects all contracts to be fully compliant with the Living Wage by January 2016.

The GLA Group's Responsible Procurement Policy sets out the minimum standards for payment and monitoring of the LLW including the requirement for contractors to retain sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the rate is being paid for Audit and Inspection. Therefore, I am confident that the GLA Group is compliant with the living wage accreditation requirements.

## **Motion 5**

I carefully considered whether to respond to the Government's consultation paper on planning and travellers.

My London Plan recognises that meeting the special housing needs of travellers is a strategic issue and makes clear that it is most effectively addressed by boroughs in light of their local circumstances, so it is not appropriate for me to intervene in what is essentially a local matter - that is properly for the boroughs. Therefore, I did not respond to the consultation paper and it would not be appropriate for me to engage in correspondence on it.

## **Motion 6**

I am pleased that Assembly Members recognise the important role that London & Partners plays in the international promotion of the city, a key priority in my Economic Development Strategy, and I welcome your interest in its performance.

London & Partners was established in 2011 to bring together previously separate agencies to promote London in a more efficient and effective way under a single brand. It counts the launch of the Dot London domain, high-profile marketing campaigns around the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, and major business conferences choosing to locate in London, among its many

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notable successes. Building on an excellent track record of creating jobs and growth in London, it is on course to deliver 14,000 new jobs and £850m of Gross Value Added between 2014 and 2017. London & Partners was set up as a commercial enterprise to provide it with the institutional agility to work effectively alongside businesses, and to secure greater engagement and leverage from the private sector. This year, London & Partners expects to raise approximately £6m from non-GLA sources. This is in contrast to other bodies with a similar remit, such as Visit Britain and UKTI, which rely far more heavily on public funds.

As such, its arrangements are unique. It is bound by commercial sensitivities in a way that public bodies are not, which in turn has implications for the form of scrutiny and the level of transparency to which it is subject. Its work is overseen by its Board, to which I appoint the Chairman and a non-executive director. GLA officers also carefully track its work throughout the year against a number of key performance indicators, and GLA grant funding cannot be released until I have approved its annual business plan.

I made it clear at the Assembly's GLA Oversight Committee on 20 November 2014 that I am open to ensuring as much transparency as possible within the bounds of London & Partners' institutional remit. Consideration is currently being given to the possibility of London & Partners publishing further details in relation to:

- Board decision-making;
- Business planning and key performance indicator data; and
- Senior staff remuneration and declarations of gifts and hospitality.

Any mutually agreed changes in approach would be formalised through the GLA's grant agreement with London & Partners. The agreement is due to be refreshed in time for the start of the next financial year on 1 April 2015.

Yours ever,



**Boris Johnson**  
Mayor of London