

**Dee Doocey AM**

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

**Date:**

**28 JUL 2010**

Dear Dee

**Re: The London Assembly response to the consultation on the Public Draft Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS)**

Thank you for the response to my draft MTS, which was submitted by the Transport Committee on behalf of the London Assembly. This response was from your predecessor and I am now writing to you as Assembly Chair. My Transport Strategy was published on 10 May, at the same time as the Local Implementation Plans (LIP) guidance for the London boroughs.

As you know, following the Assembly and Functional Bodies consultation in summer 2009, I produced a Statement to the Assembly on its response to the MTS Statement of Intent (dated 12 October 2009). This is as required by section 42A of the Greater London Authority Act 1999. No such requirement applies following the public and stakeholder consultation. However, I am writing as a matter of courtesy to the Assembly, and I hope you find it useful.

May I also take this opportunity to refer you to Transport for London's Report to the Mayor, which considers the responses received from all stakeholders (including the Assembly), members of the public, businesses and other organisations, and makes recommendations for changes to the Public Draft MTS, which I have accepted for inclusion in the published Strategy.

Below I have set out your comments in bold, followed by my response to them.

***Unresolved challenges***

**Given that the Mayor is not prepared to consider road user charging, MTS needs to set out what alternatives are proposed to meet the objectives set out for containing congestion and emissions. The difficult decisions needed to deal with these problems should not be put off for the future. There needs to be a full and robust debate about all of the available options.**

First, road user charging remains within the Strategy (Proposal 130) as one of many possible options but I have clarified in Section 5.27.6, and in my Foreword that any consideration of it is likely to be in the longer term, though I do not rule out the possibility of tolling on particular routes to pay for river crossings. As I said in my Statement to the Assembly back in October, the precise details of any scheme would be subject to further statutory consultation.

I agree that we need to have at our disposal a number of options for dealing with the challenges of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and congestion and for this reason the MTS contains a range of measures to address these. My 20-year Strategy is appropriately not prescriptive about exactly how each measure might be applied.

With regard to CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, I have set out a package of measures based on three core approaches: improving operational efficiency, supporting the use of low carbon vehicles, and encouraging carbon efficient travel behaviour. I consider that the MTS, together with further Government action, will get very close to making the required contribution to achieve my CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reduction target. Since the publication of the Public Draft MTS, I have consulted with the Assembly and Functional Bodies on my draft Climate Change Mitigation and Energy Strategy (CCMES). As stated in the draft CCMES, progress in reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions will be monitored on an annual basis and action taken as required to ensure we remain on course to meet my challenging target. Figure 61 in the MTS provides mid-range estimates of the impact of these policies. This is an area in which both policy and technology are advancing rapidly and the effectiveness of each over the life of the Strategy may vary. To this end, I acknowledge in my proposal 109 that I will keep road user charging and/or demand management measures under review.

I have also set out my commitment to smoothing traffic flow and my Strategy sets out measures to enhance public transport capacity, better manage the road network and increase cycling and walking. These measures will have benefits both in smoothing traffic flow and reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. I would also like to note that my ambition to see a much greater uptake of electric vehicles in London, supported by my plans to put in place a suitable charging infrastructure, will bring air quality as well as CO<sub>2</sub> benefits.

In response to comments about the need to show how congestion (average vehicle delay) might be mitigated, a new diagram (Figure 42) has been added. Additionally, further text has been included in Section 5.6.3 to describe the six core components of my Smoothing Traffic Flow agenda, and Section 5.6.9 describes the possible outcomes of the smoother traffic flow agenda.

**In relation to CO<sub>2</sub>, the Mayor has made the point that rather than make required reductions from ground-based transport, additional cuts could be made in other sectors – for example, domestic property. If it will not be possible to achieve the scale of cuts from ground-based transport previously hoped for, the Mayor should set out how other sectors will bridge the gap.**

Updated analysis published in my draft CCMES is reflected in the final MTS. The draft CCMES maintains the 60% emissions reduction target, but the relative contribution expected from the three emissions sectors of 'homes', 'workplaces' and 'transport' has changed. The draft CCMES identifies greater potential to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the 'homes' sector and therefore the relative contribution required from transport and workplaces reduce accordingly. Following the completion of the Assembly and Functional Bodies consultation, I intend to publish a further draft of my CCMES for public consultation in the summer.

## *Interim measures of success*

**The Committee is of the view that the Mayor should establish interim targets for mode share or develop an alternative way of showing the trajectory towards 2031 levels of public transport usage, walking and cycling. This would enable progress to be measured along the way and further action to be taken if progress not sufficient to meet long-term goals. The Strategy should also set out the contribution to modal shift of its major schemes, which would help demonstrate likelihood that the Mayor will achieve his goals.**

My Strategy aims to deliver an increase in cycling mode share by 400% on 2000 levels to 5%, and walking to 25% by 2031 as shown in Figure 2 of the MTS. The measures set out in the Strategy provide the means to achieve this, but it is not prescriptive about exactly how and when these will be implemented across London, consequently it is not appropriate to set out interim targets. Measures will be applied as appropriate at particular times and locations, and with regard to technological and policy development, and with the input of boroughs and other stakeholders. The ability to be flexible and responsive to changing circumstances is vital. Policy 11 sets out my commitment here, and notes that there is a *range* of approaches – investment in infrastructure, Smarter Travel, demand management measures – that I can use to achieve my overall objectives, including the mode share target. TfL, through the Travel in London Report, will be monitoring increased mode share by cycle and walk, and this monitoring will help indicate how much more needs to be done and where.

This is not to say we will not adopt targets, or encourage boroughs or other partners to do so, for specific schemes and initiatives as the Strategy is implemented over time.

Similarly, it is not appropriate at this stage to set out the specific contributions that major schemes would make to modal shift. None of the major schemes (funded and as yet unfunded) would apply 'in a vacuum', and would of course be implemented in the context of a wide range of other factors – such as the economic conditions of the time – which would have a bearing on the contributions of a particular scheme, as would how the scheme interacts with other measures. Add to this the need to consider the specific operating details of new schemes, and the fact that some schemes are not yet at development stage – and we can see that significant uncertainty exists. Given this picture, I believe it is quite right for me to set these goals, but not appropriate to be too prescriptive about how exactly they will be achieved.

That said, we will continue to provide information about the potential impacts of specific schemes in detail via channels other than my Strategy, as we have for Crossrail, for example. These specific scheme details will be available as options are developed, and will be in greater depth than a document such as the MTS could allow.

## *Progression of long-term projects*

**Experience has shown that new infrastructure investment takes many years of hard work and campaigning to bring about. The final Strategy should include more information about next steps to progressing feasibility and design work as well as securing funding for the proposed schemes.**

Securing the funding necessary for the improvements set out in my Strategy, especially the investment required for the Tube upgrade and for Crossrail, is critical to meeting the challenges of both a growing London and the performance of the UK economy as a whole. I agree that this is challenging, particularly in the current economic climate, and for this reason have set out in my Strategy my commitment to making the case to Government for this investment and also to explore innovative ways of financing investment and services (Policy 30 and 31). The Implementation Plan sets out the full list of schemes, including new infrastructure proposals, and clearly indicates which are funded and unfunded, and potential timescales for their completion. This allows me to set out the ambitious schemes required to achieve the Strategy's goal while also indicating where further work, including the securing of funding, is required.

In response to submissions received during the consultation, I have also added a new Policy (33) which sets out my commitment to secure the investment needed to deliver the transformation of the Tube. As you know, just before launching my Strategy, TfL announced that it had finalised an agreement to buy Tube Lines, which under the PPP is responsible for the upgrade and maintenance of the Jubilee, Piccadilly and Northern Lines. While the details are still being worked out, I am very pleased with this outcome as it gives me much greater control over how the upgrades are delivered, and means a better deal for Londoners in terms of a less disruptive programme, and presents opportunities for achieving cost savings. Since there is now no funding gap, there will also be no need to seek additional funding from the Government or fare payers for the upgrade.

However, I do not think it is appropriate to include in my Strategy detailed information about how other proposed schemes will be progressed. As I have indicated, it is intended as a broad, outcome-focused Strategy for the next 20 years and such information would make the Strategy very unwieldy. Detailed information on individual schemes will be published as scheme options are developed, and TfL's annual Business Plan will set out information and options with regard to funding over the short to medium term.

I would also like to remind you that much of the detail about local schemes and measures will be set out in the Local Implementation Plans developed by individual boroughs. I have made it a priority to allow boroughs more say in how transport is delivered locally. I am pleased to say that the revised LIPs process gives boroughs greater flexibility with regard to how they deliver the five goals of the Strategy *and* their own local priorities, as well as confirmed funding levels for the next three years. In addition to the LIPs process, TfL is working with the boroughs and other partners to produce Sub-regional Transport Plans, which will provide a framework between the MTS and LIPs and a means to address issues that cross-administrative boundaries. These will be live documents that influence and respond to LIPs and provide more detail of the schemes and measures required to meet the MTS goals at a sub-regional level.

**A project as potentially important as Thames Estuary Airport needs to be discussed, at least, in principle to enable the wide range of views on its desirability and feasibility to be aired.**

As you are aware, the decision on the expansion or construction of new airports, outside of London, but which serve London and the South East, is not within my control. Such decisions would rest with the Government. Also, as you will be aware, the London Plan (which contains my proposed Policy 6.6 with regard to aviation) will be subject to an Examination in Public over the summer, and it is not therefore appropriate for me to go into further detail on this point at this time.

Similarly, because I need to have regard to the MTS being consistent with the London Plan, its 'aviation' section is limited to capacity and surface access issues, and directs readers to the draft replacement London Plan for planning matters. A number of respondents commented on this and we have added text in MTS to clarify the scope of MTS in this regard.

Nevertheless, as I indicate in my Strategy, the provision of adequate airport capacity in the South East is critical to London's economic position in the world and it is therefore right that I consider the options for maintaining this. These options are by no means limited to new airport capacity and my Strategy identifies the potential to shift some short-haul journeys from air to rail wherever possible. Within the Strategy, I state my support for the proposed High Speed 2 rail link and seek to maximise the potential of High Speed 1 as well as ensuring that the use of capacity from other existing infrastructure is optimised.

Moreover, it is vital to consider the adverse impacts that air travel can have on the quality of life of Londoners, which could be exacerbated by increased capacity if this is not carefully managed. Within the Strategy I set out measures to improve air quality and reduce the noise impacts of transport, including aviation.

### ***Implementing the Mayor's Transport Strategy***

**MTS should address the challenges of providing a world-class transport system in the capital. In the reality of restricted resources - principally funding and road space - MTS should set out the Mayor's thinking in regard to difficult decisions he and his successors will face:**

- **Beyond 2017/18, the relative priority of the stalled station modernisation and step-free access on tubes, compared to schemes to provide capacity**
- **The Mayor's strategy for future fares decisions - i.e. the basis on which fares will be set in the future**
- **The balance between improving the flow of cars and delivery vehicles and the movement and safety of bus passengers and pedestrians**
- **When, and the extent to which financial incentivisation would be appropriate to bring about behavioural change**

**The Strategy needs to be clearer about the Mayor's priorities where, as is so often the case, the interests of different groups collide. Such a framework would promote rational and consistent decision-making and give the MTS a purpose beyond acting merely as a list of all the potential schemes the Mayor could consider for implementation**

We are of course in difficult economic times but it is important that a Strategy with a 20-year timescale sets out our ambition for the longer-term, including schemes that are not yet fully funded, as well as seeking to get the most from existing infrastructure. The present situation should not act as a constraint on the future, and for this reason my Strategy contains a very wide range of measures, some of which, such as providing better journey planning information, can be implemented at little cost, as well as the more ambitious schemes such as the potential Chelsea-Hackney line. My immediate priorities are the completion of the Tube upgrade and the construction of Crossrail. As I have suggested, it is not helpful to set out a 'one size fits all' approach to decisions regarding transport schemes for the coming years, but I am confident that my Strategy provides a sufficiently wide range of approaches for us to draw on in the future.

In this light, I don't think it is necessary for me to specify at this stage the priorities beyond 2017/18, but my Strategy clearly sets out my commitment both to improved accessibility and to increase capacity. Accessibility will be improved via both step-free access and by taking a 'whole journey' approach. Crossrail will deliver step-free access at key interchanges, and there are a number of measures to improve accessibility as part of the Tube upgrade. This is in addition to a fully accessible bus fleet and the Department for Transport's own programmes, and my other proposals to improve the travelling environment, provide better journey planning information and support Dial-a-Ride. I would also refer you to TfL's Disability and Deaf Equality Scheme, which sets out in detail the actions that TfL will take to ensure that its services are accessible to disabled people. With regard to the issue of capacity, although we have already secured investment to increase public transport capacity by over 30% in the morning peak in the period 2006-2031, it is important that we continue to press for further investment as well as encourage a shift to more sustainable modes of transport and ensure we get the most from our system.

I will continue to set fares on an annual basis, but am committed to ensuring that these are set at an appropriate level for making a contribution towards the cost of providing public transport services. My Strategy also states that I will keep concessionary fares under review and seek to go further on creating an integrated fare collection system for London, building on the successful roll-out of Oyster to National Rail.

My Strategy sets out policies and proposals to smooth traffic flow, and as I indicated earlier in this letter, text has been added to clarify what this approach means for London. These proposals will benefit all road users by improving conditions for pedestrians and cyclists as well as improving journey time reliability and predictability, which is of course important to bus passengers as well as car and delivery drivers. Smoothing traffic flow is not a way of prioritising motor vehicles over other users, and needs to be considered in the context of the full range of policies in the Strategy, including my ambition to achieve a cycling revolution, and increase walking, and the schemes I am putting in place to achieve this. It is not appropriate for a 'one size fits all' hierarchy to be applied to London, as all road users are equal. Decisions about how particular interventions will be applied to individual locations will be made on a case-by-case basis.

My Strategy includes a number of proposals to encourage people to choose more sustainable modes of transport, including smarter travel initiatives, better journey-planning information and improving the efficiency of freight operations (Proposals 115-119). In response to comments received during the consultation, I have also identified in my Strategy the potential for flexible working patterns to help to limit the need to travel. These measures should be considered alongside the proposals to increase walking and cycling set out in the Strategy as part of the overall approach to behavioural change. The Strategy is not the place to provide detailed information as to how financial incentivisation might be applied, but I think it is right to have a range of tools at my disposal.

As I indicated at the start of this letter, I have included road user charging within the Strategy as a potential option for the longer-term, and only for consideration when other measures have proven insufficient to meet economic, social and/or environmental objectives. As I advised the Assembly in my Statement of October 2009, the details of any such scheme would be developed with boroughs and others and be subject to public and stakeholder consultation, should such a situation arise.

May I thank you again for the Assembly's comments, and I look forward to working with you on the implementation of my Transport Strategy.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Boris Johnson', written in a cursive style.

**Boris Johnson**  
Mayor of London