

# MAYOR OF LONDON

**Dr Onkar Sahota AM**

Chair of the London Assembly

C/o [Bryony.CrosslandDavies@london.gov.uk](mailto:Bryony.CrosslandDavies@london.gov.uk)

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**Date:** 18 January 2023

Dear Onkar,

I am writing further to Assembly Member Andrew Boff's letter of 8 March about the motions agreed at the London Assembly Plenary meeting on 3 March 2022. My reply to motions 1, 2, 3, 7 and 8, as well as the urgent motions on Building Safety and Ukraine, is set out below. Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding.

## **Motion 1 – Antisemitism**

I thank the Assembly for acknowledging the work with Jewish Londoners undertaken by my office, my Deputy Mayor for Policing And Crime (DMPC) and Mayor's Office for Policing And Crime (MOPAC) officers to tackle antisemitism and reassure Jewish communities. I will, as suggested by the Assembly, take all actions available to me to continue with that challenge.

City Hall's engagement with Jewish Londoners is robust and ongoing. We have an excellent relationship with a number of organisations. This includes the London Jewish Forum, where we have explored how we can work together to enhance community cohesion, and CST and the Shomrim, with whom we work to combat antisemitism and discuss any other policing issues that impact on Jewish Londoners.

The DMPC met with the London Jewish Forum on 26 October 2022 to discuss the Metropolitan Police Service's (MPS) investigation into an antisemitic incident on Oxford Street last year, lessons to be learned and how the MPS can improve its communications with Jewish communities.

On 8 December 2022, I convened a roundtable with leading Jewish community organisations to hear directly from them. The roundtable was really well attended, and we had a fruitful discussion. I was pleased to reaffirm my commitment to tackling antisemitism and ensuring community representatives are involved in discussions that affect them.

We will develop and deliver a series of actions to deliver the commitments in my Police and Crime Plan, but I share the view expressed by the DMPC at previous Police and Crime Committee meetings, that a specific strategy to combat the victimisation of one community is not the best response to hate crime. Strategies that address the targeting of specific communities can be divisive and create a perception that hate crimes against some communities are worse than others. This will not, of course, prevent both MOPAC and the MPS from liaising with Targeted communities about actions and responses that may address their very specific concerns.

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A number of the actions proposed in the motion appear to be aimed at ensuring a robust MPS response to antisemitism, through a review of previous incidents, making clear that such behaviour will not be tolerated, and providing a quarterly report on high-profile antisemitic incidents and the response. Much of what these proposals are aiming for is already being achieved via activities that are currently underway. The MPS already has in place a set of clear strategic aims and specific Key Performance Indicators designed to deliver an improved response to hate crime. We all want to see more hate crime perpetrators brought to justice, and I will continue to hold the MPS to account in achieving this.

There is already full transparency with regard to all forms of hate crime. Hate crime rates are published on both MPS and MOPAC dashboards and the police regularly liaise with me, the DMPC, victims and Jewish communities over specific incidents, not just high-profile ones. I have always been very clear that hate crime against anyone in London, whichever community they are from, will not be tolerated and I will continue to stand alongside Jewish Londoners in condemning antisemitism whenever and wherever it rears its ugly head.

It is, of course, essential that all officers remain impartial in the course of their duty and ensure that their primary focus is the welfare and safety of victims when a crime is committed. Improved training for officers dealing with hate crimes, much of it informed by communities targeted by hate crime, emphasises the need for empathy and understanding of the particular hurt experienced by hate crime victims.

Finally, the motion calls for the strong enforcement of the IHRA definition of antisemitism. The motion is not clear what is meant by the enforcement of a definition which, the motion acknowledges, I have adopted on behalf of City Hall. However, I can assure the Assembly that neither I nor any of the functional bodies in the Greater London Authority (GLA) group will tolerate antisemitism by any staff, volunteers, associates or partners.

## **Motion 2 – Reopening of the night tube**

Night Tube services are now running on Friday and Saturday nights on the Central, Jubilee, Northern, Piccadilly and Victoria lines.

## **Motion 3 – Guardians of the Arches**

My Deputy Mayor for Transport met with representatives from Guardians of the Arches in March and May last year, and Transport for London (TfL) has regular discussions with the organisation as part of its ongoing commitment to working in partnership with its tenants. TfL is committed to continuing to work with tenants on an individual basis and is collaborating with them on the development of a partnership statement that will set out future, multi-year plans to improve customer experience.

TfL is exploring a rolling programme of refurbishment across its estate, including improving its environmental sustainability, subject to funding.

## **Urgent Motion – Building Safety**

The impact that the building safety crisis is having on leaseholders' mental health and wellbeing is of serious concern and it is clear that leaseholders around the country need more support.

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While I recognise the value of offering frontline support to leaseholders, the GLA is not the right organisation to provide this. The building safety crisis is a national one and requires a national solution and a national support service. The figures outlined in the Assembly's proposed budget amendment last year underestimated the resource that would be required to effectively run a building safety support hub.

There are various organisations offering support to leaseholders, including the government-funded independent advice service LEASE. I know that many leaseholders feel the current service offered by LEASE falls far short of what is needed, and I have repeatedly called for the government to review the role and remit of LEASE as a much-needed resource for leaseholders affected by the building safety crisis. I will continue to advocate for the government to do this.

The building safety crisis has arisen due to systemic failings across the board. I have long called for developers and those responsible to contribute towards remediating unsafe buildings, but only the government can legislate to compel them to do so.

I recognise the need for industry to be reformed with a safety-first approach and for safer homes to be built, and I am using my powers to achieve this in London.

I have introduced new conditions on building safety through my Affordable Homes Programme, which require social landlords wishing to bid for funds to put safety first. I have also lobbied the government over the last few years for the legislative changes needed to protect leaseholders from remediation costs. I welcome the provisions contained within the Building Safety Act, which create national legal powers to force developers to contribute to fix the problems they played a part in causing. However, I am extremely disappointed that the government voted down amendments that would have fully protected leaseholders from the cost of remediating building safety defects that were not their fault.

## **Urgent Motion – Ukraine**

The ongoing and tragic conflict in Ukraine continues to shock and appal us all. I share the Assembly's deep concern for the people of Ukraine.

Our capital has a long history of providing sanctuary to those fleeing conflict, and I am proud that Londoners have shown their willingness to help by donating money to charities and housing refugees. London boroughs have also stepped up to support people seeking asylum.

I made representations to the Home Office at the start of Putin's war urging the government to act at pace to secure safe passage for Ukrainians seeking sanctuary and to commit to a comprehensive funding package and appropriate safeguards, to ensure Ukrainians seeking refuge are welcomed here with open arms.

London stands shoulder to shoulder with the people of Ukraine, and we will continue to provide whatever support we can to those fleeing Russian aggression, alongside our hugely valued civil society organisations in the capital.

## **Motion 7 – Vaccine Patents**

As part of my role as Chair of C40, I have signed the joint C40 Mayor's vaccine equity letter, calling for the leaders of Pfizer, BioNTech and Moderna to share their technologies through the World

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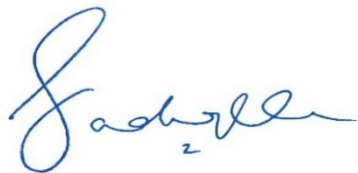
Health Organization, so vaccine equity can finally be achieved, and lives can be saved across the world.

## **Motion 8 – Funding for Transport for London**

I am grateful to the Assembly for its continued support for a fair funding settlement for TfL. As you know, after weeks of negotiation, at the end of August we reached agreement with the government on a funding settlement until 31 March 2024. This agreement, which was hard won, means that we can now get on with the job of supporting London's recovery from the pandemic – to the benefit of the whole country. There is no UK recovery without a London recovery, and no London recovery without a properly funded transport network.

My response to Motion 4 – Safer neighbourhoods will follow.

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