

London Assembly (Mayor's Question Time) – 19 October 2016

Transcript of Agenda Item 5 – Questions to the Mayor

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): Thank you very much. We will now go to the agenda and go through it as set out.

2016/3843 - Selective Education

[Jennette Arnold OBE AM](#)

What is the percentage of state-educated children in London who leave school with five good GCSEs, compared with the percentage of non-Grammar School, state-educated children in Kent who leave school with five good GCSEs?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you, Chairman, and thank you, Assembly Member Arnold, for your question. I know this is an issue you feel strongly about, as indeed do I.

London schools are doing a fantastic job in getting good outcomes for London's children and young people. Our results are ahead of the rest of the country at the end of primary schooling and in GCSE results. Our schools have made such great progress due to targeted extra investment, particularly during Labour's London Challenge. This brought together schools and boroughs to lead and achieve improvements in the capital.

To answer your specific question, in Kent only 43% of non-grammar school state-educated pupils left school with five GCSEs in 2015. This compares less favourably with their London peers: 61% of London pupils achieved this same measure.

London's non-grammar school state-educated children also perform better compared to other areas with grammar schools such as Lincolnshire, Medway, Buckinghamshire, Trafford and Wirral. In London, the two local authorities with the highest number of grammar schools, Sutton and Bexley, produced worse results for the children attending non-selective state schools than the London average. There is no evidence that grammar schools raise standards for the poorest students and we know that the best-performing international education systems are not selective. London's schools particularly lead the way in narrowing the achievement gap between children from rich and poor backgrounds despite there being only a few grammar schools in London. Selection simply leads to segregation and I believe it is vital that our education system works for every single student.

The new Prime Minister's flagship education policy risks undermining all that London's brilliant teachers have worked so hard to achieve and of whom the majority oppose such reforms. An obsession with the grammar schools is essentially the same as giving up on the prospect of a good or excellent school for every child in London. The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) Chief Inspector of Schools, Sir Michael Wilshaw, also agrees with me. He believes that more grammar schools will lower standards for the greater majority of children and lead to social division.

If the Government is really committed to increasing social mobility through education across the country, it should follow the example that London has set over the past two decades. The Government therefore needs to protect the current funding arrangements for the capital's schools and we need to fight strongly for a properly and fairly funded school system in London.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Deputy Chair): Thank you, Mr Mayor, for that full and detailed answer and, also, thank you for reminding us about the comments made by Sir Michael Wilshaw. I find myself in a strange place to be on the same page as Sir Michael Wilshaw. Even though I thought he was a marvellous head teacher of Mossbourne, I do not think that we are in the same political space at all. But he is right to say that you cannot find another advanced country that has chosen to go down the selective route.

What actions can you take and what alliances do you plan to be a part of to urge the Prime Minister to think again? Her proposals will be counterproductive. They will do nothing to narrow the current 60% attainment gap that exists between some of our children and others at that stage that she would plan to take them through a selective process to make them either failures or choose the few who would be winners anyway.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Can I thank you for your representations? What I plan to do is to write to the Secretary of State for Education, who is a London Member of Parliament (MP), in relation to two issues.

One is, as you will be aware from previous cross-party campaigning, our concern about the change to the funding arrangements for the schools in the capital and the Government is currently reviewing the previous proposals, which would have been unfair to London's children. The letter will be in two parts; one in relation to that issue.

The second issue to express is our concern about the Prime Minister's proposals. You will be aware that I recently appointed a very good Deputy Mayor for Social Integration, Social Mobility and Community Engagement and you will be aware of the dangers to social mobility. By the way, the Government's own 'social mobility tsar', Alan Milburn [Chair, Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission], has also expressed concern about the impact on social mobility of an increase in the number of grammar schools.

Only 4% of secondary schools in London are grammar schools. But in those boroughs where there are grammar schools, those children who go to the non-grammar schools do worse than children in other boroughs.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Deputy Chair): That is right. I welcome the actions that you are planning to take and I will be following through, both as an Assembly Member and as Chair of this Assembly's Education Panel. Thank you.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): Thank you very much.

Peter Whittle AM: Following on from that, Mr Mayor, I wonder: are you aware in your dislike of grammar schools, that social mobility has virtually ground to a halt over a period of time that is exactly concomitant with grammar schools being phased out?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I appreciate that you went to a grammar school and you did not do badly out of it, but think of all of those children who did not go to the grammar school in your area. That is the point that Assembly Member Arnold was making.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Deputy Chair): Yes.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): If you care about all children doing well, you will want all of their potential to be fulfilled. It is all well and good for those who get into the grammar schools, but - unless you are suggesting that all schools are grammar schools, which defeats the object of a grammar school - social mobility is not something that you could claim credit for in relation to grammar schools.

Peter Whittle AM: The fact that, for example, in the 1970s about half of the people at Oxbridge were from state schools - probably most of them grammar schools - but now something 70% are from private schools does not show that there has been a halt in social mobility?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): That is an argument to invest in our children. The evidence is that when we invest in children in schools, children in schools do better. Look at London. The Labour London Challenge led to investment in schools, teachers and children. Our results went through the roof. Those children benefited. They became socially mobile.

The reality is that, if you look at those receiving free school meals going to grammar schools versus those children in non-grammar schools in the same area on free school meals, the difference is that 3% of entrants to grammar schools get free school meals, whereas on average it is 18% in other schools.

My point is that if you care about and are obsessed with social mobility, you will want all of your schools to be good schools rather than having a small percentage of children going to the good schools.

Peter Whittle AM: OK. Thank you.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): Thank you very much.

2016/3722 - Post-Brexit work permit system for London

[Gareth Bacon AM](#)

How will your proposals for a separate work permit system for London work in practice?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you for your question, Assembly Member Bacon. Let me be clear: I want to consider all options for making sure that London remains open. This is a critical issue for London business and for higher education. Access to talent is a vital part of London's economy and culture, creating jobs and driving innovation. We have been able to become one of the biggest, richest and best cities on earth because of our openness over many decades to talented people from around the world. The Government must therefore ensure that the visa system is flexible.

The certainty around Brexit means that London now, more than ever, needs to stay internationally competitive. This is vital not just for London; this is vital for the rest of the United Kingdom (UK), too. The London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) and the City of London Corporation are both looking at how we can best ensure that London continues to be able to attract top talent from around the world. As a pro-business Mayor, I look forward to seeing their proposals.

As I have made clear on numerous occasions, my position is that we need to maintain as much access as possible to the single market. I see advantages to a system that will make sure London is open and competitive. However, this cannot be one that restricts London's access to the talent that we need. There have been a number of suggestions put forward as to how a London-focused route for overseas talent might work, but nothing concrete has been proposed to date. Immigration policy is set at the UK level and, from discussions with Scotland and other parts of the UK, I know that access to talent is a concern not just for London.

This issue cannot be seen in isolation. London needs more autonomy to respond to the challenges and opportunities of Brexit. We are therefore working on a range of devolution proposals in partnership with London Councils and others to achieve this. This is why I have reconvened the London Finance Commission to look at how London can finance the infrastructure and high-quality public services it needs.

This work includes skills devolution, which will play an important role in making sure Londoners can make the most of the opportunities of living in the greatest city in the world. This could be particularly crucial when over 1 million European Union (EU) citizens live and work in London and our economy relies on them. Because this Government is using them as bargaining chip, there is real uncertainty over how many will stay after Brexit. We could be left with a chronic skill shortage that hits London more than elsewhere. This strengthens the case for a London-led, tailored skills policy to help to fill these gaps.

Gareth Bacon AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. I agree - somewhat unusually - with 95% of what you have just said. The thing that I disagree with - I will just get that on the table now - is the "bargaining chip" line that you just used. I was just about to agree with everything you just said, but I do not agree on that. As you know, there are millions of UK nationals living in Europe and, if the Prime Minister were to guarantee that everyone from the EU could stay here come what may, it would prejudice, potentially, UK nationals living in Europe. That is why that has not been agreed yet.

The general sweep of what you have just said I would tend to agree with. EU nationals in particular living in the UK and particularly in London have contributed to London's economy and I do not think that there can be any doubt about that.

I am interested, though, in precisely how you see it working and what sort of timelines you have for putting this together. Do you see it as a multi-layered visa or just one? Would it be a version of the highly skilled migrant visa? How do you see it working?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Can I, firstly, thank you for the tenor of your response? We will just have to disagree in relation to the "bargaining chip" point.

Gareth Bacon AM: It would not be the first time we have disagreed and so I can live with that.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The London Chamber of Commerce and Industry is working on proposals, as is the City of London Corporation. Once they have given me their proposals, we will consider them. I am happy to discuss them with you as somebody who supports trying to make sure that we are open to talent. We are going to work with the Government in relation to making sure that any proposals are workable. Let us be frank. The proposals may not be workable from our analysis before we even submit them to the Government and so let us wait and see what the LCCI and the City of London Corporation come up with.

Gareth Bacon AM: The LCCI has written to me. They have seen the question and have written to me asking me what the motivation for this was and is it the work that they were doing and there is a report that they have published and they are also hosting a seminar - I think it is next week - which I will be going to.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Brilliant.

Gareth Bacon AM: I am genuinely interested in this. Are you just going to rely on the LCCI's recommendations and the Confederation of British Industry's (CBI) or are you working up some of your own?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): At the moment, it is the City of London and the LCCI. We are reliant on them to do the work.

Gareth Bacon AM: Sorry, not the CBI.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): We are not at the moment spending resources doing that piece of work because we do not want to duplicate what others are doing. If there is a need for us to supplement that we are willing to do so, but we are doing other work around devolution and so we are trying to divvy up what different people do as part of the London family.

Gareth Bacon AM: OK. You have no firm views yet about what kind of visa, how it would be enforced or anything like that?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): No. What we are going to do is we are going to review the proposals that the LCCI and the City of London come up with and then discuss how to take that forward.

Gareth Bacon AM: Do you have a timeline for that? The reason for asking that is --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Good question. They think that they will let us have those by November 2016. We need to move sooner rather than later because, in the meantime, there is the need to make sure we carry on attracting talent. If you have a multinational, if you have a small business or medium-sized business or if you have a start-up, you are thinking about how to attract talent and you will want to keep those people who are here as well who are talented.

Gareth Bacon AM: The Prime Minister announced that Article 50 would be invoked by the end of March 2017. Do you envisage your proposals being fully worked up and publicly available before then?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): If she carries through that announcement - and we have heard about the changes to the Heathrow announcement - in relation to Article 50 by March or April 2017, do not forget that we still have two years for the negotiations and that could be extended as well. Let us wait and see how firmed up the proposals are from the LCCI and the City of London. If they are brilliant, then it is a slam-dunk. If they need work or if we have real concerns about them, they may take time. Unless I see them, I cannot really make a decision.

Gareth Bacon AM: That is fair enough. Thank you, Mr Mayor. Thank you, Chairman.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): Thank you.

2016/3630 - Private renters

[Sian Berry AM](#)

How will you ensure that the concerns of private renters in London are addressed by your housing policies?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Can I thank you for your question? I know you are personally interested in this matter.

We know that more and more Londoners are finding housing harder and harder to afford and, for those Londoners who rent privately, that is particularly the case. Over the last eight years, rents have increased by nearly three times average earnings, meaning that even Londoners on very decent incomes are struggling to pay their rent, never mind save for deposits.

We need to be building thousands of new and affordable homes every year to help Londoners who are renting privately. We also need to be honest that making housing more affordable is not going to happen overnight. My team has been working with councils, housing associations, developers, investors and Londoners themselves to get started on this goal. We need to build homes of every type and we need to make sure as many of them as possible are affordable.

That is why we are aiming to publish new planning rules in the autumn to make sure new developments include a decent proportion of affordable housing. Those affordable homes will include ones for shared ownership to help private renters buy their first home and new homes for a London Living Rent, a rent based on a third of the average household income to help give private renters a rent that they can afford and that enables them to save for a deposit should they wish to do so.

Beyond concerns about affordability, the lack of security for private renters can also make life difficult for many tenants, especially the growing number of households with children living in rented homes. Furthermore, although most landlords offer their tenants a good service, a minority of landlords are letting their tenants down with poor-quality service and conditions.

My predecessor launched a Landlord Accreditation Scheme, saying that he wanted to do something about poor standards. Despite a target of accrediting 100,000 landlords by 2016, fewer than 2,000 new landlords were in fact accredited through it.

In contrast, I want to develop well thought through and meaningful approaches that will actually help renters. That is why my team is developing plans to name-and-shame rogue landlords and why we are supporting local authorities to crack down on bad landlords through properly enforced landlord licensing schemes.

Many boroughs are already doing great work in this area and I will support their efforts when they do so. For example, I have recently written a letter in support of Redbridge Council's application for a licensing scheme to tackle criminal landlord behaviour in key areas within the borough. Their scheme needs Government signoff and I believe that the Government should support boroughs like Redbridge when their schemes are well-evidenced, light-touch and easy for good landlords to register for.

Although my powers are limited in the private rented sector (PRS), I will continue to work with councils to improve conditions in the sector, to make the case to the Government for London to have greater powers and to work with all partners across the capital to build new and affordable homes to rent and buy.

Sian Berry AM: Thank you for that answer. That is quite a lot of work that you are doing. I am very concerned about private renting and I asked private renters to tell me their stories and their concerns in my recent survey. Over 90% of those who answered me had experienced not one but four or more serious

problems in the past three years. A huge majority of them want better information about their rights and a way of looking up bad landlords and letting agents.

I am pleased to see that you still have plans in train - you mentioned them to me briefly at the last Mayor's Question Time - for a "database of rogue landlords", as you called it. Will this include letting agents who break the rules and will you commit to collating the information that is in the borough schemes and from other sources and putting it online in an accessible way as soon as possible?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): That is what we are working on: a portal to do just that and we are taking advice. There are issues around data protection stuff and there are issues around defamation as well, but we are exploring all of those difficult things. That is the ambition.

Sian Berry AM: Do you have a timetable for when that will be launched?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I asked that very question and I was told the answer, which I will share with you. I will find it shortly, I promise.

Sian Berry AM: The clock is on me.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I can drop you a line if that helps, Sian, but I did ask that question and I do have an answer as to timelines.

Sian Berry AM: Maybe I can move on to the question of costs, which you also touched upon. The London Living Rent and the new London Plan do bode quite well for new homes but, as you touched upon, under your predecessor, the previous Mayor, the cost of rents in existing homes went up absolutely hugely. The average rent went up from £1,190 a month in 2011 to £1,452 a month this May [2016].

What plans do you have to make sure private renters in homes that have already been built will not face continued high increased rent costs over the course of your mayoralty?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I have no control over the rents that private landlords charge already. I am not sure if you are suggesting retrospective rent control powers, but those powers do not exist.

What we can do is try to stabilise rents in new properties. The good news is that many local authorities and others are building PRS homes. They are good landlords. They give longer-term tenancies between three and five years and, during those tenancies, the rent goes up only by inflation. There are examples London of PRS homes being built by local authorities and by private developers but, as far as those who rent from private landlords are concerned, as you will be aware, we have no powers to get involved in that.

Sian Berry AM: I am disappointed to hear that you will not be trying to get further powers in this. Your London Living Rent will work. It will not do any harm. Even if you manage 50,000 homes out of the 200,000 that you plan to build during your mayoralty, it will help only 5% of those in the current PRS sector. What I am hearing is that you are not offering anything on costs to the other 95% of us living in homes that already exist.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Look, it is really easy to be a megaphone politician with no influence, but the Government was elected and I respect the fact that it was elected on a manifesto different to mine in 2015. I was elected on a manifesto different to theirs in 2016. We have to come up with a deal. The reality is that, in the real world, what I would want to do is not necessarily the same as what the Government wants to do and so we have to come up with a compromise.

We are having good discussions with the Government in relation to a package for London with the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and the Treasury. Once we have a decision I will be happy to announce that, but I am realistic. This Government is not going to give the Mayor of London powers over rent control or rent stabilisation for those properties already in the private market. This Government is not going to ban a letting agency in London as they do in Scotland in relation to the tenancy fees it can charge. We have to be realistic in relation to what is achievable. I want the best deal possible for Londoners and I intend to do that.

Sian Berry AM: There are four years of your mayoralty, almost, to go and I really hope that this will not be the end of your efforts on this.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): At least four years.

Sian Berry AM: Moving on to helping renters to help themselves, really significantly, six out of ten renters told me that to join an independent London-wide renters' organisation, they would be prepared to pay a small fee. This is something that you currently have the powers to do. It is an organisation that could become self-sustaining over time.

Would you consider providing perhaps start-up funds or perhaps practical support such as office space for an organisation like this?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I looked into some of the plans that people have considered for, for example, a renters' union and I looked at the sort of things that a renters' union would do: provide assistance and support to individual renters, stabilise and support local groups of private renters and establish a database that would include rogue landlords.

While I support many of the aims, I am not convinced that we should prioritise resources for setting up a new structure since many of the aims are done by others. Shelter, for instance, provides advice services. Generation Rent is organising a local renters' group. Here at City Hall, my team is developing options for a database of rogue landlords. Unless I am persuaded that there is something to supplement, I am unclear what this money would go towards doing that is additional to what Shelter, Generation Rent and we are going to be doing.

Sian Berry AM: I am out of time, Mr Mayor, but I will just say that I hope you will agree to meet with some of these groups and think about how you might help them to expand, but I will leave it there, Chairman. Thanks.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): Thank you very much.

2016/3609 - Scholarship scheme

[Peter Whittle AM](#)

Can I ask the Mayor to consider setting up a mayoral scholarship to help fund talented young people to study in the arts, specifically in areas such as visual art, writing, dance, music and theatre. I'm sure there would be many commercial organisations that would be willing to fund such a programme to help disadvantaged young people into the world of the arts where social mobility has seriously declined.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Can I thank you for your question? I know you are interested in culture and the arts.

Supporting the arts, culture and the creative industries is one of my core priorities as Mayor. I have therefore set out an ambitious programme to support the sector, including championing the night-time economy, launching Creative Enterprise Zones and protecting vital music venues. I am aware that you are meeting my Deputy Mayor for Culture on creative industries next week to discuss the programme and to share ideas on how we can work together to improve the sector. London's rich creative scene is a major area of economic activity, boasts world-class talent and institutions and is a vital ingredient in our city's success. We know the creative industries generate £35 billion per annum to London's economy and accounts for one in six jobs. It is crucial that this vibrant sector continues to grow and it is one of my aims to help it do so.

How we educate and train our young people has a profound effect on both their own life chances and our city's future prosperity. The arts are, clearly, a great opportunity to do this, whether through formal study in schools and colleges or supplemented by out-of-school opportunities, and we should nurture young people's career ambitions in the arts.

I already support scholarships in the arts through two registered charities of which I am patron, the Mayor's Music Fund and the Mayor's Fund for London. I would want to encourage young Londoners to participate in these existing schemes.

I am using the London Curriculum programme to reach the most disadvantaged pupils in London by opening up cultural offers and opportunities for all young Londoners. Some of the first teaching resources were on art and design and on dance. I attended the fantastic London Curriculum Festival on 29 September 2016 with children from the many primary schools that have helped to develop the new primary programme. My culture team is in discussion with the Music Education Taskforce about broadening its remit to support my wider ambitions for dance, drama, visual arts and creative education.

I want to continue to work with the London cultural organisations to make sure that we have a good offer across London for children and young people in all the areas you cite. We could then provide multiple platforms to enable young Londoners' access to more opportunities like the Mayor's Music Fund.

Peter Whittle AM: I am very encouraged to hear the level of your support, Mr Mayor, for the arts and particularly for young people. Do I take it from what you are saying, though, that the idea of individual scholarships for people who show particular talent is not something that you would be interested in?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): We already do that through some of the programmes we have discussed. One of the things I looked at was the children we are helping. For example, with the Music Fund, former scholars have gone on to receive places at prestigious music schools, high-profile state [schools], scholarships and to other schools and places like conservatoires. The Mayor's Fund and the other programmes I already have are encouraging young people, often from deprived backgrounds, to have access to free lessons two hours a week and can take the instrument home. That leads on to progression.

Peter Whittle AM: Do you know how many people are involved in those schemes and how many people benefit from them?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Since 2011, the Fund has awarded 375 scholarships, has funded 29 projects in 30 boroughs with 32 professional arts organisations, reaching over 8,000 young musicians and awarding over £1.6 million in funding directly to support music education in London.

Peter Whittle AM: Where does the funding for that come from? Is that from your budget, as it were?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Yes.

Peter Whittle AM: The reason I was putting this forward - and I cannot claim complete credit for the question because it came out in a scoping exercise we were doing with the staff of City Hall but I thought it was such a good idea - was to include somehow corporate sponsors in these sorts of things so that you could widen this much more. I am not saying that what you are doing is not very good, but surely there would be some of the City corporations and also big companies that could sponsor the Mayor's scholarship scheme, as it were?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Look, I am not averse to any good ideas. I know that you are meeting Justine [Simons, Deputy Mayor for Culture and the Creative Industries] next week and I am happy to explore your ideas. The Mayor's Fund does use the philanthropy of businesses. In relation to the Mayor's fund, it is money raised by charities and so that already happens to an extent. I am happy to take forward any other ideas you might have.

Peter Whittle AM: Just to finish, I know that you have a limited amount of influence in education as the Mayor but this would be one way of directly helping.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Yes, the potential is huge. Just look at the Big Dance. The Big Dance was a small sum of money that has gone all around London, getting people involved in dance. There are lots of things we can do with small sums of money outside the normal 'national curriculum' - in inverted commas - education programme and so I am not limited by the powers given by Parliament.

Peter Whittle AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor.

2016/3845 - Brexit

[Florence Eshalomi AM](#)

In light of the EU referendum result and the potential effect this will have on the ability of businesses to source skilled work, do you agree that a complete overhaul of the skills system is required to ensure full investment in the skills of all young Londoners to upskill and nurture existing talent?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you. I share your concerns about the potential impact of Brexit on the ability of London's businesses to recruit the talent they need. We know that businesses in London employ a large number of workers from the EU and that those workers contribute a great deal to our economy and our communities. One of London's creative strengths as a global commercial centre is that we can draw upon the best talent not only from London but from around the world. With the uncertainty around Brexit and what impact this will have on EU workers, we simply do not know what the impact will be on the flows of skilled labour into the capital. That is one of the reasons why I have been calling for London to have a seat at the table in the Government's Brexit negotiations.

It is also one of the reasons why I am pressing for a skills devolution deal. I want to ensure that we have the powers we need to ensure that all Londoners have the opportunity to make the best use of their abilities in the economy of tomorrow, a home-grown talent pipeline equipped with the skills our businesses need. That means having the levers to ensure that the training on offer in London is more responsive to employers' needs and to the needs of all Londoners, both young people and adults. I believe we need a devolution deal on further education (FE) and the EU referendum result only sharpens the imperative to secure that deal.

Without going into detail, we are having constructive conversations about this at the moment with the Treasury and with other relevant departments including the Department for Education (DoE). I want to set up my Skills for Londoners taskforce to make sure businesses and Londoners get the skills they need to succeed. We will develop a city-wide strategic approach to skills, mapping gaps and commissioning provision that meets the needs of London's economy and is of the high quality that Londoners deserve.

Florence Eshalomi AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. Again, we definitely welcome some of those steps you are taking, it is fair to say. Given some of the Government's rhetoric when it comes to immigration, especially in terms of its treatment of EU nationals and immigrants, and the fact that we do rely on a number of people coming into London and working, how do you really think London will cope if we do have a massive skills shortage?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): There will be real problems. If you look at some of the numbers that I have before me, in the accommodation and food sector, for example, 31.7% of those working in that industry are from the EU; in construction 25.2%, in admin and support services 20%, in the motor trade 15% and in financial services 12%. I am not saying that we should not be training Londoners to have the skills for those jobs - of course we must - but to blame those companies that employ these talented people is wrong. I am pleased that the Government has done a U-turn on that policy.

Also, if you look at London's success story over hundreds of years, the reason why we are the greatest city in the world is our ability to attract talent over successive centuries. Talent, ideas and trade are the things that make us a great city. It was a question that Assembly Member Bacon asked about how we carry on attracting talent and I pleased that he agrees with all of us in relation to making sure that we carry on doing so. That is why we are going to wait and see what the City of London does and what the LCCI does. Also, we have to make sure that we train up our youngsters as well.

Florence Eshalomi AM: In training up our youngsters, there is a lot of talent in the UK, which sometimes, I would say, employers do not call on. You will definitely be aware that 41% of recent graduates from 2015 were still unemployed. It is fair to say that there is clearly still a mismatch between the skills gained and the skills that London employers need.

How do you think we can help to identify and make sure that some of our young people who are unemployed in London are getting the training and skills that they need?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): It is crucial that we have employers talking to those who train youngsters. That is the idea of Skills for Londoners. Basically, employers are helping with the curriculum that is devised and also with work experience, whether it is FE or HE, because it does not make sense to train up people in FE colleges or get degrees in universities when there is a disconnect between that and what employers want. We have to have a better connection between the two. That is one of the things that Skills for Londoners intends to do.

Florence Eshalomi AM: Just on Skills for Londoners, do you have a timeframe for that piece of work?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Jules Pipe [Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and Skills] is currently working on plans to get going on this in detail next year for the simple reason that we are not sure what devolution we will get from the Government. We are having good conversations with the DoE. It did not help that there was a reshuffle and also that the departments were changed just did not help. I am not criticising; it is a fact of life. It depends on what we get from the Government in relation to post-2016 and then we hope to get going next year.

Florence Eshalomi AM: Thank you.

Fiona Twycross AM: Thank you. I wondered if you could comment on what the GLA and the London Enterprise Panel (LEP) are doing to support business start-ups for young entrepreneurs in particular, which is one route for young people.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): We have to engender an entrepreneurship spirit amongst young people and that means recognising that sometimes businesses will fail. We are trying to work with the LEP to make sure that that happens. Jules Pipe and Rajesh Agrawal, the Deputy Mayor for Skills and the Deputy Mayor for Business, are both separately working on how they can make sure we encourage entrepreneurship going forward.

One of the things that most impressed me about the delegation that we took to Chicago and New York - we took 30 founders of tech start-up companies; half women, by the way, which was great - was the dilemmas they have are in relation to venture capital, in relation to expansion, in relation to a skilled workforce and in relation to pitching ideas. I learned a great deal watching them in action and, also, they benefited from the trade mission. We have to think about how we help start-ups much more than we currently do.

Fiona Twycross AM: Excellent. Thank you. I was pleased that you mentioned the number of women entrepreneurs who accompanied you. In a report commissioned by Google, young women were particularly sceptical of the term 'entrepreneur' as something that related to them and they felt that it was inherently a masculine term. I would be very keen if you could look into how you can particularly promote entrepreneurship among young women, who may not feel that it is something for them.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I was shocked to discover that never before had anybody asked the question, "How many in your trade mission are women?" I wanted to make sure that at least half of our trade delegation were women. Google did some great work in relation to its campus and coding for girls, making sure that school-aged girls and others have the skills to code.

There are so many obstacles put up in relation to young girls in particular fulfilling their potential and we have to make sure they recognise that the fact you are born a girl should not mean your life chances are diminished.

Fiona Twycross AM: Thank you.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): Thank you very much.

2016/3782 - Zero Days of Strikes

[Keith Prince AM](#)

In January you said: "As mayor what I'd do is roll up my sleeves and make sure that I'm talking to everyone who runs public transport to make sure there are zero days of strikes." Given the recent strike on the Hammersmith & City and Circle Lines and the upcoming strike over ticket offices, how soon can Londoners expect your sleeve-rolling to begin?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you for your question, Assembly Member Prince. The previous Mayor allowed the Night Tube dispute to drag on for almost a year. Through constructive talks and genuine engagement, I delivered the Night Tube on the Victoria and Central lines within a few months. I have just brought the Night Tube to the Jubilee line and announced that the Night Tube will run on the Northern line

from 18 November 2016. I also have to announce a launch date for the Piccadilly line Night Tube service, which will be in operation later this year.

My Deputy Mayor for Transport Val Shawcross and I have committed to doing something that my predecessor refused point-blank to do: that is to meet regularly with union leaders to ensure we have a new and more constructive relationship based on partnership, not conflict. Refusing to meet the unions simply makes industrial action more, not less, likely. I have already had two constructive high-level meetings with senior trade union leaders and my Deputy Mayor for Transport meets regularly with union leaders across the range of transport sectors. You will have heard earlier of the progress made on the London Living Wage thanks to a better relationship.

Trade unions play an important role in our city, promoting fairness and equality and representing our vital public transport workers. It is critical that we work together so that we can deliver a modern, affordable transport system for all Londoners. As part of our action to modernise TfL and make the organisation more efficient, effective local discussion and engagement with the workforce is absolutely critical. I know that TfL is committed to this and I will continue to press TfL to do it well.

Keith Prince AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. I have said it before and I will say it again: let me congratulate you on the Night Tube. It is a good idea that was invented by Boris [Johnson MP] and one that was completed by you. In your manifesto on page 34 I think you will find it - you said:

"I will ... reduce the number of days lost to strike action by maintaining better industrial relations and abandoning Boris Johnson's policy of refusing to meet with representatives of TfL transport workers."

You have indicated that you have already met with some of these people. Can you perhaps give an indication of the type of people you have been meeting with?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): It is not a secret. I am happy to disclose who I met with in both meetings. I have had a couple of meetings with transport trade union leaders. Separately, I have also agreed to attend the southeast Trades Union Council meeting who are not transport specialist trade union staff and I am happy to let you have the details of those meetings. Separately, by the way, the Deputy Mayor for Transport has regular discussions with those who work in the transport sector for obvious reasons.

Keith Prince AM: The manifesto, as I have already said, was about maintaining better industrial relations and thus reducing the number of strikes. In fact, prior to the election, as you have said, you were going to have zero days of strike. You have, obviously, broken that promise.

Can you explain to me what is going wrong, then, with your plan? Clearly, you are failing in your ability to have better industrial relations because we have already had one strike and we have more strikes planned. Where do you think you are going wrong, Mr Mayor?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): It was because of constructive discussion with trade unions that we discovered that there were staff indirectly employed by this organisation getting paid below the London Living Wage and so I thanked them for bringing that to my attention.

Keith Prince AM: They were not striking over pay, though, were they?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): There were pre-existing disputes that TfL has to get through. There are some issues in relation to local matters, but I do not apologise for having good relations with trade unions. It is really important.

Keith Prince AM: One would believe that you had good relations with trade unions if they were not striking but they are striking. If that is good relations, what would happen if you had bad relations? Would we have no transport at all?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): You have made Tony [Devenish AM] laugh, which is a start, but the reality of it is this. You will recognise that I inherited a mess in relation to relations between City Hall and their staff. We are trying to improve those relations.

Keith Prince AM: Let us take good relations, then. We will accept that you have better relations than Boris [Johnson MP] had. I do not know if you have better relations than Ken had; Ken Livingstone [former Mayor of London], for the record, for those who do not remember him.

Could you tell me? How many strikes - in the number of days - do you think good relations amounts to?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): We do not want any strikes. When there is a strike, it is a failure on both sides. When there is a strike, commuters are inconvenienced --

Keith Prince AM: You are failing, then, Mr Mayor?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Strikes are a failure on both sides. Nobody wins when there is a strike. Commuters suffer. You just have to see the chaos caused by what the Government's doing and what Govia is doing with Southern. It is chaos. Every day hundreds of thousands of commuters are inconvenienced by cancellations and delays and are paying record fares and then there are strikes. It is not good for anybody.

Keith Prince AM: An industrial relations success to you, then, would be how many days strikes over an eight-year period? What do you think?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I do not judge industrial relations success simply by the criteria of industrial disputes. For example, we want to make sure that we have good relations so that productivity improves. All of the evidence says, by the way, that those cities and countries that do collective bargaining well have better productivity. Recruitment and retention improves and productivity goes up.

Keith Prince AM: You do measure industrial relations by the number of days of strikes?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I said not solely by the number of industrial strikes, no --

Keith Prince AM: You do because you have said:

"As Mayor, what I'd do is roll up my sleeves and make sure that I'm talking to everyone who runs public transport to make sure there are zero days of strikes. [You have failed; we know that.] Sixteen days was too many [that was in reference to Ken Livingstone's record of 16 days of strike] and 35 days is a disgrace."

Where are you going to fall, Mr Mayor? You are going to fall below 16, which is too many, are you going to fall between 16 and 35 or are you going to get to 35 and become a disgrace?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Strikes are a failure on all sides when we have strikes.

Keith Prince AM: What would be your aspiration? I know that when I spoke to you last about this matter you said that your promise of zero strikes was now an aspiration. What is your aspiration in keeping down the number of days strikes over the next four years, Mr Mayor?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I do not want there to be strikes anywhere, whether it is strikes by TfL --

Keith Prince AM: No one wants strikes, but you have said that 16 is terrible and 35 is a disgrace and so I am just wondering where you are going to put yourself on that record of failure.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am going to have good relations with trade unions. I am going to speak to those who represent the workers. I am going to make sure that it leads to productivity and that we have a far better relationship. Not talking to people is not the way to be a good employer.

Keith Prince AM: You said you had good relations, but we are having strikes. How good is that?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I have inherited a mess and I am trying to sort it out.

Keith Prince AM: You are creating the mess, Mr Mayor. We know that one of the reasons why the mess has been created is because of the money that you have taken out of TfL and therefore you cannot deliver the promises that you were giving.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London) The dispute that you are talking about is a recent Hammersmith & City and Circle line dispute and the background of the strike covers a range of issues that pre-exist my time as Mayor and are local issues. I am going to take responsibility for what happens on my watch, but you will appreciate that your poster boy - the Foreign Secretary - deserves some of the responsibility for what happened on his watch, which I am trying to clean up.

Keith Prince AM: Can you just explain to me, then? If you think strikes are a bad thing - and we all do because of the ramifications they have for hardworking people in London - are you therefore condemning the unions for striking or encouraging them to strike?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I do not encourage anybody to strike. There are a number of issues. Number one: do I think trade unions are a good thing? They are a good thing. They protect workers' rights and they have been a source of good over decades. Do I think trade unions should be outlawed from striking? No, they should have a full toolbox at their disposal when it comes to negotiation with employers. Do I think we should prevent things getting so bad that trade unions are balloting for strike action? I do and that is why we have constructive dialogue.

Keith Prince AM: Your dialogue is not working, is it? That is the problem. That is fine. I will leave it at that, Mr Mayor. Thank you very much.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): Thank you very much.

2016/3846 - European Funding

Tom Copley AM

On 13 August 2016 the Chancellor, Phillip Hammond MP, confirmed that all structural and investment fund projects signed prior to the 2016 Autumn Statement (due in December 2016) would be fully funded by the Treasury. However, no guarantee was given for projects signed after the Autumn Statement. As at mid-August 2016, only £44 million (just eight per cent) of ESIF projects had been formally signed in London, leaving £540 million currently yet to be agreed. Are you concerned London is going to lose almost half a billion pounds in funding?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thanks for your question. There is €745 million of European funding managed by City Hall, which is supporting my priorities for improving Londoners' skills and employment chances, helping small businesses grow, greening our city and tackling inequalities. If utilised in full, the programmes will help 85,000 Londoners into education, employment or training; reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 40,000 tonnes per annum; help 34,000 Londoners gain skills qualifications and 21,000 Londoners gain basic skills; support 12,000 new and existing small businesses, renovate 3,000 square metres of small business workspace and create 2,200 jobs. We are therefore taking all possible steps to commit this funding as quickly as possible.

The figure of £44 million from August 2016 represents only a relatively small percentage of funding actually committed. A similar amount has been committed since then with more to come shortly. There is also £200 million already committed to skills and employment programmes to help children at risk of dropping out of education or joining gangs and adults furthest from the labour market with a particular emphasis on those excluded by race, gender, disability or multiple factors. There is £75 million available, matched by a similar sum from the European Investment Bank, to create our new loan and equity funds for small businesses and green infrastructure.

I wrote to the former Chancellor in July to stress the importance of committing further EU funds without delay. I gave two reasons. One, the UK has not left the EU yet, nor is it likely to do so for at least two years, and two, no domestic replacement funding is available. The Government's August announcement did not address this satisfactorily but in a subsequent announcement on 3 October 2016 the Government better addressed my concerns by confirming guaranteed funding for all EU projects signed both before and after the Autumn Statement, even if they continue after Brexit. This means we can make the most of the European funding that remains and commit London's entire allocation, providing there is no further attempt from the Government to restrict its use.

Above all, we must now ensure that those Brexit supporters now in Government honour their previous commitments to replace European funding in full with local growth and employment programmes run for London by London.

Tom Copley AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. Yes, I am aware that things have moved on since this question was tabled and that is very welcome. Are you confident that we have the capacity to bid for the funding now the deadline has been extended?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Good question. Basically, there are a number of hoops to go through. We have the team in place but I am willing to, if need be, recruit more to get the team in place because this funding is needed by London. We have contributed towards it and we should bid for it.

Tom Copley AM: You have the willingness to recruit more. You mentioned that agreements that are signed before Brexit will be honoured after we have left the EU, but I am interested to know what lobbying you have undertaken to ensure similar levels of funding for London as those we have experienced under the EU will be experienced once we leave.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): That is the unknown. Just so that you are aware, there are other parts of the UK also concerned about what happens post-Brexit. That is the reassurance that we all need.

Tom Copley AM: I assume you are making representations to the Government on this very issue?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): We are. You will be aware that unfortunately within Government - it is no different to when we were in Government - there are those outside London who think London gets a good deal. What is important for us cross-party is to say to Government that we are the engine for the country. If we do well, the country benefits. If we suffer, the country suffers. It is not a zero-sum game. There are the same intra-Government politics that there were previously and we have to make sure that London's voice is heard. I will carry on doing that. The good news is that there is cross-party support that we need this.

Tom Copley AM: Yes, I agree that we should not be playing different parts of the country off against each other. Thank you, Mr Mayor.

2016/3850 - Future of the Metropolitan Police

[Unmesh Desai AM](#)

With the announcement of the retirement of Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe, what are your priorities for the future of the Metropolitan Police in London?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you for your question. I am sure we would like to thank Sir Bernard for his service to London and for his dedication to keeping our city safe. Under his leadership, among many other achievements, the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) has delivered a safe and secure Olympic Games and has taken a big step towards making our police service more representative of London.

I will now work with the Home Secretary to find the best possible candidate to become the new Commissioner. My priorities for policing in London were clearly set out in my manifesto and I remain committed to these. These include the restoration of real neighbourhood policing, challenging hate crime, reducing violence and knife crime and working with communities to tackle the spread of extremism. I also want to build on Sir Bernard's work to create a police force that is representative of Londoners and has strong, positive relationships with the communities it serves.

These priorities will be put into action by my Police and Crime Plan, which will go for formal consultation later this year before being published next year. My Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, Sophie Linden, has been meeting with community groups, individuals and stakeholders across the capital to discuss how we can best deliver the policing needs of London.

Unmesh Desai AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. I have a couple of supplementary questions. It has been reported that following the departure of the present Commissioner, the MPS's counterterrorism functions will be moved to the National Crime Agency. What are your views on this and the implications for the MPS? Have you had any discussions with the Home Office regarding this report?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): This is an ongoing concern that the Commissioner and I have. The previous Mayor had a similar concern. We are keen to make sure that the MPS has control over this. The expert advice that I have received is that it is important for us to have control over this. The legislation was passed in relation to how the Government would do this. I am quite clear, though, that counterterrorism

should remain as it is: with the MPS. It is a situation that has stood the test of time and we will lobby, if need be, to keep it that way.

Unmesh Desai AM: If we could just move on, we await the findings of Lord Toby Harris's review into how well-prepared London is in terms of facing a terrorist threat. Do you know if the Harris review has looked at interagency working between all of the different agencies, MI5 and MI6, which by all accounts seems to work well? If not, do you feel that this needs to be looked at? I know it is rather late in the day. The Harris report is promised quite soon.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I met with Lord Harris last week. He has met with a lot of people. I cannot confirm unequivocally that he has met with MI6 but he has met with the security services, the police, counterterrorism and many non-police agents as well. I am sure he will hear your question and make sure that he has spoken to everyone who should be spoken to.

Unmesh Desai AM: If not, perhaps this calls for a supplementary report. Finally - and a yes or no answer to this question will suffice, Mr Mayor - local policing is part of the golden thread of intelligence that keeps London safe. In the new Police and Crime Plan that will come out in due course, will you protect and grow this vital part of London's policing?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Yes.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): Thank you.

Florence Eshalomi AM: Mr Mayor, we do know the pressures that the MPS and a number of other organisations are facing and it is no surprise to see that they have decided to look at testing the market in terms of their commercial venture. They have mentioned that an outline business case on that market testing is being developed. Have you seen that and what are your thoughts on this?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): On market --

Florence Eshalomi AM: On Met Enterprise and the announcement that the MPS will be considering the launch of a commercial arm.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): This is one thing the Deputy Mayor is looking into, exploring revenue-raising options.

Florence Eshalomi AM: On that, you may be aware, Mr Mayor, the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA) set up something similar a few years ago. It had strict trading criteria in terms of ethical trading. This was overturned by the former Mayor. What is your view on this? If the MPS does go down this route, do you think that the MPS should have strict, stringent trading criteria in terms of ethical trading?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Yes, we should. There is no question that the MPS would work with inappropriate regimes. The MPS already currently does some of this kind of work in relation to training and in doing so it works closely with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), using a list of approved countries where they provide that. I am aware of the concerns with LFEPA and Sophie Linden [Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime] is well aware of the concerns in relation to making sure we have an ethical framework of working.

Florence Eshalomi AM: OK. Thank you.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): The next question, in the name of Assembly Member O’Connell, will be dealt with by Assembly Member Prince.

2016/3810 - Operational Policing

Steve O’Connell AM

What steps are you taking to ensure you do not obstruct the operational independence of the Metropolitan Police Service?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you. Good question, Assembly Member Prince. The operational independence of the police is a fundamental principle of British policing that sits alongside the important principle of policing by consent. I am clear of my role as Mayor and my responsibilities to Londoners for the policing of crime, as too is the Commissioner of this. This means that the Commissioner is responsible for operational decisions but where those decisions require community consent, it is important that the mayoralty is able to represent the views of Londoners. The rules are set out in the Policing Protocol that was introduced in 2012 by the then Government and sets out national policing governance arrangements. Both the Commissioner and I work to the protocol. This includes my role as Mayor, providing the local link between the police and communities.

Keith Prince AM : Thank you, Mr Mayor. Assembly Member O’Connell has asked me to send you his regards and to ask if he can have his tram extension, please.

What I would like to ask is: you have taken a number of decisions in relation to issues that are clearly you interfering with the operational independence of the police. You have insisted on ring-fencing in your new 2-in-1 Local Policing Model and you have contradicted the Commissioner and prevented the use of spit guards. These are clear examples of you interfering with operational matters. Could you just tell me what qualifications you have in order to do that?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I have taken a number of decisions in relation to policing, which I do not apologise for. I have asked Lord Toby Harris to conduct a review of the preparedness of London’s emergency services in the event of a terrorist attack.

Keith Prince AM: That is an operational issue.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I have announced the increase of dedicated ward officers, ensuring that each ward in London will now have two dedicated police officers working with the community to drive down crime, along with the Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs).

Keith Prince AM: That is operational.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I have launched the rollout of body-worn videos in Lewisham as part of my investment in new technology to ensure officers make the best use of their time and have access to information when and where they need it. I do not apologise for any of those things. We have to recognise that I have a big responsibility as the Mayor of London, working closely with the Commissioner.

Keith Prince AM: You have announced, Mr Mayor, that you have decided to ring-fence the numbers of local neighbourhood police officers and you have said that in almost no situations can they be abstracted. Could you perhaps give me an example of what would be an example of those abstractions, then?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): There are exceptional circumstances where they can be extracted, for example, if there were issues in relation to – God forbid – a riot, I suspect, or other issues. It will be for the Borough Commander, the Commissioner and those in senior positions to make a decision as to when it is appropriate.

What is happening now is that too many ward officers are not in the ward. The neighbourhood is defined as much bigger than one ward. It can extend to two, three, four or five wards. The community does not know who the local bobby on the beat is. I want to make it much more local. That is why we are using wards as a geographical definition rather than neighbourhoods, which are very esoteric to many people.

Keith Prince AM: Most Londoners would agree with you that the abstractions are too many, but if you are making a rule that there can be no abstractions except under exceptional circumstances, does the Commissioner have to refer to you before making those abstractions?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): No. Those operational decisions are for the Borough Commanders and the senior officers. What is important is that they understand the expectation is that there are dedicated officers in a ward. By the end of next year, we will have two police officers and one PCSO --

Keith Prince AM(on behalf of Steve O’Connell AM): Is this another one of your promises that is becoming an aspiration already, then?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): No. We will have dedicated officers and PCSOs in wards by the end of next year.

Keith Prince AM: You have made a promise there will be two officers and one PCSO – and we think that that is a good thing – but they will not be abstracted. Now all of a sudden you are saying that the Commissioner has the power to make those abstractions. His aspirations may well not be the same as yours.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): They are.

Keith Prince AM: Then you must be psychic, Mr Mayor, because the man who will be making those decisions has not even been interviewed yet, let alone appointed. That is amazing.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): . Keith I know it is hard for you to imagine, but it could be a woman as well yet.

The point is this. The Commissioner understands how important neighbourhood policing is, how important it is to make sure we have dedicated officers in a ward and they should not be abstracted unnecessarily. People expect a local officer to be local.

Keith Prince AM(on behalf of Steve O’Connell AM): Thank you very much, Mr Mayor.

2016/3833 - Tree provision

[Tony Devenish AM](#)

How do you intend to meet your election pledge to plant two million trees by 2020, and will you confirm that no GLA-funded trees have so far been planted under your mayoralty?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you for your question, Assembly Member Devenish. In my manifesto I stated that I would, and I quote:

“... embark on a major tree-planting programme across London in partnership with businesses and the public sector.”

I remain fully committed to that promise and to planting trees across the capital. Trees have a wholly positive contribution to our urban landscape. They visibly define London’s green credentials and help to clean our air. As the Assembly will be aware, trees also improve our resilience to the changing climate and positively contribute to making London an attractive and economically vibrant city.

You have asked what funding the GLA has spent on this already during my first months in office. It is standard practice to plant trees during the off season. People who know better than me tell me that the tree-planting season runs from the end of November to early March each year. In addition, I have recently appointed my Deputy Mayor for the Environment, Shirley Rodrigues, who started just over two weeks ago.

However, I should make clear that I inherited a 2016/17 budget that did not include any funds for tree-planting. This is simply not good enough and I will ensure that more trees are planted to improve London’s air quality and make London a more attractive place to live and work. Shirley and the team are tasked with developing plans to deliver on my commitment to tree-planting and it’s a campaign that will gear up over the coming months. It is important that we get this tree-planting campaign right and plant trees in the right places. My environment team is currently exploring suitable sites for tree-planting with borough involvement and are developing an approach to involve Londoners, both businesses and local communities.

I am also keen to ensure that major infrastructure projects, London’s transport and regeneration programmes maximise every opportunity to include trees and other green infrastructure. I will therefore explore whether changes to policy in the London Plan could improve tree-planting.

I should add that, remarkably, in addition to not budgeting any funds for tree-planting, the previous administration did not operate an adequate system that could record all the trees planted and funded across the entire GLA group. I therefore asked my team to improve the system for monitoring tree-planting across the GLA group and to ensure they get much better information about what trees are being planted, where, when and how many.

Tony Devenish AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. That is the longest statement ever for a broken promise I have heard from you. Your tweet of 30 November 2015 at 11.54 was, and I quote:

“I will plant 2 million trees in London in my first term as Mayor, focusing around our schools.”

Are you still going to plant 2 million trees before the end of your first term, please?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I was quite clear in what my manifesto said and I quoted that to you in my answer. I will quote it to you again:

“I will embark on a major tree-planting programme across London in partnership with businesses and the public sector.”

Tony Devenish AM: Broken promises, broken promises and, I am afraid, even more broken promises. The Chair of the Environment Committee is not here today. Was she embarrassed? I know she is as passionate as I am about building -- sorry, growing. I will grow the trees rather than build the trees.

As someone who was a MP during the MP expenses scandal, Mr Mayor, have you forgotten how important public trust is for those of us who are elected to office? Your tweet clearly says, "I will plant 2 million trees in London in my first term". There are no caveats. There is no, "Something else was said in my manifesto". There was no, "I will get my Deputy Mayor to slip out a U-turn during one of our scrutiny meetings". You gave a commitment. Will you plant 2 million trees for Londoners in this term?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Is it my turn now? As I have already stated, my manifesto commitment was to --

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): You have told us twice, Mr Mayor. You have read that out twice. Are you able to answer what Mr Devenish asked?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): He asked the question how he wanted to. I will answer it how I want to.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): Of course, but you have read it out twice already.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): He has, clearly, not heard. As I have already stated, my manifesto commitment was to embark on a major tree-planting programme and that is what I am committed to do. The current Climate Change Adaption Strategy --

Tony Devenish AM: I get --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Let me finish. includes a target to increase tree cover by 5% from 20% to 25% by 2025. I will ensure that during my current term we will plant enough trees to ensure we are on the right trajectory to achieve that target.

Tony Devenish AM: Mr Mayor, this is the one thing in my political career that I would guess that hopefully we could agree on. It is cross-party across all parties. Everybody on any planning committee I have ever sat on is pro-tree. When you talk about 2 million trees, it is 2 million trees. It is not the usual caveats. These broken promises will come back to haunt you, Mr Mayor, they really will. To finish on a Labour former Chancellor, Denis Healey, "When in a hole, stop digging". In this case, next spring you should start digging 2 million trees.

I finally ask you: will you go back to your Deputy Mayor and reconsider whether you can meet this manifesto commitment, please? All Londoners, regardless of party, will want you to be pro-tree.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chairman, I am not sure --

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): Thank you. This is for us, Mr Mayor.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I thought you were enjoying the theatre, Chairman.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): I do enjoy the theatre and of course we Arbours are very keen on trees.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I find it astonishing you say that, given that the current budget from the poster boy Foreign Secretary has zero money for tree-planting.

The Assembly Member talked about building trees - which in itself beggars belief - not once but twice. He then talked about digging next spring. The tree-planting season, Assembly Member Devenish, is from November to March, I am told. We are on course to do better than the previous guy.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): Thank you, Mr Mayor.

2016/3547 - Road safety and use of apps

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM

What are you doing to address safety concerns around the use of apps by taxi and private hire drivers?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you for your question, Assembly Member Pidgeon. I am committed to ensuring London's taxis and private hire vehicles (PHVs) are as safe and as accessible as possible. The significant increase in the use of app-based technology in both the taxi and private hire industries is a relatively recent development. To be clear, hands-free phones, sat navs or other devices in cradles that are widely used by drivers are legal as long as they are used safely and in accordance with road traffic laws while driving. It goes without saying that all taxi and private hire drivers should give their full attention to the road when driving. TfL and the police will take enforcement action when this is found not to be the case. The MPS have stopped nearly 27,000 motorists for this offence last year and there is ongoing work to enforce road traffic legislation and educate road users. The MPS aim to reduce instances where this offence occurs.

My Taxi and Private Hire Action Plan is aimed at improving driver standards, including my intention that TfL should introduce an advanced driving test for private hire drivers by summer 2017. I am also boosting the number of on-street compliance resources by quadrupling the number of officers from 82 to 332 to clamp down on illegal activity. In addition, TfL is planning a road safety campaign targeted at all professional drivers, including freight, taxi and private hire drivers, to highlight the dangers of becoming distracted while driving.

Through this comprehensive action plan, we will improve public safety by driving up standards across the private hire industry, provide the support black cab drivers need and deliver the world's greenest taxi fleet.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Thank you for that. I want to focus specifically on the issue of apps today. Driving whilst texting is a serious offence and studies have shown that if you use hands-free or even handheld mobile phones you are slower at reacting to hazards. Some drivers, particularly private hire, are reading text messages and interacting while they are driving vehicles. Do you think taxi and private hire drivers should only read and respond to text messages when they have pulled over and are safely parked?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Yes.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Thank you for that really clear answer. That is what I was hoping for.

In the last few weeks, the *Sunday Times* published an excellent report by an undercover reporter who was an Uber driver for three weeks. These are his specific words, "Beep. The next customer flashes up. You have 10 seconds to comply". Drivers are having to read messages and respond while driving. You simply cannot do that safely. Do you agree that Uber and other apps are in effect forcing drivers to take risks?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): If you have to respond within ten seconds and you are driving, it is clearly not safe.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Will you maybe ask TfL to undertake research into how all apps are used in practice on the roads and perhaps to produce some safety guidelines?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): It is an issue for the police to look into as well. The bad news in relation to the specific point you raise is what I have said about the law. Hands-free phones and sat nav systems in cradles and other cradled hands-free in-vehicle devices are not prohibited in law provided the driver remains in safe control of the vehicle. I have talked about the numbers of the MPS: 27,000 last year. We have quadrupled the size of our team in relation to enforcement. You are right. Drivers should be aware that they are taking a risk with not just their safety but the passenger's safety and they are breaking the law.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Would you maybe then ask TfL to consider a new regulation stating that apps can only be used by a driver when the vehicle is stationary?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The law is quite clear. Drivers should understand the law. The issue is enforcement of the law. The MPS made 27,000 stops last year. I am sure there will probably be a similar number this year. We have quadrupled the number of our officers. There is nothing stopping passengers saying to their drivers, "You should not be looking at the phone while you are driving".

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: With the way some of these apps work, if the driver is late they get a text from the passenger saying, "Where are you?" The driver responds, "I am in bad traffic". That was also in the *Sunday Times* article. They are encouraging this engagement when somebody should be focused on the road, causing a danger to others on the road as well, such as cyclists and pedestrians. I am just wondering whether you could get TfL to look at whether there is something else they could be doing, as well as your road safety campaign you mentioned, that might help tighten up this area of concern.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): TfL are always looking at and evolving ways to make sure that we have the best taxi and PHVs here in London. It is an issue also for the police, as you are aware, in relation to finite resources but also enforcing safe cars around London. It is not simply taxi drivers who do this. You are right that we have to make sure that we have zero tolerance toward this. TfL will carry on evolving stuff and looking at all sorts of issues to make sure that health and safety of drivers and Londoners is paramount.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: I will take that as a yes, as part of the work you are doing. Another issue I wanted to raise is that there has been a 44% rise in casualties caused by taxis and PHVs since early 2013. We know taxi numbers have stayed relatively the same but there has been a huge rise in PHVs. Will you give a precise date as to when TfL will start to regularly publish data showing the breakdown of collisions and incidents between those involving taxis and separately, those involving PHVs?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): TfL are currently working on that in relation to getting that data available as soon as possible. I am not going to date when we can do that by but we are working on that. We think spring 2017 is the earliest we can do that by because we have to segregate, but we are working to do that because it was not done before, not separated. It is a STATS19 national reporting system. It receives collision data without separating, as you have said, taxi and private hire. We think there should be greater transparency. I have referred to it in previous Mayor's Question Times (MQTs). We think that by spring 2017 you will have that data available.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: It is urgently needed. If you are developing public policy, you need to be able to define between taxi and private hire. Thank you very much.

2016/3855 - Food Insecurity

Fiona Twycross AM

Will you lobby the Government to start measuring household food insecurity?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thanks for your question. I would like to begin by taking this opportunity to thank the *Evening Standard* for its fantastic Food for London campaign, which highlights the shocking levels of food waste in London. I am 100% committed to the campaign, as I am to combating hunger and food poverty, and I applaud the *Standard's* partnership with the Felix Project to help surplus food reach Londoners in need. I urge anyone who can help that agenda to get in touch with the Felix Project.

There is no excuse for child poverty in a city as prosperous as London. There is no excuse for parents to be forced to use a food bank to feed their children or to go hungry themselves so their children can eat. I have made a commitment to monitor levels of poverty and food poverty, and to develop effective and targeted intervention strategies to tackle the huge challenges that London faces. I commend organisations such as the Trussell Trust for the work they do but we know that the statistics on food banks can only ever tell us half the story when it comes to hunger. We need a more sophisticated measure.

My officers are currently working with a range of stakeholders to develop better poverty metrics for London, including on food insecurity, but to answer your specific question, yes, I will also write to the Government Minister to request that we come up with an official measure of household food insecurity.

Fiona Twycross AM: I really welcome your response on that. It is something I have been raising with your predecessor for the past four years. I, like you, welcome the *Evening Standard* campaign. As you will be aware, food poverty means children going to bed hungry, it means parents skipping meals so that their children do not have to go to bed hungry and it means older Londoners eking out Meals on Wheels - where they still exist - over several meals when they should be having good, nutritious food.

Today you may be aware that the boss of Tesco's warned of potentially lethal Brexit-related food price rises. I do not think he was using the word "lethal" lightly. One of the ways that the Government can address this would be to add questions to a number of pre-existing surveys, such as the Health Survey for England or the Living Costs and Food Survey. I am hoping your answer to the next question is as positive as your response to the first one.

Will you support calls for them to add questions to pre-existing surveys just so that we can start understanding the true extent of this issue and the number of Londoners facing hunger on a daily basis?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I have looked at the various different organisations and the survey data they think we should be asking for to get a good idea of this issue, and I think you are right. At the moment, we do not have the information. We need to get the information. I have seen the Sustainable Development Goals obligations that we were supposed to be abiding by. That is one of the reasons why, after seeing your question, I have made the decision to write to the Government to try to get an answer. We need to get an answer to this sooner rather than later because the problems are likely to get worse rather than better, in the short term at least.

Fiona Twycross AM: Thank you. Finally, I just wanted to highlight the launch this week of a campaign called End Hunger UK, which is a coalition of charities working with people facing a lack of food and a lack of decent food on a daily basis. Will you also look into how the GLA, including our food team here, can engage with this campaign to support the work here and their work in helping to end hunger here in London?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I fully support that. I would suggest that you also involve my Deputy Mayor for Social Integration, Social Mobility and Community Engagement, Matthew Ryder, because this is an issue about social mobility as well as the other issues that you have raised. We should be making sure that the London Food Programme builds on some of the stuff you were talking about.

Fiona Twycross AM: Thank you. That is very welcome.

2016/3610 - Cab Trade

[David Kurten AM](#)

What are the ongoing issues concerning Private Hire Vehicles (PHVs) which you still need to deal with?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you very much, Chairman, and thank you for your question. Assembly Members will have seen my Taxi and Private Hire Action Plan in which I set out my plans to improve taxi and private hire services and enhance public safety and convenience, but I want to be clear that this is not the end of the process. I want to keep this action plan live so that it can be regularly updated and reviewed.

These measures are in addition to TfL's recent review of private hire regulations. TfL will put measures in place to improve customer service skills including an English language requirement for private hire drivers and an enhanced topographical assessment before obtaining a licence. Improving driving standards across the private hire trade is also extremely important. By next summer, all applicants for private hire driver licences will need to pass an advanced driving test prior to becoming licensed. This will also apply to existing private hire drivers as they review their licence.

Adherence with the regulatory regime will be supported by the introduction of an additional 250 compliance officers by summer 2017, quadrupling, as I have said, the existing number to 332. Together with industry representatives, I am lobbying for a statutory definition of 'plying for hire' and greater enforcement powers for compliance officers, including approval from the Secretary of State for TfL to issue fixed penalty notices for a broader range of offences. We will also be lobbying for control of cross-border hiring of vehicles licensed outside London. I have welcomed your support on this matter, Assembly Member Kurten.

Together with improved safety, TfL is currently investigating the feasibility of introducing a requirement for a minimum three-year enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check for all drivers to guarantee that a full and comprehensive period of criminal history is available. Finally, TfL is also exploring the potential for private hire operators to have their own hire and reward fee insurance covering all their registered drivers and vehicles by spring 2017.

David Kurten AM: Thank you for your answer, Mr Mayor. I welcome many of the things that you have said there. Just going back to the three-year disclosure for criminal disclosure, what is your timeframe for introducing that?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): We are working on that now. As you know, we are also grappling with a legal challenge in the High Court. As soon as we can get a scheme ready for people to see, we will have that up and ready.

David Kurten AM: There have also been recent issues with doctors for hire, which has been a story in some of the newspapers, and PHV drivers going and getting fake certificates. Have any of the people involved in that had their licences suspended?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Like you, I was shocked to read those reports. TfL is working with the British Medical Association (BMA) to get to the bottom of this because it is a huge source of concern. We hope to have a resolution of the issues that were raised in the articles very shortly.

David Kurten AM: Back in 2015 it was reported in *The Guardian* that you said:

"You cannot take shortcuts with Londoners' safety. I am putting private hire companies on notice. If I am elected as Mayor, it will be one strike and you are out. Even if just one of your drivers is found not to have gone through the right checks or to hold legitimate documentation, then your licence to operate in the capital will be suspended immediately."

In the light of many issues of false documentation, in terms of medical checks, insurance and other things, how many operator licences have you revoked or suspended?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I do not have the information here. I am happy to write to you to give you that answer. You will appreciate that TfL is currently being challenged in the courts in relation to a number of the proposals I have in my Taxi and Private Hire Action Plan. I am happy to write to you with the numbers.

David Kurten AM: That would be good. Thank you. There is also concern about the number of private hire licences that are being issued. It is about 500 a week, if I am not mistaken, and in the Transport Committee last week I was told there are about 110,000 already. If we go on at this rate, by the elections in 2020 there will be about 200,000 PHV licences.

How does that sit with your plans to improve air quality and reduce congestion? Are the two things not incompatible with each other?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The bad news is that I do not have power in relation to capping the number of PHVs in London. That is a power that the Government has. I am trying to get those powers, so far unsuccessfully. I will carry on trying to get those powers. Any help you can give in speaking to your colleagues to the left to persuade their party to give me those powers is much welcomed.

The action plan that I published has 27 separate measures to increase public safety, boost the eco credentials of black cabs and improve how TfL regulates and engages with both trades. We will get as far as we can. Even as far as I am going I have been challenged in the courts, as you are well aware, by Uber, but if you can persuade the Government to give us more powers so that London can have more of a say over the issues that you have raised, I am more than happy to work with you to do that.

David Kurten AM: Do you have to issue 500 licences a week? Could you not slow the rate of licence-issuing down?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): No. I am afraid the rules are that, if they satisfy the criteria, we cannot say no.

David Kurten AM: OK. Thank you.

2016/3844 - London's Care Economy

Dr Onkar Sahota AM

Is the Mayor alarmed that as a consequence of Brexit, as many as 20,000 EEA migrants working in London's care sector may lose their right to work in the UK, severely impacting the ability of care providers and local authorities to meet their statutory and moral obligations to meet the ever increasing need for adult social care?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you, Chairman, and thank you for your question. The European Economic Area (EEA) nationals working in London's care sector play an invaluable role, working hard to provide care to our families and friends and helping some of the most vulnerable in our city. I would take the opportunity raised by your question to thank care workers, these Londoners, wherever they are from, for their hard work in their city, in our city.

I share your concern about the potential impact of Brexit on London's health and social care sector. It is one of the reasons why I am pressing for a skills devolution deal, as I want to ensure that we have the powers we need to equip Londoners with the right skills for the health and social care sector, as well as other sectors that are critical to our economy.

I also want to repeat that all EU citizens living in London, who make a huge contribution to our city, are very welcome here and London remains open. It is simply not good enough to leave EU citizens in London in limbo. The irresponsible position taken by some politicians has caused unnecessary uncertainty and anxiety amongst communities in London. London is a decent and open-minded city and we will not stand for London's 1 million EU nationals being used as a bargaining tool. This uncertainty also affects London's employers, not least those in the care sector, who already face recruitment and retention challenges.

I continue to call on Theresa May [Prime Minister] to say very clearly that she will guarantee that EU citizens who were living here before the referendum can remain. We must remember that we are talking about many mothers, fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers of British children born and growing up in London. They are our neighbours, colleagues and family members, valued members of our communities who make a vital contribution to our economic, civil and cultural life.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor, for that very full answer. Clearly, we have a huge dependency on workers from the EU who work in the healthcare sector. It shows two problems. One is the cuts that have been experienced in social services. Despite the National Health Service (NHS) budget being protected, social services have taken a huge cut in this country. There has been a failure to attract people to the social care sector and we are relying on people coming from European countries. In the first six months of this year, of all the people who migrated to this country to work in the social care sector, 80% came from the EU.

The question is how we make the sector more attractive to people living in this country. London does worst because of the cost of living. Do you support a statutory London Living Wage?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): You will be aware from your experience as a general practitioner (GP) of the cuts that social care has faced over the last few years. One of the things we were keen to do is to integrate health and social care far better. You will be aware of the phenomenon - a phrase I hate but it is a phrase used in common parlance - of bed-blocking when people are being treated in hospital but cannot be discharged to go home because of concerns around care.

I am not in a position to tell local authorities, who are very, very stretched, what they should be doing in relation to the Living Wage for care workers because obviously most local authorities in London, definitely the

Labour ones, are Living Wage employers. They themselves have tried to use ethical care charts to make sure people are getting a Living Wage. I understand the challenges they have in relation to cuts of (inaudible) over the last six years. It would be unfair to put another budget dilemma on them by saying that.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: One other thing: will you make the social care sector a key part of your Skills Strategy for London?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): It is important that we do so. It is a combination of two things. One is to make sure we train up Londoners to get the skills for the jobs that are in London. Two is making sure we do not blame foreigners for the fact that they are doing these jobs. We need to complement Londoners doing these jobs with those from outside London doing the jobs, from the EU or elsewhere as well.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: Great. Thank you, Mr Mayor.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): Thank you. The next question on suicide prevention in London will be withdrawn from this meeting and resubmitted. The next question is on the cold homes crisis and is from Assembly Member Cooper, who is absent.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: I am taking it in her absence.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): Dr Sahota will be taking it.

2016/3848 - The Cold Homes Crisis

[Leonie Cooper AM](#)

In London there are as many as 348,000 fuel poor homes. There is also a clear pattern of increasing depth of fuel poverty in older households. Given these terrible statistics, what action will you take to protect pensioners this winter?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you for taking this question, Dr Sahota. I am hugely concerned about the levels of fuel poverty in London and its increasing depth amongst older households, which is a national trend and is extremely worrying. I am committed to taking much more of a leadership role. I will look at ways to better target fuel poverty measures in London and produce a Fuel Poverty Action Plan for the capital.

My new Energy for Londoners programme will tackle fuel poverty on a number of fronts. I intend to set up a not-for-profit energy company to ensure fair and affordable bills for Londoners targeting those people who are currently paying above the odds for their energy bills. This includes households with prepay meters and those who have not switched energy supplier in the last couple of years. I will also reinvigorate and develop new homes, energy efficiency programmes and initiatives to both save carbon and cut bills. In addition, I will support the rollout of smart meters, ensuring that Londoners are supported in being able to use their meters to use energy more efficiently.

While I am very concerned about the reduction in the Energy Company Obligation budget, I welcome the shift in its focus towards fuel poverty given the absence of any other national fuel poverty energy efficiency support programmes.

I am committed to working with the boroughs to attract more eco investment in London to improve the energy efficiency of homes in fuel-poor households. I also wholeheartedly support Public Health England's fantastic Stay Well This Winter campaign, launched earlier this month.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (on behalf of Leonie Cooper AM): Thank you, Mr Mayor. Of course there is a clear association between temperatures and health and the winter months are approaching. Will you support a campaign across London to make people realise the importance of heating and also how they can make savings on heating? Are you prepared to run that campaign for the winter months?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): We are currently exploring, Dr Sahota, what we can do as part of a Fuel Poverty Action Plan. I support the plans that I announced in my answer in relation to Public Health England's fantastic campaign. We will do what we can.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (on behalf of Leonie Cooper AM): Will your new Environment Strategy have a section dedicated to tackling cold homes?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): If it was not already thought about, it needs to be now. I will make sure it is. Thanks for raising that.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (on behalf of Leonie Cooper AM): Thank you. The third thing is that of course there is no pan-London scheme. We have an example of the Seasonal Health Intervention Network (SHINE) from Islington, which advises residents of how to better cope with the winter months. There is a proposal by the Labour Group called Heat, which would have a single telephone line, a website and outreach teams working. Could you work with all the London boroughs to replicate the SHINE programme in Islington to see if we can roll that out right across London?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Can I suggest that you send me the details? I am more than happy to look into that. I cannot make a commitment because I have not seen the details but if it is a good idea, helping people who are in fuel poverty and who need help, I am willing to look into it if you can get in touch with me on the details.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM (on behalf of Leonie Cooper AM): OK. Thank you, Mr Mayor.

2016/3631 - ULEZ consultation response

[Caroline Russell AM](#)

How will you act on the considerable public support for a wider Ultra Low Emission Zone?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thanks for your question. I hope it is clear that I am refusing to sit back and do nothing on this issue. Both the previous Mayor and the Government failed to get their act together to meet legal pollution limits and that is why I have put forward some bold, hard-hitting measures to tackle this issue head on. I received overwhelming support in July for my proposals from a record number of respondents, over 15,000, with a clear majority in favour of not only introducing the ULEZ earlier in 2019 but extending it beyond central London. I made clear at the time that, subject to support, there would be more detailed consultations.

That is why I have now launched a second consultation which provides more detail behind the proposals and a further chance for Londoners, businesses and other stakeholders to have their say. There is also a statutory part of that consultation. It includes information about the costs and benefits of not only an expansion up to

the North and South Circular roads but a further expansion for heavy diesel vehicles across the whole of London. I am also asking when the most appropriate time to expand the ULEZ would be. The results will then be fed into a pool of proposals in 2017. I will consider all points and responses made to the consultations in shaping these proposals but it is absolutely clear from both my election and the consultation results that there is an overwhelming desire to take decisive action. Finally, Londoners were clear that Government needs to do its bit to match my ambition and help people meet the new ULEZ standards by providing a national scrappage scheme.

Caroline Russell AM: Thank you. In outer London, the largest group of people, 40% of them, favoured a London-wide ULEZ for cars and small vans. That would be much wider than you are currently proposing. Given the support for a London-wide ULEZ was highest amongst people living beyond the North Circular and South Circular, does it make sense to just use the existing Low Emission Zone (LEZ) boundary, making your ULEZ London-wide for all diesel vehicles, lorries, vans, cars and motorbikes?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): You clearly feel strongly about this and so please respond to the consultation. The second phase of the consultation is talking about a number of things. One is the central London ULEZ earlier. The second is a wider London ULEZ going up to the North Circular and South Circular for cars and motorbikes --

Caroline Russell AM: and including. You did say before that it would include the North and South Circular, and your consultation did not offer that as an option.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): For heavy vehicles, the bigger vehicles, it does include all of London, for the lorries. Please do respond.

Caroline Russell AM: I will do. Mr Mayor, I am very short of time but would you join me in Tooting to talk to residents about air pollution? That is people living outside the South Circular.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I have a feeling that if it is for my diary it might be 2018 but I will see if Deputy Mayor for Transport Val Shawcross is available.

Caroline Russell AM: Thank you.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): Thank you very much. The next two questions, from Assembly Members Devenish and Whittle, have been withdrawn.

2016/3849 - Council House Building and Social Inequality

[Tom Copley AM](#)

Would the Mayor of London agree with me that far from Gavin Barwell's assertion that building 500,000 new Council homes would entrench inequality, the opposite is true in London?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you, Chairman. I know how important secure, decent affordable homes are to give Londoners the chance to succeed. Living in an affordable council home gave my parents the chance to save for a deposit and meant they were able to raise me and my brothers and sister in a safe and secure environment. Across London, there is a near-universal agreement on the importance of building more affordable housing. We need more affordable housing to make sure our city remains a mixed and diverse place to live and to give all Londoners the chance to be part of our capital success. Businesses agree that more affordable housing is vital to keep London's economy growing.

My Deputy Mayor for Housing launched a report in July entitled *The Business Case for Affordable Housing*, commissioned by the Peabody Housing Trust and the CBI, which underscores how important this has become for the economic success of the capital. This report sets out how one-third of London's shift workers live in social housing; that means carers, cleaners, those who operate our blue-light services, all people who provide essential services in the capital. It is clear that London's economy would struggle without the vital role that social and council housing plays. We need to make sure councils can make their contribution to building new homes. There are some fantastic examples of London boroughs doing just that: Hackney, Croydon, Southwark, Wandsworth and others. They are doing this despite the limits of what they can do and the fact they could do so much more is why I will continue to make the case for councils to be allowed greater freedom to invest more in building new homes.

The truth is we need to be building homes of all types, whether that is to buy or to rent, whether that is market rate or affordable. We need a variety of different sorts of affordable housing to help Londoners in different situations. That includes homes for social rent, shared-ownership homes for first-time buyers, homes for London Living Rent and others besides. I want to make sure London continues to succeed as a diverse city and as an economic success. That is why building new and affordable homes is so vital. Council homes have to be part of that mix and they are a vital way of giving many more Londoners the chance to benefit from the sort of opportunities I had and to be part of our great city's success.

Tom Copley AM: Thank you for that answer, Mr Mayor. You have already answered one of my supplementary questions about the borrowing cap for local authorities and lifting that to enable them to invest in more council housing. I think I am right in saying housing to buy in this country was most affordable when we were building large numbers of council homes.

If we were to do the same again and build a large number of council homes, do you think over the long term the impact on that would be to make private housing to buy more affordable?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): It would. The experts say that. One thing I would say is there is no point building affordable homes, selling them and then not replacing them, if possible, like-for-like in the same area, but you are absolutely right.

Tom Copley AM: I do not suppose you are able to update us on your negotiations with the Government over what the forced sale and the replacements might look like in London?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): What I do not want to do is give a running commentary on the negotiations, but I can say this: there were some people who expressed concern when the Prime Minister appointed a Minister for London. I think Gavin Barwell is doing a good job as Minister for London and battling for London when it comes to going to the Government. He is also the Minister for Housing. I am hoping Gavin's experience as a Croydon MP, as the Minister for London and Minister for Housing means we will get a better deal than we otherwise would have done. We are having good conversations with the DCLG and with the Treasury, and so all fingers crossed.

Tom Copley AM: I am pleased to hear that, although I was disappointed in Gavin Barwell's comments that building new council housing would entrench inequality. I am sure from your experience you would agree that council housing can be a source of social mobility in itself.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I do not want to be Gavin's advocate but, in his defence, I am not sure if it was taken out of context or if it was scripted. I disagree with him 100%, because for many people a home for

which you can pay a social rent is your access to a decent home. Council homes were a lifeline not just to my family but to many others. I explained about the blue-light services and people who are crucial to our city being sustainable, viable and doing well living in council housing. The problem is that there is not enough.

Tom Copley AM: Just finally, I have asked you about this before but do you think that with the creation of Homes for Londoners City Hall could enter into the business of providing a new generation of municipal housing?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am not ruling it out, but we have to be realistic about the funds coming to us from the Government, we have to be realistic about our ability to borrow to build and we have to be realistic about where we are post-Brexit. Homes for Londoners includes local authorities - of both main parties, by the way - and includes developers and housing associations. We want to make sure we get the homes built that are genuinely affordable sooner rather than later, but I am not ruling that out.

Tom Copley AM: Great, thank you very much.

2016/3851 - Leadership on Zero Carbon Homes

[Nicky Gavron AM](#)

In light of the COP21 agreement in Paris, I welcome your commitment to deliver zero carbon homes as part of your plans for housing in the capital. How do you intend to support zero carbon homes through your new London Plan and Supplementary Planning Guidance?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thanks, Chairman. Thank you for your question, Assembly Member Gavron. Firstly, I would like to thank Assembly Member Gavron for her longstanding commitment to improving London's environment, including important input into London Plan policies, raising awareness and environmental standards in London and working with our international partners.

The Paris agreement is a landmark step in international co-operation and leadership in tackling climate change. I want London to be a leading city in addressing this global challenge, hence my manifesto commitment to work towards London becoming zero carbon by 2050. To help achieve this, we must ensure that new developments are zero carbon. In the absence of strong national policy, London has taken leadership on this issue and I fully support the Zero Carbon Homes policy in the current London Plan. I also intend to retain the Zero Carbon Homes policy in my new London Plan, as well as a policy for zero carbon non-domestic developments. Once my new plan has been adopted, if necessary I will issue further information in Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) to detail how the policy will be implemented.

I will continue to take a rigorous approach to requiring and assessing energy statements that are submitted alongside planning applications to ensure that developments are achieving the highest possible energy standards onsite and that, where appropriate, schemes support the expansion of decentralised energy opportunities, such as heat networks. I am working with London boroughs to implement my zero-carbon ambitions and support them in developing carbon offset funds where developments cannot meet zero-carbon standards. Some of these offset funds will be used to retrofit the existing building stock. Tackling energy-inefficient homes, responsible for over a third of our emissions, is also vital to achieving a zero-carbon city, along with supporting low-carbon energy infrastructure and supply. Through my strategic planning role, I will do all in my power to ensure that development remains deliverable whilst meeting the highest standards, including environment and zero-carbon budgets.

Nicky Gavron AM: Thank you very much for that answer and thank you also for your kind remarks. It is in all our interests that we make sure that our new-build homes are really ultra-energy efficient and low-carbon. If developers build those kinds of homes, as I understand it, they would have to pay very little or even nothing into an offset carbon fund, which then goes to boroughs. We know, being realistic, that there are some developers who will not want to do that, will not want to build ultra-energy efficient homes and will not even want to meet your minimum requirement that they must provide 35% of the home as zero-carbon. We also know that there are some developers --

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): Is there a question in this, Nicky?

Nicky Gavron AM: It is coming. There are some developers who will play off - I know it is the end of the meeting - your affordable homes target against your requirements for zero-carbon homes. My question, Chair, is will you take a tough line with those developers who say that your requirement for zero-carbon homes is going to negatively impact on viability?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The trick is to talk about building trees; you get more time then. To answer your question, we have to be tough on developers and that is why the new London Plan is so important because we have to make sure that actually the next generation of homes are environmentally friendly and sustainable. You are right that most emissions are coming from homes. We can take the plans in relation to ULEZ and I am very ambitious about our plans in relation to making sure we reduce carbon emissions, nitrogen dioxide and particulate matters from vehicles, but we have to make sure we deal with new developments. When you bear in mind that around 80% of today's buildings will still be standing by 2050, which also includes retrofitting, that is why the contribution made by developers is so important.

Nicky Gavron AM: Already the work has been done here to help boroughs in valuing how much a tonne of carbon is, in fact, £60 a tonne if it is not mitigated. That goes into a fund for boroughs. Boroughs like Westminster and Islington are really leading the way on this. Islington is targeting, as you referred to, better insulation for homes but some boroughs will need support with this and will need support administering the funds and targeting them. Are you prepared in some way to give that support to boroughs?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): One of the things I have realised in relation to local authority budget restraints is that some of the planning departments have been - it is not a criticism, it is just a fact - hollowed out and they need expertise. We are giving expertise now in relation to viability. You are right to suggest that we should be thinking about giving help in relation to environmental issues.

Can I go away and think about that and talk to my Deputy Mayor [for Environment and Energy], Shirley Rodrigues, and also the Deputy Mayors for Planning and Housing to see how we can do that? You are right that there is an area of specialism that some local authorities have - you gave two examples of good ones - and some do not have. They need them going forward.

Nicky Gavron AM: That would be very helpful. Also, if you are thinking about that, maybe there will be opportunities for some boroughs to want to pool funds with other boroughs so that maybe one could get a district-wide combined heat and power (CHP) scheme or district heating scheme.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): One thing that is really encouraging is that we are now seeing more and more local authorities working closely together, whether it is back-office operations or whether it is chief executives. Some are even talking about planning working together and that has a huge saving in relation to economies of scale. We have good relations with London Councils and we are always told about good examples which they share with each other. That is the way, going forward.

Nicky Gavron AM: My final question: referring to what you were saying in your original answer to the first question, it is quite difficult for us know how to ensure that for these homes, once built, their energy performance and their carbon reduction will match what they put in the original energy assessment. I do not quite know how one is going to do that or how you would do that. Will it be spot checks? Will it be some compensatory fines? Can we think about a way of doing that? We know already - and there is evidence - that many of the recent newly-built homes are not just high-carbon but are draughty, they are not energy efficient and the residents have to actually pay more for their bills than they would have done if those buildings had been built to specification. How are we going to monitor it? I do not expect an answer, but it needs one.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): No, we need to look into this. I will tell you why: because there already are similar things in relation to contractual obligations you might be able to come up with, with a developer. It is worth us thinking about the next generation of planning obligations so that we can make sure we can enforce them post something being built. Once it has been built, unless you take enforcement action and pull it down, there are very few levers you have.

You are right to canvass the suggestion about looking at what levers we have to make sure that once something has been built it is fulfilling the promise made during the planning phase, which were the conditions upon which it got permission. You are right that we have to look into this.

Nicky Gavron AM: Thank you, Chairman.

2016/3853 - Discrimination and the MET

[Navin Shah AM](#)

Are black people routinely discriminated by the MET in stop-and-search operations in London?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thanks for your question, Mr Shah. Stop-and-search is a legitimate policing tactic that is supported by the vast majority of Londoners. We know that when stop-and-search is intelligence-led and is used fairly and proportionately, it is effective and has the support of London's communities. That said, the tactic does cause concern among some communities and can harm confidence if conducted poorly. Stop-and-search is an intrusive police power and can be contentious. For many members of the public who are neither victims nor offenders, it may be their only encounter with the police. We all know that the inappropriate use of these powers over many years, both real and perceived, has tarnished the relationship between the police and some communities they serve. We also know what the issues are with stop-and-search: the quality of the encounter between the officer and the person being searched and the perception that is used to discriminate against some sections of the community, particularly young black men.

I am aware that since the launch of the MPS's Stop It campaign in 2012, created to improve how the MPS targets suspects, the use of stop-and-search has been curtailed by 66%. This is down to the good work of Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe [Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis]. While I do not believe that there is routine discrimination, there is still work to be done. That is why I have committed that the stop-and-search we do is used in an intelligence-led and effective manner. That is why we need to promote and recruit a police force that looks like the community it serves. The Police and Crime Plan, due to go out to formal consultation by the end of this year, will address this. In addition, the rollout of body-worn video across the MPS will help to improve trust and confidence in the police. This technology is already helping to drive down complaints against officers and making them more accountable. We know most Londoners are supportive of their use.

A final point I would make is that we have an excellent cohort of community volunteers who monitor stop-and-search, including being present at the Notting Hill Carnival. We provide the opportunity for the community to talk directly to the police if they feel stop-and-search has been used excessively, inappropriately or in a discriminatory way.

Navin Shah AM: Mr Mayor, thank you, as always, for a full response to my main question. I have a couple of supplementaries to further explore the situation.

It is worrying that for every one white Londoner - and this was in August this year - five black Londoners were stopped. This figure, unfortunately, has been creeping up since the last year. In fact, the ratio has been going upward since last year, when it was three in one in August 2015. This poses serious questions.

Does this rise concern you? I am sure it does concern you. What do you think accounts for this? The initiatives that you have suggested in this respect I do very much welcome, but even to counter the impression that the MPS's stop-and-search is targeted on the basis of race, how are you going to tackle that?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Can I firstly explain why it is so important? I believe in policing by consent. The police by themselves cannot keep us safe. They need intelligence and information from the community and that means the community having confidence in the police service. If you are, in your mind, wrongly stopped and searched today - or your younger brother, your bigger brother, your dad or your nephew - question: are you going to come forward tomorrow with information or be a witness? That is why it is important for all of us to make sure the police get this right. I am in favour of intelligence-led stop-and-search. Stop-and-search is a useful tool, but you are right that there are legacy issues in relation to a perception that it is used unfairly.

There have been huge improvements as a consequence of Macpherson and a few other things. The body-worn video is not a silver bullet, but the body-worn video will improve confidence. All the evidence from the pilots show fewer complaints against the police. The police like it and it leads to easier to obtain evidence and faster justice. You are right that I am afraid it is a longstanding issue that we have not managed to solve. Public confidence is crucial.

Navin Shah AM: Yes, public confidence. Particularly I think there is a strong need for effective engagement with community, that local intelligence from the ground and confidence from the black and minority ethnic (BAME) community and particularly the youth is very important and there is a gap here that needs to be bridged. Anecdotally, my children, if you ask the youth, do not have a lot of trust because of stop-and-search and the way that is being conducted.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I do not think your experience is unusual amongst some members of the BAME community. One of the reasons why the current Commissioner was so keen to have a police service looking more like London is because you get more confidence if the police look more like you. I went to a passing-out parade recently and the good news is we have record numbers of BAME officers and women officers - it is still not good enough - roughly speaking, 13% BAME and 26% women. The good news is, of the new recruits, more and more are BAME and women. We have to carry on; we cannot be complacent. We have to keep our foot on the gas.

Navin Shah AM: I am aware that there was a record recruitment of something like 4,000 BAME officers recently.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Correct. Roughly speaking, 31,000 officers, 4,000 BAME and 8,000 women. It is a record number, but it is not good enough.

Navin Shah AM: Thank you. It is just a question of making sure that we address this issue very seriously to see how we can improve on stop-and-search.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I agree with you.

Florence Eshalomi AM: Mr Mayor, just in terms of interaction with BAME communities and MPS, I very much welcome the announcement around the body-worn cameras. It is something that I have campaigned on in terms of some of the work I have done with young people in Lambeth and Southwark. The fact that the cameras will not be required to be switched on at all times - witnessing a stop-and-search that has escalated in a matter of five seconds from a good stop-and-search to a really bad one in Peckham - I am just grateful for your views on the fact that there is not that requirement for officers to wear them all the time. Do you think that that may be a concern, the fact that some incidents may not be captured?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): It is worth just reminding ourselves that the piloting of the body-worn video was the most comprehensive piloting ever done by any police force in the world. The rollout is the biggest rollout in any city in the world. We will have all 22,000 frontline officers with body-worn video by the end of next summer. We have consulted and worked closely with the public and we have academic evaluation of the piloting. In relation to the rollout, we have also consulted the Surveillance Camera Commissioner, the Information Commissioner, the College of Policing and the Home Office to get it right. The way the body-worn video works is, when you press the button, the preceding 30 seconds are recorded; visual, not audio. It is not on all the time because there are issues around privacy and issues around some people not wanting to be recorded for very good reasons, which I can talk about if you need me to.

If you, as a member of the public, are in a situation with the police, the officer is trained to start recording it; you can ask for it to be recorded if you want. You will see a red light flashing. The new camera is different to the original pilot ones. The original ones, you could not tell, as a member of the public, whether the body-worn video has been recording. There will now be a red light flashing and there will be a beep every 30 seconds so you know it is recorded. If you are in a stop-and-search or a stop-and-account or your vehicle has been stopped or you are the victim of domestic abuse or a victim generally, it should be recorded. If it is not, you can ask the officer to record it. The Commissioner is quite keen to reassure Londoners that if it is the case that somebody who should have been recording it is not recording it, those issues around training and conduct can be taken on board by the police.

Florence Eshalomi AM: Just on that, the timeframe for the image to be captured is 31 days. Again specifically targeting BAME communities, who sometimes are not aware of the process in terms of how to make complaints against the police or how to follow up in terms of some enquiries, do you feel that 31 days is sufficient?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I do because it is getting the balance right between having all this data kept somewhere, issues around privacy and also making sure there is due process and accountability. If you want to make a complaint or want a copy of the recording, you should do so within 14 days. After 31 days, unless somebody has been arrested or there is a complaint made or there is a reason to keep the recording, it will be deleted.

If you think about it just rationally for a second, we have 22,000 frontline officers, we have 32,000 officers and the armed response teams will be having these shortly. It is just not sensible to keep all this stuff for a long period of time unless there is a good reason to do so. If you have a good reason to keep it, it will be kept;

otherwise, it will be deleted after 31 days. As I said, we have consulted the Surveillance Camera Commissioner, the Information Commissioner, the College of Policing and the Home Office. It is getting that balance right; it is very important.

Florence Eshalomi AM: Thank you.

2016/3854 - Self-employment

[Fiona Twycross AM](#)

What action can be taken to prevent low pay in self-employment in London?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Can I thank Assembly Member Twycross for her question? I understand there are a number of cases of low-paying self-employment coming under scrutiny at the moment within the on-demand or “gig” economy. A lack of workers’ rights, no sick pay and no leave can see some workers earning less than the London Living Wage and even the National Minimum Wage in some cases. This is not acceptable.

That is why in my manifesto I committed to setting up an Economic Fairness Team that will promote the Living Wage across London and help drive up workplace standards and promote exemplary standards in pay and employment rights. My officials are currently working on setting up this team to take forward this crucial area of work. I want to work with employers across London to drive up standards and root out bad practice.

In addition to this, where I have powers, it is my important duty to promote economic development for London and the people who work and live within our great city. This includes the many thousands of self-employed people who make up London’s workforce. I will promote economic development in a number of ways. The London Finance Commission is preparing the case for more autonomy for the capital to strengthen its fiscal powers and delivery of high-quality public services. Devolution of these fiscal and other powers to the capital, including over skills, will help to protect London’s economy from the uncertainty ahead. I will set up Skills for Londoners to ensure that all Londoners have the opportunity to train in the skills that our economy needs, whether as employees or as self-employed.

I will call upon my new business advisory board and the new London LEP to help dismantle the barriers to growth that exist and to increase productivity in large firms, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and within the self-employed community. In light of the EU referendum result, I will call on the Government to ensure that London gets the best possible deal for our economy in the forthcoming Brexit negotiations.

Finally, I would also encourage all employers in London to pay the London Living Wage to their employees. I am providing Londoners with cheaper transport fares to enable them to move around the city and access the jobs they need.

Fiona Twycross AM: Thank you. You have answered most of my follow-up questions, but I did want to do a shameless plug for an excellent new report published by the Social Market Foundation this week on the issue of low pay in self-employment, focusing particularly on London and the UK. One of the recommendations in the report is around making sure that there is additional data that could be collected to look into exactly what the issue is and how it can be addressed and the extent of the problem.

Could you look into publishing data specifically on the pay of the self-employed in London? Would that be possible, do you think?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I saw that. I will ask my Economic Fairness Team to work with the Living Wage Foundation in raising awareness and also collecting the data you talk about.

Fiona Twycross AM: Great. Thank you.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): Thank you very much. The final question comes from Assembly Member Copley on overseas property investment.

2016/3866 - Overseas Property Investment

Tom Copley AM

I welcome the launch of your investigation into Overseas Property Investment. What is the remit of the investigation and when do you expect to publish it?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Can I thank you for this important question, Assembly Member Copley? This will be a key piece of work in our understanding of the complex issues around overseas money and property in London.

Firstly, I want to be clear that London is open. We welcome people who want to make their home here and we welcome investment in building new homes, including those first-time buyers, from all over the world. At the same time as more and more Londoners struggle to get on the property ladder, there are real concerns about the prospect of a surge in the number of homes being bought by overseas investors. The previous Mayor launched a Concordat scheme, which he hoped would stop major developers advertising London homes abroad first for overseas buyers but which has generally been seen as a failure.

In contrast, I want to make sure any options I bring forward will be meaningful whilst being mindful of the needs of homebuilders to raise project finance. For that reason, I believe we need a much clearer understanding of the issues involved here. We need to better understand the different roles that overseas money plays in London's housing market and the scale of what is going on. Before we consider what can be done, we need to better understand the nature and nuance of the issue, separating out issues that often get conflated, and understanding the complex role that international money plays in London's development industry.

That is why we are commissioning the most thorough research on this matter ever undertaken in Britain. The remit of the research will include looking at the extent to which new homes in London are bought by overseas buyers, the extent to which these homes are left empty and the role that such sales play in development viability. I expect the research to look into the detail of the trends in London. For example, how is this issue affecting different locations, house types and price points? The findings will be available next year, but I will announce the exact timetable in due course. Alongside this research, I will continue to lobby the Government to strengthen the case for much more transparency around overseas ownership of property in London. Londoners need reassuring that dirty money is not flooding into our property market and Ministers must now make all property ownership in London transparent so we can see exactly who owns what.

Tom Copley AM: Thank you for that answer, Mr Mayor. I do welcome this research which you are undertaking. It is something that the Assembly has been calling for, for some time. We passed motions under the previous Mayor, which he ignored, and we passed a motion indeed in June. I am going to claim it as a victory for the London Assembly that you have listened to us and so thank you very much for that.

Can I ask you? It can seem that the existence of foreign demand fuels demand for the wrong kind of property, often prime London property, rather than the sort of property that ordinary Londoners can afford to live in. How do you think we can encourage more private supply that meets the needs of ordinary Londoners?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Can I say that the weak pound makes the case even more urgent than otherwise would be the case?

Tom Copley AM: It makes it cheaper for them, yes.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The bad news is it is not simply the luxury end of the market that overseas investors are involved in. There are some developments we know about, middle of the range properties, before they have been completed are bought by middle-class investors in the Middle East and Asia. There are things we can do in relation to encouraging local authorities to have it as a condition of planning to market them here for the first six months. There are issues around cash flow; some developers are telling us there an issue with cash flow. That is one of the reasons why we are undertaking this independent research. You are right that it has an impact on the market here, because what we see more and more of - and we all have personal experiences of this - walking past blocks or developments where the curtains are open and the lights are off in the evenings. The bad news is it is affecting all sorts of property. What it means is that the homes that are being built, the very few that are being built in London, not enough are available to Londoners.

By the way, we should not be embarrassed to say there should be homes for Londoners. This is not us being anti-foreign or anti-investment in London or any of those things. It is just basically saying, "Look, there is a demand for homes that are genuinely affordable to buy and rent in London". That demand is not being met. The finite numbers that are being built, too many are being bought by investors and left empty.

Tom Copley AM: The point you make about homes being left empty, I do think sometimes this could be slightly over-played, because we know that the number of empty homes across the whole of London is actually quite low, long-term empty homes. But of course in parts of London, as you have described, you can walk around in certain areas and not see any lights on at night. It was your Deputy Mayor for Housing, when he was the executive member for housing in Islington that issued this planning policy, that said developers needed to prove that the homes were occupied, which you mentioned. Are you considering or can you put this into the London Plan or issue SPG on a London-wide basis?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): From the question you ask, you are aware how urgent this is. The good news and the bad news is that the new London Plan will not be available until 2019, roughly speaking, for very good reasons. You have to consult; you have to do lots of work before it is a London Plan. In the meantime we are left with the current London Plan.

The SPG that I talked about in answer to a previous question is in relation to viability later on this year. The short answer is in the short term, there is not a lot we can do. In the longer term, with the new London Plan, there are things we are looking into.

That is why we need to work with London Councils. I do not want to be imposing things on local authorities across London. We want to work closely with the 33 London authorities to make them feel it is in their interests, because in an ideal scenario you want local councillors on a planning committee to make decisions in the best interests of their constituents in London. That is why we are working with local authorities now, even before the new London Plan is done, to see if we can come up with a resolution that helps.

Tom Copley AM: Of course you can be helpful to those local authorities that wish to do this by including helpful policies within the London Plan such as this. I am sure you would agree. Sometimes perhaps there are local authorities that may need encouragement on this matter as well. Not all local authorities will get this right and there is a strategic imperative.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): There are examples of local authorities doing really good work. In Hackney, the new Mayor of Hackney, who was the housing lead, Phil Glanville, will ensure, for example, on certain developments that the *quid pro quo* of getting permission was for the first six months you have to market to Hackney residents. If you are a Hackney resident, you would see the benefit of that new block going up because you get first dibs on that development. There are examples of good practice around London. We will use the good offices of City Hall to exert influence - in the positive sense of the word - on local boroughs across London.

Tom Copley AM: Absolutely. What further powers might you wish for from central Government to act on any findings from this research?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): One of the things that the Government could do straight away is in relation to transparency of ownership. The New York Mayor, Bill de Blasio, and the New York City Council have used the powers in New York in relation to offshore companies that buy property; they know what the justification could be in relation to buying properties offshore and knowing who the owners are and stuff. The previous Prime Minister made a big speech on this a year or two ago in Singapore; no action has been taken.

There are things the Government can do in the meantime in relation to a perception that London is the money-laundering capital of the world. There is stuff it can do, working with us, in relation to discouraging the issue of homes being left empty. As you know, local authorities have limited powers in relation to council tax on empty properties. The reason why we are not doing this piece of work in-house is we want a proper piece of work done that hopefully has the respect and gravitas of the Government going forward as well as developers and Londoners.

Tom Copley AM: You mentioned Singapore. Singapore has certain restrictions; New York has restrictions; France has a property speculation tax, regardless of whether the property speculation comes from abroad or domestic. Would you seek any tax powers, do you think, in that regard?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am always keen for more powers, Tom, for London, not for me. Fiscal devolution is an issue that the London Finance Commission is looking into. London is different from other parts of the country and it was one of the points we made to the Government. It is not because we are asking for special treatment because we are not-in-my-backyarders (NIMBYs), but there are particular issues around property in London that are not seen in other parts of the country. Actually, they are starting to be seen now in some parts of the country, which is why if we can grapple this now, it will mean that we can have a city that carries on doing well.

Tom Copley AM: Just finally, as I alluded to in what I was saying about what happens in France, property speculation, whether domestic or from abroad, all contributes to driving up demand for housing in London. Have you any intention of doing any work to assess the impact of domestic property speculation on the London housing market?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The research we are doing is in relation to the distinct issue of overseas stuff. The big thing I would say in relation to demand is to increase supply. It is an obvious point, but in the last year for which figures are available, roughly speaking, 20,000-odd homes built, only 13% were affordable.

We need to build far more homes and far more affordable homes. Brexit has caused a lot of concern. Some really good blue-chip developers have paused. They bought land at an inflated price; they are concerned about that.

The good news is that the conversations we have had with the Government have been very productive in relation to dealing with DCLG in relation to housing. The conversations we have had with Gavin Barwell, as the new Minister for Housing, have been constructive. If we can increase supply with the right sorts of homes being built and with the right sorts of people being either tenants or being able to purchase them, it addresses some of the issue, but overseas demand is also a big issue. Domestic demand will carry on being an issue because people want to move to big cities with bright lights and long may that continue.

Tom Copley AM: I am more talking about domestic demand in terms of investors rather than people who want to come and live in London.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The biggest concern is Brexit. We are speaking to developers all the time who are worried about Brexit and the uncertainty. Homes for Londoners will have developers on there and so we have an inside track on what developers are thinking.

Tom Copley AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor.

Tony Devenish AM: Mr Mayor, we referred you to the GLA Economics report in November 2015 when you last raised this red herring. The fact is that just 3% of residential transactions are with foreign buyers. Can you please not repeat this anti-foreigner nonsense? You are a Blairite and not a friend of Mr [Jeremy] Corbyn [Leader of the Labour Party]. Most things on housing we agree with; this is just nonsense, though.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): It is all over, Mr Mayor.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Who writes this stuff, Tony? You need to sack her.

Tony Arbour AM (Chairman): All right. Thank you, Mr Mayor. Thank you for coming.