

London Assembly (Mayor's Question Time) – 14 September 2017

Transcript of Agenda Item 4 – Questions to the Mayor

2017/3583 - Bridges to Fish Island in Hackney Wick

Caroline Russell AM

What is your view on the extent of opposition to the demolition at Vittoria Wharf and proposed road and pedestrian bridges linking the Olympic Park and Fish Island in Hackney Wick?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you, Deputy Chairman. Half of Vittoria Wharf was purchased by the London Development Agency (LDA) in 2009 to enable a new pedestrian and cycle crossing to be built across the Lee Navigation Canal. Ownership then passed to the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC) in 2012.

I am aware that the LLDC's plans have attracted some concern, particularly around the planned ending of a temporary-use warehouse by a small number of creative and business users who had been given short-use leases by the Corporation. Those tenants were aware when they signed their leases that this was not a permanent arrangement.

The LLDC's plans to install two new bridges are not a standalone development but are, in fact, part of a wider strategy for Hackney Wick and Fish Island in the Local Plan that includes up to 4,500 new homes and new employment space including the protection and re-provisioning of 8,400 square metres of low-cost work space and artist studios and a major refurbishment of Hackney Wick Station. The bridges will connect communities to each other including future neighbourhoods to be built to wider forms of public transport, open space, new schools, healthcare facilities, universities and cultural facilities, and the economic opportunities that surround them including high-quality jobs.

The bridge plans have been reviewed and tested several times, most recently prior to the detailed planning application being submitted in early 2017. There was also an extensive public consultation on the proposed designs for the bridges during the summer and autumn of 2018 --

Caroline Russell AM: Mr Mayor, my question was actually: what is your view of the extent of the opposition to these plans?

Let me just make it a bit clearer. Assembly Members Boff, Gavron, Shah and I have recently sent a letter to Peter Hendy [CBE, Chair, LLDC] calling for an immediate halt to the proposals until the LLDC had carried out a proper review and looked at alternative options. Assembly Member Pidgeon has opposed the proposals. Assembly Member Shah as Chair of the Assembly's Regeneration Committee published a report, *Creative Tensions*, which recommended exploring the alternatives. That is the cross-party consensus on this issue, which I hoped you were aware of.

There is also political opposition on the ground from the Labour ward councillor, Rachel Blake, the Labour Mayor of Tower Hamlets, John Biggs - who is very clear on this - and the local Labour Member of Parliament (MP) Rushanara Ali. Are they all wrong?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am surprised you are not aware of the way the process works on planning matters. I am surprised you are not aware of the consultation that took place. I am surprised you are not aware of the decisions of the Committee, which represents a number of councils in that part of London. I am surprised you are not aware that the H16 Stour Road [planning application] was passed by the Committee by seven votes to two. I am surprised you are not aware that the H14 [planning application] was passed eight to one by the Planning Committee. These are decisions taken after due process and due consultation involving councillors from the relevant boroughs. You are seeking my intervention against local democracy, which surprises me.

Caroline Russell AM: I am asking you if you are aware of the extent of the local opposition and the cross-party opposition to these plans. That was my question to you.

Let us pick up on this bridge. There is a pedestrian bridge at the moment at Monier Road and the LLDC wants to turn it into a link road from the Olympic Park to the A12, cutting through Fish Island. That is a rat-run. My question is: how is punching a rat-run through the middle of Fish Island, which is a low-traffic residential area, supporting your Healthy Streets and traffic reduction policies?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): What, Deputy Chairman, this Member is trying to do is overturn the Planning Committee's conclusions and they have considered this properly. I do know that my Deputy Mayor [for Planning, Regeneration and Skills] Jules Pipe also met with local objectors to discuss their concerns and was reassured that the Planning Committee and those involved with the decision-making had taken on board my policies and made their decision looking at all the evidence.

I cannot overturn the Planning Committee's findings unless I have a very good reason. The threshold is very high and the evidence I have seen, Deputy Chairman, means that the threshold has not been met.

Caroline Russell AM: Yes, Mr Mayor, you are saying there is a threshold. You are saying there is a high threshold. You are saying it is very high. That means there is a threshold. You can decide to ditch these plans. There is a compelling case to reopen the decision. Other development plans for the Olympic Park have been changed. These could be changed, too. There are people from every party and campaigners in the Chamber here today. You are looking at a whole Chamber of people who are really keen that you change your mind. Will you change your mind?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I have looked at the processes gone through, which I invite you to do as well. I have looked at the decisions of the Planning Committee. I have spoken to my Deputy Mayor who has met with the objectors. I have also asked Transport for London

(TfL) to work with the LLDC to review the traffic modelling and options for operating the bridge in light of my new draft Transport Strategy.

Caroline Russell AM: Mr Mayor, the LLDC works for you and so let us hope that you can get them to stick to your policies. Thank you.

2017/3753 - Brexit

[Fiona Twycross AM](#)

Is the Government listening to London's concerns about Brexit?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you for your question. In my response to the Government's Brexit White Paper back in March, I highlighted the risk of the Prime Minister's extreme hard Brexit approach, I stressed the importance of transitional arrangements and I continue my fight for the rights of European Union (EU) nationals in the United Kingdom (UK) to be guaranteed. I note the comments of the Deputy Chairman at the start of the meeting.

We are now winning the debates on these issues but the Government's progress especially in agreeing the rights of EU nationals, over 1 million of whom are Londoners, is frustratingly slow. I thank the London Assembly's EU Exit Working Group for their recent letter on this issue. I could not agree more that EU citizens deserve certainty and a simple process for establishing their status. I have called on the Government to recognise the right to permanent residence of all EU nationals in the UK.

The recently leaked document on future immigration options for EU nationals is also concerning. By suggesting tough restrictions on businesses and individuals, the Government risks undermining the negotiations and risking their ambition of privileged access to the single market.

Alongside meetings with senior members of the Cabinet, I meet regularly with David Davis [MP], Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, to press the needs of London's key sectors within the negotiations. I believe he understands our concerns and the concerns of business, but it is time that the Government started to reflect these in their negotiating stance. It is vastly important that the final deal between the UK and the EU protects London's strengths with no new tariffs or regulatory barriers being placed in the way of our ability to trade across Europe. I have been clear that I believe the continued membership of the single market is our best chance to achieve this and ensure the continued success of London's world-leading finance, professional services, tech, creative, life sciences and higher education sectors.

Businesses need certainty to plan and invest and so it is also vital that the Government gets on with defining what type of transitional arrangements it is seeking. Businesses around the world are taking investment decisions now and, unless the Government can start offering some clarity about the future, London and the rest of the UK will start losing out.

Fiona Twycross AM: Thank you. We are already hearing examples of discrimination against EU nationals as a result of concerns about what might happen in the transition arrangements.

In light of the Government's leaked memo, how can you continue to reassure Londoners and particularly EU nationals that they are welcome in London?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): It is really important that we understand that we have neighbours, friends and members of our family who are Londoners but who are EU citizens who are feeling vulnerable, scared and uncertain about their future. I have been quite clear. As far as I am concerned, they are welcome here. They make a massive contribution and that is not going to change.

I have received reassurances from members of the Government I have met - and I have to be careful when I say - that the document that was leaked a couple of weeks ago in the press is not the Government's stated position, which reassures me. We have to carry on lobbying the Government to make sure, when it comes to negotiating with the EU, that it reflects what we want, which is a deal that does right by EU citizens. In my opinion, that means they have a cast-iron guarantee that they will be welcome to stay here.

Fiona Twycross AM: Considering the potential impact on people's futures, not just EU nationals but Londoners as a whole, do you feel the Government is providing the public with enough clear information about what post-Brexit UK will look like?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): No. The evidence we have is -- I am not sure they know what post-Brexit UK looks like. That is a source of concern for the reasons I have said. Businesses around the world are making decisions now about future plans. Also, families want to make plans about their futures as well. The Government needs to get to a good position and make that clear.

It is also difficult for the EU to know where we stand. I have met two European ministers in the last week. They are none the wiser on what the UK's position is.

Fiona Twycross AM: Thank you. I think we can all agree that it would be helpful for the Government to clarify the position as quickly as possible. Thank you.

Tony Arbour AM (Deputy Chairman in the Chair): Assembly Member Dismore?

Andrew Dismore AM: With some of the immediate risks that are appearing, Mr Mayor, would you agree that part of the problem that has emerged from that leaked Government document is that EU nationals who are here already are starting to leave and that those who might have thought about coming to work in our public services such as the National Health Service (NHS) are not coming, creating a real vacancy problem, particularly in the NHS, for example? Would you also agree that one of the immediate risks is that the Brexit negotiations so far have been so shambolic on the part of the Government that it is clearly not listening to the messages coming back from the other 27 Member States and is putting its own party political management ahead of the country's interests? There is a growing risk now that insufficient progress will have been made from the EU's perspective - by next month it has to be done - that we will not even be able to start trade negotiations at the EU summit at the end of next month.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am extremely concerned about whether the October deadline is going to be met now in relation to lack of progress made in negotiations. I have been speaking to employers and anecdotally they have told me that some experiences they have had is of Londoners whose countries of origin are in the EU are returning home. The explanation they give me is that they think that if they have no future here, they will be able to get back first to start building a future in their country of origin before others go back to the country of origin.

It is a huge source of concern for us as Londoners. We need these Londoners from the EU in construction, in social care, in hospitality, in the financial sector, in the tech sector, in the cultural sector and in the higher education sector. The idea that, even if we accelerate the job we have to skill up our youngsters to do these jobs as soon as possible they will still be able to fill the vacancies, is nonsense. I have seen no evidence that we will be able to fill the vacancies and the gaps left by EU citizens by homegrown talent.

Andrew Dismore AM: What can we do as Londoners to kick the Government's backside to make sure that it gets on with some very clear messaging?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): You were being very diplomatic when you said that this has been done for internal party management. That was you being kind. There are real sources of concern that many of us have that the policies of the Prime Minister and the Government are in the interests of the Conservative Party and keeping them together rather than the interests of London and our country. I am hoping that sensible people in the Conservative Party will put pressure on the leadership to recognise that there needs to be a big change and there needs to be some serious heavy lifting by our negotiating team - and by 'our' I mean the UK negotiating team - to make sure we get a good deal with the EU.

2017/3467 - TfL Ombudsman
[David Kurten AM](#)

Given the sweeping powers and far-reaching consequences of the decisions taken by Transport for London, would the Mayor not agree with me that, in the interests of the people of London, an Ombudsman with sole responsibility for TfL should be put in place to ensure the highest standards of integrity and accountability?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you, Deputy Chairman. TfL is directly accountable to me and the TfL Board and I am directly accountable to Londoners. The London Assembly also plays an important role in holding TfL to account.

Since I arrived in office, I have ensured that new controls have been put in place at TfL. This includes strengthening the TfL Board, which I chair, and the appointment of a new Chief Procurement Officer. The current Board is the most skilled and diverse ever and offers effective support and challenge.

The TfL Board is subject to an external review of its effectiveness every three years and internal reviews led by its deputy chair, the Deputy Mayor for Transport, in the intervening years. The review for 2017 is underway and is focused on the new decision-making structure introduced in 2016. In addition to the annual reviews of the effectiveness of the Board, TfL's Audit and Assurance Committee approves a governance improvement plan each year and reviews the actions taken in response to the plan from the previous year. TfL is already subject to the jurisdiction of the Local Government Ombudsman and considerable public scrutiny including by the London Assembly and London TravelWatch. I am not sure if other Members of the Assembly would agree to being replaced by the Ombudsman who would scrutinise TfL instead of them.

I should also add that TfL applies the Greater London Authority (GLA) Group framework agreement and must apply the highest standards of integrity and conduct all of its activities. TfL also has a transparency strategy and will shortly be publishing a further consultation on how we can further extend the information that it makes publicly available.

David Kurten AM: Great. Thank you for your answer, Mr Mayor, and it was a very full answer. You have given lots of different bodies that scrutinise TfL, but you did mention the TfL Board, which is part of TfL and so I am not sure how much of an independent role it can have if someone has an issue.

One of the issues that comes up from constituents and people who write me letters all the time is from black cab drivers. You have a taxi engagement policy, which was updated in April 2017. Since the update of that engagement policy, a lot of the taxi representative organisations feel that there has been a lessening of communication and that they cannot seem to get the answers and communication with TfL has degenerated since that time.

Which public body should taxi representatives go to if they feel they cannot get an answer from TfL about the challenges facing the taxi trade?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The TfL Board is independent of TfL. They do not work for TfL. We have made sure it is more representative. For example, on the TfL Board are a number of trade union experts; one of them, for example, is a member of Unite, as are some black cab drivers. Separately, the Deputy Mayor for Transport - and I can write you about this - has probably met black cab drivers and their representatives more than the previous Mayor or Deputy Mayor put together during their tenure. I have met with those who represent black cab drivers. We have a Taxi and Private Hire Action Plan. Some of the stuff we have done for the black taxis over the last 16 months no Mayor has done before: the increased use of bus lanes; quadrupling the number of compliance officers to take action against those who use private hire vehicles (PHVs) wrongly; increasing the number of taxi cab ranks, which is really important; helping black taxis move away from diesel through a scrappage scheme; giving them a grant towards new electric black taxis; helping them use contactless and credit cards. You tell me any previous Mayor who has done more and I will happily take lessons from him.

Of course, we have to engage with black taxi drivers. They are doing an incredibly important job. They are an important part of the public transport family in London. We are going to carry on engaging with black taxi drivers.

David Kurten AM: Yes, I do appreciate some of the things that you said that you have done in London, but one of the big issues facing the taxi and private hire (TPH) trade at the moment is of course the Uber situation. Coming up at the end of the month you have to make the decision whether to relicence Uber or not. Before you were elected Mayor, you said:

"You can't take short cuts with Londoners safety. I'm putting private-hire companies like Uber on notice. If I'm elected as Mayor it will be one strike and you're out. Even if just one of your drivers is found not have gone through the right checks or not to hold legitimate documentation, then your licence to operate in the capital will be suspended instantly."

Recently one of your own policemen wrote a very strong letter about Uber and a situation where they have alleged to be found not to be reporting serious sexual offences to the police but just to TfL. Do you think that that has put Londoners' safety at risk?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The Government lays down the regulations by which those who grant licences to operators need to operate. There is a process in place by which those who grant licences have to follow a procedure before deciding whether to grant or reject a licence. You will be aware that previously a five-year licence was given to Uber, as often happens to those who apply for operating licences, but that is up for renewal. A temporary four-month licence was given by TfL while it considers the application from Uber. You would appreciate, I am sure, how inappropriate it would be, bearing in mind this is a quasi-judicial role that is played, for me as the Mayor of London and Chair of TfL to give a running commentary on an application made by somebody, if for no other reason because they will then challenge that in the courts and say that the outcome of the application had been prejudged. I am sure you would reflect upon your question when it comes to the role I would play as the Chair of the TfL Board.

David Kurten AM: I do not think you have answered my question directly, but let me ask you just one more finally. In the Plenary session in July 2017 the Assembly unanimously passed a motion asking you not to renew Uber's licence unless it has been deemed to have significantly improved its working practices. Do you think Uber has significantly improved its working practices over the last four months?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): There are officials in TfL whose job it is to decide whether an operator gets a licence or not and what normally happens is that they look at all the evidence. I am sure, as in all cases, they will be looking at all the evidence.

David Kurten AM: It seems that you have not directly answered the question again, but my time is up now. Thank you, Mr Mayor.

Tony Arbour AM (Deputy Chairman in the Chair): Assembly Member Devenish?

Tony Devenish AM: We have agreed in this room before, Mr Mayor, that failures in customer services are a problem for TfL and you have made responses in the past about how you are going to improve TfL's customer services. Can you update us at all on that or would you prefer to write to us on that?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): On customer services, TfL has made huge progress in relation to improving the quality of experience of public transport users from the Tube, London Overground, buses and black taxis as well. They have a team of people who respond to concerns raised by members of the public. Some of the changes that have been commented about over the last few days around King's Cross Station and the platforms have been as a result of TfL responding to some of the issues raised. TfL is not perfect, but bearing in mind the numbers of people who use public transport - more than 5 million use the Tube on an average basis every day and record numbers use buses - they do a good job making sure they provide the best service possible to public transport users.

I compare and contrast the service we give to our customers to the suburban lines. Some of the suburban train operating companies, because they have a monopoly, think they can do anything and the customer will have to use their service. That attitude does not apply in TfL. We make sure that even though sometimes a community will have no alternative, we are going to provide a good quality service.

Tony Devenish AM: Would you agree that more needs to be done? Comparing yourself to one of those train services or perhaps BT is not exactly a high bar, really.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): There is always more that can be done, but you are criticising us for being better than the others and asking us to compare ourselves to a comparator who is perfect. I am happy if you want to suggest a comparator for us to compare ourselves to and I will happily do so, but one of the things the TfL Board provides is that sort of analysis of not just numbers - very important for fare revenues - but also quality of experience they have.

One of the reasons, for example, we have improved accessibility in stations - I have invested taxpayers' money, £200 million, to make more stations accessible - is the experience of commuters who are disabled. That is an example of us addressing customer service.

Tony Devenish AM: Thank you for the challenge. I will come back to you on the organisations that you should be benchmarking yourself against.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Sure.

Tony Devenish AM: I would be interested also if you could come back to me in writing with the organisations that the TfL Board are already benchmarking themselves with, please.

2017/3830 - Transparency and Policing in London

[Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM](#)

How are you consulting Londoners about your plans to close police front counters and change local policing in the capital?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I would like to make clear that my first priority for local policing is protecting neighbourhood police officers. That is why I am doubling the number of dedicated ward officers in every ward across London so that every single ward will have two dedicated police officers and one dedicated Police Community Support Officer (PCSO). We also want to keep policing accessible and with one police station open to the public in each borough, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

As I have said before, I would rather we were not having to close front counters and change access to policing in the capital. However, this is an unfortunate direct consequence of the cuts imposed on us by the Government. The last Conservative and Liberal Democrat Coalition Government started us down this road of massive cuts of policing in London by cutting £600 million from the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) since 2010. The MPS now has to make a further £400 million of savings for its budget on top of this by 2021. London's police service relies on a vast majority of its funding from central Government and this leaves very little fat in the MPS's budget to trim, which is forcing us to make extremely difficult decisions.

The proposals that the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) is consulting on jointly with the MPS will see around half of police station counters closed, releasing around £117 million in capital receipts to reinvest in policing and saving £10 million a year, equivalent to over 170 officers. It follows that if these savings are not made from front counters which are generally little visited, then the number of officers policing our capital will need to be reduced further.

As far as the consultation is concerned, this is a genuine process of discussion with Londoners to engage with local communities about the changes and it is running until 6 October [2017]. My Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, Sophie Linden, has been meeting with stakeholders to discuss the proposals and is continuing to do so, as well as attending public meetings. People can also contribute their views in writing to MOPAC and by email or through a bespoke questionnaire and many people have already done so. As I said, this is a genuine process, which was clear from the way we listened to some suggestions that you had about the way some of the questions in the consultation were worded and these have now been amended.

In addition, there are public consultation meetings being held in boroughs to discuss the proposed changes with the public. So far 10 have taken place and they have been well attended. There are many more planned. These are locally led and have been advertised in the boroughs. More information can also be found on the MOPAC website.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Why has it taken you two months to publish consultation meetings in each borough about your closure programme?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Those are published locally and so it is a local decision. You will be aware that the month before September is August when many people go on holiday and

so the plan taken by local leaders was to have the meetings in September when people returned from holidays rather than August.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Yes, but you would normally expect when you publish a plan to have a set of dates. The first meeting at Kensington and Chelsea took place on 6 September with only 24 hours' notice. Planned borough meetings on 7 and 8 September were changed with two days' notice. Are you happy with the seemingly shambolic nature of your consultation?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): These are meetings organised locally. They are locally organised and so, if you are criticising, for example, the Council in Kensington and Chelsea, I note that and I will pass that on to them. If you are criticising other councils, I know the Borough Commanders and I will pass on your criticism. You will appreciate that there are good reasons why they probably did not want to consult in August.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Your office has said that the consultation meetings are led by the MPS and so they have not created any meaningful publicity, but it is your responsibility to oversee the consultation on your plan. For all the disagreements I had with the previous Deputy Mayor for Policing, he personally attended consultations in every single borough over a two-month period in 2013 when, as I understand it, the current Deputy Mayor is planning to attend only a few. How does this complete lack of public engagement fit with your claims, Mr Mayor, to be the most transparent Mayor in London's history?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): That is a speech, not a question, and it is inaccurate. The Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime has attended many public meetings. There will be at least 32 meetings in every borough across London. A number of members of the public have been responding via the website and via the questionnaire, and numbers have responded by coming to those public meetings. It simply is inaccurate to suggest that the previous Deputy Mayor attended more meetings than the current Deputy Mayor. I understand the reasons why you are embarrassed because of your responsibility for starting these cuts in 2010 and you are using the process to mask the substantive position.

The substantive point is this. We are having to make these cuts because of decisions made by the previous Government and the current Government. We are trying to involve as many members of the public as we can and we are carrying on doing so. The consultation ends on 6 October [2017]. There is still time for people to get involved. Our energy should be spent getting Londoners involved in those consultations. The Safer Neighbourhood Boards are doing a good job advertising the meetings. Ward panels are doing a good job. They are using local newspapers and posters. We should use all the means we can to get Londoners involved in the consultation.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: I understand the position you are in, Mr Mayor, but given the fact you published your document and you would normally publish your full suite of consultation meetings at that time, even if they were in September, to give people notice. You cannot expect people to turn up with a couple of days' notice. Some of the meetings were then

cancelled. They were changing every day on the MOPAC website. You own the police estate. It is your responsibility.

Given, in my view, the failings of your office in dealing with this consultation, will you extend the length of the consultation to really make sure? People in Croydon, for example, have to get their response in the day after their public meeting. Give people a bit more time. Have more time for these meetings and truly engage with Londoners.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I understand the smokescreen. It has been used by politicians of all parties before. The point is that if I had organised this centrally, can you imagine the criticism if we in City Hall imposed meetings in London, imposed a date, imposed a venue a month ago? The Assembly Member would be the first to criticise us for not allowing local police and local politicians to be involved in the meetings. Because we have asked Safer Neighbourhood Boards and we have asked ward panels and we have asked local leaders to organise the consultation, we are being criticised for not being control freaks.

The substantive point is this. We are having to make big changes across policing in London including having to close front counters, including having to reduce police staff and make big changes, the consequence of decisions made in 2010 and decisions made in 2015. We will make sure between now and 6 October that we try to involve as many Londoners as we can because these decisions affect all Londoners.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: That is disappointing. I do not think you have a grip on what is going on there, Mr Mayor.

Tony Arbour AM (Deputy Chairman in the Chair): Thank you very much. Time is up for Assembly Member Pidgeon. Assembly Member O'Connell?

Steve O'Connell AM: Thank you very much. On the same theme, Mr Mayor, I fully support Assembly Member Pidgeon's comments around this. The fact of the matter is, in Westminster, they had four working days' notice and in Havering eight days' notice. In Sutton MOPAC put the wrong date on. This, to me, represents a rather underhand way to approach engagement. Londoners would be quite happy for you to impose a date if there is plenty of notice. Assembly Member Prince and I joined the previous Deputy Mayor [for Policing and Crime] across London and met some wonderful people across a whole range of London and they were very well supported, Mr Mayor.

The point really is that you seem to be deflecting the responsibility. It is your responsibility around making decisions around front counters but you are blaming the local engagement on local officers and local policemen. Would you not agree, Mr Mayor, that this is no way to engage with Londoners and would you - again, supporting Assembly Member Pidgeon - agree to extend the consultation so that you can hear properly from Londoners?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Can I just say, Deputy Chairman, through you, with respect, why the Assembly Member's point is irrational? If I was being underhand, as has been alleged, about these changes, I would not be talking about them all the time. I have been talking about

the consequences of Government policy and nothing else in relation to policing terms for months now. During the course of the election campaign I was criticised by Assembly Member Bacon about my worry that if the Conservatives won the General Election we would have to make big changes in relation to front counters and police stations across London. Therefore, it is not underhand if I am talking about it all the time. Since the General Election, I have been saying publicly that as a consequence of the cuts we may need to close front counters and police stations. It is hardly underhand if I am talking about it all the time and letting Londoners know what the consequences of the cuts are.

As far as the local meetings are concerned, look, I have been reassured by MOPAC and the MPS that, as far as the meetings are concerned, they have been well advertised and organised locally. Also, that is not the only way people can respond to the consultation. With the best will in the world, the best attended public meetings, both previously and now, 200 or 300 may attend those public meetings. The online response to consultations is far greater and so we are encouraging Londoners to respond online, to respond to the MOPAC questionnaire, to respond via Assembly Members, via councillors and via MPs. They have done so in large numbers already and they will continue to do so, I am sure, by 6 October.

Steve O'Connell AM: We will study those numbers after the event to see how they compare with previous engagements. I will just ask you, Mr Mayor, in line with the previous Deputy Mayor [for Policing and Crime] who attended every meeting across London with colleagues, can you please ask your Deputy Mayor to attend these remaining engagement meetings, to take some responsibility and to explain to Londoners your decision-making?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): She has, Deputy Chairman, been attending many meetings and she will be attending many more between now and 6 October.

Tony Arbour AM (Deputy Chairman in the Chair): Assembly Member Prince?

Keith Prince AM: Thank you. Mr Mayor, you said a few minutes ago that you worked or MOPAC worked with the local councils to organise these meetings. Is that what you said?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): What I said was that the meetings were organised locally. They were locally organised by the MPS local leadership and advertised to partners, and by partners I include local councils and others. They are promoted locally through a variety of different ways in each borough, including councils, including online, social media, through Safer Neighbourhood Boards and ward panels, through local newspapers and posters, and some of these local authorities advertised too. so there was actually there was no consultation, and some have used the local authority to advertise, too.

Keith Prince AM: There was no consultation with the local authority in organising the dates of these meetings, Mr Mayor. That is a fact, which obviously you are inferring because you said there was no consultation. Do you think it is acceptable, Mr Mayor, to hold a public meeting on the same date as the day of a full Council meeting?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I cannot, in City Hall, determine the dates of these meetings across London. You will appreciate that MOPAC wants to involve as many local residents as it can. The information is on the MOPAC website, another way that there can be a response to the consultation. MOPAC understands the concerns raised by Assembly Members. I am sure they are making sure that there are new ways for residents to get involved in the consultation. They want to get as many Londoners involved in the response to the plans, I am afraid, to close front counters in police stations.

Keith Prince AM: Why would you then organise a meeting on the same day as a full Council meeting in that borough? Why would you say to the leader of the Council that there was no negotiation or potential to change the date because MOPAC arranged the venue itself without discussion with the Council and the public consultation is of the MOPAC draft public access strategy? Even the tone coming from MOPAC is not acceptable, is it?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Deputy Chairman, I am not sure what the question is but what I can tell you is that, as I have answered before, these are locally organised meetings. I am aware that some daytime meetings were changed to evenings for more people to attend the meetings, but these are locally organised in partnership with the local stakeholders. I am sure the comments made by the Assembly will be taken on board by local organisers between now and 6 October.

Keith Prince AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. Yes, I find it quite galling, really, that no notice was given to Assembly Members or no reasonable notice was given to Assembly Members or to local Council leaders. I do not find that acceptable.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Can I say? We have to be very careful that Assembly Members are not being inaccurate and misleading the public. The Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime made an invitation to Council leaders and to MPs when the consultation was launched and many good Council leaders have taken up the offer. If it is the case that some Council leaders cannot be bothered to take up the offer and Assembly Members are embarrassed by their Council leaders, I do not apologise for that, but the offer was there. She has met many Council leaders and she will carry on meeting them between now and 6 October and thereafter, as she does on a regular basis.

Tony Arbour AM (Deputy Chairman in the Chair): Assembly Member Devenish?

Tony Devenish AM: Have you prejudged every single station closure, Mr Mayor?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): No.

Tony Devenish AM: You may have read the *Evening Standard's* interview with the Deputy Commissioner when he was ridiculed in terms of particularly going out to see residents and English language speaking, but that was not the point that was missed by a lot of the media. At the bottom of that article, he prejudged the five stations in my constituency. Have you had legal advice that you are open to being judicially reviewed on that basis?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I have just said I have not prejudged the outcome. I am sorry. If people write their second question before I have answered their first question it is not my fault. I have not prejudged the outcome of the consultation. One of the reasons I have not prejudged is, firstly, because I want a meaningful consultation and, secondly, as in answer to the TfL question around Uber, it is not unreasonable for somebody to challenge that because the outcome has been prejudged.

Tony Devenish AM: Have you had legal advice subsequent to that interview by the Deputy Commissioner that he is in danger of being judicially reviewed by my very bright residents?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I have not sought legal advice, Deputy Chairman, and I am not sure of any legal advice sought by anybody else.

Unmesh Desai AM: Mr Mayor, at this moment in time we in the Labour Group remain sceptical about the way plans for borough mergers are progressing. Evidence from the pilots - certainly the ones in Havering, Barking and Dagenham, and Redbridge - suggests that things are not well. I know that the Leader of Barking and Dagenham has been in correspondence with you. Target response times have been met only 52% of the time in Barking and Dagenham. Clearly, this is not acceptable and I think you acknowledge that. You have said in the past - and I quote - "We will not proceed with Basic Command Units if problems identified have not been addressed". Is this still the case and are mergers off the agenda for the time being?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): You are right to articulate some of the concerns raised by the first two pathfinders, particularly in the east. I am told that there has been improvement recently but we are not going to proceed with this - the Commissioner [of Police of the Metropolis] is quite clear, as is the Deputy Mayor - unless we are satisfied that the concerns in relation to the two pathfinders have been addressed. You will be aware of some of the resources being diverted to improve the response time but you are right to express the concerns of your constituents and others about the pathfinders. The Commissioner and the Deputy Mayor are keen to resolve those.

Tony Arbour AM (Deputy Chairman in the Chair): Assembly Member Dismore?

Andrew Dismore AM: Thank you, Deputy Chairman. I have raised with you before the local concerns over the mergers in Camden and Islington, including poor community engagement, poor response to 101 calls and, most importantly, the worsening response times to emergency "I" and emergency "S" calls for help. You rightly said in response to a written question that the rollout across the capital will not happen until the merger problems are sorted out.

Can you say when the evaluation is going to take place and confirm it will be carried out on published and objective criteria?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): My understanding is that the evaluation of the pathfinders we are going to do towards the end of this year. It would have been done earlier but for the problems that have been articulated by Assembly Member Desai. You will be aware of the additional increase in resources to resolve the issues. By the way, it would be unfair to say it has

been a blanket failure because there have been improvements around dealing with vulnerable people and around some of the other services that were identified by the Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) report. The pathfinders have led to some improvements in services in some areas.

However, clearly, as was referred to by Assembly Member Desai, response times were a big source of concern for everyone and we still need to address those. The idea is that towards the end of this year the Commissioner and the Deputy Mayor will evaluate the pathfinders before deciding on how to proceed.

Andrew Dismore AM: Will that be on objective and published criteria?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Can I write to you about that? I am not sure what the criteria are, but they should always be criteria that reassure the public rather than a source of not reassuring the public. I will write to you to let you know exactly what the criteria is and when we expect to evaluate that by.

Andrew Dismore AM: Thank you.

Tony Arbour AM (Deputy Chairman in the Chair): Assembly Member Bacon?

Gareth Bacon AM: Thank you very much, Deputy Chairman. Just on that final point, Mr Mayor, could you write to all Assembly Members on that criteria?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Of course.

Gareth Bacon AM: That is something that is worrying everybody and it would be very useful to have it. Thank you.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Also, hopefully I will be able to give you an idea of when it will happen because I am not quite sure but I am meeting the Commissioner later on today and we will discuss this, as you will appreciate, when we do meet. I should hopefully, by the time I write to you, also give you an idea of when we think the evaluation will take place.

Gareth Bacon AM: That is great. Thank you.

2017/3708 - London's Security after Brexit

[Len Duvall AM](#)

Are you concerned about the impact of Brexit on London's security, for example in regard to the MPS being able to access the critical data it needs to protect London from terrorist threats as links with the EU are loosened?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you, Deputy Chairman. It is important that the Brexit deal for the UK is the right one for London. I have and will continue to work to protect London's interests and I am working to strengthen London's ties further with cities in Europe.

In March 2017 following the atrocious terrorist attacks I visited Brussels and Paris. As part of these visits we also discussed security co-operation post-Brexit. It continues to be important that we learn from each other and show solidarity in the face of an assault on our shared values of life. My most important message throughout this has been that we approach Brexit in the right spirit, confidently and with the goal of ensuring continued security for London.

Counterterrorism, of course, is a particular area where future security co-operation is important but we must remember that the use of tools such as the European Arrest Warrant, Europol, the European Criminal Records Information System, passenger name records and the Schengen Information System have a significant role to play in the fight against crime in general. Terrorism is not the only crime that crosses borders and for many years police have been deployed overseas to assist in the collective effort against all crime. On the whole, there is consensus that it is in the interests of both the UK and the EU that that co-operation on security continues. It is essential that the Government prioritises security and moves quickly to settle future security co-operation. The tools I have mentioned have all been identified by senior colleagues in the MPS as significant and are in need of being maintained or replaced. As part of the negotiation, the voices of experienced officers and security experts must be taken into account.

Finally, nationally the National Police Chiefs' Council and the National Crime Agency are undertaking work to ascertain the operational requirements post-Brexit and MOPAC is involved in these discussions.

Len Duvall AM: Thank you very much, Mr Mayor. Can I just say? Look, I agree with you and I am not making party political issues. It is very complex what the Government is trying to do, whatever the outcome. Whether we disagree with them or not, this is one issue where there should not be allowed any drift or uncertainty and we should be further ahead of the game than where we are.

The House of Lords EU Committee has done a very useful piece of work highlighting some of the difficulties around this, particularly about data-sharing and Europol. We now need to step up. I know that you do regularly meet with the Home Secretary, but we need some action. I would not normally put you on the spot now, but this is the sort of action that we might need. Can you seek an urgent meeting with the Home Secretary to gauge some progress on this matter?

We know there are some important issues around legal jurisdiction, but we must have a sense of movement that does not just rely on goodwill. We all know it is in our interests to do this but we actually need to do it. Confusion and uncertainty means that the people that operate the service will start to take decisions and it will become slower. The slower those decisions are taken, there will be a tragedy. There will be many tragedies on the back of this if we do not get this right. Therefore, what I am asking you to do is urgently met with the Home Secretary.

Will you also link up with Police and Crime Commissioners across the country? London's MPS is not just dealing with London. We have a sense of leadership for the rest of policing in London.

Would you make them have common cause with the Government so that it has a sense of urgency to get on with this matter and to be clear about the direction that we are traveling?

Will you also contact your counterparts in other devolved assemblies and parliaments like Scotland and Wales? Northern Ireland is a bit difficult at the moment, granted, but there are interested political parties there that I am sure would share the common cause of moving this issue on further. We cannot risk drift and at the moment there is too much concentration and rightly so. They need to be able to twin-track. However, this is so important in terms of security for London, for this nation and for Europe. It is in our interests but we cannot rely on that. It does not work that way. We need to move forward.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Can I, Deputy Chairman, respond to that powerful question? As a consequence of the House of Lords EU Committee report and the representations made by Assembly Member Duvall, I will give some thought to how we can accelerate the reassurance that we need, working with the Police and Crime Commissioners and the devolved administrations to get this reassurance.

I will just say this by way of reassurance to Londoners. In the meantime, of course, all these things are still in play. The concern that Assembly Member Duvall is alluding to is what happens if, for example, there is no transitional deal in March 2019. Question: do we fall off the cliff-edge when it comes to security matters as well? I have been quite clear that security must not be used as a bargaining chip. There was some confusion in the media about what members of the Government were saying in relation to this.

The evidence given by our police officers to that Committee should worry us if there is no deal done in relation to security. Some of the questions in relation to Europol passenger name records and access to criminal records are the sorts of gaps that could lead to the safety of Londoners being jeopardised. Let me work on how I can accelerate the reassurance that we all need to make sure that the cross-borders work that takes place, which has led to people being brought back to London to face justice, for example, terrorists, which has led to dangerous people not being allowed to come here, which has led to good working together to investigate crime carries on after we leave the EU. I will do that and I will then write back to Assembly Member Duvall to let him know what action I have taken, because he can then pass on the action we have taken as a consequence.

Len Duvall AM: Thank you.

2017/3711 - Brexit and London's Higher Education Sector

[Joanne McCartney AM](#)

Given the Government's claims that there has been mass overstaying by foreign students have now been proved to be false by recent ONS figures, will you further renew your calls for HE students to be taken out of any immigration targets? What other steps does the government need to take to protect London's HE institutions during the chaotic Brexit negotiations and post Brexit?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you for that question. The UK has a strong reputation as a place for global talent and we must ensure that we continue to be a beacon for talent from across the world. International students should never have been included in the net migration target. This is a great export opportunity for London and the UK. What other service export would be politicised in this way? As the recent Office for National Statistics (ONS) data published in August this year shows, there is, and I quote, “No evidence of a major issue of non-EU students overstaying their entitlement to stay”. Some will of course stay on for further study and research or move into skilled work opportunities here. This is something that we should welcome. We should also be extremely proud that London’s higher education sector is world-class. We have four universities in the world’s top 40, we have world-leading institutions and specialist institutions, including the Royal Colleges, the London Business School and national research centres, such as The Francis Crick Institute. London continues to be the most popular city in the world for international higher education students. It is the higher education capital of the world.

However, this success cannot be taken for granted and our universities need policies that support them, not work against them. In my recent meeting with the Secretary of State for Exiting the EU, the Rt. Hon David Davis MP, I was joined by Professor Alice Gast, President of Imperial College London, who made this point persuasively. My priority is for the Government to introduce a clear post-study work opportunity for international students, one that universities can include during recruitment periods. I am pleased the Home Secretary has commissioned the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) to assess the impact of international students and I will be responding and making the case for clear policies that support our universities.

Joanne McCartney AM: Thank you. You are quite right that London is a world leader in our higher education sector. The benefits of that ripple out into the wider economy. Did you get a sense from your meeting with Government that it understood the benefits of the higher education sector and it is going to work with you to ensure that that sector is not damaged? I note what you say about the Home Secretary’s immigration work, but I understand that is not going to report until next year at the earliest.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Yes. I am always the optimist and there are some pieces of good news. [The Rt. Hon] David Davis [MP] gave the impression that he understands the importance of higher education not just to London’s economy but the UK’s economy, the synergy between research and development (R&D) and employers loving London because of our universities. Just bear in mind the proximity also of Oxford and Cambridge to London as well. I am also optimistic because of the announcement from Jo Johnson [MP, Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation], who recently reiterated the Government’s commitment to underwrite the funding for all successful bids made by the UK participants for Horizon 2020 that are submitted before we leave the EU.

The problem though is that if you are a potential student, if you are a postgrad, if you are a research student, if you are an academic, you are nervous about what will happen when we leave the EU. That is why reassurance is required at all stages. We are going to be submitting evidence to the MAC. You are right that it will not report for a while. That is why it is important the Prime Minister, who is making a speech shortly in relation to the EU, needs to

give the reassurance, which should come from the Prime Minister, about the role of higher education going forward.

Joanne McCartney AM: Thank you. What the latest ONS figures show is the importance of basing policies and asks on evidence. What assurance can you give that your own work on Brexit and the impact it has the London economy is actually based in evidence?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Absolutely. I subscribe to the school of thought that people in this country have had enough of experts, as was indeed the view of [the Rt. Hon] Michael Gove [MP, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs]. I am of the view that the evidence is inarguable when it comes to our education in relation to the contribution to London, but also the contribution to the country. Put aside for a moment the economic benefits. Think of the influence we have when you have world leaders educated in our country; think of the influence we have across the world when we have some of our alumni who are chief executives, teachers elsewhere around the world. The idea that we would somehow diminish inadvertently the role we have around the world by a bad negotiation with the EU or by an immigration policy that disadvantages students who want to come here and study and then work here does not make sense to me.

Joanne McCartney AM: Thank you.

2017/3769 - Mayor's Transport Strategy

[Keith Prince AM](#)

How closely does the Mayor's Transport Strategy match the promises in your transport manifesto?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you, Deputy Chairman. My draft Transport Strategy sets out how I will deliver my manifesto pledges and my longer-term ambitions for London. I have already delivered a number of my manifesto promises, including my commitment to freeze TfL fares and have introduced the Hopper fare that has been used over 100 million times already. I have overseen the successful launch of London's Night Tube after it stalled under the previous Mayor, approved four river crossings in East London and committed a record amount of funding, around £770 million, to improving cycling across the city. These are just some of the many transport improvements over the first 16 months of my time in office. The current TfL business plan is designed to deliver my priorities. It includes £2.5 billion of funding that will help get Londoners walking, cycling and using public transport more.

Progress has already been made on removing traffic from Oxford Street through close collaboration with Westminster City Council. I recently launched the Liveable Neighbourhoods programme, which will lead to local improvements across London. I am committed to delivering a London-wide cycle network. Later this year, I will be providing further details on my Vision Zero approach to reduce road danger on London streets. In my manifesto, I committed to delivering a zero-carbon city by 2050 and my draft Transport Strategy sets out how this can be achieved, complemented by my recently-published London Environment Strategy. I am

introducing the Toxicity Charge (T-Charge) in October, as well as fulfilling my manifesto pledge to consult Londoners on an early introduction of the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ).

As I set out in my manifesto, I am committed to improve public transport accessibility. TfL's business plan includes a record £200 million for accessibility improvements on the Underground. I am continuing to upgrade the bus and Tube networks and have committed to delivering the Rotherhithe to Canary Wharf crossing and extension to Bakerloo line and Crossrail 2. Significant progress has been made on all these fronts. Finally, Deputy Chairman, a key part of my manifesto is to deliver more affordable housing and my draft Transport Strategy outlines how this will be delivered in a sustainable way. TfL is delivering 50% affordable homes across their surplus sites.

Keith Prince AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor, that is very kind. In your manifesto, not the earlier work of fiction that you published during your election, you said:

"I will ensure that the markets for licensed taxi drivers and for private hire vehicles are fair, with special privileges built in, as they always have been, for those who become a licensed London taxi driver."

Could you tell me what extra special privileges you have provided?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Sure. A special privilege we have added is more taxi cab ranks; another special privilege is more of our bus lanes being used by black taxis; another privilege is speaking to councils to get more of their bus lanes used by taxis and working with them for more taxi cab ranks; another privilege is us using revenues to quadruple the number of compliance officers to take action against the PHVs, which are causing huge problems. Some would say it is a privilege us giving them a diesel scrappage scheme to help them move from diesel black cabs. Others would argue it is a privilege that is helping them move to contactless and credit cards. Some would also argue it is a privilege giving them a grant towards buying a greener taxi. It is really important to recognise black taxis have played a huge role as part of the public transport family. I want them to carry on doing so.

Keith Prince AM: They are not really all that special, are they, Mr Mayor? You must practise that laugh a bit better.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Tell me any other previous Mayor who has done more.

Keith Prince AM: They are not really all that special, are they, Mr Mayor, because --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Tell me any other previous Mayor who has done more.

Keith Prince AM: -- they do not really do very much than already has been committed, but do you think it is really a special privilege to force, as from 1 January [2018], black cab drivers to have to pay over £60,000 for a new cab? Do you think it is really a privilege that the enforcement team are no longer run by the TPH, and to marshal events, they now have to get written permission from another body? Is it really a privilege that there is only one roadside

charging point at this moment in time in London, when it has been accepted by you, Mr Mayor, and promised by you, Mr Mayor, that there will be 75 by Christmas? Do you really think there will be 75 charging points by Christmas, Mr Mayor?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Let me address that. I know, Deputy Chairman, that the Assembly Member could not answer which previous mayors have done more for black taxis than I have, but as far as black taxis are concerned, he will be aware, because he reads the same newspaper as I do, I am sure, of the criticism I receive from PHV operators about the special privileges I am giving to black taxis. They are always complaining about how it is an unlevel playing field, because of all the help I give black taxi drivers. I meet, as does my Deputy Mayor [for Transport], regularly with those that represent black taxi drivers and we take on board some of the challenges they face. They are facing huge challenges, the amount of time it takes to do the knowledge, the cost of a black taxi, and we are trying to help them as much as we possibly can and we will carry on engaging with them. It is unfair to assume that because we are trying to fix the air in London, it is unfair to criticise us for trying to improve the toxic air coming from vehicles, blaming black taxis for that. We are not doing that.

Keith Prince AM: Mr Mayor, what about the 75 charging points you promised by Christmas? When are they going to be delivered? Are they going to be delivered by Christmas, Mr Mayor? As from 1 January you are not allowed to buy or register a diesel taxi and so someone who actually wants to use their brand-new £60,000-plus electric taxi will not have anywhere to charge the thing.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Again, the Assembly Member is in danger of being unfair, which is unlike him. He will have seen the draft Environment Strategy I published and will have seen the draft Transport Strategy I published. He will also have seen the work we have done with councils to have more charging points, not simply on the estate we own, but working with councils to have charging points elsewhere as well. We are working with the black taxi trade to make sure we can have more charging points as well, but some of this is working with --

Keith Prince AM: They are not convinced that you are going to be delivering the 75 that you promised. A simple question, Mr Mayor, and if you cannot answer, if it is too difficult, I understand. Are you going to have 75 roadside charging points in place by Christmas, as you promised the taxi trade, yes or no?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): We will have all the charging points that I promised the taxi trade on the timelines I promised the taxi trade.

Keith Prince AM: We can expect 75 roadside charging points that you promised by Christmas this year?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): There is a difference, you see, between Assembly Members trying to deftly put words in my mouth that I did not say and me keeping the promise that I did make. I will keep the promise that I did make.

Keith Prince AM: There is definitely a lot of difference between the promises you make and the promises you keep, I will give you that, Mr Mayor. If I can --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The rehearsed ones are the best ones.

Keith Prince AM: I made that one up, actually. You just gave me it on the plate and I took it. Mr Mayor, if we move on, you have received a cross-party letter from MPs and I would also add my pressure on that, Mr Mayor. I understand that you cannot give a commitment today, but can I press you, Mr Mayor, and will you accept from the letter from the cross-party MPs for London that we will not be renewing Uber's licence? Will you take that on board, Mr Mayor?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Deputy, I am not sure how many times I can say this without getting boring, which is unlike me to be boring --

Keith Prince AM: Really?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): -- but I will not give a running commentary on the application made to TfL in relation to a licence. You will appreciate that it would be improper for me to do so.

Keith Prince AM: Moving on to Uber, Mr Mayor, do you think that it is reasonable that the Chair of the Night Time Commission is at this moment in time - or certainly will be very shortly - representing Uber drivers in a London court, when indeed he is the Night Time Commissioner and he should be representing all elements of the night-time economy, which would include black cabs as well as Uber? Do you think that is reasonable, Mr Mayor?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): It is important to get the facts correct before making assertions. The facts are that the Chair of the Night Time Commission [Philip Kolvin QC], who works, roughly speaking, a day a week as Chair of the Night Time Commission, is also a fulltime barrister and a Queen's Counsel (QC), and one of the country's leading QCs around licensing. He, for example, acted for Fabric, which stayed open as a consequence of a good deal done between the Council and the police and Fabric. His expertise is in relation to live music venues and nightclubs. He plays no role at all in relation to the licence of Uber, but it is also worth reminding you, and I am sure you probably know this, that lawyers - and you will love the pun here - operate on the cab rank principle, which is that they take the case that they are given and they are instructed on. When he was first given this brief, he took advice from the Bar Council's relevant committee to ask if there were grounds for him not to accept this case and they said there were not. What you are in danger of doing is making an unfair assertion, which just is not there.

Keith Prince AM: Mr Mayor, I am sure you would agree that black cabs are one of the many stakeholders in the night-time economy. This is the Chair's role and responsibility, along with the Night Czar:

“The Chair will have a detailed understanding of policies, processes and systems underpinning the night-time economy. They will also have a track record of working collaboratively and finding common ground between diverse stakeholders.”

If you are representing Uber against the black taxi trade, you cannot find any common ground, can you, in a court of law while you are contesting against each other? Do you not think - because I think most people in London would think - that there is a conflict of interest, Mr Mayor?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): In those circumstances, I would expect the Chair of the Night Time Commission, who is also a barrister, to seek advice from the Monitoring Officer at the GLA and ask, “Excuse me, Mr Monitoring Officer, is there a conflict of interest in me taking on this case?” I would expect the Monitoring Officer to give a response.

Keith Prince AM: Sorry, Mr Mayor, the question is whether you, not him --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): In this case, he did get advice, he did take advice. Let me answer the question.

Keith Prince AM: Mr Mayor, there is no question --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): You are making serious assertions. He took advice and the advice from City Hall was that there no conflict.

Keith Prince AM: Mr Mayor, there is no question about him. I am sure he is doing everything within the rules. The question to you, Mr Mayor, do you not think that is a conflict of interest? Do you not think that you would not be surprised that the leaders of the taxi firm have lost all confidence in your Night Time Commission Chair because of this conflict of interest? You are the man who makes the decision on who the Night Time Chair is. It is a question for you, whether you believe there is a conflict of interest there.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I agree with the views of the Monitoring Officer at City Hall, which is there is no conflict of interest.

Keith Prince AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor.

2017/3665 - Rough Sleeping

[Tom Copley AM](#)

After rough sleeping increased under your predecessor, what assessments will you put in place to ensure any measures taken to reduce rough sleeping are achieving success?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The latest statistics show that during my first year, the rise in rough sleeping has effectively halted for the first time since 2009. It rose every year from 2009 to 2016, with 8,108 people seen in the streets last year, virtually unchanged from the year before. This contrasts with a rise of 7% the year before and a doubling since 2010, when the

reported figure was 3,975. Since I became Mayor, a sharper focus on rough sleeping has shown early signs of progress, but these figures highlight just how much work needs to be done. Clearly one person living rough on the streets of our great city is one too many. The fact remains that over 8,000 people sleeping rough in a global city like London is simply unacceptable.

I am determined to do something about it and so have established my No Nights Sleeping Rough taskforce to bring together key partners to identify what interventions are needed to help rough sleepers off the streets. Last year, the taskforce helped secure an additional £4.2 million towards new targeted services for rough sleepers. I have also recently announced a number of smaller projects funded by my £1 million Rough Sleeping Innovation Fund (RSIF), including a new web-based tool to cross-check key details from the Missing People database with those on my Combined Homelessness and Information Network (CHAIN) database on rough sleepers in London, two projects helping female rough sleepers and a project based on the Housing First principles to help those with multiple and complex needs. All these services look to help rough sleepers by recognising the complex, varied reasons why people end up on the streets. The taskforce includes representatives from the key councils and organisations who are helping rough sleepers and are well-placed to make sure our services are comprehensive and effective.

What is more, the investment I am making in new and improved services, such as my new night transport team, to help the number of rough sleepers who use the Night Tubes and buses may mean the number of people seen sleeping rough rises in the short term. I am working closely with the Government's new rough sleeping and homelessness taskforce and advisory panel not only to make the case for extra resources, but also for the Government to address the longer-term underlying causes of rough sleeping.

Tom Copley AM: Thank you very much for that answer, Mr Mayor. I particularly welcome the action you have announced recently on people who are sleeping on public transport. We have been looking at hidden homelessness on the Housing Committee recently and it is a big problem. First of all, there was some concern about the data-sharing between CHAIN and the Home Office. That was happening under a memorandum of understanding (MOU) established under your predecessor. Can I ask what progress you have made establishing a new MOU with the Home Office and what measures to define data-sharing analysis will this contain and will it be published by the GLA?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you for your question. It is just worth reminding ourselves that EU citizens do not have access or recourse to public funds or some of the other facilities that UK citizens have access to. Often, they are vulnerable and they are in crisis, so they need support. I want to make sure that the Government's policy is implemented in a way that ensures that EU nationals sleeping rough get the advice and information they need to live safely in London and to make sure those who are vulnerable are given the support they need if they choose to return home, accessing those services they need. We are currently working on the MOU. Deputy Mayor [for Housing and Residential Development] James Murray is working on that. I have got no problems at all sharing that with you in your role once that has been finalised. As you will appreciate, there is a consultation, there is negotiation taking place with

the Home Office. The key issue you are alluding to is the sharing of data that is taking place routinely and my understanding is it is aggregated data shared routinely, and the concern you will have, I suspect, is individual level data. I will make sure that James Murray shares that with you.

Tom Copley AM: Thank you. I welcome that being published. There was a rather damning National Audit Office (NAO) report this week into the Department for Communities and Local Government's (DCLG) handling of the doubling of rough sleeping and the impacts of homelessness on public spending. What actions would you like to see from the Government to support efforts to reduce homelessness and eliminate rough sleeping in London?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The NAO report is extremely useful because there is now a direct link that the NAO shows between some of the welfare benefit changes from the Government and street homelessness, rough sleeping.

Tom Copley AM: Directly contributing to the rise in homelessness?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Cause and effect. The NAO, as I say, is inarguable. The obvious thing the Government could do is change their welfare benefit policies, which are accelerating people leaving home and living rough on the streets. We have got to recognise some of the problems are complex: mental health issues, it could be family breakdown, some of the issues around young people not having work and welfare benefits, alcohol dependencies. That is often the reason why we work with charities, who are experts in this field, but the Government needs to do much, much more. I welcome the involvement of Sajid Javid [MP, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government] in chairing the taskforce. James Murray will be attending that. We are working closely with the Government, not simply resources to deal with the issues, but stopping people being made homeless, rough sleepers, in the first place.

Tom Copley AM: Thank you very much, Mr Mayor.

2017/3796 - Metropolitan Line Extension

[Shaun Bailey AM](#)

Is the delivery of the Metropolitan Line Extension an opportunity to convince the Secretary of State for Transport that you can be trusted with more rail devolution?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you, Deputy Chairman. When the Mayor of London was a Conservative, the Government agreed that TfL would assume responsibility for the Metropolitan line extension in return for greater control over suburban rail routes. I am sorry, as indeed are commuters, that the Government has unfortunately u-turned on this. The potential benefits of devolution could not be clearer from the success of the London Overground and TfL Rail: better services, improved reliability and more satisfied customers. This has been seen on old lines that are now part of the TfL network, such as Euston to Watford Junction, Gospel Oak to Barking and Liverpool Street to Chingford. The gains brought about by previous devolution

applies as much to the eight London Overground and TfL Rail stations that sit outside the GLA boundary as they do to the 114 that are in London.

The current one-size-fits-all approach to rail franchising means rail services across London often fail to live up to their potential. I have suggested to the Secretary of State that the Department for Transport (DfT) and TfL look at the barriers to wider devolution in London and in particular assess the further recommendations in the Gibb report that a position is taken by 2019 on whether to devolve Southern's Metro services to TfL in 2021. I have recently had a positive meeting with the Secretary of State for Transport and we agreed a joint statement of the importance of progressing Crossrail 2. I will continue to engage with him and the DfT to consider how to best take forward the recommendations in the Gibb report. On the Metropolitan line extension --

Shaun Bailey AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. We are pressed for time, Mayor, and I would just like to pose you a few direct questions.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Sure.

Shaun Bailey AM: Thank you for that. You can send that to me and I will read your notes.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I will do that, sure.

Shaun Bailey AM: What, in your opinion, needs to happen to make sure the Metropolitan line extension is delivered?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am optimistic. I am meeting with the MPs in that area shortly. We are working with the Council to bid for Government's Infrastructure Fund. There is a shortfall of £50 million. If we can tap into that, also get local funders involved, we can get going on the extension.

Shaun Bailey AM: Do you think not delivering the Metropolitan line will weaken our case for rail devolution? Around this room, we all support you in that, it is cross-party, but it looks to me that if we cannot deliver this, why would the Government then trust you to deliver better rail devolution?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): It is just worth getting the sequencing right. The Government did a U-turn before the Metropolitan line extension announcement in relation to the shortfall of funding and so you cannot do a cause-and-effect in relation to the shortfall of the Metropolitan line and the Government's U-turn, but I think --

Shaun Bailey AM: Hold on there. The Metropolitan line extension does not even warrant a mention in your Transport Strategy. If you look at the Bakerloo line, it is in there nine times. Are Londoners to believe that you are no longer interested in doing this?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): No. The Metropolitan line extension benefits people outside of London, but we are still committed --

Shaun Bailey AM: So will rail devolution. That is not a reasonable --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): It still benefits Londoners a lot as well. We are still committed to £50 million for the Metropolitan line extension and that is still there. The money promised is still there. I am not resiling on that promise. What has happened though is the cost of it is £50 million more, so my point is we will pay the £50 million we promised, but someone needs to pay the other £50 million.

Shaun Bailey AM: Time is pressing, but if we - you - did not sit on your hands so long, that £50 million would probably not be as large. It is growing, because you need to act. Direct question: can you commit to delivering the Metropolitan line extension?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): It is a direct question based on a misleading stat. It is not the case that the cost of the Metropolitan line extension has gone up because I have been "sitting on my hands".

Shaun Bailey AM: TfL wrote to my colleague, Gareth Bacon [AM], and said it has been increased.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): No, the cost has increased because there was no cost estimate done by TfL before. What happened was previously --

Shaun Bailey AM: How can it increase when we had done no costing before that? I do not understand that.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Let me explain to you in plain English. The first time --

Tony Arbour AM (Deputy Chairman in the Chair): No, would you explain to him at a later date, perhaps in writing in plain English, please, because time has run out.

Shaun Bailey AM: Thank you, Mayor.

2017/3664 - A Post Garden Bridge London

[Len Duvall AM](#)

Now that the garden bridge has finally been put out its misery, what infrastructure projects will you be funding that will enable more sustainable transport in the capital?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): My draft Transport Strategy sets out the ambitious goal of achieving an 80% mode shift for sustainable transport modes by 2041. This means more people walking, cycling and using public transport, making London a better place in which to live and work. I am determined to deliver the necessary infrastructure improvements to support more sustainable travel across the city. The Living Neighbourhoods programme was launched early in the summer, which will provide funding to boroughs to deliver improvements for walking, cycling and public transport. This will be complemented by plans to deliver a London-wide

cycling network. Transforming Oxford Street by removing traffic was a key manifesto pledge and we are working with Westminster Council to deliver this. Improving the Tube, bus and rail networks is also essential to support more sustainable transport and I am committed to continue the upgrade of the Tube and bus networks and make wide improvements.

I want to see Crossrail 2 delivered, which will lead to 200,000 new jobs and 200,000 new homes and provide a massive boost to the UK economy. I am keen that an extension to the Bakerloo line is delivered to Lewisham, opening up opportunities for new jobs and homes in South East London and improving travel options. I will support a Government-led extension to the Elizabeth line eastwards from Abbey Wood to support regeneration in the Thames Gateway corridor. My draft Transport Strategy seeks to provide alternative, genuinely sustainable river crossings. I am working to deliver a new walking and cycling crossing between Rotherhithe and Canary Wharf and also the feasibility of a new Docklands Light Railway (DLR) crossing further east between Gallions Reach and Thamesmead. I am clear, in conclusion, that these new infrastructure projects will not only enable London to become one of the most sustainable cities in the world, but will improve transport provisions in London for all of us.

Len Duvall AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. Can I just also raise with you, in terms of the road infrastructure crossings and some of the messages from TfL, one of the big causes of air pollution is static traffic and keeping it moving? It does not necessarily have to move at speed because that is one of the issues, and I know that there is some thinking in your team of moving on to the next stage of how we can reduce more. When TfL is approached with issues and suggestions to reduce air quality issues, like Silvertown link, it is not quite on board. There is some interesting work being done by the Highways Agency around that.

Do you believe that there are sustainable road crossing solutions? You have it in your transport plan for Gallions and I call it the Bexley crossing. I know it is not called that, but in terms of the issues it is there. We welcome for those parts north of the River Thames and south of the River Thames there on the public transport issues and we have a good history of public transport crossings, but there is an issue about traffic moving on both sides of the river and interconnections. What is your thinking about that?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Your question has illustrated why the status quo on roads is not an option. There were representations made to me when I became Mayor to cancel the Silvertown Tunnel because the tunnel contained roads. The evidence I saw was actually the current situation is intolerable in relation to air quality, but also the congestion, which causes problems for businesses. The Silvertown Tunnel is designed in a way that we can maximise also buses, the guaranteed bus lane, but also we can make sure those people who are walking and cycling can use the facilities of a bus to get from this side to the other side, which will free up the congestion caused by Blackwall and other issues around that part of London.

Now, the old maxim is: you build a road and people will use it. I have some sympathy with that. We do not want to create a generation for roads, but what you are alluding to is the fact that there is congestion there and we need to find ways to alleviate it, but also the potential east of London for development of a brownfield site. That is one of the reasons why I approved the London Overground Barker riverside crossing. It is really important just to say that to you: we

have not ruled out further crossings. In fact, my Transport Strategy gives details of some of the other crossings in the east of London and there are four in total. I met last week with Lord Andrew Adonis, who is the Chair of the National Infrastructure Commission. He is quite keen for us to look at river crossings in the east, so we will be working with him in relation to modelling, but also how we can do it in a way that does not risk air quality. You are right that we cannot just let it be because it is not working for our city, but also those in the east outside our city as well.

Len Duvall AM: Thank you.

2017/3754 - Holiday hunger

[Fiona Twycross AM](#)

What is your estimate of the number of children that went hungry in London during the recent school holidays?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am afraid that the data required to accurately report how many children went hungry during the recent school holidays in London does not exist. However, we do know that there are around 700,000 children living in poverty in London and are therefore at risk of going hungry during the school holidays. Any hunger among children in a city as prosperous as London is simply not acceptable. I am pleased the Government has now dropped plans to end universal free school meals for four to seven-year-olds, but free school meals are not always taken up by children who really need them and are obviously not available in school holidays.

I therefore give my full support to the Kitchen Social programme run by the Mayor's Fund for London. This summer, the programme delivered holiday food provision across 16 boroughs and served approximately 10,000 free school meals to 1,600 children. This October half-term, Kitchen Social will be supporting an additional 30 Kitchen Social clubs, but this support is only the tip of the iceberg. To make the programme more sustainable, the Mayor's Fund is raising the profile of holiday hunger through campaigning and evidencing the negative impact it has on young Londoners. As you know, Rosie Boycott, Chair of the London Food Board, is passionate about the issue of holiday hunger. My new London Food Strategy, to be published early in 2018, will include a focus on food poverty and hunger to help all Londoners to secure access to healthy, affordable food.

I also support the work of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Hunger and Food Poverty and its Chair, Sir Frank Field MP, who is raising a Bill to ensure that there is a statutory responsibility for this UK-wide. However, food poverty and hunger do not exist in isolation, and that is why I am working to make London more affordable so parents can feed their children in the holidays. That means making public transport more affordable, making sure homes are genuinely affordable and also making sure Londoners get a decent wage for doing a decent day's work.

Fiona Twycross AM: Thank you. You have anticipated most of my supplementary questions, but I really welcome the work of the Mayor's Fund for London on this area. I saw some of the

work they did in the pilots last summer and the difference they can make, albeit with a relatively small number of children, is quite remarkable.

What more would you like the project to achieve going forward? You have mentioned the work in the half-term, but have you got particular ambitions and goals for the project going forward?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): One of the key benefits of the work in relation to the Kitchen Social project is around social integration. Matthew Ryder [QC, Deputy Mayor for Social Integration, Social Mobility and Community Engagement] is working with Rosie [Boycott, Chair of the London Food Board] to see how we can target those parts of London to try to get a better connectivity between children from different communities.

The frank answer is we are limited by the resources we have and the resources we can raise. As you know, we have got no statutory responsibility in this area, but we think it is important. The success of this scheme is contingent upon how much money we can raise with the Mayor's Fund, the generosity of those who give to the Mayor's Fund, but also how much money we can leverage in from other areas as well. My frustration is the lack of resources, but clearly if [Sir] Frank Field [MP, Chair, All Party Parliamentary Group on Hunger and Food Poverty] is successful in relation to moving the Government nationally in relation to recognising this big gap during the holidays, that will help us in relation to the work we are going to do in this area.

Fiona Twycross AM: I am sure you are aware that the right to food is a human right, and you highlight the scandal of child hunger in our city. Are you concerned that Government policy, particularly around Social Security and welfare reform, is potentially increasing the levels of children who are going hungry in London?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Absolutely. There are 700,000 children living in poverty in London. That is why I referred in my first answer to the interconnection between the cost of living in London, wages, housing, transport. I wanted to make sure we addressed those issues as well. They are all interconnected and the report referred to by Tom Copley [AM] in relation to the NAO report talked about the connection between welfare benefit changes from this Government and homelessness. I know from my evidence as an MP and also as the Mayor of London, there is also a connection between children going hungry and Government policy in relation to all sorts of issues around housing, around transport, in relation to the remuneration people are getting. That is why all our policies are connected in that extent, of trying to address the issue of young Londoners not being able to fulfil their potential. Food poverty, food hunger during the holidays is just one of the things we have to address.

Fiona Twycross AM: Thank you.

2017/3703 - Police funding

[Andrew Dismore AM](#)

What has been the Government response to your request for additional funding for the Met?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you for this question. It allows me once again to discuss one of the more pressing issues in my mayoralty. I have written recently to the Home Secretary, Amber Rudd [MP], to raise the issue once again, as I have done repeatedly since I became the Mayor. I will continue to engage with the Government in the run-up to the autumn budget. I want to thank the Assembly for its cross-party work on the most pressing matter that we face in relation to policing and I am sure any further representations you make ahead of the budget will be very helpful.

You will recall that the MPS has already delivered significant savings of more than £600 million over recent years. Front counters have closed, buildings have been sold and almost 3,000 PCSOs and police staff posts have had to be lost. A further £400 million of savings are required over the next four years because the flat cash budget settlement provided by the Government failed to take into account the increasing demand or inflationary pressures on policing. Of the £400 million savings, they have identified £200 million, which has already meant some hard choices and difficult decisions. As I have made clear previously, finding another £200 million will be very tough.

Unfortunately, over the last few years crime in our city has been increasing in volume and complexity. We desperately need the Government to reverse the cuts and provide a real-term increase to MPS budgets. We also need the Government to announce that it is abandoning its funding formula review. We also need the Government to provide the full funding of the National and International Cities Grant to reflect the true additional costs that come with policing the nation's capital. The Government has been too slow and too quiet on the issue. The MPS is running out time. We have to make decisions on the budgets and workforce now. If Ministers do not act and the current funding arrangements remain, officer numbers may fall below 30,000 for the first time since 2003.

Andrew Dismore AM: Thank you for your answer. That paints a pretty bleak picture unless we actually do get more from the Government. I hope we can all welcome the reports that the Government is finally considering giving the police officers a much-deserved pay rise. Whether it is enough for our hardworking London MPS officers, it is rather debatable, to say the least. The \$64,000 question though - and it is rather more than that - is where the money is coming from to fund this pay rise. Has the Government indicated they will meet the cost of the pay rise or will it have to come from the existing over-stretched MPS budget? If so, what will the impact be on the MPS's finances?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): On that point, firstly, can I thank you for making the point how hard our police work day in, day out? In fact, the inflation is, roughly speaking, 3%. The announcement from the Government of 2% this year, 1% from next year, that does not appear to be funded. We discovered this yesterday. My understanding is that the 2% increase will mean an additional cost of about £18 million per year. We have got to find that from a budget that has already got massive problems in it. There is no point the Government announcing a pay increase if they are not going to fund it, in the context where we already have big problems with our budget in London.

Andrew Dismore AM: What would you say to those Conservative London MPs, like the two we have in Barnet, and especially the MP for Chipping Barnet, who says she does not recognise the £400 million shortfall in Government funding, who consistently voted for the central Government budgets that have led to this underfunding crisis in the MPS and who now questions the need to close the police station in Chipping Barnet?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): What always astonishes me is the collective amnesia from Liberal Democrat politicians and Conservative politicians who are responsible for the cuts we have seen over the last seven years. They laugh. Conservative Assembly Members and Liberal Democrat Assembly Members laugh when I have to remind them we have faced, since 2010, £600 million worth of cuts. MPs voted at every budget, 2010, 2011, 2013, 2014, 2015. Since 2015 we have got to find another £400 million, a £1 billion cut from the MPS budget voted through by the MPs you refer to. At the same time, they say how wonderful - and they are, by the way - our police officers are. At the same time, they vote through a 1% increase only in relation to pay in previous years. We know inflation is 3%, so nobody should be surprised that police officers look aghast at the MPs who are now celebrating a cap being lifted and an increase in their pay of 2%, in the context of there being fewer police officers, fewer police staff, front counters are closing down, police officers being stretched and the prospect of police numbers in London going to levels we have not seen since 2003.

Andrew Dismore AM: You mentioned the national police funding allocation formula, which could be reduced from 2018/19. The estimates were that the MPS stood to lose somewhere between £184 million and £700 million from its yearly budget under the previous version. Have there been any indications from the Government that they will drop this scheme and, if not, what would the outcome of that be?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): One of the consequences of the Government calling a General Election in June is not simply the cost - £140 million spent on this General Election, which was not needed - think about the police officers that could have paid for. Also, they have missed the boat for the police funding formula to take place next year, which is good news for us, because we get another year's worth of grace, which is one way of looking at it. They have not ruled out the police funding formula being changed in subsequent years. My call to the Government is to reverse the cuts, give us the funding that we need, give us the funding that experts say that we need, including the Government experts, but also say once and for all they will not be changing the police funding formula, which would punish London.

2017/3710 - Planning Committee report into offsite manufacturing and the Mayor's Housing Strategy

[Nicky Gavron AM](#)

What role do you see for offsite manufactured (OSM) homes contributing to the objectives identified in the Housing Strategy and wider strategic objectives?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Can I, Deputy Chairman, through you, congratulate the Planning Committee for producing such a timely and important report? I agree that we need to support greater housing delivery in London through additional housing construction activity

that takes place in factories, which is what we mean by offsite or precision-manufactured housing. We cannot deliver the number of new homes we need using traditional methods of construction alone. That is why alongside our work to boost construction skills in London and to secure access to the single market after Brexit, we need to support a greater role for precision manufacturing in home building. This has the benefit of boosting overall capacity in the construction sector and offers the potential of greater consistency and quality control, alongside additional benefits in terms of speed, delivery and cost efficiencies.

In my new draft London Housing Strategy, I set out how I will support precision-manufactured homes. I will do this by providing direct funding for these homes through my Affordable Housing programme, particularly through the Innovation Fund and my strategic partnership with housing associations. The first round of my Innovation Fund received a large number of bids, many of which were related to precision-manufactured homes. I recently announced the first Innovation Fund contract with Pocket Living, securing a deal under which at least a third of the 1,000 homes will be precision manufactured. I hope to announce further deals on an ongoing basis.

Alongside this, I am negotiating with Government to secure a London share of the National Accelerated Construction Fund in order to further support precision-manufactured housing in the capital. My new London Development Panel, which I am currently procuring, will include experts on precision manufacturing to support the public sector and housing associations to bring forward housing development.

My team is working also at how we can further support manufacturers and developers in working together to aggregate demand and build more homes through precision-manufactured housing. Precision-manufactured housing not only has the potential to have a positive impact on the pace, scale and quality of home-building but also to contribute positively to wider objectives. A more pleasant, safe and high-tech working environment has the potential to increase the attractiveness of the construction industry to a new pool of workers. It also provides an opportunity for London's growth to contribute even more to the prosperity of the whole of the country through the location of manufacturing facilities across the wider South East and beyond.

Nicky Gavron AM: Thank you very much for that very comprehensive response. Given that you are clearly seeing that offsite manufactured homes meet a whole range of your objectives and that you are consulting currently on your Strategies - Transport, Environment, Housing, and Economic Development to come - and then of course the London Plan, will you consider including policies and mechanisms to galvanise the sector when you come out with your final Strategies?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): We have to. We have to find ways to support the sector. It is a new sector. One of the things that really attracted me to it when I was reading about the sector after reading your report was how we can use the sector to help other parts of the country, actually. Precision manufacturing will not just help London but will help the rest of the southeast and the UK as well. Not only are we going to use the various Strategies we have, we are going to use the bully pulpit of City Hall to persuade others to use this as well.

Nicky Gavron AM: That is very exciting. Then you clearly see that London's demand could stimulate factories outside London and help us progress this new industrial sector. London could be leading that.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Absolutely. It is a good example of an interventionist industrial strategy, helping a sector, and I have not seen any downsides. Making the sector more attractive to a certain pool of workers, creating jobs, meeting the demand for more homes, helping employers outside of London, while being environmentally sustainable and value for money; the upsides are very persuasive.

Nicky Gavron AM: Can I just raise one more thing? I agree that the Housing Strategy is very strong in terms of how offsite manufactured homes can address the skills challenge that the construction industry faces - you have talked a lot about Brexit in that - but without supply, skills will not really fly, and in order to get the supply, you need demand. The industry has told me that they are poised to deliver but they need you to catalyse that change. You have believers. They are very interested in how you might help certainty of demand with your land. You have been talking too about how you are going to land assembly. Could you just say a little bit about how you can use your land assembly strategic partnership?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Sure. One of the representations made to me is, and I am paraphrasing, "Why would we invest in this sector when we are not sure of the demand going forward? We need the certainty of demand to make sure we invest in this and skill up people". We want to provide that reassurance and there are a number of ways we are going to provide that reassurance. The Innovation Fund shows there is money there to help. The deal we have done with Pocket [Living] is an example of a supplier we know uses this fund.

In relation to the assembly of land, sometimes that is used to give potential developers the certainty of knowing they can use the land but it has to be commercially viable in relation to the revolving fund. The revolving fund works to make sure we can get the money back. There are other pieces of land we have access to as well. We are happy to talk to members in the sector, whether it is those who are the manufacturers or other builders, about how we can give them the reassurance they need, bearing in mind of course we have TfL land we are bringing forward. We are hoping to do a deal with the Government around the London Estates Board on the NHS. I am happy to talk with the sector through my Deputy Mayors, if not through me, about how we can give them the reassurance they need. We want this sector to thrive and flourish. We want this to be a centre of excellence going forward.

2017/3584 - Protecting Londoners' human rights

[Sian Berry AM](#)

With increases in the number of Metropolitan Police officers armed with firearms and Tasers, and the use of intrusive tactics such as spit hoods and stop and search, what steps are you taking to ensure the human rights of all Londoners are respected?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am very clear that protecting Londoners is my first responsibility. That includes protecting their lives but also respecting and protecting their human rights as well, and despite the rise in crime over the last few years we should not forget that London is an overwhelmingly safe city and we need to ensure it remains so.

The MPS is a largely unarmed service and even with the increase in officers equipped with firearms and Tasers, they will certainly amount to a minority of police officers. My desire to maintain this, and that of the Commissioner, is clear. We both recognise that this is an essential building block of the British policing model of policing by consent. Unfortunately, recent events such as at London Bridge, Westminster, have highlighted that on occasion we rely on the police to take extreme actions to defend the lives of innocent people. Their courage in professionalism in responding to such threats should be acknowledged and praised.

We should also remember that Tasers do protect life, too. For example, in the attack at Leytonstone Tube station potential victims were protected and the suspect was Tasered and brought to justice, as happened in the case in Russell Square last year. Furthermore, the rise in the use of knives in London has to be addressed and intelligence-led stop and search can make a real contribution to reduce the numbers of people, especially young people, being stabbed and killed. However, I should be clear that I believe that stop and search has to be intelligence-led and not carried out indiscriminately. The work of the investigative and inspection agencies such as the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) and the HMIC has my support. MOPAC has, for a considerable period, also ensured the use of firearms, Tasers and intelligence-led stop and search data is open to the public through the use of dashboards.

For me the biggest game changer in ensuring the human rights of all people are protected is the successful rollout of 20,000 body-worn videos across the MPS. Human rights are best protected by openness and transparency, effective oversight and a commitment to learn from the transformation in police and public accountability.

Sian Berry AM: OK. Thank you, Mr Mayor. That is a very helpful answer. With my supplementary questions, I do not have much time and I wanted to focus a bit more on the tactics that might most likely impact Londoners' daily lives. You have not mentioned them yet.

If I could take spit hoods first, when they were first announced in September last year you were concerned and you insisted on a pilot instead of an immediate rollout. However, in July this year the police announced an extension to all the custody suites. I asked you for some evidence on the use of them so far and there are limited numbers, but they so far suggest that black people - and black women in particular - are much more likely to be hooded.

I wanted to ask: what was your measurement of success when evaluating the pilot in relation to your initial concerns?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): We have to be accurate. At present, the number of times these hoods have been used is low. They have been used on 11 women. What is clear is that the MPS and MOPAC are working to oversee and gain a better understanding concerning the use of the tactic. At present, the low numbers make drawing any conclusions about

disproportionality very unwise. The sample is simply too low. That is why the MPS has chosen to expand the pilot. As far as the evaluation of spit hoods is concerned, the data collected concerning the use of hoods will identify if mental health is a factor, for example. We have to make sure we evaluate all these things before anybody can properly draw the adverse conclusions you currently are.

Sian Berry AM: The numbers so far are small. They are, however, worrying. Just to conclude, you will be monitoring what is a continued pilot very closely for clearer evidence of discrimination?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): We will be monitoring them anyway. The issue of discrimination is a point further down the road but we have to monitor them to make sure they are safe, see how they are being used and who they are being used against. So far, again, good news. No complaints have been made about use, which is a good sign. The Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, the Deputy Commissioner and the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime always want to make sure that all the tools used by the police are used properly, and spit hoods is one of those that are used by the police.

Sian Berry AM: OK. On Tasers now, the data we have shows they are used more against black and minority ethnic (BAME) Londoners. I have asked in written questions about a policy of “no camera, no Taser” but your answers have not been absolutely clear, so just to ask. At the moment, two changes are being made: the rollout of body-worn video to police, and more Tasers and changes in the rules so that some officers can use them when they are on their own. What I want to make sure of is that officers who are not wearing a camera will not be able to carry a Taser, so that they are never used in an unwitnessed and unaccountable way. Can you reassure us that that will not happen?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I will reassure you and Londoners about Tasers. Most times when an officer pulls out a Taser, they do not use them. In 90% of the cases, they are not used. It is important to reassure Londoners of that. It is also important to reassure Londoners that, in relative terms, few officers carry a Taser. In a police service of around 31,000, roughly speaking, 1,500 officers will have a Taser.

Sian Berry AM: More narrowly, the change to single officer use is significant. What we want to know is just simply yes or no: will they be able to use it on their own if they are not equipped with body-worn video?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Of the 43 police forces around the country, nearly all of them, save for the MPS, have single officer use of a Taser. We are the only police service in the country that requires two police officers to be present. I have been reassured that these changes are sensible and proportionate. You will be aware we announced recently that body-worn video will also now be used by armed officers and Taser officers.

Sian Berry AM: You are not answering my question. Will body-worn video be required for officers who are allowed to use a Taser on their own?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): It depends on the circumstances.

Sian Berry AM: There should be a policy that just says yes or no on that.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Can I just say how incredibly naive your question is? Let me tell you why. An officer often has to make a split-second decision whether to use a Taser. I will give you the Russell Square example. In the Russell Square example last summer --

Sian Berry AM: It is about how they leave the office. Are they equipped with a Taser and body-worn video? Can they take a Taser out if they do not have body-worn video?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): If I can answer your question, in the Russell Square example last year, police officers got to the scene in less than six minutes. They were faced with somebody with a knife who had killed someone with a knife and was killing officers. That officer has to decide in a split second whether to use his Taser. The officer decided to use his Taser. I am not going to criticise an officer if he uses the Taser in that split second and has not turned on his body-worn video but you are right, in general terms normally officers should be using their body-worn video.

Sian Berry AM: It is whether they are wearing it when they leave the office.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Of course officers should be wearing their body-worn video. The question is whether they should use it.

Sian Berry AM: We are out of time.

Tony Arbour AM (Deputy Chairman in the Chair): Yes, you are out of time. Assembly Member Duvall?

Len Duvall AM: Mr Mayor, this is an important question and I thank the Green Group for asking it. Do you accept, Mr Mayor, that the human rights legislation works both ways and that public-sector employees, police, transport operators and all, should also not have to go about their duties being spat at in some way? The use of hoods, if it is monitored, if it is done correctly, is also around protection of those carrying out their duties on behalf of us.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Can I just say? The reason why I am frustrated with that question is because, look, I answer more than 100 questions at MQT. I am happy to do so, but you cannot ask flippant, short questions without allowing me a chance to answer the question. You are right to remind us that we have to look after our police officers, just like we look after our firefighters, making sure they have the equipment and the tools to do their job. Of course, there have to be checks and balances, and the police would be the first to say there have to be checks and balances. They recognise they have certain rights you and I do not have.

The reason why we paused before spit hoods were used is because we wanted to make sure there was consultation, so nobody was taken by surprise. A custody officer or a police officer in a custody suite who decides to use a spit hood does it in exceptional circumstances. When you

think of the number of people arrested and who go through a custody suite, the number on whom a spit hood is used is very, very small. For somebody to, from that, extrapolate that there is discrimination against black women is unfair on our police. I am determined to give our police the tools they need but I will defend them if unfair allegations are being made against them and that assertion from the Assembly Member was unfair.

2017/3719 - Increased demand on MPS related to mental health

Dr Onkar Sahota AM

The Metropolitan Police Service received a phone call related to mental health every five minutes last year. This represents an increase of almost one third compared to 2011-12. (<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2017/aug/28/police-phone-calls-mental-health-nhs>) What do you think has caused the rise in demand and how is the Met coping with the increase?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you for raising this important matter with me. It brings together two key areas, ensuring that we have an effective police service that keeps Londoners safe but also tackling health inequalities and improving mental health in London. Over the last year the MPS received an average of 5,932 calls per month, 1,835 per week and an astonishing 262 per day. About 20% of these calls to police came from hospitals and mental health units. There is no simple answer to the question of what has caused the rise in demand. This is a very complex matter.

We all know there are significant financial challenges right across the public sector and a recent NHS survey has suggested staff shortages and changes in mental health commissioning structures are having a detrimental impact on their ability to ensure sufficient mental health provision. This comes down to a systemic failure across the health and justice system caused by lack of Government funding and a refusal to adequately invest in areas that our communities need most, in this case the police and health service need. Time and again, we see a surge of pressure on other services result in the police being pulled into areas where they are not best placed to respond. The police and health services are currently stretched to their limit and this is why I repeat my call for greater devolution in London, including healthcare funding, and a reversal of the cuts to police budgets.

The fact remains, though, I say by way of conclusion, that continued budgetary pressures are a risk to the success we have already achieved. We cannot allow this to continue and for the police to fill the gaps that other agencies cannot.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: Thank you for that very comprehensive response, Mr Mayor. You will of course know that the HMIC says that by the time the police become involved, many opportunities to intervene to prevent mental health deteriorating to a point where people are in danger have already been missed. This is both ineffective and expensive. In a well-ordered and compassionate society, we should not rely upon law enforcement officers to support people who need medical care. The severe problems with mental health provision in this country are not only failing those who need treatment but also creating an unacceptable strain on the police force. Inspector Michael Brown, the Mental Health Coordinator of the College of Policing, said that most people in contact with police about mental health issues do not need the police, they

need mental health professionals. Would you agree that this is an underfunded police service having to pick up the pieces of an underfunded NHS?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Yes. The thing that is always remarkable is how we expect the police to pick up the pieces. A lot of these problems should be dealt with by mental health professionals. There are all sorts of challenges in the NHS that you will be well aware of from personal experience, but let me just give you a couple of numbers. Roughly speaking, in London, more than 2 million of us have poor mental health. That is one out of four or one out of five Londoners. Because of the gaps in provision in social care and healthcare, often people are not helped and often the police have to step in.

One of the things we need to do is change the attitude around mental health. Thrive LDN, which I know you support and are an advocate for, will hopefully lead to a movement in London to try to, at an early stage, help people with mental health issues, but it is important to recognise - and I do not want to use a phrase which others do, 'drain on resources' - that when the police have finite resources and they have to prioritise, it does not make sense to me for them to spend 20% of their time responding to calls around issues that should be being dealt with elsewhere. When you speak to those who are supposed to be 'elsewhere', they will also complain about budgetary pressures which mean they cannot respond and help people who need them.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: Thank you for that, Mr Mayor, and thank you for all the support you give to mental health services and to the police.

Tony Arbour AM (Deputy Chairman in the Chair): Thank you very much.

2017/3675 - Digital Policing

[Unmesh Desai AM](#)

A report released in August on digital policing by the think tank 'Reform' outlines how demand on policing has changed as crimes such as robbery and criminal damage have fallen over the past two decades whilst crimes with a digital element such as fraud and internet enabled child abuse have risen. Does the Metropolitan Police Service have the resources and skills to deal with the changing nature of crime?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I recognise that the job of the police is changing dramatically and that the MPS must be supported and properly resourced to respond to both existing and new types of crime. You are right that online crime has created a new and large demand on policing in London and around the country. The internet has vastly increased the scale and speed of traditional offending.

To start to address some of these challenges, in April I launched the Online Hate Crime Hub, the first of its kind in the UK, to help tackle online hate crime and improve support for victims across the capital. The MPS has taken an important step in tackling this growing threat by establishing a Fraud and Linked Crime Online (Falcon) command to provide a dedicated response.

I have also recently appointed Theo Blackwell as the capital's first ever Chief Digital Officer. Theo will champion cyber-security across London and develop a Cyber Security Strategy to better protect London's digital infrastructure.

The MPS and National Crime Agency work to tackle online child sex abuse. The response is delivered at a local level, as well as centrally for the most serious and complex investigations. For example, the MPS runs a number of undercover operations online, engaging with predatory paedophiles, resulting in arrests, prosecutions and convictions. The Government also needs to start thinking more about this area and how we tackle this type of crime, as do internet providers and social media companies who inadvertently facilitate some crime types.

Unmesh Desai AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. Firstly, I welcome all those various initiatives. My question to you is specifically about the work of the London Digital Security Centre, which was set up in 2015 and is funded by MOPAC with the purpose of helping small businesses to both manage and convict cybercrime. There are 1 million small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in London and they are often overlooked in this debate, and that is the reason why I am asking this question to you. The thinking out there is that cybercrime basically affects big bodies such as banks and it is really the impact on SMEs that I am concerned about. I know that there will be various initiatives at a conference in City Hall on 12 October 2017 with your Deputy Mayor for Business, Rajesh Agrawal, attending and which I hope to be at as well. What challenges do you think the Centre has faced so far, how do you see its work progressing and what do you see coming out from this conference?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you for your question and thank you for being an advocate and fighter for small and medium-sized businesses, Unmesh.

In addition to a new Chief Digital Officer, who will do some work around the Cyber Security Strategy which will help SMEs, I committed in my Police and Crime Plan to continue to support Operation Falcon as well as the London Digital Security Centre, which you referred to. For those who do not know - I know you do - this is a private, academic and public-sector partnership which does deliver important advice to small businesses on cyber-enabled crime. Often small businesses do not have the resources to deal with this issue. The mission is to help businesses to innovate and grow their operations in a secure digital environment. Some of the conference will be taking experiences of small businesses and some of it will be providing practical advice to small businesses. My view is that small businesses are most at risk because they have the least amount of resources to protect them from cyber criminals.

Unmesh Desai AM: Yes. I am conscious of the time that I have left and so, Mr Mayor, I will just say that I met with John Unsworth [Chief Executive] of the Centre recently and I hope to work with him in the three London boroughs that I represent to trial their work with local councils.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Very good.

Unmesh Desai AM: Depending on the outcomes, we hope to share the lessons learned across London.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Great. Thank you for that.

Tony Arbour AM (Deputy Chairman in the Chair): Thank you very much.

2017/3468 - Ion Pacific

Peter Whittle AM

To ask the Mayor if he will join with me on congratulating the City of London on the recent news that the Asian merchant bank Ion Pacific has chosen to establish its new European headquarters in London - despite Brexit.

(<http://www.cityam.com/269593/asian-merchant-bank-ion-pacific-expands-into-european>)

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): London is indeed the world's leading financial and professional services centre, with more foreign banks than any other city and an unparalleled and diverse pool of talent and a complex business ecosystem that cannot be replicated anywhere else. These are some of the reasons why Ion Pacific have taken the very welcome decision to establish their new European headquarters here. I congratulate them and wish them the best of luck. I believe we should be proud to have the world's leading financial services industry both in London and across the UK. Overall, this is an industry that employs 2.2 million people across the country, contributes over 10% to the economy and over £70 billion in tax revenue. The UK's financial and professional services sector is clearly thriving in the single market and I hope that continues in the future too.

Peter Whittle AM: I am very pleased, Mr Mayor, that you join me in congratulating. You might know that Deutsche Bank, which is also one of the banks that was apparently going to leave after we had the referendum, have also just signed a lease on Moorfields for 25 years for a major European headquarters. These are all very good signs, Mr Mayor, are they not? Yet the whole gist of the way that the economics is talked about, particularly in this Chamber at MQT, has taken on the air of a wake. I originally questioned you in June about London's position. Are you pleased it has lengthened its position now over New York, Singapore and Hong Kong as the leading financial centre?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Look, if I may say, Deputy Chairman, I am the strongest advocate for London. I say we are the greatest city in the world. What I will not do, though, is put my head in the sand and pretend things are hunky dory in relation to our future prospects. We have not left the EU yet. Notwithstanding that, some of the statements made publicly - and so I am not divulging statements made privately - do not bode well. I do not welcome the announcement from Goldman Sachs. I do not welcome the announcement from HSBC. I do not welcome the announcement from UBS. I do not welcome the announcement from JPMorgan. Let us not pretend that there are not some grey clouds over the horizon, too.

Peter Whittle AM: The pretence is all from your side, Mr Mayor. The fact is that these sorts of institutions have to take a very long view and the truth is that during the campaign with the

referendum, as chief 'remoaner', you were one of the people who basically said that this was all simply going to fall apart. It is not. In fact, the good news keeps coming, does it not? The good economic news keeps coming.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Can I just --

Peter Whittle AM: You may laugh. All right. We have tourism up 7%, we have retail sales up 2.4% and the Financial Times Stock Exchange (FTSE) 100 and the FTSE 250 are much, much higher than they were this time last year. This is just simply not happening, this disaster, Mr Mayor, is it? You are in a position where you should promote everything good about London. These are the sorts of things you should be highlighting, are they not?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Yes, I always highlight good news as far as London is concerned and I will continue to do so, but one of the things I have to make sure I do also is make sure we are ready for the future. I simply do not have the same optimism you have in relation to our chances of continuing to be the world's greatest financial centre if we have left the single market, if we are not members of a customs union and if we cannot attract talent. My job as the Mayor is to make sure the good things we have now continue in the future.

Peter Whittle AM: Mr Mayor, the Chief Executive, Claire Hoey, of the new centre for Ion Pacific in London said that London's centre is based on decades and decades, hundreds of years, of being at the very centre because of the use of language, because of our legal system, because of all of these things. It is not because we are in the single market, Mr Mayor. London has been around for 300 years as a city centre.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I agree with you in relation to our strengths, the underlying strengths we have in relation to our legal system, which is the best in the world - our judges cannot be corrupted - and with our language, as well as where we are in the time zone in relation to Greenwich Mean Time (GMT), the strength we have in relation to students who come to London and leave with great experiences, and the strength we have in relation to our diversity, something I know you like to talk about a lot. The strengths we have in relation to all these things are not going to change when we leave the EU. My job as Mayor is to make sure the deal we do with the EU, the deal the Government does with the EU, takes on board some of the advantages of being a member of the single market, for example.

I would make this point in relation to your assertion about things being bleak. One of the promises you made during the campaign was that we would get £250 million a week which we could contribute toward the NHS. If you had kept that promise, the police would be well funded in London.

Peter Whittle AM: Come on. No, listen. First of all, that was not our claim. The lorry going around with that figure was nothing to do with us. That was Vote Leave.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): We have a situation, Deputy Chairman, where those guys want nothing to do with Boris Johnson [the Rt Honourable Boris Johnson MP, former Mayor of

London and Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs] and those guys want nothing to do with the Brexit campaign.

Peter Whittle AM: This is major displacement activity, Mr Mayor. The fact is, Mr Mayor, you said the whole thing was going to come down like a pack of cards. It just has not. The economic news is only getting better. The fact is --

Tony Arbour AM (Deputy Chairman in the Chair): All right.

Peter Whittle AM: -- that in your position as Mayor you have an absolute responsibility to highlight that, particularly with the rest of the world.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Deputy Chairman --

Tony Arbour AM (Deputy Chairman in the Chair): All right, thanks very much. Time is up.

2017/3736 - London's Skyline

[Navin Shah AM](#)

Will your London Plan herald a new approach to tall buildings and ensure genuine public consultation?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you for your question. I have always been clear that I believe that tall buildings can make a positive contribution to a neighbourhood and to the city. Delivering the housing Londoners need while protecting London's green spaces requires more efficient use of the city's land. Tall buildings have a role to play in making optimal use of the capacity of some appropriate sites, but they are not the only way to provide the housing and employment space we need. Greater densities can at times be achieved through a range of building designs, including courtyard blocks and midrise buildings, as I am sure Assembly Member Boff would agree. What is possible and appropriate will depend on the specifics of the sites and, as I have said before, while I am Mayor the answer on tall buildings will not always be yes.

In my new London Plan I will be taking a more rigorous approach to ensuring new tall buildings are in appropriate, sustainable locations, that they are safe and that their full impacts are assessed. In consultation with local communities, the boroughs, through their Local Plans, we will take greater responsibility for determining where tall buildings are an appropriate form of development based on a thorough evaluation of the existing character and context of individual areas. The visual, functional, environmental and cumulative impacts of tall buildings will be assessed in detail to determine if a tall building is acceptable on a particular site.

The Plan will make clear that all tall buildings must make a positive contribution at street level and to the skyline. It will also be clear that careful account must be taken of the way buildings relate to activities at ground floor level, as well as the effect they have on local daylight, wind turbulence, glare and noise. Proposals for tall buildings should expect the highest level of scrutiny and adhere to the most exacting standards. Every design for a tall building must be

judged on its merits, its impact on surrounding communities, its impact on the skyline and particularly its safety features. Through a borough's Local Plan process, local people will be meaningfully involved in deciding where tall buildings are appropriate in the area and what scale they should be.

Navin Shah AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. I agree substantially, probably wholly, with everything you have said. I am pretty sure that you would acknowledge that the Skyline Campaign has done a commendable amount of work and lobbying on issues related to tall buildings and London's skyline. In their detailed response to your *A City for all Londoners* document, they said that study after study has demonstrated that often midrise designs can provide similar and even higher levels of density than those achieved in tall buildings, something you again have alluded to and accepted.

Do you think that the London Plan that you are embarking upon could contain a requirement that developers should consider alternative building configurations to demonstrate that they could not achieve similar densities using midrise designs?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): First, thank you for your comments. We had a conversation at the last MQT in relation to tall buildings, and I made the point there you cannot have a one-size-fits-all. On some sites, subject to certain commissions being satisfied, a tall building will be appropriate; on other sites it will not. I, for example, look at London and see evidence of good quality, high-density homes that are not tall buildings. They are midrise, they use courtyards, and they are very good quality. The densest part of London is Kensington and Chelsea (K&C); midrise, courtyards, and good quality. Therefore, I do not subscribe to the view the only way to get high-density homes is via tall buildings. It is horses for courses.

Navin Shah AM: It is a question of making sure that when applicants and developers put submissions they do not simply translate 'high density' as high-rise buildings.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Absolutely right.

Navin Shah AM: This is why this particular alternative configuration is important. That leads to the next question, which is about evaluation, which you also incorporated in the reply that you gave to my original question. Again, the Skyline Campaign has recommended that all proposals for tall buildings should be subjected to independent design reviews at key stages of planning progress, including the preapplication stage. Design review panels could also be useful for those design alternatives, in terms of midrise, for any proposals of high densities. Will you support such design panels in the London Plan?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am very supportive of design panels. Most of the local authorities in London have them. Some, I am afraid, do not. I want a situation where all local authorities have a design review panel. They add value. I have my own Mayor's Design Advocates, who will play an important role in relation to bigger designs. I consider only those applications that are of a certain height or a certain size or a certain number of units, but I am a big advocate of using specialism of design in relation to improving the quality. It is important to get designers involved at an early stage. You mentioned the pre-discussions; they are crucial.

Navin Shah AM: It is important what you said happens at a local authority level as well because not many authorities have that expertise. This is why it is important that the London Plan does require that such design panels are there to assess at a local level planning applications. Thank you, Mr Mayor.

2017/3755 - Government's new childcare scheme

[Fiona Twycross AM](#)

What is the impact of the Government's new childcare scheme in London?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you. On 1 September 2017, the Government increased the entitlement to free childcare for three- and four-year-olds in England for working parents. In practice, this means that working parents can now access 1,140 hours of free childcare, often taken as 30 hours per week for 38 weeks of the year.

It is too early to understand what the impact of this change will be in London. My officers will of course be monitoring take-up and seek to understand the impact of the changes, particularly on the most disadvantaged families in the capital. There is already huge pressure on good childcare places in London and parents in London pay 34% higher than the average for England. We also know that take up of the previous 15-hour entitlement was lower in London than elsewhere in the country. In 2016 only 86% of three and four-year-olds accessed their entitlement compared to 95% nationally. I am afraid at this moment the thinking is that the childcare-place shortages and high nursery running costs means this offer will be difficult to roll out in London.

You will have probably seen recent press quotes on the Pre-school Learning Alliance survey where almost three-quarters of childcare providers have said that the funding levels for the 30 hours offer does not cover the cost of providing a place. I will continue to make the case to the Government and set out what London needs, including the need for early-years funding that accurately reflects the cost of delivery.

Fiona Twycross AM: Thank you. I think you will agree that while additional support to parents must be welcomed, it also must be viable, as you indicated in your response. Last year the London Assembly's Economy Committee heard serious concerns from childcare providers that the scheme would be unsustainable unless additional funding was made available to cover basic costs that they face in London. In recent weeks we have already heard of some nurseries closing ahead of the additional free hours coming into play, blaming the shortfall in funding from Government that simply will not cover the additional costs.

What reassurances have you sought or will you seek from the Government to make sure that we will not see valuable childcare places being lost in London as a result of this scheme?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): In addition to the concerns you have just expressed, the New Economics Foundation did recent research that showed that nurseries will either pass on

the extra cost to implement the 30 hours offer to parents or cut services, as you said, or reduce workers' wages, which is no good for any of us.

There are a number of things we are doing. First, I will shortly be launching the funding application process to establish three early-years hubs that will bring together schools, childminders, and private, voluntary and independent nurseries, with the aim to improve access to quality early-years education and childcare for the most disadvantaged families. Secondly, we are going to carry on lobbying the Government in relation to the importance of having affordable childcare for this particular cohort. It helps the children in relation to their development, but also it helps the parents and carers to become economically active again, which is crucial if we are going to fulfil the potential of all Londoners.

Fiona Twycross AM: Thank you for that update. As you will be aware, parental employment is lower in London than other regions of the UK, and this appears largely to be down to the cost, availability or flexibility of childcare. It is a particular issue for people who work shifts or irregular hours.

What specific measures will you take to help those in low-paid work or shift work, including those on zero-hours contracts, to access flexible, affordable childcare?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The Government has often addressed that issue with simply the 30 hours offer. We have very little statutory role in relation to this and hardly any funding in relation to this. Anything we do comes from other budgets.

One of the key reasons I am keen to bring forward the early-years hubs is to bring together providers, experts and users to see what we can do. We have the rollout of the three early-years hubs that I talked about. One of the things we are hoping to do is address the issue of shifts that you talk about. One of the other reasons why I am so keen to make sure people get decent remuneration for a decent day's work is so they can afford childcare. We have to bring down the cost of childcare. One of the reasons why I was so keen to get devolution of business rates from the Government is to see whether we could use business-rates discounts to childcare providers to try to reduce the cost indirectly to parents and carers for childcare. These are just some of the things we are talking about doing, but without the resources and the levers it makes the ability for us to do that quite hard.

Fiona Twycross AM: Would you like the responsibility to be devolved to you to deliver this sort of thing?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Absolutely. We could do a far better job than the Department for Education (DfE) and the Government do.

Fiona Twycross AM: Thank you.

Tony Arbour AM (Deputy Chairman in the Chair): Thank you very much. That ends the question-and-answer session. Thank you very much, Mr Mayor, for your answers.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you.

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