

John Biggs AM, Chairman of the Budget and Performance Committee

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Dear Boris

TfL fares briefings

Thank you for your letter dated 27 May, and the fares briefings attached therein. I am grateful that the briefings have now been published on the GLA website as a result of our discussions.

I would like to begin by restating my previous observations about the recent improvements to transparency in the GLA Group. I am grateful for the leadership that you and Sir Edward have provided in this respect. I hope that this trend continues, because I firmly believe it will improve the accountability and performance of the GLA Group, to the great benefit of London as a whole.

I agree with your assertion that there will be occasions when a Mayor may need to delay the publication of some documents, particularly those relating to sensitive issues. And I recognise that your negotiations with HM Treasury were a valid reason to delay publication of the 2013 fares advice. However, I also agree with the conclusions of the Information Commissioner's Office that "the legitimate public interest in protecting the safe space for the GLA to consider fares options would significantly diminish once a decision was made." Thus, once the fares decision has been published, there is little reason not to publish the advice you received in making that decision. The most obvious action would therefore be to publish the advice with and at the time of the announcement.

In my letter to you, dated 10 April, I asked you to propose a regular release date on which you would publish TfL's fares advice in future years. Your letter did not address this, and I would be grateful for a response on this point by 4 July. I will also be writing to TfL to ask them to provide the fares briefings prior to 2008, which you were not able to provide.

Finally, I would like to make the point that I have never sought to make this a party-political exercise. I am asking you to set a precedent around standards of transparency to which future Mayors of all political persuasions should aspire. It will be the Assembly's role to ensure that they do.

Yours sincerely



John Biggs AM
Chairman of the Budget and Performance Committee