

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

### Transcript of Agenda Item 4 – Oral Update on the Report of the Mayor

**Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair):** We now will listen to the Mayor, who will provide an oral update of up to five minutes in length on matters occurring since the publication of his report.

Mr Mayor, there has been one request for an oral update and that is in the name of Assembly Member Pidgeon. It is regarding the actions that Transport for London (TfL) will now be taking following the publication of the Rail Accident Investigation Branch (RAIB) report on Thursday, 7 December 2017 relating to the Croydon tram crash. Thank you.

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** This morning the Chair of the London Assembly and I attended the Grenfell Tower National Memorial Service at St Paul's Cathedral, where we remembered the 71 lives so tragically lost in the Grenfell Tower fire six months ago, the innocent victims: young, old, children, parents, grandparents, friends and loved ones.

Survivors are still grieving and traumatised. Many will still be homeless this Christmas. The community remains justifiably angry and frustrated. I share their anger and will continue to fight to ensure that they get justice as quickly as possible.

Today was about remembering the many Londoners we lost that night and the families and friends who miss them so desperately. I am sure I speak for all Londoners and the Assembly when I say that our thoughts and prayers are with them.

I today launched my plans to establish Creative Enterprise Zones across the capital to ensure that artists, creative talent and communities can thrive. We simply cannot afford to lose our artists and creative businesses. They power our economy and make a huge contribution to London's reputation as an open, creative and diverse city. This success is largely thanks to our wealth of creative talent. My Creative Enterprise Zones will give the creative industries the boost they need, as well as supporting businesses, providing jobs and positioning London as a world leader for culture and creativity into the future.

Last week, over six days, I and a delegation of brilliant London businesses visited six cities across India and Pakistan. We met with Indian and Pakistani businesses and key government decision-makers. The links made will yield more jobs, growth and investment for our capital and will strengthen and deepen the bonds that already exist between our countries.

I have now taken control of the London Stadium following on from the results of the Moore Stephens review I commissioned into the Stadium's finances. What was presented in the findings was simply staggering. Not for the first time, they revealed a bungled decision-making process that had the previous Mayor's fingerprints all over it. He failed properly to examine the transformation costs or the entirely inadequate estimates for moving the retractable seats, which leaves us squarely in the dire financial situation we are now in. By taking over control of the London Stadium, I can try to negotiate deals and minimise ongoing losses to get the best deal for London taxpayers.

This week I launched my Economic Development Strategy, which sets out how I will help to ensure that all Londoners share in the benefits of London's prosperity as it grows. Within this, there is a package of new

initiatives which will support entrepreneurs and help small businesses across London to grow and flourish, including plans for a new £100 million fund to help small businesses in the capital. The initiative includes support for those of black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds to boost science ambitions and access business finance.

As you said, Chair, I have also been asked to give an oral update on the RAIB report into the Croydon tram crash. My thoughts, Chair - and I am sure the entire Assembly's, too - remain with those who lost their lives or were injured in the tragedy at Sandilands. TfL continues to do all it can to support everyone affected. Both TfL and I welcome this report from the RAIB. TfL will continue to work alongside the RAIB, the Office of Rail and Road, and First Group - which operates the tram network - to ensure all of the recommendations outlined are met. TfL will also be publishing its own independent investigation report in the new year.

Since the incident and before the publication of the final RAIB report, TfL has introduced a wide range of additional safety measures to make sure such a tragedy can never happen again. These include new signage and a warning system for drivers, additional speed restrictions, enhanced speed monitoring and an upgrade of the closed-circuit television (CCTV) recording system. An in-cab driver protection device has been trialled and is now fitted to every tram, meaning that any sign of driver distraction or fatigue results in the driver being alerted immediately. Work to install a system to automatically reduce tram speeds if required is also underway. TfL has enhanced the customer complaints process so that all reports are now managed by one dedicated TfL team and any that relate to safety are prioritised for immediate investigation. The TfL Sarah Hope Line remains available to all those affected and continues to provide help with counselling and other support to anyone who needs it. TfL continues to work with the wider tram industry to ensure that the lessons are learned from this incident and that they introduce any further measures that could improve the safety of trams across the United Kingdom (UK).

**Andrew Boff AM:** Mr Mayor, you referred to the Moore Stephens report. What blame do you put on Tessa Jowell [Tessa Jowell DBE, PC, former Minister for the Olympics] and Ken Livingstone [former Mayor of London], who were the key decision-makers, when they thought it was a sensible idea to build an athletics stadium and rejected the football legacy, so starting this sorry process?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** I think the question is what blame Moore Stephens, the independent forensic accountants, put on those two, and the answer is none. You will see the finger is pointed squarely at the former Mayor, your friend, Boris Johnson.

**Andrew Boff AM:** Mr Mayor, who was Mayor in 2006 and 2007, which the Moore Stephens report established was when the problem started?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** As you will be aware, Moore Stephens looked at six different areas. One of them was the issue of what happened to the Stadium after the Olympics and, if memory serves me correctly, the Mayor was Ken Livingstone in 2006 and 2007. If I am wrong, I am happy to be corrected.

**Andrew Boff AM:** You got it right. Thank you, Mr Mayor.

**Peter Whittle AM:** Mr Mayor, you mentioned your Creative [Enterprise] Zones there at the beginning, which I welcome. I just wondered if you could give me a brief overview of your creative incentives in our schools, which is where it starts? I know it is a big subject, but what is your general overview or plan for that at the moment?

**Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London):** Firstly, thank you. I know you have a long-standing interest in this area and thank you for meeting with the Deputy Mayor [for Culture and the Creative Industries] to discuss your ideas.

We are doing a number of things with young people. There is the London Curriculum to get them out about and enjoying the city; the Music Fund, which you know about and support and have given ideas for how to improve; giving young people access to the cultural facilities. One of the reasons why we launched the London Borough of Culture was to see if the winning borough could ensure that the children in that borough benefit from that borough being the London Borough of Culture. I recently went to Hull, which is about the size of a borough, and I have seen the changes that have been made there with the children benefiting from, in that case, the UK City of Culture.

There are lots of things we are doing that particularly benefit children and the good news is that children have played a big role in some of the submissions made by the boroughs in relation to being awarded the winning London Borough of Culture.

**Peter Whittle AM:** Thank you, Mr Mayor.