

## GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

**Gareth Bacon AM,  
Chairman of Oversight Committee**

The London Assembly  
6 Floor, City Hall,  
The Queens Walk  
London SE1 2AA

**Department: Growth, Infrastructure and  
Connectivity Unit**

Date: 31 January 2019

Dear Gareth

**Proposal to establish an Infrastructure and Development Coordination Team at the  
Greater London Authority**

I am writing to follow up on the Committee's consideration of the Head of Paid Service's proposal to establish a new GLA Infrastructure and Development Coordination Team.

In the 11<sup>th</sup> December Oversight Committee meeting, following questions raised by Jennette Arnold, I agreed to supply further information about how the new team would make use of existing assembly scrutiny reports, related both to congestion and to flooding caused by burst water mains.

I can confirm that the Assembly Transport Committee report titled 'London Stalling' (2017) has already been helpful in the development of the business case for the new team. The report highlighted the scale of street works and road works-related congestion in London. As set out in the business case for the new coordination team, the total cost of street works-related congestion in London is around £750m per annum. While this includes emergency as well as planned works, the new team will aim to reduce the impact of congestion associated with street works by encouraging utilities providers to work collaboratively across borough and TfL road networks. We estimate that significant cost savings to the public, providers, and boroughs can be achieved through such an approach and we are already trialling it working closely with the London Borough of Croydon in the Croydon Growth Zone. The work of the new team is therefore closely aligned with the principles set out in the 'London Stalling' report.

In 2017, following a series of flood incidents caused by trunk mains' bursts, the Assembly Environment Committee undertook scrutiny of Thames Water and other organisations involved in responding to these incidents. The committee found that failures to communicate, both within and between organisations involved, led to delays in responding to the events. The activities of the new coordination team do not include proposals to intervene directly in emergency and unplanned works. However, the work of the team should help improve working relationships between utilities' providers, boroughs and the GLA and the former's communications during emergency events.

The team will also work with the Mayor's Infrastructure High Level Group, the London Resilience Office and the GLA Environment Unit to promote a 'whole-life' approach to asset design and management. The aim of this approach is to ensure that London's infrastructure is more resilient, including sensing and responding to damaged assets earlier.

Finally, I look forward to discussing the team's work with the Assembly again in future, once the pilot is underway, by which time we will have developed ways to monitor and evaluate its costs and benefits, which I appreciate is also of considerable interest to Members.

Thank you for your consideration of the proposal.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JS', is positioned above the typed name.

Jeremy Skinner  
Assistant Director, Growth, Infrastructure and Connectivity Unit

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