

London Assembly Transport Committee – 15 June 2020

Transcript of Item 8 – Q&A Session – COVID-19 and London’s Transport Network

Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair): I would like to welcome Deputy Mayor [for Transport] Heidi Alexander; Simon Kilonback, Chief Finance Officer for Transport for London (TfL); Andy Lord, Managing Director for London Underground; Gareth Powell, Managing Director for Surface Transport for TfL; Vernon Everitt, Managing Director for Customers, Communication and Technology for TfL; and Stuart Harvey, Director of Major Projects for TfL.

May I first invite the Deputy Mayor to make an opening statement prior to us moving into our Q&A session? Ms Alexander.

Heidi Alexander (Deputy Mayor for Transport): Thank you, Chair, and thank you very much for the invitation to join you today.

If I may, I would like to start by thanking colleagues at TfL and City Hall for the herculean efforts that they have made over the last three months to help London respond to this crisis. Whilst it does feel like a lifetime away now, there were days in March [2020] when I must admit I was wondering whether the Tube would still be running. There were days in April when I was unsure whether we could continue to operate a bus network. There were days in May in the heat of the funding negotiations with the Government when I wondered whether TfL would still exist in a few months’ time.

These statements may sound melodramatic, but they are all true. We are collectively living through one of the most astonishing periods of this city’s history. The fact that we have kept the Tube and buses running is testament to the 60,000 incredible men and women who work on the front line of our transport network: the train drivers, bus workers, cleaners and maintenance staff. I would like to thank each and every one of them. In the face of widespread staff illness and absence, income streams collapsing and unnecessarily difficult funding discussions with the Government, the senior team at TfL has shown great resilience compassion and determination, too. We would not have got through this without you.

Back in March [2020], we turned an oil tanker around in a matter of hours. We went from being an organisation whose primary purpose was to promote the use of public transport to one that told people to get off it. We took hundreds of difficult operational decisions, hour by hour, day by day, new cleaning regimes, timetable changes, station closures, turning off the Congestion Charge, granting rent relief to small businesses, closing down our construction sites. The list is quite simply endless. We used announcements about the public transport network to drive behaviour changes across the city of 9 million people: stay home, do not travel. We acted ahead of the Government at a time when every day mattered.

Since then, we have lost colleagues, men - and they are all men - who came to work during the peak of the pandemic to help others get to theirs. The deaths of 44 transport workers, including 29 bus drivers, weighs heavily upon me and I ask myself constantly whether there was anything more we could have done to prevent their suffering and the pain their families are now experiencing. We will probably never

know where those 44 men caught the virus, but I do know that we will leave no stone unturned in asking ourselves the difficult questions and taking every action available to us to keep our services as safe as possible.

I also know that just as London's transport network was at the heart of our efforts to curb the spread of COVID, it will be at the heart of our recovery. I am pleased that we were able to secure a funding deal with the Government to enable TfL to operate services for the next four months, but I was angry and disappointed by the political conditions that were crowbarred into the agreement at the last minute. Londoners have done the right thing and stayed at home. As a consequence, fare income dropped by 90%. You do not have to be a trained accountant to work out that if fares and other commercial activity make up 80% of your day-to-day running budget, you have a problem when you have only 10% of that coming in. The Government, though, is insisting on higher fares next year and the removal of free travel for children and young people, settling old political scores in the middle of a global pandemic.

I really hope that the next phase of negotiations with the Government can be done in a more constructive manner. We cannot get to a situation again where we are minutes away from needing to make decisions that would be incredibly harmful to the city just because the Government has not properly engaged or cannot resist political gameplaying in advance of next year's London elections.

As the Mayor has said, the deal we did in May [2020] is nothing more than a sticking plaster and there is an urgent need to agree a long-term, sustainable funding arrangement to enable the delivery of essential transport services in the capital. The way in which people travel around our city will change as a result of this crisis. People's lives have changed. Their expectations have changed, too, and we are not out of the woods yet. We do not know the extent to which people will return to our Tube and buses or how quickly, but we do know that we cannot have a car-based recovery and rising levels of air pollution, replacing one public health crisis with another. A safe, reliable and affordable public transport network remains critical to the success of this city. Our ability to get more people walking and cycling is also more important than ever.

I look forward to working with Assembly Members to make this happen over the year ahead and I am very happy to answer your questions today. Thank you.

Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair): Thank you very much for those opening remarks and for setting the context of the discussion today. If I may, I will open the questioning today.

To you, Deputy Mayor, and to Vernon Everitt, how prepared is TfL to maintain increased service provision in response to the projected demand associated with easing of lockdown, considering staffing crashes and restricted financial resources?

Heidi Alexander (Deputy Mayor for Transport): Perhaps if I start with that one, Chair, and then I may ask Vernon to come in if I miss anything.

We are well prepared. It might be helpful if I set out what we are seeing at the moment in terms of service provision and passenger numbers and so on.

On the Tube, we are running over 90% of normal services and in the peak on some lines, such as the Victoria line this morning, we are running 100% of normal services. We have moved back to running our pre-COVID timetable, but we do have some planned cancellations within that.

At the moment we have about 8% of frontline underground staff who are still shielding and are therefore off work. That is quite a significant number.

Last week on the Tube, travel was at about 10% to 12% of normal levels. That is, clearly, up from the 5% that it was running at during the height of the pandemic, but what we have seen is more of a trickle back to the Tube network than a surge. That has been replicated again this morning.

On the buses, we are running nearly 90% of normal services, despite having quite a number of bus drivers who are still furloughed. Whilst we do not have completely comprehensive ridership data because we are still waiting to return some buses to front-door loading, we think that probably travel has been at around 25% of normal levels last week, perhaps up to 30% this morning. This is quite consistent with the pattern that we saw during the lockdown where the number of people as a percentage using our buses was actually higher than what was happening on the Tube.

We have a really comprehensive plan going forward. We have done a huge communications campaign saying to people, "You have to continue to work at home if you can do so". I cannot really overstate that enough. The fact that people like us are doing this hearing virtually and staying away from the public transport network means that we are, in effect, giving space to people who need to be physically present to do their jobs. We have said to people, "Please shop locally. Do not make unnecessary journeys on the public transport network, especially at peak times and in the early hours of the morning".

We do need people to still exercise some restraint, to be honest. People are going to have to wear a face mask if they are making journeys on public transport. If people are getting on a train into a central London station, we need people to be walking instead of jumping on the Tube or a bus to get to their final destination. We do also need people to be thinking about whether they might be able to get off the Tube a couple of stops early in order to relieve that overall pressure on the network.

We have put a cap on the number of passengers that can get on our buses and so the drivers have discretion to not stop at a stop if the bus is already full. It will need to stop if people need to get off. We have a lot of plans in place that Andy [Lord] may wish to talk about for how we might activate queuing systems at our busiest stations if the need arises. We have brought in stewarding resources to be placed around those hotspots on the London Underground network. We are working with the British Transport Police. We are well prepared.

Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair): Thank you very much for that. If I might, you were going to ask Vernon Everitt to pick up, but before you do can I just ask what progress you have made in terms of using Journey Planner and social media alerts to help passengers avoid those hotspot stations?

Heidi Alexander (Deputy Mayor for Transport): Yes. I might ask Vernon to speak on the detail of the changes we have made to Journey Planner because we have done a number of things to change the information that is available on those pages. Also, there are station update pages on our website. We have had 60 million emails that have gone out to customers since the beginning of this crisis with a 42%

open rate to advise people about how they should be changing their journey patterns throughout this period.

Vernon, I do not know whether you want to speak specifically about some of those changes that we have made.

Vernon Everitt (Managing Director, Customers, Communication & Technology, Transport for London): Yes, thank you. Thank you, Heidi. Thank you, Chair. To build on that and specifically your question about the Journey Planner, we have always been a great promoter of free and open data at TfL so that we can enable through a unified application programme interface other third parties, like Citymapper, Google Maps and so on, to plug into our information and to draw from it.

What we have specifically been doing with the Journey Planner is to promote walking and cycling options as a way of mitigating the capacity constraint that we have on public transport at the moment. We have started with journeys where walking and cycling options are under 40 minutes so that when you interrogate Journey Planner to plan a journey, you will get walking and cycling option first. That is quite a fundamental re-engineering of the Journey Planner system.

To build on what Heidi was saying about public transport capacity, we are of course promoting very heavily walking and cycling more generally. If you, again, look at our website, we are promoting the Tube walking map, cycle parking and cycling maps that demonstrate to people the network of cycling facilities that are available. We are working very hard to update all of that almost in real time as the Streetspace programme, being led by Gareth [Powell] and Will Norman [Walking and Cycling Commissioner], rolls out so that people are aware of the new facilities that are being made available for walking and cycling.

We are also working very closely with the boroughs because there is an enormous amount happening within the boroughs, which I am sure Gareth will describe a bit later on, which we are also plugging into the Journey Planner. All of that goes on top of our Twitter feed, our social media feeds and the information that we provide in real time at stations and on vehicles.

There is a huge communications effort. I can go into more detail in questions, but that is the overview.

Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair): Thank you very much. Assembly Member Prince, I believe you wanted to come in and ask a question on this section.

Keith Prince AM: Good morning, Deputy Mayor. I understand that as part of the bailout agreement you undertook to get back to 100% services within four weeks. I believe that that four weeks was up on 11 June [2020]. You have indicated that a couple of services are not quite yet 100%. I also wondered if all the Underground stations are open now.

Heidi Alexander (Deputy Mayor for Transport): The short answer to that - and perhaps Andy Lord would like to comment on it - is that a number of the lines have been operating in the early morning peak at 100%. Broadly speaking, every line is up to at least 90% in that early morning peak. We do have still significant numbers of people who are particularly in that shielded category, as I said in my introductory remarks, and so we are not quite there yet with the return to normal service levels. Of

course, normally we probably run 98% or so of services and we were not always at 100%. There has been huge progress made.

Andy may want to say more about the detail of that.

Andy Lord (Managing Director, London Underground, Transport for London): Thanks, Heidi. Thank you for the question. Thank you, Chair. It is my first appearance at the Transport Committee since I joined. Thank you. Sorry I have not had a chance to meet you all yet.

As part of the funding agreement, the requirement is to get back to normal service levels and, as Heidi has alluded to, we do not always operate 100% of service in normal times because there is a variety of operational issues. We are typically around 95% to 98% of a full schedule.

We were very clear and agreed with the Department for Transport (DfT) that our primary focus was around achieving normal service levels during the morning and evening peaks from Monday to Friday. We are at those levels now. In fact, we are exceeding them on some of the lines, as Heidi has alluded to. For example, on the Victoria line, we are delivering 36 trains an hour in the peak, which is one train every 80 seconds.

We are actually delivering a higher rate of service than most of the national rail industry across the country. We are very close to that [normal service levels] and we have done it in line with the Government's easing of lockdown restrictions, focusing on the areas where ridership is likely to increase through schools and today was a critical day with non-essential retail. We are working very closely through Vernon's [Everitt] team with the key business communities and retail sectors to make sure that we manage the travel demand accordingly.

Our focus now is to get our weekend services up to normal levels. They are slightly below at the moment. Again, there has been no need and no demand to get those services up to near normal levels. We are not far off and that is the focus going forward.

It is worth highlighting as well that we have suspended the Night Tube on Friday and Saturday evenings. That still means we are running the Tube until about 1.00am in the morning and restarting services at about 5.15am or 5.30am in the morning on Saturdays and Sundays as well, but again there is no economic need for the Night Tube at the moment. We will keep that under review.

In terms of stations, we opened some more stations today. We have 25 closed in total. That is a strategic decision based on our absence levels and to make sure that we maintain a sustained level of service for our customers. One of those stations closed is Heathrow Terminal 4, which has been closed at the airport's request because the terminal is currently shut. Thank you, Chair.

Keith Prince AM: Can I just come back? Thank you for that. You have pretty much met most of the Government's requirements, which is excellent, and I congratulate you on that. I have just two questions out of that.

Firstly, as you have not fully met those conditions, do you think there will be any comeback from the Government to question you on why you have not quite achieved that?

Secondly, whilst I understand that most of this is because you have too few staff, what efforts have you made - maybe like the police, like the National Health Service (NHS) - to recruit recently retired people to bring that number up so that you can deliver a full service?

Andy Lord (Managing Director, London Underground, Transport for London): I am very happy to respond on those.

On the first question, we are in very regular dialogue with the DfT. I attend a weekly call - it was daily for a period of time but is now a weekly call - along with Gareth [Powell] to talk about wider DfT and TfL issues. Equally, this morning, tomorrow and Wednesday, I am on a daily call with the Secretary of State along with Network Rail and National Rail members of the Rail Delivery Group (RDG). It is fair to say that the DfT is very satisfied with the level of service that we have delivered and the openness that we have demonstrated. We have shared all that data and all our information. I would say actually that we take a lead for the rail industry as a whole in a number of areas and which Network Rail and National Rail have been taking as a result.

In terms of staff absence, we have absolutely looked at getting recently retired ex-colleagues back. The most critical area for us was around our service control centres. Each line has its own service control centre and some of those control centres have only 30 people in total. When we are running at 25% or 30% of absence, which we were in the peak, and you lose an entire shift of staff, which may be only three or five people, we would run the risk of losing the entire line. We did bring back some recently retired members of staff, which helped bolster our service levels and our contingency.

We did look at the feasibility of bringing back train operators, but the biggest challenge we have, along with the whole national rail sector, is that to bring back anybody you have to retrain them and at least recertify them. That is impossible to do at the moment under 2-metre social distancing because that requires two people in a train cab or a Tube cab. Currently, that is suspended nationally because there is no solution at the moment for undertaking training with social distancing and a suitable mitigation. That is a key priority for us and the rest of the rail industry to solve.

Keith Prince AM: Finally, if I may, Chair, on the buses, you have a 20-person bus rule on the double-deckers and 10 on the singles, I believe, and you have the face mask rule. A couple of bus drivers have been in touch with me because they are not clear on exactly how they are expected to enforce these rules.

Could you perhaps give us an indication, Deputy Mayor or anyone else, what advice is being given to bus drivers or what advice you are giving to bus operators on how they can enforce? What level of discretion would the bus driver have in these situations, please?

Heidi Alexander (Deputy Mayor for Transport): The best person to answer that might be Gareth Powell, actually. Gareth?

Gareth Powell (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London): Good afternoon. Good afternoon, Chair. Yes, Keith, on that issue, what we have been doing is saying to bus drivers that they do have some discretion around the 20 and the 10 limits that you referred to - if, for example, a

family group came on who do not need to observe social distancing in the same way, maybe a mother with two young children and so on - but generally they are asked to maintain the limit at or about 20 people, say, on a double-decker bus. What that means in practice is, once they feel that that limit has been reached, then they will not stop at bus stops unless a passenger on the bus of course asks to get off, in which case they can start letting new passengers on.

In respect of the face masks, we have asked our bus drivers to give advice to customers and so on. It is not their role to get into a conflict situation or otherwise with customers. We are seeing very good levels today of compliance with customers, who are really behaving very sensibly. The vast majority - maybe 80 to 90% - of customers are wearing face coverings and others maybe were not aware of it or maybe had forgotten it. That is going really well. Ultimately, the enforcement activity for face coverings is a matter on buses for the Metropolitan Police Service and our own specially trained enforcement staff, but we do not think in the vast majority of cases it will come to that because customers are behaving exactly as we have asked them to do. We are very encouraged by the response we have seen today.

Keith Prince AM: That is really helpful. Just to finish, it is a little unfortunate, Deputy Mayor, that you did bring politics into your opening speech. We are working with the Government. The Government has given £1 billion to TfL and has lent £500 million to TfL. You have to have an ongoing relationship and so attacking --

Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair): Assembly Member Prince --

Navin Shah AM: Chair, we have a question coming up later on.

Keith Prince AM: Navin, if you let me finish, the question is in there. Do you think it is sensible to attack the Government --

Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair): Assembly Member Prince, you have had quite a large bite of the cherry and I did say I would move people on.

Keith Prince AM: Yes, I have finished.

Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair): Unless the Deputy Mayor would like to comment, I would like to move on to Assembly Member Eshalomi's question. Sorry to shut you down but we do want to use this time effectively.

Keith Prince AM: No, I have finished.

Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair): Assembly Member Eshalomi.

Florence Eshalomi AM MP: Thank you, Chair and guests. Good afternoon, everybody. Coming back to what we were discussing, you mentioned, Gareth, people responding and adhering to the guidelines and staying at home, but one of the issues is that from today, as you know, non-essential shops have opened again. I am sure some of you were watching the scenes this morning of people queuing up outside a number of the stores, eager to go back. On the one hand, that is really good. We need to support the economy. Equally, we need to make sure that the people who are getting to those jobs have

to find a way to get there. For some people, it is not practical to walk or cycle. They have to use public transport.

How are you going to be monitoring the transport services to make sure that they are being used for essential services?

Heidi Alexander (Deputy Mayor for Transport): I do not know whether Vernon might want to come in on this one. We have done a huge amount of work with the business community and with retailers to encourage retailers to stagger their opening times. If you are opening at, say, 11.00am in the morning and not closing until 7.00pm, you are then enabling your staff to travel at a point in the day when the pressure on the public transport network is not so acute. What we have seen over the last couple of months is that there has been quite a lot of pressure in the very early hours of the morning and the evening peak has also come forward. We have had some success in our communications with retailers about that. We have been talking to people like Westfield and the New West End Company.

Clearly, as more people return to work, there are going to be increasing numbers of people on the public transport network. That is why we are making sure that in addition to all of this work that we are doing with businesses, we also have a very clear communications campaign, which is saying to people, "If you are able to work from home, you must continue to do so", because we are not going to be able to manage this period going forward unless we do keep the numbers of people overall on the public transport network down.

We have very detailed data that we can almost access in real time about different loadings on the Tube network. Once we get back to being able to obtain all the data on the bus network as well, we can look at which bus routes are seeing higher than normal passenger numbers. We constantly monitor that. Then we look to see whether there is a way in which we can adjust the service we are providing to ensure that we have the right services in the right place at the right time. We have done that, to be fair, throughout the period of the pandemic.

Vernon Everitt (Managing Director, Customers, Communication & Technology, Transport for London): Heidi and Chair, may I just build on what Heidi was saying about the work we have done with businesses?

Taking some of the learnings from the Olympic Games, although this is of a completely different order, we have engaged with well over 1,000 London businesses over the last couple of weeks, primarily to spread the shoulders of that peak Heidi was talking about. The busiest times in the mornings are between 5.45am and 8.15am and in the evenings 4.00pm to 5.30pm. One of the things that we have tried to do, keeping the messages really simple, is to work with those businesses, some of whom are retailers, some of whom are other types of businesses who employ many people in London, to spread that peak. When you look at the way in which people are starting just to very slowly get back onto the transport system, a lot of the higher rates of growth are actually in the off-peak times. Many of the retailers, for example, have agreed that their opening hours should be late morning and that their closing hours should run beyond the evening peak at 6.00pm to 7.00pm in the evening. We have worked very closely with businesses of all shapes and sizes and all their representative groups.

Also, we have done an immense amount of engagement with schools because, if we think back to previous days when some of the restrictions of lockdown have been eased, that has entailed some schoolchildren going back. There is a huge programme, particularly when you look out to September [2020] and beyond, of work to do there to ensure that schoolchildren can get to and from their places of education safely as well.

There is an enormous amount of activity. We have published where the hotspot locations are and what the times and places of the hotspot stations are. We will keep that engagement rolling. We are extremely grateful for all of the help we have had from the business community.

Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair): Thank you very much. Assembly Member Eshalomi, do you want to follow that up?

Florence Eshalomi AM MP: That is it from me, Chair. I am just mindful of time. Thank you.

Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair): Thank you very much. If nobody else has anything, I will move on to Assembly Member Pidgeon.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): Lovely. Thank you very much. Can I put on record my thanks to the officers of TfL and the Deputy Mayor for keeping us so well briefed throughout this very difficult period and for listening to feedback from us when we have had suggestions? It has been really appreciated by us as Members and the job they have had to do.

I have a couple of questions. We already started to touch on this issue of flexing the services and how you can shift services to meet demand. I can see that that is very possible with buses and you can easily increase buses potentially or shift the services around. I am possibly wondering what you have been doing with buses but also things like the Docklands Light Railway (DLR) and the tram and whether you have been able to look to flex the services there to meet the demand and also your projected demand as we are starting to see - Heidi used the phrase - people trickling back over the coming weeks and months. I am not sure whether Heidi wants to answer or Gareth, perhaps.

Heidi Alexander (Deputy Mayor for Transport): Shall I start, Gareth, and then you might be able to add some detail?

As you quite rightly say, Caroline, there are ways in which we can flex the bus network. You may recall from the conversations that we have had over the last couple of months that when we moved to a Sunday timetable for the buses, what we chose to do was to make sure that we kept the services that were running early in the mornings across the week at a much higher level of frequency because that was when we saw that the demand was there. We essentially modified the Sunday timetable and to ensure that we still had enough buses running at the times when most people were wanting to travel.

We actually have done some similar things on the Tube even though you are also right to say that it is a bit more complicated. At the point at which we stopped running the Night Tube, we looked at what services we needed to provide in the very early hours of the morning on Saturdays and Sundays that might previously been caught up within that Night Tube timetable.

One of the reasons behind stopping the Waterloo & City line was so that we were able to use the driver resource to bolster the Central line. We also tweaked services throughout the day. In effect, we took some of the driver resource that may have been on later in the afternoon and put it into those early hours on the Central line in the morning when we could see that there were more challenges at certain stations. We have been doing that.

The other thing that we were doing is, because we have this very granular data on where trains are most loaded and at what times, we could take decisions. If we knew that there was a problem that was emerging at Canning Town, for example, we might choose to non-stop some DLR services so as not to add more people into the mix at that station.

On the DLR and the trams, Gareth could pick this up, but we are pretty much up to normal levels of service now on both of those modes. Gareth, did you want to pick up on that?

Gareth Powell (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London): Thank you, Heidi. Just to add, we are, on the trams, operating 100% of our previous timetable and that is the maximum level of service that we can operate.

On the DLR, one thing we have done is that we have lengthened each of the trains to be three cars. People might recall. Some trains are two cars. Some are three cars. They are now all at three cars, which allows the maximum amount of space for people to socially distance within there.

Then on the London Overground, just to complete the picture, we have been running additional shuttles. Where we see very precise levels of peak loading, just as Heidi described, on the Tube, we have put in the odd extra train service just to help move the peak of the peak away, where we have seen it.

We are doing what we can within the constraints of those systems and driver resources and so on.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): Might you consider some express buses, for example, if you can see peaks in loading and then maybe some stopping ones on routes to try to help as more people return to work?

Gareth Powell (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London): Thank you. That is a good suggestion. We are looking at some opportunities for that. It is very challenging to produce express buses because of course, if you have a stopping [bus] and an express, the express has to go around the stopping bus in order to be able to maintain. That can be really challenging, and it can be quite confusing for customers to make sure they are on the right vehicle.

We are looking for opportunities where we can vary the service in the way that you described because, if it looks like it is going to be useful where we can see patterns of demand going from one place to another and we think we can serve that better, then that is exactly what we will try to do with our operators.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): Lovely. Thank you. If I move on then to my next area of questions, which really are to Stuart Harvey and Simon Kilonback, it is looking at how TfL's capital delivery programme is being reprioritised in the wake of COVID-19. You had your business plan, which

set out a bold vision and plans for London. We are in a very different place now. Maybe, Stuart or Simon, could you talk me through that, please?

Simon Kilonback (Chief Finance Officer, Transport for London): I will talk you through this and then Stuart can come in in terms of the details.

Clearly, given where we are, our entire capital programme prioritisation will be subject to the further funding agreement with the Government, which will need to take place over the summer. We are working currently on a fully revised budget that will be taken to the TfL Board at the end of July [2020]. In that process we will make very transparent and clear the prioritisation methodology and what it is we are suggesting that the Government should fund.

To get into the detail of it, given what has happened with the coronavirus, we internally have slightly reframed our core purpose to London moving and working safely and sustainably rather than focusing on growth, given where we are. The impact of COVID means that we are unlikely to return to our previous business plan without significant external funding supports and a change in our funding model, which I will also come to.

You will remember that last year when we talked to you at the Budget and Performance Committee, we had identified that the baseline cost of continuing to provide existing service levels and maintaining and renewing our core transport assets was about £1.4 billion per annum [in constant prices]. This is the cost before any enhancements or improvements to elements of our network. These are the safety-critical -- investments that we must make in order to deliver a safe and reliable service and they will always be the very first things that we prioritise.

In terms of the emergency budget, when we had to act very quickly having been told by the Government on 12 April [2020] to mitigate our costs ourselves before we got a funding package. We therefore put in some conditions for the immediate capital programme, which was to substantially complete anything that was already near completion or fully contractually committed and would have cost us more money to stop than to continue. Ensuring that we completed projects on sites where they had been subject to a safe stop. We put, as you will know, a safe stop in for our construction activities. Then again, in terms of remobilising them, which we have been doing over the last few weeks, we are remobilising them where it makes sense to do so and where our contractual obligations outweigh any benefits of further pausing.

As I mentioned, we are prioritising our safety and operationally critical renewals, which includes the majority of surface asset renewals, which have been, as you know, on a two-year pause and remain on pause through the summer. There are also some projects that will help with revenue generation or operating cost savings. Continuing to work on the expansion of the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) clearly makes sense because that is something that can be done safely and remotely.

Then some of the new areas that we have had to really focus on are other projects that support social distancing. Our Healthy Streets funding has been refocused on measures that support social distancing through this period.

Going forward, clearly it is difficult to think about what life in London will be like post the crisis and whether it will return to normal. Our city planning team has put together some long-term strategic

scenarios that look at different ways from returning to normal and the very different ways in which London may be lived in, worked in and used by people following this public health crisis. Those four or five long-term scenarios we are using to help with longer-term thoughts about what we should prioritise for our capital programme.

It seems to make sense now that we should intensify and accelerate our active travel work and our social distancing measures, including intensifying our existing public transport services so that we can carry people at a safe distance and promote public health. We are accelerating our decarbonisation and carbon reduction agenda and seeking to prevent a car-based recovery.

Because we have been promoting some of those things, some of the things that we are less certain on the need for in the near term are reconditioning public transport capacity and as yet we do not know what the demand will be for new homes and the transport services to connect to those.

As I said, the work is ongoing. The emergency budget was an interim measure to allow us to achieve short-term funding. We will be going to the TfL Board at the end of July [2020] with the suggested second half of the year and then we will be following our normal business planning process over the autumn and engaging with the Government about those longer-term priorities.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): Thank you. That is really helpful. If you are able to share some of that work around the methodology ahead of that meeting in July and also these scenarios, they sound very interesting, certainly. I am sure other Members would be interested in getting an understanding from you on how you are trying to plan in this unknown world.

Perhaps I might get Stuart in because I want to specifically ask about some major projects. I am not touching on cycling and walking. Other colleagues are doing that, but I really want to understand, have you looked at revised completion dates for some of your big capital projects, whether it is Crossrail, whether it is Bank Station, whether it is the Northern line extension or the Four Lines Modernisation? That was due in 2023. Have you already started looking at revised completion dates for those projects, Stuart?

Stuart Harvey (Director of Major Projects, Transport for London): Thanks, Caroline. Thanks, Chair. We are right in the midst of understanding the impact of our safe stop. We are working very closely with our suppliers and collaboratively to understand what progress they could make during the safe stop on construction sites. They have continued to make progress. We are looking as we go back onto sites, which we are doing in a staggered, very safe manner, putting the safety of our workers at the core of what we are doing. We are looking at the productivity that is being made. Right at this moment, it is too early to say exactly what impact there is going to be, but we are going through it very carefully and we will be reporting on that going forward at the TfL Board and in other sessions.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): OK. Thank you for that. In terms of your work with your supply chain, looking at the year 2019/20, TfL spent £6 billion with the wider supply chain. How are you engaging with the rail supply chain at the moment? I have heard from the industry that they feel they really need clarity at the moment, and they want TfL to actively engage them in understanding what is going forward. Clearly, some suppliers' futures are in doubt unless they know what work is coming.

Also, I know Network Rail and High Speed 2 Ltd have made a solid commitment to prompt payments to their supply chains. Will TfL make a similar commitment? Perhaps you could outline what you are doing in that area.

Stuart Harvey (Director of Major Projects, Transport for London): I will let Simon [Kilonback] come in on the payment, but we have engaged the best we could with supply chains. Very early on we got the supply chain all together - the capital supply chain - to tell them what was going on and explain the reasons behind the safe stop. I must say there was real support for that. People understood the need for that.

We have recently got the supply chain back together. There was a bit of a gap in between while Simon and I and others - particularly Simon - had to work with the Government to get the funding. It was very unclear on what basis we could move forward and so it is been very difficult to communicate with the supply chain, but we have got back with them last week. They have welcomed that and, again, are working really closely with us to understand how we move forward to make sure that both supplier and client come to the other end of this in a meaningful way that means our projects continue to deliver in an efficient manner.

Simon, do you want to touch on the payment point?

Simon Kilonback (Chief Finance Officer, Transport for London): Yes, thank you, Stuart. Also on the funding point because that was very key, Assembly Member Pidgeon, we made the case right from the beginning of the crisis in March [2020] that we believed TfL should be treated in the same way as Network Rail and Highways England in that, if we were fully funded through the crisis, we would be better able to support the supply chain and commit to the Cabinet Office public procurement notice to support our suppliers. Unfortunately, we spent a period of time negotiating the funding and at the end of that we were not fully funded in the same way. Therefore, this has had an impact on what we can continue to do and what we cannot.

We would want in the second half to try again to make the case that using TfL, and recognising this is a public transport infrastructure entity that can fully support its supply chain if adequately funded to do so, we would very much advocate that that is in the best interests of the supply chain throughout the country and throughout the world.

We do commit to prompt payment and we always do commit to prompt payment. We pay all our small and medium enterprises within 10 days and we pay all of our suppliers within 30 days from the date of receipt of invoice. We very much comply with that, but it is the other measures around support for the supply chain which we have not been able to fully deliver as we would have wished because of the way our funding settlement has concluded.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): Lovely. Thank you. Finally, on step-free access, you had a programme for another 12 stations that were due to be step-free by March [2020]. That had slipped before COVID. By 2021, all the Elizabeth line stations are supposed to be step-free. Do you think you will still be able to keep that deadline or what are your figures looking like and when will you be able to tell us about step-free, which is so important to so many Londoners?

Simon Kilonback (Chief Finance Officer, Transport for London): As Stuart said, we are going through the process now really of understanding the full implication upon our programmes. When we come back to the Board in July [2020] with our revised budget, we will be better able to set out what that means for all the programmes, including step-free, in terms of timing, delivery and prioritisation.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): Thank you very much.

Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair): Thank you very much for those very helpful answers. I have indications from a number of Assembly Members who would like to follow up on this. If I can take Assembly Member Bailey first, please, but can we keep our questioning tight on this?

Shaun Bailey AM: Good afternoon to our guests. Hello, Deputy Mayor. Firstly, can I just build on the comments made by Assembly Member Pidgeon about the level of work you are doing? It is really good to see that TfL is really getting involved. It is great to see the level of innovation you are talking about.

I want to focus on your capital projects. Over the last four years, there have been frequent alterations to the capital projects with 22 being paused or cancelled or whatever. Would it be possible to give us the details of what all those projects are and what the completion dates will be now in view of the new challenges that you have? It would be very important to give us that sort of detail through the Chair, if you could write to the Committee to give us that detail so that we can look at your capital projects going forward, which will obviously be significantly different. Would that be possible?

Simon Kilonback (Chief Finance Officer, Transport for London): Yes, Assembly Member Bailey. As we as we go through this revised budget process, towards the end of July [2020] we will be able to write to you and provide that detail.

Shaun Bailey AM: OK. Could you let us know the financial impact of stopping or starting any of those projects? That will be very important because it will help us to look at what your next steps are and what impact they will have for London.

Simon Kilonback (Chief Finance Officer, Transport for London): We will.

Shaun Bailey AM: Thank you. Chair, thank you.

Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair): Thank you, Assembly Member Bailey. Can I take Assembly Member Shah next, please?

Navin Shah AM: Yes. Thank you, Chair. Like Assembly Member Pidgeon, I would also like to thank the Deputy Mayor for her regular weekly briefings for the Transport Committee, which were extremely helpful. Thank you to you and your team for putting together those.

Moving on to a question about the Crossrail project, can Simon or Stuart give us an update both on the current situation with financing as well as on the completion? Thank you.

Simon Kilonback (Chief Finance Officer, Transport for London): Thank you, Assembly Member Shah. Clearly, the Crossrail project has also been through a safe stop of its construction activities, although we have continued to tackle the big assurance mountain that we have to climb in order to complete the project during this period. There is a Board meeting later this month where the officers of Crossrail will present to the Crossrail Board the first cut of what they think that means in terms of the schedule and timings of the Crossrail project, but more realistically by the July [2020] Board we are expecting to have some detailed analysis of what the COVID impact has been upon Crossrail.

You are right to point out that the Crossrail funding needs to be resolved and that is very much part of the negotiations we have agreed will take place with the Government over the summer. They need to be concluded by the end of September [2020] so that we can know by that stage not only TfL's funding but the funding through to completion of the Crossrail project.

Navin Shah AM: Chair, through you, can I also thank Tony Meggs, Chair of Crossrail, who has during the pandemic period kept both Deputy Chair Caroline Pidgeon [MBE AM] and me up to date with the progress?

There were, I appreciate, initially severe concerns about supply chains, but I believe that is no longer an issue. From what I hear, certainly there is still an aspiration, if not a clear commitment, as was noted here in Tony Meggs's comment, to "meet or beat" the current deadline of summer 2021. Is that a realistic situation to put on record?

Heidi Alexander (Deputy Mayor for Transport): You are right to say, Assembly Member Shah, that that is the aspiration of Crossrail. Clearly, as Simon has set out, some of the remaining construction works that are going on have stopped during this period. They have restarted. They were able to do what they called "niche working", where they were able to send a small number of people onto sites to aid the assurance and safety certification process, but they have also had to pause dynamic testing. It is my understanding that that has restarted now.

Of course they are in a situation where, just like none of us know what is going to happen in the autumn, whether there will be a repeat wave of infections or perhaps repeated waves, they need to look at the programme of works that they have going forward and make an assessment about how they best organise those works in order to get into the trial running and trial operations period, which we know is so critical. With a lot of construction projects, you need to look at really what the implications are. It is very challenging for them, to be honest, at the moment. As Simon said, their Board are going to need to look in detail at what the programme is going forward before making any statements about their ability to meet that summer 2021 date or otherwise.

Navin Shah AM: Thank you very much.

Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair): Thank you very much.

Tony Devenish AM: Thank you, Chair. Good afternoon, Deputy Mayor. I sent to your office two questions in advance of this afternoon's meeting, one on Hammersmith Bridge and one on Pimlico Tube noise.

On the bridge, can you please update me on your reopening plans? Do you agree that post-coronavirus, with walking, cycling and public transport even more central to London's transport needs to revive our economy, a closed bridge is a real hindrance to west London especially to elderly and disabled Londoners?

Heidi Alexander (Deputy Mayor for Transport): I would say in response to that, that everyone would like to get this bridge reopened to motorised traffic. You will be aware that there is a very hefty price tag attached to that piece of work.

What we have been able to do during the course of the last couple of months is to progress the design work. We have completed some work to two of the pedestals on the bridge. We were also progressing plans, as you know, for a temporary walking and cycling bridge to give unimpeded access to the main bridge.

The pandemic has had a very big impact on TfL's finances. There is no getting away from it. One of the very last meetings that I had before the pandemic really hit in mid-March [2020] was a discussion with Baroness Vere [Under-Secretary of State for Transport] at the DfT about what financial support the Government could give to enable us to move forward with the restoration plans for the bridge. Those discussions have been parked whilst we have been dealing with all of these other huge issues. We need to stay in touch with Hammersmith and Fulham [Council], who own the bridge, but at the moment there is not an easy way in which to find £120 million in TfL's capital programming in order to do this work.

If the Government would assist us in funding this, then we can make it happen. I saw in the media over the weekend that the Government is looking for shovel-ready projects to invest in. We have the design work there now and we could move forward with this, but it will require the Government support in order to get that bridge reopened.

Tony Devenish AM: Thank you. We all understand, and I was actually going to mention the *Financial Times* article you referred to. Have you seen the letter that came from [The Rt. Hon.] Rob Jenrick [MP, Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government] to the Mayor asking for shovel-ready projects that you have to respond to, I believe, by 18 June [2020]?

Heidi Alexander (Deputy Mayor for Transport): I have not personally seen the letter, but I have had a discussion with the Mayor's Chief of Staff about the range of capital projects that we could be putting forward. Some of the advice we received from the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) was that because there are other funding discussions happening between TfL and DfT, they did wonder whether the capital projects should be dealt with in that DfT discussion. It is our point that actually we need to be putting transport projects forward here. Any lobbying that you might wish to do of MHCLG on this issue would be very welcome because it is really important that we see some of that money coming into the capital so that we can do the infrastructure works that need to be done here.

Tony Devenish AM: I would be very supportive of putting -- the Hammersmith Bridge in the letter, which has to be in on 18 June. Thank you. Moving on to my final point because I know the Chair will want to rush me, in terms of Pimlico Tube noise, which you will be aware has been a long-running issue

for my residents, has the new Delkor resilient track fastening product, scheduled to be fitted in Pimlico between last October [2019] and this March [2020], now been installed? If so, what were the initial results of the trial of this product?

Heidi Alexander (Deputy Mayor for Transport): Following your email to me on Friday, I did get in touch with the head of track at London Underground to ascertain exactly what has happened here. The Delkor fittings have been fitted on a part of the Jubilee line between St John's Wood and Baker Street and some initial assessments done of those fittings to ascertain what the impact of those fittings is on noise above ground.

The fittings have not gone in on the Victoria line as yet. There are also some supply chain problems because these fittings are bespoke. Andy [Lord] could speak more knowledgeably than me about this, but the type of sort of sleeper that these fittings are attached to is very different from line to line.

I am acutely aware of the noise that your residents on the Victoria line are dealing with and I am very keen that we find a way to test these fittings. I do not know whether Andy wants to say any more on that.

Andy Lord (Managing Director, London Underground, Transport for London): Yes. Thanks, Heidi, and thanks, Assembly Member Devenish. In terms of the Pimlico area, we have not installed the Delkor fastenings. Delkor is a brand name. There are various types. Our engineering team is currently finalising the design and, once that is finalised, we will be happy to write to the Chair and your office and inform you of the plan to install.

What we have done though is we took the opportunity over the late May [2020] Bank Holiday weekend to carry out an additional 48-hour closure of the Victoria line, which was already due to close for 24 hours for a significant piece of engineering work to replace the crossing at Brixton. We took the opportunity to grind 10,000 metres of rail on the Victoria line, including the entire section from Pimlico to Victoria in both directions. That has delivered some short-term benefit to residents.

As the Deputy Mayor said, the fastenings that we have installed between St John's Wood and Baker Street are slightly different. They are Delkor but they are slightly different and the initial results from those are very encouraging. We are just waiting now to finalise the engineering design and then we will be able to confirm to you what the plan of action will be for the Pimlico area.

Tony Devenish AM: Great. I will leave it there. Thank you, Deputy Mayor. Thank you to your team. Thank you, Chair.

Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair): Thank you very much. If we could move on then to Assembly Member Russell.

Caroline Russell AM: Thank you, Chair. I would also like to add my thanks to the Deputy Mayor and the staff team who were supporting her through the early days of the lockdown. The information that we had was really helpful to understanding what was happening and I want to put my thanks on record for that. You gave us a lot of your time and it was very much appreciated.

My question now is for Gareth Powell and Simon Kilonback and is about Streetspace. How much will the implementation of the Streetspace programme cost and how is it funded?

Gareth Powell (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London): Thank you, Assembly Member Russell. Thank you, Chair.

The Streetspace programme, as you know, is a massive set of interventions right across London to allow for extra space to be given to pedestrians so that they can socially distance as they are waiting outside shops and so on and also to allow for the increase in cycling that we have seen such a huge increase in across the capital to be accommodated with additional space for cyclists.

Within the funding letter that we had from the DfT, some £55 million was ringfenced for that programme. That is roughly split down into about £45 million that will be allocated to the London boroughs for implementation on their roads and £10 million retained by TfL for TfL-led initiatives across the capital.

There is also a separate DfT fund from which notionally £25 million has been allocated to London, £5 million in the first phase at the moment and then a potential another £20 million in a second phase. All of these programmes are being administered by a joint working group at the moment, which comprises representatives from the Prime Minister's office, the DfT, from London Councils and from us.

To give you an idea of the scale of this, not only have we already in TfL-led initiatives reallocated some 19,000 square metres of carriage space for walking and cycling, but we have also had over 500 schemes from the London boroughs put in through that funding mechanism for which we are making decisions every week and releasing those just as quick as we can for implementation. It is a really big joint effort by us and London Councils, and we are really moving very quickly to provide these facilities when they are most needed at the moment.

Caroline Russell AM: Thank you. That means there is £80 million in total for the Streetspace programme.

We have heard that the Healthy Streets work has been refocused into Streetspace and we know that you have paused the Local Implementation Plan programme with the boroughs, and you have asked the boroughs for their sunk costs. It looks like you are freezing the expenditure on those projects and closing those programmes down.

Does this mean that there is going to be less money overall for walking and cycling than we had before?

Gareth Powell (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London): In the programme at the moment, the very immediate focus is on these short-term, temporary installations because that is the most pressing need. However, also what I want to assure you is that, within that, we are also pressing forward with the existing programme where we can restart those programmes but perhaps implement them using more temporary style materials so that they can be delivered more quickly. Work has, for example, already restarted over in Hounslow on one of the cycleways there that was part of the previous programme.

For the rest of the financial year, the longer-term funding for this of course is bound up in the process that Simon Kilonback outlined earlier, which is the need to get funding beyond October [2020] agreed with central Government so that we can then go through the reprioritisation process that was referred to earlier. Clearly, we will be putting forward a very strong case to continue with this type of expenditure because of the enormous importance that it attracts, particularly at the present time.

Caroline Russell AM: Yes. I can see absolutely that the whole agenda of making sure it is safe for people to walk and cycle is very urgent while we are trying to make sure people have an alternative to using public transport.

I just want to dig a bit more into this Healthy Streets budget. The budget for 2020/21 for Healthy Streets was £417 million, whereas Streetspace is just £80 million. There could potentially be a gap of about £337 million. Is that a gap that you recognise? Is it as bad as that?

Simon Kilonback (Chief Finance Officer, Transport for London): If I may, Assembly Member Russell, as Gareth was saying, we had to focus on the first half of the year through to September [2020]. We were asked to minimise the call on the Government to fund it whilst we worked through the impact of the coronavirus and then spend a greater amount of time working through with the Government the priorities. It would be our full ambition to be putting forward an ambitious case for active travel and sustainable modes of transport for the second half of the year and that we would make the case to the Government to be funding as much of this as we can possibly get it to fund. Because the emergency budget did not contain funding for the second half of the year, we will be making a case for an ambitious investment in active travel on our own and the boroughs' assets for the second half of the year.

Caroline Russell AM: Does that mean that you will be trying to make sure that you maintain the full -- budgeted for this year, particularly as these measures to support walking and cycling are going to help prevent gridlock on the roads and keep people out of their cars?

Simon Kilonback (Chief Finance Officer, Transport for London): As I said, it is difficult to say. Because everything has changed upon which we had the assumptions for the budget, we need to re-examine whether what we were originally intending to do will best support social distancing, active travel and sustainable methods of transport going forward. Where investments will help support those and help improve the walking and cycling agenda and the liveability agenda for London, we will make the case for them, but we need to go through that process. As I said, we will be ambitious in that. We will have to see where that turns out when we get to the July [2020] TfL Board.

Caroline Russell AM: OK. We will be watching that very closely.

Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair): If I may, Assembly Member Russell will have an opportunity to interrogate that further at our July meeting.

Caroline Russell AM: Yes, indeed. I have one question for the Deputy Mayor. I know that this is in the wider TfL budget, but you had a review of toilet provision at stations. I have still not seen that. Given where we are at the moment with public health and the need for TfL staff being able to wash their

hands as well as passengers, is there anything that TfL can do to provide more access to toilets for hand washing in particular within the emergency budget?

Heidi Alexander (Deputy Mayor for Transport): That is something that I will need to pick up with Andy Lord. It is not something that I have discussed with him in the last couple of weeks, but if I can take that away and come back to you, Caroline?

Caroline Russell AM: That would be great. Thank you very much.

Andy Lord (Managing Director, London Underground, Transport for London): Sorry, Assembly Member Russell. If I may add, we have installed over 800 hand-sanitiser units at all our stations across the Tube network for passengers to use. That is a pretty substantial investment that we have made as a direct result of this. There are facilities for passengers to use across the network.

Caroline Russell AM: That is hugely appreciated, but being able to wash your hands and also to have access to a toilet is part of staff wellbeing and passenger wellbeing and, for people with disabilities or people who cannot go too long between toilets, it would help at this time.

I then have a further question for Simon. What are the risks regarding the forecast income levels in the emergency budget?

Simon Kilonback (Chief Finance Officer, Transport for London): Thank you, Assembly Member Russell. Could I give you a bit of context about how we constructed the revenue forecast for the emergency budget? Then I will talk about the risks.

Clearly, you will all understand this is an unprecedented situation. We have worked very closely with the DfT and the Government's advisers at Imperial College to understand some of the COVID-19 scenarios that they were using to inform their thinking at the time we put the emergency budget together. Those ranged from a single peak with a quick return to life as normal, to the full adaptive triggering, which was effectively turning social distancing on and off until a vaccine is found and deployed, which could take many months and well into the course of next year.

In discussion with our own Board and the DfT, for the purposes of the emergency budget when we put it together in early April [2020], we took a prudent view about a six-month period of social distancing followed by a return to about 50% of pre-COVID demand levels for the remainder of this year. That was our base case for our emergency budget and the £1.9 billion in funding we asked the Government for in the first half of this year.

In terms of the risks around that, we continue to update and monitor with DfT, and I will perhaps hand over to Vernon [Everitt] in a minute so that you can talk in a bit more detail about this, but there are constant iterations of these models. What we are seeing now is that the risks and opportunities for the first half of the year could be up to £300 million better than we initially forecast if social distancing rules were relaxed more quickly and a return to demand was better than we expected, and a further downside of £200 million to £300 million. Over the full course of the year we had previously modelled a funding gap of £3.2 billion based upon more than £4 billion revenue impact over the course of the year, and what we are currently seeing, based upon our discussions with the Government, is there could be a risk of plus

or minus £500 million, so that full-year impact for this year and then a further impact going into next year of between £1 billion and £2.5 billion. Significant risks remain around the revenue forecast.

For the first half of the year we have a funding package that covers those risks. For the second half of the year we will continue to work closely with the Government on agreeing the scenarios and how the risks will be managed.

Vernon, I do not know if there is anything you want to add.

Vernon Everitt (Managing Director, Customers, Communication and Technology, Transport for London): No, thank you.

Caroline Russell AM: Am I right that TfL is the only transport authority in the world that is dependent on fares income and, outside of this COVID situation, does not have the Government support to run the transport system?

Simon Kilonback (Chief Finance Officer, Transport for London): Yes. TfL is one of the very few transport organisations in the world and certainly the only one in the old world, if I can call it that, not the emerging world that is so fully dependent on our revenues. This has been a policy of successive governments to move the burden of paying for transport services and infrastructure from the taxpayer to the user. As we have said, in 2010 TfL's revenue made up about 50% of our income and 50% was made up of direct government grant at the time. Between 2010 and now, TfL's grant level had been reduced by about 42%, just over £1.4 billion, and in 2013 the remaining £1.4 billion operating costs, about £700 million to £800 million a year, was devolved pound for pound from the grant amount into retained business rates, and then our investment grant followed in 2017. Compared to other major cities around the world, you would see the New York Metro with about 38% of its income coming from its revenues and the rest coming from a mixture of grant and specific hypothecated taxes. On average, you see most metros having subsidy levels of between 50% and 80% elsewhere in the world.

Caroline Russell AM: Yes. This makes it absolutely clear what a difficult situation you are in. With continued social distancing, the fares model of income is really broken, but I was also thinking about some of your non-fares income, things like the advertising revenue, the business rate, which is obviously at risk, and you have been giving, very properly, rates holidays to some of those other small businesses.

I am wondering two things. One is I sincerely hope the Government provides some decent long-term support for TfL because Londoners need it, but also do you think it is time for drivers to start to contribute more to TfL's budget?

Simon Kilonback (Chief Finance Officer, Transport for London): In the first instance, you are absolutely right. The only forms of income that TfL and the Mayor have devolved in order to fund transport in London are almost perfectly correlated. If you have nobody travelling on the Tube and little business activity in London, our media and retail income will also fall and, as we know, there is a significant risk to business rates income, not only for this year but several years going forward. We will need a return to long-term funding certainty. That was one of the principles upon which TfL was established as an integrated transport body with a need for a 30-year capital plan that was efficient and efficiently financed. We have lost that over the last few years since we have not really had a

Comprehensive Spending Review providing long-term funding certainty since pre-2015. We absolutely need that in order to be able to maintain our asset condition efficiently.

One of the conditions of the funding agreement with the Government is that there will be a Government-led review of our finances, which in the first instance is concentrating on our efficiency, which we believe we will be able to demonstrate. The progress we have made over the last four years will go a long way towards satisfying that. In the second case, we will have to look at the people and who benefits from transport in London and how those that benefit pay and contribute towards the cost of it, because clearly it cannot all fall upon the farepayer as it has done recently.

The final thing I would say is, unlike almost any other transport agency anywhere in the world or even in the United Kingdom (UK), not a penny of general taxation has been spent on supporting infrastructure and services in London over the last three years. Clearly, we need to look in the round at who benefits and who should contribute to paying for transport in London as part of that review.

Caroline Russell AM: Thank you. That is it from me, Chair.

Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair): Thank you very much. That lays out the position very clearly, thank you for that. Can I now ask Assembly Member McCartney to ask question 2(g)?

Joanne McCartney AM: My first question is to the Deputy Mayor, if I can. As part of the funding package, a London COVID-19 Transport Task Force was set up, which has representatives from TfL and the Government on it, so my questions are around this. Firstly, can you tell me who is on the Task Force? Who makes decisions? Is TfL still taking those operational decisions day-to-day, or does it have to have the agreement of the Task Force?

Heidi Alexander (Deputy Mayor for Transport): On a day-to-day basis, one of the things that we were very clear about in the negotiations was that operational, safety-critical decisions had to sit with TfL, and that is the responsibility of the Commissioner, and that is still his responsibility now.

You asked me about the membership of the London Transport COVID Task Force and how it takes decisions. There are quite a lot of people that sit on it, because it is not just TfL and DfT. There are representatives there from Network Rail, the train-operating companies, the British Transport Police, and there are a large number of civil servants, both from the DfT and also Number 10. Formally, it is jointly chaired by [Sir] Ed Lister [Prime Minister's Chief Strategic Adviser] and me. In practice, Ed Lister has chaired every meeting since the first meeting. The first meeting of the Task Force took place before the funding deal was sorted out. On that you also would have Baroness Vere, who is a Minister at the DfT. Paul Scully [MP], the Minister for London, may also be on it. There is an active travel subgroup to that, which Gareth [Powell] participates in, along with Will Norman [Walking and Cycling Commissioner] and Andrew Gilligan [Prime Minister's Transport Advisor]. Gareth may wish to say more about how that subgroup is operating.

Broadly speaking, there are weekly meetings, although sometimes other meetings take place outside of that formal structure. The easiest example to give you about how it works in practice: one of the conditions of the funding agreement, for example, was to restrict free travel for holders of the 60-plus photo card and Older Persons Freedom Pass from outside of peak hours. What happened was that we

went away and looked at that as TfL. We considered the arrangements that are currently in place with London Councils. We went back to the Government and said, "We think the simplest way of making this work is to restrict early morning travel before 9.00am". The Government may have wanted to align the cut-off point to the arrangements that exist outside of London, which is 9.30am, but I am quite pleased that we were able to agree a 9.00am cut-off point there. We wanted to ensure that older people could still travel for free in the evening peak, and so we made some suggestions and it was agreed that we would take that back. That required a mayoral decision. As you might imagine, there are some quite heated discussions under way at the moment about the whole issue of the removal of free travel for children and young people, which was also a stipulation of the Government funding agreement.

Joanne McCartney AM: Thank you. We are going to have some questions on that very shortly.

In terms of governance, I noticed from the funding agreement that two Her Majesty's the Government (HMG) appointed representatives are going to attend all TfL Board meetings. Has the Government formally notified you who they will be?

Heidi Alexander (Deputy Mayor for Transport): No, it has not as yet. The condition of the funding agreement was that it could nominate two representatives to come along to the Board. They would not be voting members of the Board, but they would have the ability to request information from TfL officers, and also one of those two individuals would sit on the Programme and Investment Committee and one of them would also sit on the Finance Committee. To date, we have had no communication as to who those individuals will be.

Joanne McCartney AM: OK. Thank you. I may have some questions later on, Chair, but thank you, Heidi.

Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair): Thank you very much. We will move on to the last substantive question in this part of the meeting, and this is to do with funding again. Assembly Member Prince is going to ask the question. I believe we have covered some of this in earlier answers, but Assembly Member Prince will want to take that into account as he asks the question.

Keith Prince AM: Thank you, Chair. Most of it has been covered, but I will just ask the question so you can add in the bits that are missing. I was going to ask a supplementary. I will ask that now so you can build that into the answer and save time. Basically, what are the plans for the period beyond the lifetime of the central Government funding and financing package, and how will the Recovery Board feed those plans into the mix? Thank you.

Heidi Alexander (Deputy Mayor for Transport): Shall I have a go at answering that one? Essentially, as Simon [Kilonback] has already said, there will be this Government review of TfL's funding and financing and its governance structures more broadly. We do not have detail about exactly how that is going to be done at the moment, but clearly that review would need to report back before we get into the real detail of the negotiations, I guess in the autumn again.

From my perspective, Simon has set some of this out already, but since the Government has withdrawn the direct operating subsidy from TfL, which most recently was worth about £700 million a year, it has essentially decided that it is moving to this position where the user pays, and that the income we get

from fares and other commercial activities, such as advertising, needs to cover the cost of the majority of our day-to-day spending. The real problem with that, as I said in my opening remarks, is that when you only have a small fraction of people who are using your public transport services compared to normal, that does create a massive black hole. Those fares and commercial activities account for 80% of TfL's running budget. In April [2020] and for much of March and May, our fare income collapsed by 90%. You can see that there is a real problem there.

We could be in a position where, because of the changing way in which people are living their lives - lots more Londoners are working from home, which is a good thing - you do not see passengers returning to previous levels. As a result of that, the funding model is fundamentally broken. It does not really matter how much the Government might want to ratchet fares up by or for TfL to cut jobs; you are never going to get to a place where the income from that could cover a £1.5 billion signalling upgrade or a £6 billion Tube extension.

It is my view that the Government has two choices in front of it. It either swallows its political pride and restores the operating subsidy to TfL, or it devolves more funding to London to enable it to pay for more of its own services. Currently, taxes are levied on Londoners and London businesses, but then those taxes are paying for services and infrastructure elsewhere in the country.

There is a third option for the Government, and that is to basically choose to commit London to a low-investment, low-productivity future. I think that would be the wrong thing to do because, no matter how life changes after this crisis, London will still be the engine of the UK's economy. It may be that the role of the Central Activities Zone changes because if three-quarters of all office employees are working from home, what does that mean for big, heavy bits of infrastructure in future? Does it mean that we need to be investing in more local journeys? There are big questions around all of this, but I do think the Government has to recognise that it needs to invest in London's public transport network to ensure that we have the sort of mobility that people need in London in order to get the economy started again so that we can pay for those things. At the moment, the funding model is broken.

Keith Prince AM: Thank you. We certainly would support you around - which you did not mention - car tax coming into London, because, as you know, the road fund licence does not come into London. It goes everywhere else. I did quickly ask you about the Recovery Board and how you are going to feed those plans into there.

Heidi Alexander (Deputy Mayor for Transport): Are you talking about the Task Force? Yes, the London Task Force. At the moment, we have had quite a lot of discussions on the Task Force about the operational performance of TfL. That is the first item on the agenda, and Andy [Lord] and Gareth [Powell] are there, and they give updates on a weekly basis about those issues.

We have talked about face coverings. On a number of occasions, I have made the point to the Government over recent weeks that we needed to move to a position where we were mandating them. We have had discussions about the 60-plus and Older Persons Freedom Pass, about under-18s travel. This bigger question about the review of TfL's finances has not been an agenda item to date in those meetings. Clearly, the Government has said it is going to commission this review, but I am sure that as we go forward those discussions, if they do not happen in precisely that forum, they need to happen with the Government because we need to find a sustainable answer.

Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair): Thank you very much.

Keith Prince AM: Thanks, Chair. Thank you.

Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair): Thank you very much, Assembly Member Prince. I have Assembly Members Shah and McCartney who want to come in now. Assembly Member Shah.

Navin Shah AM: Thank you, Chair. The Deputy Mayor has already given the background about the suspension of concessionary travel facilities. Two questions, please.

As you know, [London]TravelWatch and many other leading organisations have been campaigning because of concerns about [the] withdrawal of peak-time morning facilities for Freedom Pass and 60-plus Oyster [holders]. We understand that that was limited, the suspension, to four to six weeks' time. Do we know when exactly it is likely to end?

The second question is about under-18 free travel suspension. In fact, the Transport Secretary has stated in his written submission and statement that there will be special arrangements made for those children who qualify for free travel to schools. Do we know what those arrangements are? Again, what is the shelf life for this suspension? Thank you.

Heidi Alexander (Deputy Mayor for Transport): If I take the question on the suspension of free travel during the early morning peak for 60-plus and Older Persons Freedom Pass holders, I do not know where the figure of four to six weeks has come from. That is not a timeline that the Government has discussed with me at any point.

Navin Shah AM: I had come across this in one of TfL's briefings, actually. It was clearly written down as that.

Heidi Alexander (Deputy Mayor for Transport): OK. If you could send me that document and I will look at it, but we have not set a date over which these restrictions apply. It will be subject to review going forward. As the lockdown restrictions are eased and as we monitor what is going on in the public transport network, I would want that to be a subject of discussion with the Government. Honestly, to my knowledge, that is not a date that I am aware of, and so I would like to see exactly what it is that has been sent to you. I am sorry about that because I recognise that gives uncertainty to older Londoners.

We were mindful in taking the decision, of course, about the period of time when the public transport network is most congested and busiest, and also mindful of the more severe consequences for older people when they get coronavirus. Whilst I recognise this gives a lot of inconvenience to older people who would like to be travelling perhaps for doctor's appointments or for hospital appointments, this is quite a difficult problem to solve, given the pressure on the public transport network in those early hours of the morning.

On the issue to do with the removal of free travel for children and under-18s, this is hugely, hugely complicated. This is a point that I made very clear to the Government during the negotiations that took place. Anyone who has read the funding agreement closely will see that there is a line in that funding

agreement that says that TfL would bring forward proposals around the suspension of free travel for children and young people subject to discussions in the Task Force about how to operationalise it. We fought for those words in that agreement because I knew it would be very complicated, and whilst I do not personally disagree with the need to get more children walking and cycling to school, not using public transport in the peak times, I am very concerned and the Mayor is very concerned about the impact that the blanket removal of free travel would have on some of the poorest Londoners. Remember that there is no requirement to provide any free travel at all by law to 17- and 18-year-olds who may be going to college across the other side of London.

Outside of London, some children are eligible for free travel to school. It is a very complicated legislative framework that sits underneath that, and it relates to age and it relates to the distance that the child lives from the school. It is further complicated if you are on free school meals or if your family is in receipt of full working tax credit. One of the points I have made to the Government is that, of course, if you are on free school meals and your family is in receipt of full working tax credit, that is not a status that is constant throughout the year. You may be in work in June [2020] but come September you might not be. There would have to be a process by which children were assessed for free school travel throughout the year. We have no experience in London of having a process to verify eligibility for free school children. That competence does not exist in local authorities. This is a long way of saying that once we have looked into this and the Mayor has written to the Secretary of State for Transport and said, "We think you should drop this", at a time when you are trying to get children back to school, and we have seen all the problems that the Government have had in this regard. "This is just going to put big barriers in the way of poorer kids, and we want you to drop this as a condition to the funding agreement."

The Government wrote back and said no. The Mayor has written back again and said, "Look, this is your policy, so you need to set out how you see this working. Do you want children and young people to pay full adult fares? Do you want them to pay 50% fares? What are the arrangements for different age groups? How do you see the free travel for school applying in a London context?"

I know that a number of London local authorities are really worried about this and this is a monumental distraction at the moment. There are other ways in which we could be getting more children walking and cycling to school: some of the brilliant work that has been done around School Streets. We are using a sledgehammer to crack a nut here and so it is not the right thing to be doing, and that is going to be the subject of discussion going forward.

Navin Shah AM: Thank you very much.

Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair): Thank you very much. Assembly Member McCartney.

Joanne McCartney AM: Yes, thank you. Can I just thank you, Deputy Mayor, for fighting for London's children and young people? It is really important that you are doing that and that you and the Mayor are saying that quite clearly. Of course, this is not just about travel to school. It is also about those wider benefits and that investment that this city has promised to make in its children and young people. For example, visiting museums, getting around our city. Many families just would not be able to do that if this benefit were not there and so thank you, and I hope you will continue to fight for this in those negotiations.

I have just been reading the Mayor's letter, updated 8 June [2020], and he states in there that in actual fact this was dropped in in a draft agreement just two days before the final agreement was signed, and that with the six weeks' negotiations beforehand it was not mentioned once by the DfT or the Government. Did that come as a total surprise to you, and why do you think that was dropped in at the last moment?

Heidi Alexander (Deputy Mayor for Transport): It did come as a total surprise to me. I remember the email that I received at about midnight on the Monday before the Thursday when the funding agreement was actually finalised. You would have to ask Government Ministers about why they decided to crowbar this into the agreement at the very last minute. Their stated rationale at that point in time was that this was about easing congestion on buses and on Tubes at the busiest point in the day. I have subsequently pointed out to them that on the buses we have introduced a maximum passenger cap, so no more than 20 people on a double-decker bus, no more than ten people on a single-decker bus. We are controlling the number of people on buses that way, so your rationale for it no longer exists.

Their response to that at the moment is, "What we cannot have is a situation where children and young people in London have a more generous arrangement for free travel than elsewhere in the country". I, again, have pointed out to them that if you look at London and compare us to the rest of the country, not only do we have much lower levels of car ownership, we are much more heavily dependent upon the public transport network. When you look at the pattern of where 17- and 18-year-olds go for further education - I know this from my time as a Member of Parliament - you might live in Lewisham but you might be going to college in Westminster or Islington, and you have taken a reasonable decision based upon the fact that you had anticipated that you would be getting free travel. I do think that is a real problem. It is a problem in London.

When you look at the under-18 population, nearly 60% of under-18s in London come from a Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) background, compared to 43% as a whole. When you look at the equalities impact of this change, I am really concerned about that. I know the Mayor is concerned about that. Those are the sorts of discussion that we are having. Londoners are really worried about it. Families are worried about it. As you think about what is going to happen over the next year, sadly, people will find themselves in more precarious situations around their employment. The added worry of having to make an application to either the school or the local authority to then get your child free school travel, if you have also just lost your job, it is not a sensible thing to be doing. That is why we are making the case to the Government that we are at the moment.

Joanne McCartney AM: Thank you. I am having the same concerns expressed to me that you have stated. Parents have made decisions on education based on the ability to get to schools. I have talked to local authorities. They are extremely concerned that, firstly, they will have to pick up some of the funding for this, and they just do not have the headroom in their budgets. Secondly, they do not have the administrative capability to do this.

One other thing, if I can ask, is that children who are going to secondary school in particular in September have, over the last couple of months, been allocated their places. This is a rite of passage. They apply for their Zip cards, and many of them will be doing that over this summer. Will TfL still be processing those Zip cards?

Heidi Alexander (Deputy Mayor for Transport): As of the moment, yes.

Joanne McCartney AM: Good.

Heidi Alexander (Deputy Mayor for Transport): The Government has not said when it wants to implement this. We have talked about the complexity of who is eligible for free travel, and the Government has not made it clear as to how it wants to deal with that in a London context. We have not spoken about the complexity of implementing this from a technological point of view. We have not spoken about the limited functionality of the Oyster system. All of this feeds into this. Until such time as the Government sets out what it wants to do - because it is the Government's policy, this is not the Mayor of London's policy - we will continue to work in the same way as we have been working.

Joanne McCartney AM: Thank you, and please continue fighting. I find it quite astonishing that the Prime Minister, a previous Mayor of London, is seeking to impose this policy when he should know the benefits of it. Thank you.

Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair): Indeed, and you put your case very eloquently, Deputy Mayor. Thank you very much for doing that, and keep fighting for children in London.

Just before I move on to the second set of questions - and I will come back to that in a minute - we had a request from one of the Members, and I would fully endorse it. Is it possible for us to, as a Committee, have sight of or see the minutes for the Transport Task Force and the sub-group, the working group? It would be very helpful in doing what we need to do.

Heidi Alexander (Deputy Mayor for Transport): Those minutes are jointly held between TfL and the Government. I will seek the permission of Government to share those with you. I do not feel that I am unilaterally able to commit without having had that conversation with them, but I undertake to have that conversation and come back to you.

Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair): Please do, and thank you very much. It is in our role in scrutiny and challenge and support that we have, so thank you very much, and I would really appreciate that if we are able to do so. Thank you.

I would like to move on to the second set of questions, which are around safety on the transport network, and I am mindful of the time. Members, I would like to try to finish this meeting by 4.15pm, but if we can keep our questions tight. We have guests with us whose time is deeply precious at the moment, even more than ours.

Can we move on to that section now? I will ask the first question, which is: how is TfL assessing whether the current measures being implemented to protect health and safety of transport workers and passengers are having a positive impact, and what further steps are being considered?

Heidi Alexander (Deputy Mayor for Transport): Perhaps I might ask a combination of Andy [Lord] and Gareth to pick up these points, because the things that we are doing do differ but are similar in some

respects across the Surface area and in London Underground. I do not know who wants to go first. Gareth, do you want to kick off?

Gareth Powell (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London): Thank you, Heidi. Clearly, the safety of all those working in the transport system has been absolutely front of mind for us as a team right from the start of this pandemic. We have sought to try to bring in whatever measures we could as quickly as we could, basing our decisions at all times upon the available scientific advice at the time at which we were able to see it.

Obviously, understanding about the disease and the impacts of it and so on has been evolving over time, and we have, therefore, been changing and enhancing the measures that we have been implementing over time as well. In respect, for example, of buses, you will be aware of the fact that we have done a range of measures for bus drivers and those working in the industry, absolutely jointly in collaboration with Unite, the union representing bus drivers, and also with the bus operators themselves. Those measures have included putting film over the holes in the assault screens to further protect the drivers, to actually enhancing the assault screens completely so as to reduce the chances of the passage of air flow from one side to the other, to moving to centre-door boarding and barring off the seats most adjacent to the drivers, to then being able to reinstate front-door boarding now, we have enhanced screens in place. Throughout all of this, we have also enhanced both the anti-viral cleaning processes to the very highest standards we could understand, not only from what we use in the UK but also learning internationally, and all bus vehicles are regularly sanitised with 30-day antiviral processes, etc. Also, then for drivers, making sure that hand sanitiser is available and so on, and most latterly, of course, the implementation of face coverings for all passengers.

In respect of buses - and I know Andy will say similar things for those working on the Tube - our processes have been geared towards trying to take the scientific advice and then implementing, sometimes ahead of anyone elsewhere, those kinds of measures to try to make sure we do what we can to protect those providing these essential services.

Andy Lord (Managing Director, London Underground, Transport for London): Thank you, Gareth, and Chair. From a Tube perspective, in line with what Gareth and Heidi have already said, the wellbeing and safety of our colleagues and customers is absolutely the first priority. I have to say we have had great co-operation and support from all our colleagues and our trade union partners throughout this pandemic that we have been dealing with.

From a specific safety perspective, we have a range of measures, as Gareth has already alluded to. We were the first transport network to implement the anti-viral cleaning regime that was applied across all our infrastructure, stations, our trains and also our train depots and maintenance facilities, which is now being adopted more widely. We enhanced the cleaning regime frequency on top of that as well. We introduced a number of measures when the social distancing requirements came in in terms of making sure that our colleagues across the network could maintain social distancing, whether it is reporting for work at train-operated depots, whether it is how they undertake critical essential maintenance work, and even where they cannot maintain 2 metres, we have clearly defined and risk-assessed procedures which have been shared with the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) as well, and following ORR guidance.

We have also been following the rail industry. The RDG has been taking a lead, working with both the ORR and the trade unions partners, to ensure that we have consistency across the rail industry and make sure that we follow Public Health England (PHE) advice and also apply it in a practical way so that we can maintain those essential, safety-critical roles.

From a customer perspective, you will have seen all the customer communication that we have sent out through Vernon's [Everitt] team. We have applied over 236,000 vinyl stickers across the Tube estate to make people aware of the social distancing requirements. Again, we are the first railway in the country to do that. We have put measures in place in terms of one-way systems and signage across the network as well, and also keeping our customers informed as to what we are doing around the cleaning regime and the frequency of doing that. That is an ongoing process. We continue to refine it as we learn more and more and as the advice changes. I am sure you all appreciate that certainly in the first few days and weeks this was an ever-evolving situation and so we had to constantly change the advice and adapt our risk assessments to cope with that. We continue to focus on following the scientific advice, and that is a priority for us.

Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair): Thank you very much. Assembly Member Pidgeon, you wanted to come in with a follow-up question on this.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): Yes, I do. It is to start looking forward. In terms of the bus companies, I am just wondering whether they have stepped up to the plate in the whole of this, because you have things like hand sanitiser, which TfL ended up bulk-buying for the bus drivers and bus garages and so on, and it was TfL who had to step in and offer full sick pay from day one so that bus drivers, if they did have symptoms and did feel unwell, stopped working.

I am just wondering, in the future, when you are looking at the contracts you let for all these contracted services - I am mostly thinking about buses at the moment, but it could be the DLR or the Overground - will you look at the terms and conditions that the drivers and others have in their contracts to make sure that you are only contracting with people where you are not then having to go back and effectively bail them out because the private company is not prepared to do so?

Gareth Powell (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London): Thank you, Assembly Member Pidgeon. We have had to work really closely with the bus companies. Just as it has been a fast-changing situation for all of us, there have been real issues we have had to overcome jointly. In the example you give of hand sanitiser, at that time at the beginning of the pandemic, hand sanitiser and anti-viral hand-cleaning fluid was in short supply everywhere. TfL was able to exercise its bulk-buying capabilities in order to secure larger volumes of that and then be able to distribute that to the individual bus companies while they themselves are able to start setting up their own supply chains. In some cases, it is because TfL has been able to do it. It is not a reluctance on behalf of the bus companies. We have been really closely together with the joint aim in mind of getting the facilities to the frontline colleagues as quickly as possible, irrespective of the contractual scenarios, as we work through those weeks and days.

In order to answer your question going forward, it is fair to say that we have looked at the regimes we have at the moment between ourselves and the bus companies, and we have sought in all cases to make sure that we are doing the right thing for those that work in the bus industry. The contracts are set up in

a way that incentivises operators to perform in certain ways, and we are in a very different landscape at the moment in terms of the types of services that we need to provide, which we talked about earlier, and also the very significant impact on bus drivers and the workforce itself. At peak, we had 2,700 bus drivers off on furlough with a variety of issues, 50% of which were in the vulnerable category, 25% of which were shielding, and these are volumes that individual bus companies cannot maintain on their own in the same way that the contractual mechanisms do. Of course, TfL at that stage stepped in and made sure that everybody was looked after in the process, because the top priority was to ensure that the welfare of the bus drivers was first and foremost and that we could provide the maximum service possible to those who needed to use it, the critical workers at the time.

We are looking forward in terms of the way we operate with the bus companies. We are looking forward to making sure we continue that process, because we do not know over the next weeks and months how this is going to play out, but we do know that we need to work jointly with our bus operators so that we can continue that twin-track approach to provide the maximum services for customers to get around London and also to provide the protections for those that work in the bus industry to make sure that they are looked after properly.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): OK. Thank you very much.

Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair): Thank you very much. I am going to ask the next question. Some of it has been picked up in the previous section, and I know that Keith Prince [AM] wants to come in on this one as well and so if I ask and then he comes in directly, and perhaps you can pick up both parts of it in one go.

Keith Prince AM: Chair, to be helpful, my question has been answered. Thank you.

Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair): OK. That is really helpful. The way I am going to ask the question, therefore, is to ask you whether you have anything to add to this. How successful have current efforts been to reduce demand and smooth congestion on the network to enable social distancing to be observed? What other actions are you considering to achieve this, especially as demand increases? You may well feel that you have answered all of that, but if anybody has anything to add to that, that will be fine at this point, and then I will move on to the next two questions.

Heidi Alexander (Deputy Mayor for Transport): Chair, I would just add that we look on a daily basis at the statistics about the number of passengers that are using services, and what we have seen in the last week or so on the Tube is that some of the larger increases are happening later in the morning. It is difficult to draw a causal link between our messaging campaign and then what thousands of Londoners do, but the fact that we are not seeing all of that coalesce in the very early mornings is quite reassuring to me because it suggests that people are listening and are reading, whether it is the emails that we are sending, the posters we are putting up, the radio adverts that are out there, about, "Avoid those really early hours between 5.45am and 7.45am". We will monitor this as we go forward.

Also, the feedback that we have received from some of the businesses that we have been engaging with - be that retailers, be it developers on construction sites, about how start times and shifts are being staggered, how the opening times of shops are perhaps being pushed a bit later - also provides us with some reassurance at this point, although it is early days, that the campaign to manage demand is having

some impact. I would be lying if I said I thought this was going to be a walk in the park going forward. None of us know exactly what is going to be happening in the weeks and months ahead and so we just have to adapt our operational response accordingly. Andy [Lord] on the London Underground will have plans in place to manage queuing at stations if that needs to happen. We have only had to implement that a couple of times. I think it is at a couple of stations in east London. If we need to do that more consistently and across a larger number of stations, we have plans that can be activated.

Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair): That is very helpful, and you would be thinking in terms of the sorts of plans you bring into play in Camden Town or Oxford Street running up to Christmas, those sorts of traffic management issues. Thank you. That is really helpful.

I would like to move on to a very important question, and I wanted to make sure we had time for this. Assembly Member Shah.

Navin Shah AM: Yes. Thank you. London TravelWatch has analysed risks faced by BAME transport users as well as frontline workers. I know that the Mayor has recently announced his initiative setting up a risk assessment for BAME staff on transport as well.

Can you please overall indicate what targeted efforts are being implemented to protect BAME staff members, particularly those who work on the front line, given that they are disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic? Thank you.

Heidi Alexander (Deputy Mayor for Transport): The first thing I would say is that this is a very important area of focus for us because nearly half of the Tube's frontline staff and nearly half of London bus drivers come from BAME backgrounds. Our starting point is to reduce the risk of exposure for everyone as far as possible so that, regardless of any individual risk factors, we keep the overall risk as low as possible for staff and for passengers. Very early on in this process, one of the things that we did was we made sure that people who have underlying health conditions - they may fall into the extremely vulnerable or vulnerable category - if it was possible for them to work from home, to enable them to do that. If not, though, with some jobs - a bus driver cannot work from home - we were clear with the bus-operating companies that people with underlying health conditions falling into those extremely vulnerable and vulnerable categories should be prioritised for furlough. We have since 11 May [2020] made face masks available to frontline transport workers since the Government changed its advice. We have introduced social distancing measures in the depots and when staff are signing on for shifts.

You are quite right, Navin; since 1 June [2020] when the Mayor made his announcement about all BAME across the Greater London Authority (GLA) family having access to risk assessments, TfL has put in place a mechanism to be doing that. We have taken on more resources in the Occupational Health Team, for example. What we have also done is we have commissioned research from the Institute of Health Equity, led by [Professor Sir] Michael Marmot, to look into the measures we have taken, for example, on the bus network, a rapid piece of work that should report back in the next couple of weeks, to assess the effectiveness of all of the things that we have been talking about that we have done on the bus network and to say whether there is any more that we should be doing.

I do not know whether Gareth wanted to pick up on how TfL will be implementing the specific risk assessments for BAME staff subsequent to the Mayor's press release on 1 June [2020].

Gareth Powell (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London): Thank you, Heidi. The process that we are just getting under way with at the moment is based on something that has been piloted within the NHS for the NHS's own staff, which asks individuals who are concerned - and it starts off with the individual - to then go through a process where they are able to look at their own underlying health conditions, their own age, for example, their weight and so on and so forth. All of this builds up a picture in a structured way that gives them an overall risk that is evaluated. If they fall over a certain threshold, then they have specific conversations with occupational health specialists who are able to have a personal conversation with them about that, and then, subsequent to those conversations, if there are adjustments that need to be made or other measures that need to be put in place for those individuals, then those can be discussed with their line managers and so on.

That is a process that TfL has been talking to the TfL trade unions about and is making available, and we also have talked to the bus operators and to others that work within the broader TfL family who are implementing exactly the same types of processes at the moment. We are being quite broad ranging with where this applies.

Navin Shah AM: Chair, I would like to thank the witness for the particular reference to trade unions as well, because they have been lobbying very hard about the issue of the safety of BAME frontline transport workers.

This is by far the biggest issue that has come about or has been highlighted during the pandemic to do with London's diverse community, and I am pleased that this is not just picked up as a transport issue but an issue right across everything that we do at the GLA. This is something I would like to make sure does not drop off the agenda, and, therefore, everything that we do, even issues like equality impact assessments are done so that we know we are providing a service that does not put in danger any community concerned. I am pleased that we have this agenda very much as a priority. Thank you for doing that.

Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair): Thank you very much, Assembly Member Shah.
Assembly Member Bailey.

Shaun Bailey AM: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Gareth, for your answer. Just two quick questions, Gareth. What proportion of your BAME staff have met this threshold and needed additional support?

Gareth Powell (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London): The process is being rolled out at the moment. I do not have figures as to how many individuals have started to do the self-assessment process at present, but we are encouraging all that want to do the process to undertake it. It is not something that is in any way restricted. In fact, we are encouraging people to engage with the process, and we have the support with the trade unions to take forward any issues that arise or make any modifications to the process, for example, to make sure that people understand how to use it properly and so on, to make it fully accessible for people. We do not have specific numbers. We are just in the process of going through it now.

Shaun Bailey AM: Will you be recording specific numbers? What I am getting at here is what proportion of staff will do it? How vociferous are you being with advertising this among your BAME staff so they know it is available and they take what for them could be a very important step?

Gareth Powell (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London): I do not know if Andy [Lord] wants to come in with any specifics on the Tube, but our intention is that if anybody wants to use this process, of course they should do, and we are making that widely publicised in our internal communications and so on. We have issued guidance to all line managers to make sure that they are fully informed of the process and can address any conversations on a one-to-one basis with those who directly report to them. This is fully available, and our intention is to make sure that those who want to use it can use it. We are absolutely encouraging that process to happen at the moment. The percentages and so on will be down to individuals who choose or not to go through the process. It is not something that in that way is mandatory in any way for them to do. Andy.

Andy Lord (Managing Director, London Underground, Transport for London): The only thing I will add is that we will keep records. Once we have been through a period of time, we will be able to provide that information, but there will be two stages to that. There will be those who have undertaken assessment with their line manager, and the assessment has decided that any mitigations can be made locally, and then there will be those who require some form of intervention or further consultation with their Occupational Health Team, which will take it to the next level, which again might result in further mitigations to enable them to work normally or, worst case, might result in them being removed from role or potentially being asked to isolate or shield, depending on their circumstances. We expect those numbers to be incredibly small.

Shaun Bailey AM: OK. Thank you, Andy. Thank you, Gareth. Thank you.

Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair): Thank you very much. That is very helpful. Finally, on this question, Assembly Member Devenish.

Tony Devenish AM: We are all hoping there is not a second wave or a third wave, Deputy Mayor. Is there anything you would do differently in terms of this particular issue, if a second or third wave came out, that you have learned during this crisis?

Heidi Alexander (Deputy Mayor for Transport): It is a good question. We have been in constant contact with the bus-operating companies, with the trade unions, and what I would want to do is replicate that very intensive contact between frontline staff and senior management. I guess my one point about what has been good about the way that we have dealt with this is that there has been a lot of interaction and I would want to maintain that going forward.

We were ahead of the Government in the week of 16 March [2020] when we changed, for example, our public announcements in the Tube stations. I can remember very early one morning texting Vernon [Everitt] - and Vernon will testify to this - to say, "We need to be saying on the Tube network, 'The Tube is solely for essential journeys and critical workers'". Even though the Government at that stage had not defined the list of critical workers, we had to send a very clear message that behaviour in London needed to change. I remember sitting talking to Baroness Vere virtually and begging her, quite literally, to define a list of critical workers, because people needed to know what they should be doing, whether they should

be going to work, whether their kids should be going to school. Being very directive in the communications that we as TfL put out was the right thing to do. You do need to be quite brave at certain points and just decide, “We are going to do this”, and even if it feels that some of the time you might just be slightly ahead of what the Government are doing, looking back at that time, I feel that that was very much the right thing to do. As I said in my opening remarks, every day matters in that context.

Obviously, the test and trace system that the Government is developing, if it works as it should do, should give localised information to us as the regional transport authority about where perhaps new waves of infection are bubbling up. We need to be very targeted in how we run our communication campaigns, then, looking at the data that we have about who has been using the public transport network in those areas and making sure that our communications and our messages are directed at those groups of people, and we can do that using the email database that we have.

I remember saying to TfL, “We have to get these announcements translated into 15 different languages”, finding a way to reach all of London’s diverse communities so that they all hear the same message. We may be putting that message out, but you need to make sure that everyone is hearing it. If we could do any more of that, that would be a good thing. We did some of it. We got the Leader of Redbridge, [Councillor] Jas Athwal, talking on a Punjabi radio station. There were broadcasts going on upon Cypriot radio stations up in Enfield. Every life matters, every life is equal, and we as the transport authority have a responsibility to make sure that our messaging is reaching everyone. We did that well. Could we build on that and do more of that? Possibly, yes.

Tony Devenish AM: Thank you, Chair. I will leave it there.

Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair): Thank you very much. We have two final sections to cover and so bear with us. We will get through this as quickly as we can, but I do not want to minimise either of those questions. Assembly Member Shah, if you would like to ask your question around assisted transport services?

Navin Shah AM: Thank you, Chair. My question is to Gareth Powell. How are you ensuring that assisted transport services like Dial-a-Ride and Turn-Up-and-Go are being delivered safely at this time?

Gareth Powell (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London): Thank you for the question. Thank you, Chair.

It has been our priority to make sure that those services have been prioritised and looked after, and we have adjusted the way that we deliver those services as we have been through the learning experience and the changing guidance. Perhaps I will cover the particular Dial-a-Ride services that you refer to, and then I might hand over to Andy Lord just to talk about how some of the assistance on the Tube is being provided.

On Dial-a-Ridge, of course, we have seen a very significant reduction in demand for Dial-a-Ride services, partly because the population that tends to use Dial-a-Ride services quite often has been in one of the either vulnerable or shielding categories. Also, sadly, the facilities that Dial-a-Ride often takes them to have not been available under the lockdown situation, so things like community groups and so on have not been in operation. Where we have been conducting trips, where the drivers of Dial-a-Ride need to

provide assistance for people to move into the vehicles and so on, they are wearing face coverings and other forms of protection to make sure that they can do that safely. The vehicles themselves are fully sanitised with an airborne sanitiser every couple of weeks, which is well within the 30 days' protection that that particular sanitiser gives, and then we limit the number of people to the vehicles to one in order to maximise the protection for the individual, unless of course they are travelling with a carer or family member that they normally are interacting with. We are trying to make sure that those services are provided in just the very best way that we can.

That has meant that we have not had huge amounts of services. Of course, I might just say we have been doing other things with those vehicles, such as helping bring facilities to those customers such as medical supplies or, in some cases, food supplies. The frontline workers in Dial-a-Ride have really risen to the challenge to be a community service, which of course they are, but doing different things in this time.

Andy, I do not know if you wanted to cover the specific assistance on the Tube.

Andy Lord (Managing Director, London Underground, Transport for London): Yes, thanks, Gareth. Making sure that we can still provide a reliable service for any of our customers with any form of disability is absolutely critical, and we continue to offer the Turn-Up-and-Go service. That has continued to work well, with two or three things that we have specifically done. With our signage, we have made sure that it is suitable for the visually impaired and people can see that. We are working hard currently with the groups that represent the deaf, because one of the challenges with face coverings is that people who rely on lip-reading find that much more difficult now. We are working with the groups who represent the deaf community to see how we can make that more easily available.

Our station staff are all trained to assist anyone with any form of disability. If we do have stations where there are queues, any passenger or customer who makes themselves known to a member of staff will be escorted to the front of any queue and given the appropriate assistance in the station.

One of the critical things from a social distancing perspective is making sure that our lifts are available, and we did have to consider at one stage whether or not we should close stations that are lift-only, because we were not sure if there would be sufficient space. We took a decision following careful risk assessment to keep those stations open, with staff available to assist all customers but particular those who need assistance at those locations. If the worst comes to the worst and there is not the possibility of anyone with a disability being able to use a station, then, ultimately, we will arrange a taxi and alternative transport for those customers.

Navin Shah AM: That is very helpful. Thank you very much.

Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair): Thank you very much. We will move on now to the final question. This is about the taxi and private hire sector. Assembly Member Kurten.

David Kurten AM: Thank you, Chair. This is a question to Gareth again. What additional measures are being considered to support London's taxi and private hire drivers?

Gareth Powell (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London): Thank you, Assembly Member Kurten. We have been in regular dialogue - in fact, a weekly call - with representatives from both trades, the private hire and the taxi trades, all the way through this process. We have issued six updates to the industry covering a wide range of things, such as appropriate cleaning for the vehicles, about the way in which, for example, to sanitise keypads and so on for the collection of their fares. We have installed hand sanitisers at seven locations for taxi drives to use, in addition to the others that they can use which are across the wider estate. We have given them access to Tube toilet facilities for handwashing and so on. We have also put in place markings at the 20 busiest taxi ranks to help maintain social distancing between customers and so on.

Then, more recently, we have been arranging a process because a number of the operators for private hire vehicles have been asking about putting in screens between customers and drivers. The issue there, of course, is that the safety within the vehicle and the visibility that is needed through these screens, and indeed the operation of the airbags in some cases of vehicle types and so on is an all-important consideration. We have set up a process with leading test houses, Millbrook and Mira, in order to be able to evaluate those screen suggestions where they are coming through, and to make sure that if they are installed, they are done so in a way that fits with the safe operation of the vehicle itself.

Finally, alongside the recent guidance, as of today, for face coverings for all people using public transport, we have issued the guidance to the industry in saying that passengers and those working in the taxi and private hire industry should wear face coverings as well within London, as our position as regulator.

David Kurten AM: Great. I would just ask one follow-up question. Taxi drivers and taxi vehicles all have the full Perspex screen between the driver and the passenger, but not all private hire vehicles do, as you say. How are you monitoring and enforcing social distancing within a private hire vehicle so that you can be sure that the driver and the passengers are at least 2 metres apart if there is no screen between them?

Gareth Powell (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London): What we have done is issued guidance as far as is possible within the constraints of a private hire vehicle. As you say, there is not that much space within a private hire vehicle. For example, that passengers sit diagonally on the opposite side and it is limited to one passenger. That means that there is the maximum separation between the passenger and the driver. That is also why we have issued guidance that they should be wearing face coverings as well for their further protection.

Clearly, there are constraints, as there are within all types of vehicles. Maintaining social distancing wherever possible is the aim, and we are doing what we can to advise the trades in how to respond to that requirement.

David Kurten AM: OK. Thank you.

Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair): Thank you very much. Assembly Member Prince.

Keith Prince AM: Thank you, Chair. Very quickly, I will ask two questions together, firstly around black cabs. We are discouraging people from using public transport, so surely this time now it is vital that black

cab drivers can pick up and drop off their customers, especially disabled and less mobile Londoners, where they need to go. Could you perhaps comment on that? That is probably for Gareth.

For the Deputy Mayor, as we are talking about users of red routes, you said it earlier: every life matters. I am just interested in the progress you are making on Vision Zero, because I have the latest figures for quarters 1 and 2 for 2019. For people killed and seriously injured (KSIs), there were 71 pedestrians, 18 cars, five pushbikes, two buses, two others, and 32 motorcycle KSIs. That is a massive number. That is six times the number of cyclists and 20% higher than all other road users put together.

Every life does matter, but what are you doing regarding Vision Zero and motorcyclists, please? Gareth could deal with the taxis first. Thank you.

Gareth Powell (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London): As you say, black taxis do play an important role in providing accessible forms of transport, and it is really important that they are able to continue to do so. We are talking with representatives from the black taxi trade about how to do that in the context particularly of central London, where the demands on the road space allocation are particularly acute. As we roll out the Streetspace programme and so on, we are taking very good care to make sure that taxis do have appropriate access to be able to get to the places that they need to. It is an important plank to make sure that that exists alongside the Streetspace activity, and we do have to make sure there is a balance for all types of road users so that we can function properly in the road network at the moment.

Keith Prince AM: Thank you, Gareth. I will not make a point about it, but I am not sure that every cab driver would agree with you on that. Anyway, thank you.

Heidi Alexander (Deputy Mayor for Transport): Just on the point you make, Keith, about the disproportionate number of motorcyclists that have been killed and seriously injured on our roads, we have discussed this, haven't we, on a number of occasions previously? Given the overall volume of traffic on the roads has been lower over this period, the severity of some of the collisions that have happened has been very serious. I think I am right in saying - Gareth [Powell] with correct me if I am wrong - when we are putting in new Streetspace initiatives, we will be taking into account the impact of those on the overall road layout and road design so that we are not doing anything that would compromise the safety of other road users there. That would include motorcyclists. You will be aware of some of the training that TfL provides as well.

I think I am right in saying - and Vernon [Everitt] may correct me if I am wrong in this - that we have, in some of the press statements that we have put out and also the press releases that we have issued, talked about everyone observing the speed limit as well, because we have seen excessive speeding happening in some locations in London, and obviously excessive speed will lead to more serious outcomes from a road collision as well. We have been acutely aware of that and have taken action over the last couple of months to try to get behaviours changing on the roads.

Keith Prince AM: I have noticed, Deputy Mayor, that you are running a campaign to prevent more speeding in the 30mph and 20mph zones. As a member of a motorcycling group, we would encourage that. I do think more attention needs to be spent on motorcyclists because now they have become more than disproportionately victims on our roads.

Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair): Thank you very much, Assembly Member Prince. That is the end of our discussion today. Thank you very much to all our guests for giving us so much of your available time, for answering so fully. It has been really helpful to have your answers here. For your briefings in between meetings and for the work you do on behalf of Londoners, thank you very much, and thank you to Assembly Members for their questions.