

MAYOR OF LONDON

Shaun Bailey AM
Chair of the London Assembly Economy
Committee
City Hall
Kamal Chunchie Way
London E16 1ZE

Date: 7th December 2021

Dear Shaun

Re: Economy Committee Meeting – 10 November 2021

Thank you for the invitation to appear before the London Assembly's Economy Committee meeting on 10 November 2021 to discuss the gig economy in London. I hope members of the Committee found the discussion valuable, as I did. I detail the further information requested below.

Discuss the issue of the number of school cycle trainers reducing across London with the Deputy Mayor for Transport and the Walking and Cycling Commissioner, and feed back to the Committee:

Thank you for raising this issue. I have contacted the Walking and Cycling Commissioner Will Norman to highlight the specific concerns around funding for this provision being reduced, and impact of short-notice cancellations.

Both the Mayor and Transport for London (TfL) recognise the important role cycle training plays in encouraging Londoners to cycle, to support an ongoing sustainable recovery. They understand the concerns and frustrations at this difficult time and are working hard to achieve a strong funding agreement which will enable us to fund this crucial area of work.

The position that TfL is currently in is a direct result of public transport use and fares revenue being drastically reduced since the beginning of the pandemic. Without income from fares, TfL was forced to seek financial support from central Government. In June, a funding agreement was reached, which extends its financial support to 11 December 2021.

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This agreement set aside £100m for Active Travel programmes to be shared between TfL and London's boroughs. The £100m allocation is a lower sum than in previous years, leading to constraints on both TfL and borough programmes. This means tough decisions have had to be made, with cuts to programmes across the board.

Despite this, cycle training is one of the only TfL budgets that has not been cut. In 2021/22 TfL's budget for cycle training is £2.55m, the highest it has been for a number of years. In previous years cycle training budgets were also topped up by boroughs and small underspends from other budgets, and there has been less money available from these sources.

The Mayor and TfL are determined to ensure that cycle training for adults and children can continue in every borough, but this is now dependent on a decent funding agreement with the Government. Failure to reach a sufficient agreement could lead to much more drastic cuts across the board, including more than 100 bus routes being withdrawn and less frequent Tube timetables on a number of lines and branches. I would therefore urge you to make your voice known and use your influence with the Government to ensure a proper funding agreement is reached.

Inform the Committee of any correspondence that the Mayor or Deputy Mayor has sent to the Government regarding the Employment Bill:

Our discussion on 10 November rightly highlighted the difficulties defining worker status and protecting employment rights posed by the atypical operating models of many gig platforms. Although the Mayor of London has an important voice to call for change, many of these issues lie outside the Mayor's limited regulatory powers to resolve or enforce.

The Government has failed to legislate adequately to protect the rights of gig workers. It should bring forward its proposed Employment Bill to enact its own Good Work Plan, including a single market enforcement agency to help worker enforce their rights. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/good-work-plan>

The Mayor and I are committed to doing what we can to encourage platforms to improve their employment practices and lobby for stronger legislation to protect workers. We continue to lobby government to improve practices experienced by gig economy workers. Throughout the pandemic, the Mayor and I have repeatedly written to the government calling on them to close eligibility gaps in the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme, and ensure that gig economy workers have adequate sick pay protection should they need to self-isolate.

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As discussed in the meeting, the Mayor has committed to developing a new voluntary charter for good work in the gig economy. The charter will build on similar principles to the Mayor's Good Work Standard, but will specifically address themes and issues raised by workers, platforms, researchers and policy organisations with expertise in gig work. It is expected to serve as a call-to-action to platforms and Government to improve practices. The Greater London Authority's Economic Development Unit is currently engaging with a wide range of stakeholders to develop content for the charter and how it could meaningfully operate to help raise standards. Interested parties will be able to respond to a draft charter in early 2022, with a view to launching the charter by Autumn. Insight from Economy Committee members and the wider London Assembly is very welcome as part of this process.

The Mayor is also working closely with The Living Wage Foundation to understand the nature of low-pay and barriers to Living Wage uptake among platform operators. This will form part of the London as a Living Wage City programme announced during Living Wage Week. As mentioned during our meeting, the Mayor's Resilience Fund 'Gig Economy Challenge', brought together the Foundation and tech innovators Finmo to develop a tool for gig workers to help them understand how their take-home pay and expenses relates to the Living Wage, and analyse pay challenges across different types of gig work.

While it is acknowledged that many gig platforms are likely to fall short of the Good Work Standard accreditation criteria, they are welcome to pursue accreditation. The Good Work Standard team is on-hand to advise and support them through their applications.

A sector by sector breakdown of the number of employers and employees that have signed up to the Good Work Standard, in particular those outside of the public sector:

At the time of writing, 103 employers are accredited to the Mayor's Good Work Standard, demonstrating their commitment to best employment practices in fair pay and conditions, workplace wellbeing, skills, progression, diversity and recruitment. Over 235,000 Londoners work for a Good Work Standard employer. 56% of GWS employers are private sector, 25% public and 22% third.

By business sector, the following numbers of employers are currently accredited:

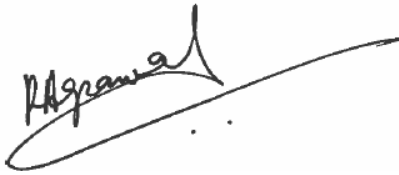
Architecture	2
Arts, entertainment and recreation	6
Aviation and transport	4
Business Improvement District	2
Charity, not-for-profit, co-operative or social enterprise	15
Education	2
Energy, electricity, gas, steam, and air conditioning supply	3

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Engineering	2
Finance and insurance	13
Human health and social work activities	2
Legal services	3
Other service activities	2
Print, picture and sound production	2
Professional services	10
Property development and housing	7
Public sector and defence	18
Recruitment	1
Retail	3
Scientific and technical activities	1
Sport	2
Technology and internet services	1
Trade Union	2

I hope this information is useful to the Economy Committee's work. I look forward to working with you to help improve working conditions for Londoners working in the gig, on-demand and platform economies.

Yours sincerely,



Rajesh Agrawal

Deputy Mayor of London for Business & Co-Deputy Chair of the London Economic Action Partnership