

Transport Committee Meeting – 1 March 2018**Transcript of Item 6 – Mayor’s Transport Strategy**

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): Would you like to make a statement at all before we kick off?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): Just, Chair, to say thank you for the opportunity to come in front of you. Obviously, Committee Members will be aware of the publication of the final version of the Mayor’s Transport Strategy (MTS), which I know you want to question on. We have been really delighted at having over 6,000 responses to the consultation, with some 43,500 discrete comments that we have taken on board in the resubmission of the final Strategy. As Members will be aware, the Strategy focuses on Healthy Streets for Healthy People, focuses on delivering good public transport experiences and focuses on new homes and jobs, which are all really important to London. It is really important that transport is playing a key part in delivering all of those very important objectives.

The Strategy is not, of course, fully funded, as any strategy going out to 2041 will not be. However, it is important, and I know Members will be aware, Chair, that the Strategy sits within a hierarchy of that strategy to 2041, a five-year fully costed and funded business plan. Then what you will see, following our next Board meeting, an annual scorecard process that I hope will demonstrate to Members that we have an annual process of tracking the objectives within the MTS in a way that shows demonstrable progress on an annual basis as to how we operate and run the place. That is the most I want to say on the Strategy upfront.

The only other thing I will allude to – because there has been some publicity recently about our financial position – is that we are in a position, for the second year in a row, to have demonstrated significant reductions in our operating costs, for the first two years ever in the history of Transport for London (TfL). That amounts to some 9% savings across our operational costs over those two years, which is in line with the very best of what you would expect to see in a private sector organisation. It is really important that we continue that trajectory to give confidence to Londoners and confidence to very important stakeholders, such as yourselves, that we are ensuring there is value for money for their transport services in what we are seeking to do going forward.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): Would you like to comment on the weather at all?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): I could comment on the weather. We have 100,000 tonnes worth of grit salt that we have been deploying across London’s strategic road network in partnership with the boroughs. Thirty-nine gritters, all of which are low emission and therefore environmentally friendly, have been fully deployed. We have kept the bus network working incredibly well over the last few days and the operation team has done – if you will allow me to say it myself – a really stunning job in doing so.

In terms of the railways, the Underground has performed pretty well. Where we have had some ‘blips’ it has been mainly due to some packed snow in particular sets of points that we have had to go out and manually clear. Although we do have point heaters around the open sections of the Underground, they are simply not designed to be running 24/7, which they have had to be in this very strange situation. You only need to walk, very carefully, through More London to recognise that it is freezing over almost as quickly as it is being gritted. That is a challenge. We have had the odd issue where, a bit unfortunately, like some colleagues of yours this

morning, people have not been able to get in. Of course, that applies as much to train drivers or maintenance staff sometimes as it does to the rest of us.

We have done OK. We are never complacent. Looking at the figures – as I did, Chair, before I came in this morning – the ‘taps’ in and out on the Tube network are some 20% down this morning on what you would expect for a normal weekday. I suspect that is in line with what you would expect, given the National Rail operators and Network Rail have made some decisions to invoke their network strategy, which reduces the capacity they allow the train operators to operate on. We are far from complacent and we will keep our focus on it. I was on conference calls late into last night and had the first update at about 3.30 this morning so I can assure we are all over this at every level, as you would expect me to be.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): Lovely. All right, thank you very much indeed.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): That is great to hear about keeping the transport network moving in London. Let us pick up some of the issues around the Transport Strategy. Can you tell us, what are the main changes in this new version? I have been trying to wade through the document where you comment on all the responses and constantly it just says, “No changes. No changes”. Can you give us, at a high level, where you have made changes and listened to the 6,000 people who have got in touch with you?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): Of course I will. In the Vision and relevant chapters we strengthened the narrative on the opportunities for new technology to ensure that innovations contribute to the MTS outcomes and the public good. We clarified the Vision Zero section so it now applies, quite rightly, to the whole transport system. In the Healthy Streets and Healthy People chapter we have strengthened the narrative and proposals regarding freight, following some significant input into that. We clarified the proposals on improvement to air quality and mitigation against climate change, to highlight that they will be taken forward as soon as we practically can do so.

In the Good Public Transport Experience chapter we strengthened significantly the narrative on accessibility and, indeed, the way we describe our bus services and bus priorities, including a revised map showing the plan for buses in outer London, which I suspect we may get to later in the meeting. We strengthened the narrative on National Rail in London, including station capacity there, interchanges, train service capacity and rail freight, which had not really had a mention in the first draft version. In the New Homes and Jobs chapter we set out the potential route and benefits of a West London orbital rail line in much more detail. We added a new section on how extending the tram network to Sutton will support good growth in that part of the city. We revised the narrative around Southern Rail access and additional public transport provision to Heathrow, including a basis to consider some additional further options with Network Rail. Also in delivering the Vision chapter we included a new section on mode shift in outer London, referring to proposals from across the Strategy that will contribute to that. We recognise that the credibility of the proportion of journeys being 80% by walking, cycling or public transport relies on a different approach to outer London boroughs than perhaps it does within central London boroughs. Members will be very familiar with that reality.

Of course, we have also responded to the very helpful input from yourselves as the Transport Committee, which includes clarifications on the Vision Zero section, accessibility inclusion more generally, the map for buses in outer London and also the mode shift point in outer London, which is something we very much welcomed from yourselves. Also, the section on the opportunities for new technology to ensure that innovation can contribute in a very positive way to MTS outcomes and the public good. Then there are some other areas that specific boroughs have input into – Waltham Forest, Kingston upon Thames, Enfield – and the progress being made there on the environment for walking and cycling as well.

There have been a range of things we have sought to do to enhance both the content within the Strategy and also the credibility, in terms of it covering very much the whole of London.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): Thank you for that. That gives us a very clear idea. One of the areas we were concerned about is having interim targets. You have this bold target of 80% of journeys are public transport, walking or cycling by 2041. You have now given us a little bit of a breakdown on how that divides up between walking, cycling and public transport, but not actual interim dates and targets. That is something that was not just from our Committee but right across the responses. Why have you not chosen to put in those interim mode shares, which we think could really add benefit to the Strategy?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): It is a very reasonable question. This goes back to the hierarchy I was discussing earlier on. As you get into a properly-costed Business Plan, and you look at the five years of the plan, then that is the opportunity to start looking at what those mode shares are.

Let me give you a couple of examples and, again, we may touch on this later in the meeting. When you get the very significant increase in capacity that you get from the re-signalling of the Circle, District, Hammersmith & City and Metropolitan lines on the Tube; when you get to the very significant increase in rail journeys that you can deliver from the opening of the central section, in particular, of the Elizabeth line later this year; when you get to a greater deal of certainty – as I hope we will do – on the Bakerloo line extension on Crossrail 2; and when we have the delivery of the extension of the Overground to Barking Riverside that is when you start to be able to capture very explicitly what those new journey opportunities are and how they are created. Again, on the bus network, when you have the detailed plans for what we will do in every part of outer London, you then have the credibility attached to those numbers.

What I have been slightly concerned about not doing is creating something based on an assumption of interim targets with dates attached to them, rather than giving you some credible lines, if you like, connecting the strategic objective with the actual ability to deliver that. That will come. To us it did not seem the appropriate place to put it, in a strategy that takes you to 2041, at this stage.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): Are you saying that in the next Business Plan for five years you will have a target within that five-year period of where you think you will be getting to on this journey to 2041?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): It might even be before that. When you see the annual scorecard, which will be quite a different process, that will go to our Board in March – we are finalising it at the moment and working through how that might look – and you will see that very clearly aligned to the MTS objectives. That will then give some very clear, measurable outcomes on an ongoing annual cycle, including trying to get a better handle on the number of cycling trips, for example, and pedestrian trips. This is quite complicated because some of these things are not conventionally measured at the moment. It is about how you deliver a credible metric to be able to report on that, which will be able to stand up to the legitimate scrutiny that, for example, you as a Committee will want to apply to it.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): Let me be clear. In March you are putting out a scorecard, which is how you are going to be measured in delivering the Strategy over the next year?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): Yes.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): Are you then able, in the Business Plan, to look at what it is likely to be for the next five years so at least it gives us some way – if you cannot go to 2041 because you do not when these projects are coming on – to see if you are slipping back or are ahead of the game?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): That is very sensible. We will certainly look to see how we can present that.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): You will look to do that in the Business Plan?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): Yes. That is a very helpful suggestion. Thank you.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): Super. One of the areas we have been looking at is motorcycle safety. You have removed a commitment to a London standard for motorcycle safety training from the Strategy. Why is that?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): What we have been trying to do is obviously work with the motorcycling community. Motorcycle safety, you are quite right, is an increasing and major challenging issue. What we have been trying to do is to get the right approach to this. We discovered there are very different views from different stakeholders in motorcycling. Being a bit directive as to the specific application of a standard did not, to us, seem to be the right thing following the consultations. We are going to review exactly how we apply this. However, that should not in any way be taken as a reduction in our commitment to improved motorcycle safety, it is more about the methodology by which to get there.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): You will still be looking at motorcycle safety training, but it might be a slightly different approach?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): Very much so, absolutely. Apart from anything else it is because there is quite a range of motorcycle users, a whole range. There is also an increasing number of people who are perhaps returning to motorcycling who have not ridden a motorised bike for some years. They perhaps have some slightly different requirements to, for example, the delivery companies that you see emerging. There is a risk there that they do not always have even the base level of training with quite low-power vehicles, that are nonetheless ones that can cause significant risk both to themselves and, of course, more vulnerable other road users, pedestrians, cyclists and others as well.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): What exactly are you going to be doing to improve motorcycle safety?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): We are not firmed up on this yet, Chair. All I am saying is that we discovered in the consultation there were different views. There are different constituencies of users of motorcycles in London and it is important we get the right tools and mechanisms to respond to the quite disparate group of motorcyclists. Those plans will emerge in the fullness of the time and, of course, I will share those in detail with the Assembly when they do emerge.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): What do we think the fullness of time looks like?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): I cannot tell you immediately off the top of my head, but I am happy to get back to you with some dates on that.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): We will look forward to that. Thank you.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): I wanted to pick up the issue of road pricing. What surprised me from the evidence we had from a wide range of groups – including the road lobby, if you like – was that they all said road pricing is the only way to tackle congestion in the city and to allow London to keep growing and functioning. In the Mayor’s original consultation he said he, “is going to be giving consideration to it”. In this final one it says, “investigating proposals”. Can you explain what the difference is?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): No, I am not sure I can, other than the fact that we are investigating this as something that may well play an important part in the overall objectives of the Strategy going forward. We recognise that, for example, the income from the current Congestion Charge System is down by some 5% last year compared to where we have been before, because there are fewer cars coming into London or more exempt vehicles. Therefore, it is something that is incumbent upon us to have a look at. Clearly there are some policy decisions that the Mayor will have to make here, which it would not be for me to comment on. It is fair to say we will continue to investigate what the art of the practical is here.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): The word “investigate”, I suppose, means that rather than it being sort of vaguely there, you are going to be doing some work and looking at what the options could be if the Mayor took a decision to move to that.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): We absolutely are. To reassure you further on that, things like the exploration – that I think I have touched on with the Committee before – of the detailed type of technology that is available that allows you, for example, to apply road-user charging in different environmental conditions such as different times of the day, different days of the week or even, perhaps, on days where there are specific challenges with air quality in the city, all of that technology is increasingly available. The word “investigation” implies that we will have a proper look at all of those technologies that are available as part of this.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): Also the work you are doing on the Ultra-Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) technology, and making sure it is interoperable is one of our key recommendations.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): Absolutely. That is a very important part.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): The Workplace Parking Levy is also part of this mix, presumably?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): It is, yes. We will continue to have some discussions. Clearly this is something that we would need to work very closely with boroughs on. As often is the case in this situation, some boroughs are more interested in exploring this option than others. There are other cities in the United Kingdom (UK) – Nottingham, for example – that, as you well know, have applied this methodology before. We are keeping very close to them on the type of approach they have had, whether this is a cost that sits with the employer or they pass it on to the employee, and how it works in practice. Very much so, we are looking at this as a possibility as well.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): You have added in this West London Orbital line, which sounds very exciting. Is that something you are looking at the Workplace Parking Levy as potentially a way to fund?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): It could do. Not so much on the core West London route. There is another opportunity potentially to look at a link into that from Hounslow, for example, which might give some real opportunities there as well. It is all part of the same mix, absolutely.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): Lovely, thank you very much.

Steve O'Connell AM: Mike and Simon [Kilonback], welcome this morning. First I would like to support the work you are doing on bus services in outer London. We need to do some serious work. For some years people have been talking about a rebalancing. If the Mayor and you are going to meet any sort of criteria around environmental issues, getting people into public transport, you have to significantly improve bus services in the outer reaches of London.

I will turn, predictably enough, to the tram, which you touched upon earlier. Certainly it is getting near my and others' ten-year anniversary of urging various Mayors and various Commissioners to work with Merton and Sutton boroughs to deliver the tram. Sutton is, I believe, the worst-served borough for public transport. If a person from Sutton was to look at a later paper and see spending looking like £4.5 billion over five years on the Underground - which, no doubt, will be welcome if you use the Underground - it is a lot of money and they are not seeing that equivalent capital expenditure. Over those ten years we have quite properly seen improvements in transport infrastructure throughout London initiatives. In Sutton we feel we are left behind. I was pleased there was some narrative but there always seems to be narrative around the Sutton tram. Tell us more about how things are going? Is there any improvement? What is new?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): There is an improvement. As you know, I think I have been consistently - I am sure the Chair and Deputy Chair will tell me if not - cautious in raising expectations on the Sutton tram. However, there is a real sense of some momentum behind this now with the two boroughs you mentioned, Sutton and Merton, and there is an opportunity to continue to explore this moving forward. Obviously we have the reality of the local elections coming up, but either side of those elections continuing the dialogue with those boroughs to ensure we can continue to jointly work on the case, and work on how we might close such funding gaps as remain so we can get to a point where this becomes deliverable.

I agree with you, by the way. For the avoidance of doubt - and echoing the question the Deputy Chair asked me around outer London that we talked about a few minutes ago - Sutton is one of those boroughs in London that has suffered because of geographical and historical reasons. It is not served by the Underground and, therefore, has had a pretty infrequent commuter service on the railway.

Steve O'Connell AM: They look longingly at the Overground across at West Croydon. There is a strong lobby in the London Borough of Sutton for the Overground to come there.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): Absolutely. I am meeting with the new Minister for London and Minister of State at the Department for Transport in a couple of weeks. We will continue the discussion - we have not given up yet - on the prospect of further rail devolution to ensure we can begin to get to grips with some of those commuter routes in South London. I will obviously update Members about that. That is not the only issue. That is why the tram - particularly in terms of local connectivity, local good growth opportunities and housing - is a really exciting prospect. I am probably in front of you, Steve, today more positive on this topic than I have ever been before.

Steve O'Connell AM: OK, that is good. I am still trying to hear new things. I am sorry to prolong this, Chair, if you will bear with me. There has been a long narrative of conversations between various deputy mayors,

leaders of councils and that sort of stuff. While that narrative is going on, the funding gap has increased, increased and increased.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): Quite right.

Steve O'Connell AM: It is about £100 million extra in the time I have been thinking about it. Is there any further progress actually on the funding? The former Mayor ostensibly put £100 million in. This Mayor ostensibly took the £100 million out but then replaced it out of the Growth Fund, which seems quite interesting. Tell us, lastly, your understanding of the funding and funding gap.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): I am not going to get into the detail of the funding gap. I will say that we are getting closer and that is why I am more optimistic. I really do think we are on the cusp of doing something really exciting here. The reason I am not getting into the funding gap is because this is a slightly moving process at the moment and clearly there are, as I said, local elections involved as well that require some quite complex discussion before and then after the elections. I can assure you that we are working extraordinarily hard. Alex Williams [Director of Borough Planning, TfL] and the others in the planning team are working extraordinarily hard with the boroughs and others to see what we can do to move this forward. I am really quite excited about this.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): Thank you.

Tom Copley AM: Going back to the subject of road pricing, which there is not an entire consensus but a broad consensus on this Committee in favour of. I was pleased with the change in language because it does sound more proactive: investigating proposals rather than just taking consideration. I wanted to implore - I know road pricing is a political as well as a practical decision - TfL and the Mayor to get ahead of the game on this. We are already seeing the Department for Transport bringing it in for heavy goods vehicles (HGVs). There is the possibility in future they could pull the rug out from under you and do it nationally. We could end up in the same situation as with Vehicle Excise Duty, where TfL is not going to get the same revenue benefit that it would if it rolled it out itself. Do you think by the end of this Mayoral term you will have a proposal or range of options that a future Mayor in the next term - or the same Mayor if he wins the election - could implement?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): I am hoping we will have just that. That goes back to the point around exploring and investigating the various technologies to look and see what we can do. I am hoping we will have a range of options we can put forward for the start of the next Mayoral term so we can explore those.

I am slightly more optimistic than your question implies in terms of where London's position is. London has historically led the way in this area. It is inconceivable for me that London would not be at the forefront of any future decisions on this, were a political judgement made to apply it. I am optimistic we have the contacts within the Department for Transport as well as what we are exploring more widely with the technology. It is a very fair question but we are quite up there at the forefront of this.

Tom Copley AM: Finally, do you have all the powers you need under the legislation you have for the Congestion Charge or do you need any further powers from the Government? Is it just a question of technology?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): It is a question of technology. It would depend on the reach of any area you were seeking to cover and how that played out in reality. My

understanding is we have the powers necessary. Clearly there would have to be a consultation process in the normal course of events --

Tom Copley AM: Of course.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): -- but I do not think there is anything that legislation-wise prevents any Mayor from deciding to do this.

Tom Copley AM: Thank you.

Shaun Bailey AM: A small point on road pricing and the investigation you are doing. How closely are you working with central Government? It strikes me that if this becomes a national project and we have a different system that will be a problem for us. Are we working very closely on technology development?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): We always try to work very closely with central Government. Again, it goes back to the question I just answered from Tom. Obviously London should be, and is, at the forefront of this thinking. We must work closely with central Government because London is the biggest city in the country by far.

The only reason I am slightly hesitant responding to your question is when we have had things like Oyster Card and ticketing technology it has not always been welcomed with open arms from a national perspective, for some strange reason that I cannot understand why. I would hope that central Government will be cognisant and will be listening to our suggestions and proposals going forward but you never quite know, because they pursued for many years an alternative ticketing option where we had an Oyster system that could have been applied nationally had there been willingness so to do.

Shaun Bailey AM: OK, Chair. Thank you.

Tom Copley AM: -- it in New York.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): It is around the world, not just around the UK. That is exactly right.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): Thank you for that. We will move on to the next section, which is private hire.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: My question is about taxi and private hire services. In February 2018, TfL published a new policy statement on private hire services, asking operators about certain practices; for example, ride sharing, providing mechanisms for passengers to decide who they will share vehicles with such as women-only vehicles, or ensuring a minimum percentage of wheelchair-accessible vehicles, or sharing data with TfL. How can TfL ensure the minicab drivers do deliver on that? What powers do you have?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): That is why any changes to legislation and regulation will be subject to full consultation. There would need to be some legislative changes to allow us to do that. You are quite right - I should say this upfront - that the absolute imperative is the commitment to safety as the top priority here. This is for the safety of passengers, obviously, but also for drivers who often have to deal with some challenging and difficult situations. The type of policies that we are looking for in terms of action plans for prevention and reporting of offences is really important. It is really vital, if you are going to get into a ride-sharing situation, that you have the right mechanisms in place to allow passengers to

choose who they share vehicles with and to assess the criteria by which they would be comfortable sharing a vehicle. You do not want anyone to feel they are in a vulnerable situation. That has to happen before accepting a ride, which is really important in the technology that would be in place. Also, the relevant insurance process. Insurance would have to change for private hire vehicles (PHVs) with contingency insurance for ride sharing and fleet insurance where appropriate as well. Also, you are quite right; you alluded to the very important issue of a minimum percentage of private hire wheelchair-accessible vehicles being available to carry out bookings.

All of this is in the mix for what needs to go to the next step and then would need to be consulted on. Our view is it would require some legislative intervention to ensure that there were powers to enforce and powers to ensure compliance with such a process. Sometimes legislation is a challenge and a problem. In this area we make no apologies for ensuring we absolutely put a legislative backbone behind something that is so important for individual and more general public safety.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: Have you had discussion with the Transport Department about this? How likely are we to see this legislation in the near future?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): I have not had detailed discussions with them. What we need to do is almost go through the consultation process first to ascertain precisely therefore what legislation might be required. There is a bit of a phasing process here to go through.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: OK. Great, thank you. The other thing was that PHVs are currently exempt from the central Congestion Charge. The Mayor was considering removing this exemption. Have you made a decision on this yet?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): We have not made a decision but we have been exploring this. We have been continuing to look at what we might do and what we might go out to consultation on. That is something we are still very much considering.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: Do you have any sort of timescales or timeframes?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): It will be certainly later this year. It will not be beyond that.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: Thank you. Lastly, the other thing is that, of course, TfL is aiming to make all taxis zero-emission capable (ZEC) by 2033. This means there has to be more rapid-charging points across London. It also is based on the premise that to improve air quality we need to make sure 9,000 taxis are ZEC by 2020. What sort of progress are we making on that, and will we be able to achieve those rapid-charging points by those timescales?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): I am hoping so. We continue to work with local boroughs. There has not been the sort of progress yet I would want in terms of the number of rapid-charging points. We think there are enough to operate at the moment. We now have 14 of the new zero-emission black cabs licensed in London. I was fortunate to go up to Coventry to see the factory where they are made just before Christmas. There will be another manufacturer coming on board quite soon. These are extraordinarily impressive vehicles, I have to say. From a public experience perspective - things like Wi-Fi, charging points, decent air cooling and lovely visible roofs and everything else to, normally, see the great sights that London has to offer - they are really transformational.

You are absolutely right, the progress with boroughs has not been quite as it needs to be. I had a very constructive meeting with the Transport and Environment Committee of London Councils last week where Councillor Julian Bell [London Borough of Ealing], who chaired that meeting, and I had some discussion with the other Members around how we might continue that progress with boroughs across the city as well. There is not as much progress as we need yet. We continue to work on it. We have some 75 rapid-charging points in place but we need more.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: I can imagine a lot of charging points coming up in central London but it is the outer London boroughs where the challenge is, and how we make sure those boroughs are delivering. What incentives do TfL have for that?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): That is precisely the discussion I was having with the local borough representatives. That is the right dialogue to have with them. Clearly there is only so much that we can do, although we can do some on our estates - Underground forecourts or parts of the network that we own - where we can install these points but clearly it is never going to be as successful as it will need to be unless we get the boroughs alongside us. I was very encouraged by the discussion I had at that meeting last week.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: That is encouraging. However, I want to make the point that outer London does have particular challenges. We often neglect outer London for inner London charging points.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): Absolutely. It is a very well-made point and I hear you very clearly, yes.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): Following on from that point, is it any surprise that there are only 14 cabs on the road at the moment because of the lack of charging points? Seventy-five were promised by the end of last year. We are now in February. The next target was 150 and you are obviously nowhere near that. How can we expect these people to buy something if they cannot charge it up?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): First of all, on the zero-emission cabs this is precisely the number I would have expected by this point, Chair. When you are making a new vehicle of a type that is so different - it will still have the iconic look of a London black cab, which is fantastic - the London Electric Vehicle Company (LEVC), the company manufacturing them, is going through a very rigorous quality and testing process almost individual vehicle by individual vehicle at the start of the manufacturing process. That is as any motor or train manufacturer, or anyone else, would do at the start of the process. Gradually they will ramp up their production. I do believe this will be something that when people see and feel it there will be a huge drive for. These things go in parallel.

You are quite right, we do need more rapid-charging points. We have got to where we need to get to now for the number of vehicles that are there. We certainly need to do more. We certainly need to, as has been discussed, spread this wider around the city. I have no doubt this will assume a momentum of its own.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): I do not think there is a lack of supply. I think there is a lack of demand. It seems to be incredibly unfair that you are now expecting all new cabs to be this new electric cab and yet you are not supplying the infrastructure to support it. That is really quite unfair.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): If by me not supplying it you mean me and the whole of London, then I acknowledge that. However, as I say, this is something we have to work with the boroughs on, there is no doubt. There are only four on borough-owned estates at the moment and that needs

to increase hugely. I was extraordinarily encouraged by the meeting with the Transport and Environment Committee of London Councils last week. That gave us an opportunity to improve the momentum. I do not want to give the sense, Chair, that the momentum is as I would wish it to be but I am confident, following that meeting and following the absolute willingness of people to move this forward, we will continue to make progress.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): That is not the point. The point is fairness. If we knew we needed X-amount of rapid-chargers in order for these cabs to be viable, they should have been in place before you are forcing people to buy them.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): We are forcing them to buy them if they are buying new vehicles. Let us be clear, this is not forcing everyone to buy one at this stage. This is as vehicles are replaced. As I say, the numbers at the moment allow this. Of course, the technology of how much range these vehicles have and what I consider the value for the individual black cab owner and operator is quite significant in terms of the types of savings you can generate because of the new technology they are using. I do not want to appear complacent in any way. We certainly need to do more and that is precisely why we had the discussion with the boroughs last week.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): I am not going to labour the point. It is a particularly good vehicle. I have been in one. They are a very, very good vehicle and definitely there are savings for the owner-drivers to be made but they cannot make those savings if they cannot charge the thing. I will leave it at that.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): I wanted to pick up the last thing that there are only four on borough estates and there is an issue with the boroughs delivering these as well as TfL. Are you looking for any legislative change to make it easier for you to install rapid-charging points across London?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): I believe it is something the Mayor has considered as to whether that might be something worth doing. As ever, that would be an issue for the Mayor if he wished to do so. I think that is probably a parallel stream that you consider such a possibility while also having the dialogue. In my experience the quickest way to get these things delivered is by the power of persuasion, argument and discussion.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): TfL is not pushing for any amendments to legislation to be --

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): No, there has been some consideration to look at it but I do not believe that has materialised yet.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): OK. On the PHVs paying the Congestion Charge, Val Shawcross [CBE, Deputy Mayor for Transport], when she came before us last month, did say there was going to be a consultation later this year on that. Is that correct?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): That is correct, yes. Sorry, I was in the wrong place in my script when I answered that question. That is correct, yes.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): Good, thank you.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): Thank you.

David Kurten AM: Morning. Going back to the number of vehicles that are now licensed as ZEC, you said 14 so far. I understand you would like to have 9,000 licensed by 2020. Is that the beginning of 2020 or the end of 2020?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): It is by the beginning of 2020, yes.

David Kurten AM: There is another 22 months. You are nowhere near 9,000.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): There is a lot to do.

David Kurten AM: How realistic is that target?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): It is realistic, not least from a manufacturing perspective. Obviously we have had the discussion about the charging points. From a manufacturing perspective, as I say, the early stages of the production line are quite slow. I have seen it in Coventry. The way it works is they are literally doing this detailed check of every single vehicle. Every single vehicle is laser checked on some sort of simulated shell. I cannot comment on the technical detail; it is beyond my field of knowledge. What I saw was incredibly impressive from the quality-control perspective. As they refine and adjust the manufacturing process, then they are able to start rolling these off as a standard production line and they will start rolling off very quickly. If you add that to the fact of a second manufacturer with a compliant vehicle also having the ability to produce vehicles on offer, this is credible because vehicles can roll off quite quickly once there is a production-line process involved.

David Kurten AM: Taxi drivers who have a vehicle that is 15 years old now are not allowed to use it anymore. They have to replace it with a ZEC. What are you going to do for the taxi drivers who are now in that period where they have to replace their vehicle - there are hundreds or thousands of them this year - but will not be able to buy a ZEC perhaps because in the last couple of months there have not been any available for them?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): There will be enough available. The timeline is such that there will be enough available. That was one of the reasons I wanted to go and talk to the manufacturer, to assure myself of just that. I am assured that will happen. This ramps up very quickly when it happens. You are talking several hundred potentially coming off every week on the production line. This is quite a significant ramp up from the original production process.

David Kurten AM: My point is that maybe that will happen in the future. I do not know if that is happening right now.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): It is beginning to happen right now, as we speak. I was there in November, which was when they were going through that early stage. The plan was in the first couple of months of this year to ramp up. I have not had a particular detailed update before today's meeting. I will be more than happy to give you some offline updates as to how many they are producing now, if that will help.

David Kurten AM: Yes, that will be very good, thank you. I do also think about the extra cost of the vehicles to taxi drivers. The TX5, I understand, costs about £65,000, whereas the TX4 was only £46,000. That is a huge increase in the price of the new ZEC. A lot of taxi drivers simply cannot afford it. Those who are coming up to retirement will maybe decide, "We cannot afford it. We are going to retire". How are you going to make sure that all taxi drivers can afford this and will not have to pay any more for the huge extra cost of the new vehicle?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): The manufacturers do allow a funding arrangement, in the same way that anyone buying their own private car is allowed to have a funding arrangement where they pay a certain amount every month to contribute towards the purchase of the vehicle. If I look at the evidence of how much you save in fuel costs because of these cleaner and greener vehicles then very quickly you recoup the charges; this is what is considered in standard, normal operation. Of course, we need to keep that under review. We need to make sure that is credible in the reality of what people do driving these vehicles around London. I am confident this is a good business proposition for anyone buying one of these vehicles.

David Kurten AM: That is assuming the cost of buying electricity from a charging point is cheaper than the cost of buying petrol or diesel, is it?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): It is based on current assumptions, yes.

David Kurten AM: One more question. The demographics of the taxi-driving industry are such that there are more people in their 40s and 50s and not so many in their 20s and 30s but there are a few coming in. We need to look at promoting the Knowledge to younger people, particularly with the push for apprenticeships at the moment coming from Westminster. What are you doing to promote the Knowledge to younger people? It would be a fantastic opportunity for them and to keep the trade going. It is a win-win-win situation. Is that something you have thought about?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): I agree. I take extraordinary pride in the Knowledge, in London's black cab trade and the drivers in London and in the hugely professional quality service that they offer as part of London's more broad transport offering. It is a fantastic service that they do. I will certainly ask the team to consider what more we might do in line with the suggestions you make. The question of apprenticeships is a very well made one and we should certainly look at that; not least - if I may add one thing - to ensure that increasingly taxi drivers are as diverse as possible as well and represent the city, particularly in terms of the number of women who feel able to pursue that career as well.

David Kurten AM: Thank you.

Shaun Bailey AM: Morning, Chair. Before I ask my questions - which will be about the finances of TfL so warm yourself up there, Simon [Kilonback] - I want to talk about the taxi driver. It strikes me that most of your comments have been about the supply of these new taxis, as great as they are. I worry about the demand for them. If I am a taxi driver - effectively a small business - having to make that decision of, "Do I take on this huge capital cost?" and you are not providing the charging points, I cannot do that, can I?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): That is why it is so important we do both things in parallel. Of course, individuals have to be confident there will be the right charging infrastructure in place. As well as the conversations with borough representatives, it is encouraging individual boroughs to look at on-street residential charging infrastructure. The Go Ultra Low City Scheme funding to prioritise requests from taxi drivers switching to the ZEC for charge points is part of this discussion.

I do not want to give the sense in any way of being complacent here. I recognise this is something we have to continue to push on both points; both in terms of the availability of the number of vehicles and also on the credibility from an individual taxi driver perspective that they will have sufficient facilities to charge. I do recognise the challenge but I am confident we will get there.

Shaun Bailey AM: I do not want to labour the point but I do think we need to see those charging points because I cannot see a taxi driver taking that risk, which is a huge one, by choice.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): I would be extraordinary grateful for any support Assembly Members could give with boroughs they cover as part of their constituency, or London-wide if that is the case. That would be extraordinarily helpful to me.

Shaun Bailey AM: I am sure my colleagues all will give that. Let us move on. I address these comments to both of you but Simon [Kilonback] may have slightly greater detail. Could you explain the financial pressures that TfL is facing and how you measured the impact of the decision to suspend TfL's Road Renewal Programme?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): Let me give a couple of headlines. As many of you will know, the first thing I did when I took over this role was to set up a review of our business and finances. It was less than a year later when the Mayor was elected. We had a discussion then about how we needed to transform and modernise the way we work, our structure, our organisation, our culture and indeed, very importantly, our commercial arrangements. It is worth pointing out that 75% of TfL spend is with external suppliers who do some of the big engineering projects, some of the big pieces of work that are required to modernise our infrastructure. As I said in my opening comments, I am confident that for a second year in a row we are going to have reduced like-for-like operating costs when we get to the end of this month, the end of March. That is despite rising inflation, which obviously puts pressure on our wage costs and also our relationship with key strategic commercial partners. Overall we have realised over £700 million worth of savings cumulatively in these two years, which is 9% of our operating costs.

It is true to say that the pressures on our financial situation exist because of the removal from a high of about £2 billion in 2012/13 in operating grant from the Government to zero for the start of the new financial year next year. The budget we published shortly before the 2016 election showed that our operating deficit would have peaked at £1.033 billion if we had not done anything and would still be £572 million at the end of the plan. It was not until we got the new business plan under the new Mayor, having had the discussion around the importance of tackling our costs, that we had a credible pathway to deliver an operating surplus while delivering all the strategic aims in the MTS.

The other thing I would say is things changed during the year we are in at the moment, mid-financial year. Clearly the increase in the passenger journeys that we had budgeted for did not materialise to the same extent. The latest figures we have from Simon show that journeys will be broadly flat year-on-year. Busing can certainly stabilise year-on-year and, indeed, is ahead of budget. None of us could have predicted the terrible events, for example, at London Bridge and Westminster Bridge last summer that did have a material impact, particularly on discretionary leisure – evening and weekend – travel on our network. The Mayor directing us to freeze fares has had a materially positive effect. If you look at the evidence now, there is no doubt that has cushioned our demand decline compared to the real numbers of decline we have seen in the train operating companies serving London. By 2020 the average London household will have saved around £200 thanks to the Mayor's fare freeze. That is real money that allows people to make --

Shaun Bailey AM: That might be correct, but what effect does that have on your budget? That has a cost to you, surely.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): I do not believe it does. There are two ways to look at this. There is the demand-encouragement way and there is the cost of individual travelling.

Shaun Bailey AM: There is a cost to your budget.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): People may pay less for an individual journey on our networks but actually, as I say, there is evidence that more people are making journeys than would otherwise have done so if there had not been the fares freeze.

Shaun Bailey AM: That might be fine, but is there evidence that it is increasing your revenue intake?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): There is evidence quite clearly now emerging. We do compare ourselves to the train operating companies that serve London. There is evidence that London Underground and London Overground, the bits we control, have done better than comparable train operating companies.

Shaun Bailey AM: Have they done as well as you imagined they would do before the fares freeze when you forecasted your income?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): They have declined much more significantly than we have declined based on the fares freeze. That is our assertion. That is our assumption and there is increasing evidence to back that up.

Can I go on to the roads funding point? I did not mean to not answer the question. From the start of next financial year we will not get any share of Vehicle Excise Duty, unlike every other part of England, with Highways England getting a share of Vehicle Excise Duty to maintain the strategic road network. Once a road crosses into central London – the A2, the A3, the A40 – whatever that road is, we do not have any money available for maintaining that strategic road network. The income from the Congestion Charge, as I alluded to earlier on, has gone down slightly, which is good because we are seeing a reduction in the number of people travelling into central London by cars that are not exempt in any way. That does mean that we have a real challenge with how we are able to proactively renew the asset that is the strategic road network.

Chair, it is important I make this point through you, to be very clear we are not – and I will not – countenance any issue that presents a risk to road users, particularly to cyclists, in vulnerable parts of the city. I will not countenance a degradation in the surface of the road that would affect a dedicated cycling lane or on the main carriageway where there is not a cycling lane on our strategic road network. However, it is inevitable that if you do not have the money to spend on the road network that there will, over time, be a deterioration in the underlying condition of that road network.

Shaun Bailey AM: Does that mean you are storing up problems? It gives you a tension for your first contention that that will not happen.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): Yes, it does mean we are doing that. That is why it is so ludicrous there is inconsistency, if I may say, between all the roads in England apart from in London.

Shaun Bailey AM: I want to circle back to this fares freeze. To be clear, you are comparing your performance to train lines you do not control and their drop in finance. I am asking, does the fares freeze constitute a lower income against your forecasting for your own income, not comparable to somebody else's?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): No, actually we have done better. The fares freeze has genuinely made an impact on people's choice of journeys. It is a bit difficult to disaggregate

all of this, I will be honest. However, if you also look at the fact that we now have the Universal Hopper in place, it is a really significant change in how people are able to travel around and it again encourages people to potentially make more journeys. We have seen a real shift from people buying Travelcards, where an apportionment of the fare goes to the National Rail operators, to pay-as-you-go which is, of course, based on our fares process. There has been a shift in behaviours here. A number of variables have emerged since this initial decision was made. However, there is increasingly evidence, as I say, that people are making decisions based on real differences to what money they have in their pocket.

Simon Kilonback (Interim Chief Finance Officer, Transport for London): More than that, Mike. If we are going to hit the 80% mode share target over time, we have to make public transport more attractive than private transport. Any normal organisation would look at its pricing and look at ways it can encourage people to use public transport. That is absolutely key within the Affordable Fares Policy. We have to make it affordable if we are going to attract more people out of private vehicles and on to public transport.

Shaun Bailey AM: That is absolutely right. However, of course, we have capacity and range issues. There is a relationship between the fares and our ability to invest.

I want to ask a slightly more detailed question. The original estimated cost of the fares freeze was £640 million. Is that correct?

Simon Kilonback (Interim Chief Finance Officer, Transport for London): Yes, when we were asked to estimate that at the start of the mayoralty. That is correct.

Shaun Bailey AM: Given the rise in inflation, is there a new updated figure?

Simon Kilonback (Interim Chief Finance Officer, Transport for London): Not that I have to hand but we can certainly come back to you with one. Of course, the income assumes passenger levels as well as the fares piece. The complication is that although inflation itself may be higher, given that we have seen some reduction in numbers of growth of passenger journeys, we re-based our 2017 Business Plan with more cautious forecasted growth. Because we reduced the forecasted passenger growth, there would be a lower impact over these five years than the £640 million when you look at the net effect of both inflation and passenger growth.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): To put it in some sort of context, we reckon broadly - Simon will share the figures with you, I have no problem with that - the removal of the revenue grant from the Government of £700 million on average per year, which is where we got to following the high level of over £2 billion that I talked about earlier - is more than five times the cost of any fare freeze, even if you net-off the benefit of the fare freeze in terms of stimulating new demand. By the way, we are the only western transport authority now to operate without any operating subsidy. We are going to see the Underground alone within the next five years being the most efficient in earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation (EBITDA) - private sector terminology terms - of any metro anywhere in the world. We are doing everything we can to reduce the cost and ensure that this place is fit for purpose financially. However, frankly, not to be given any money when we have no income for the road network is really a strange reality that would *in extremis* mean you are cross-subsidising fare payers on the Tube and cross-subsidising to maintain the road network, which, from any transport economic perspective, is insane.

Shaun Bailey AM: When the Hopper Fare was launched it was estimated to be £30 million, the cost TfL expected, journeys per year. Given now 100 million journeys per year have benefitted from the Hopper, how much has all this cost?

Simon Kilonback (Interim Chief Finance Officer, Transport for London): We still think it is costing us about £30 million a year. What we have seen, partially as an effect of the Hopper, is recovery in the bus patronage, which has been falling year on year for the previous three years. It has helped us attract people back onto buses at the same time as the improvement in bus fares themselves has also helped attract people back onto buses.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): I do not mean to cut across you, forgive me, but the other thing that the assumptions were based on, in terms of the strategic view going forward, was when we had the multi-Hopper running. It has been quite recent that we have had the multi-Hopper introduced. Already we have seen some 485,000 journeys on the multi-Hopper. The weekday average of the wider Hopper is 384,000. We are beginning to get a clearer perspective of how this might emerge. There is still potential for multi-Hopper use as people get accustomed to the reality this can happen. There is still greater potential here.

Shaun Bailey AM: How much longer until you get a clear picture and some figures around the effect?

Simon Kilonback (Interim Chief Finance Officer, Transport for London): The really important thing is to have a full year of data. The multi-Hopper has only just come in. It will take us a year to see the overall effect come through.

Shaun Bailey AM: What planning was done for the removal of the grant? Sometimes in discussions people act like it was a surprise. Everybody knew the grant was going. What planning was done for that?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): We obviously have planned on an ongoing basis for various scenarios and for various discussions. Of course, we continued with dialogue with the Department for Transport for some considerable time. Simon, indeed, had been talking with Treasury officials as well to ensure they continued to get the message. We continued to be hopeful we might get some recourse from a full removal of this grant. However, our Business Plan had to be predicated on producing a budget that was balanced for this year and for subsequent years and that is credible. Therefore, we have been, of course, planning on that basis. That is why we have been having some discussions with those who are involved in highways maintenance on our strategic road network for some considerable time now.

Shaun Bailey AM: Thank you. I think that is me, Chair.

Tom Copley AM: We have in our briefing that it is anticipated there will be an increase in the proportion of TfL walkways in need of repair or renewal: 4.6% to 10.1%. Are you anticipating additional costs if anybody were to sue TfL because they were tripping and work had not been done?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): Again, just to be clear about the distinction here, clearly there will be parts of the infrastructure that will require work, but my aim is, and the aim of the team is - we have had a very clear, detailed discussion about this - to keep it absolutely in a good state of repair. That is slightly different to being able to dig under the surface, if you like, and ensure that all the drains are replaced, all the underlying core. As you know, when you construct a footway or a roadway, there is a series of layers of infrastructure that exist underneath the pure surface. In a sense, there is an element of patch-and-mend that we will have to apply here, which is not best maintenance practice on an ongoing basis, as was implied, but that is the best we will be able to do at the moment. My aim absolutely is to keep this safe, and I am in no way going to countenance the teams not addressing things that have a safety imperative.

Tom Copley AM: OK. Thank you.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): This discussion on financial pressures really has been very much on the narrative, the discussion that you want to put out there, more points, but the reality is you are facing an operational deficit of nearly £1 billion next year, quite unprecedented. What specific things are you doing to plug that gap, and is there going to be a risk going forward to capital expenditure?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): On the second point first, I am confident not, because the capital expenditure is hugely important if we are going to continue to meet our objective, as we described earlier on in the section on the MTS. For example, the procurement under way right now for new trains for the Piccadilly line, which, alongside new signalling, will give us some 60% increase in capacity on that line of route; the hugely ambitious and very important plan we now have to increase the number of accessible stations we have on the Tube network, bringing us up to 40% by the end of the plan, which is hugely important alongside the new Elizabeth line. I am really determined that we continue to deliver the capital plan.

It is important that we continue the trajectory of modernising our networks. If I just give you some examples, the Mayor set out quite clearly when he was elected the fact that we needed to avoid duplication and waste across various parts of TfL. You, as a Committee – certainly you, Deputy Chair, consistently as an individual – have been quite rightly challenging of us down the years as to some of the things we could do better. We now have one engineering function covering the whole of TfL for the first time. We are ensuring that we run our asset maintenance processes in a way that recognises the significant capital investment we have had and continue to have in new assets. Clearly, when you have digital assets, you have a different skillset and a different requirement for maintaining those assets than you do the old electrical and mechanical assets that existed before. There is a huge amount of work still to do there.

Also, and Simon might want to touch on this a bit more, I do not want to underplay the challenge of working with our strategic supply chain as well. It is really important that we are considering all areas of expenditure with some big strategic suppliers, and these are big, big organisations. I meet regularly with the chief executives and senior teams of these sometimes global suppliers to ensure that they fully understand the pressures we are under and the opportunities that exist for them to work differently with us in terms of delivering some of these savings. Some of it can be helped in terms of initial challenges year-on-year by some phasing issues. Again, Simon may wish to comment more, but we, historically, as an organisation, have been an extraordinarily diligent payer to suppliers. That is good at one level, but it is not commercially good practice, to be honest. It is not that you want to see a supplier in trouble; of course you do not, particularly small suppliers. You want to support them. Equally, you have to pay when you get the delivery of an asset that works to the standard that is required, not as soon as it leaves the factory. It is not quite the same thing.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): No, but let us really understand, because some of this stuff is already done. The engineering we have heard about. We are two years into this mayoral term, and that was one of the things --

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): No, it is not done yet, for the avoidance of doubt. Some of this does not deliver the actual savings until the next financial year.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): Does this operational deficit figure take into account those savings?

Simon Kilonback (Interim Chief Finance Officer, Transport for London): Absolutely. The £968 million operational deficit was fully planned for and fully funded in our published Business Plan in December last year. We have granular plans in place to deliver savings. As Mike touched on, 75% of our spend is with our external

supply chain, rather than on the people that we employ, and the focus for the first two years has been putting in place a fit-for-purpose, efficient and effective organisation.

From this year going forward, the focus turns to driving out savings in our global supply chain, and there are some examples of that, such as exiting a private partnership maintenance contract on the London Underground, which will save over £200 million over the course of this Business Plan. There are multiple examples of how we will be more disciplined and procure more effectively, working together with our suppliers, to find cheaper, better ways to deliver efficient outcomes.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): Finally, is there a factoring in here - I realise it will only be the end of the financial year - that obviously Crossrail will start running, so then you have a running cost? Clearly, there will be some new passengers from that, but also there will be some passengers switching from one mode to another. Is that going to in the first year or so cost more and will not cover its costs?

Simon Kilonback (Interim Chief Finance Officer, Transport for London): That is right, there is an operational deficit in the first two years. We start to really get the income coming in from December 2019 when the full route opens, but it is from 2020/21 onwards that you get the full ramp-up of passenger numbers. That has always been in our forecast, and that is built into the trajectory you see in terms of the increase in income in our --

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): The revenue cost coming in that you will not cover.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): Yes, you are quite right. By definition with new lines you often get the attrition in the first phase, so attrition of people moving from particularly the Central and Jubilee lines, I guess, but the core central section opens, and then it is the growth that you get to after that. Yes.

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

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): Thank you. Just a couple of quick questions. First of all, you said earlier that the fares freeze stood to save a family, on average, £200. Could you give me the metrics on that? I cannot believe that you are saying every Londoner will. Clearly, it is only the passengers. How do you get to that number of £200?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): Maybe it is every passenger. We reckon 4.5 million people benefit every year, and something like well over 80% of Londoners benefit to some extent from the fares freeze, given the way people travel in and around the capital. I can give you a more detailed breakdown of that, Chair, offline.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): Yes, if you could just give me the metrics, that would be useful. In light of what you are saying that the fares freeze has generated more income and also increased ridership, as I would call it, or more passengers on buses and trains, does that mean that you will, therefore, be proposing a fare cut to the Mayor?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): As ever, fares are a matter for the Mayor to decide, and no doubt we will continue to have dialogue with the Mayor and his team and any future Mayor going forward.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): You would have had a conversation with the Mayor before the election to assist him on his proposals in relation to the fare freeze. The Mayor did promise to cut the bus fares, but he did not do that. I am sure you would be advising the Mayor, would you not, whether a fare cut is a good thing or a bad thing?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): As we sit at the moment, as I say, the fares freeze we think has had a cushioning effect on some quite challenging situations that have emerged during this financial year. Clearly, every year is different, and I think it is safe to say we will continue to keep this under full review, of course.

Simon Kilonback (Interim Chief Finance Officer, Transport for London): If I may, Mike, what we would be much more interested in doing and are actively working on are further offers to incentivise people to travel, such as the Hopper and the Unlimited Hopper. They are being seen to be very effective and things that any normal business would do.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): Can we look forward to a two-hour Hopper, then?

Simon Kilonback (Interim Chief Finance Officer, Transport for London): We are certainly looking at all options to try to get more people back on buses and increase ridership on the Tube, so we are looking at all options.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): Thank you. You are going to write to me about the fare metrics?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): We can give you the details of that, yes.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): Lovely. Thank you very much.

Tom Copley AM: I just have one I forgot to raise earlier on the TfL finances before I come to bus services. You are setting up TfL Consulting, which is going to be this international body. When do you anticipate seeing - I know it is probably difficult to say - revenue coming in from that?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): We have appointed a new Head of Consultancy. I am not sure it has been announced yet, but we have appointed somebody to take on that role, which is really good, and I think that person starts in May, which is really good, so I am very excited about that.

Clearly, one of the first things I will be doing and Simon will be doing, Tom, is getting that new Head to ensure that we properly assess the priorities and where we can most get some early income streams coming in, but also what the strategic approach is. We have had some buds, if you like, some shoots of opportunities that have emerged so far, and we will continue to explore those even in advance of her arrival.

Tom Copley AM: I was looking at the list of countries and metro systems that are automatic train protection (ATP): the Paris Metro operator. There is a huge long list, so there is clearly great potential there, including several in this country.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): I would not like to comment. Yes.

Tom Copley AM: I will turn now to bus services. The first question is, why do you think that bus passengers will increase while you are reducing services by 7% across the Business Plan?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): Let me just try to give you a bit of context on this, and obviously I will get to answer the question. The bus services are now the most reliable they have ever been in this city. That is based on bus speeds and on journey times. Bus speeds have stabilised and now they are improving in parts of London. That is partly because we have been ensuring that we properly consider bus prioritisation as part of work we do on cycling, part of the work that we do more broadly that we do on critical junctions and everything else. Bus prioritisation is a key part of what we do. 120 bus priority schemes, indeed, have been introduced.

That means that some of the additional buses that we had added into the schedule, which were in effect there to cater for the unreliability of the service, the bunching of the service, the fact that you could wait 30 seconds or 20 minutes *in extremis* for buses on particular lines of route. Kingsway, in Holborn, has 100 buses per hour going up it. I can tell you that buses cause congestion for buses on that route. Therefore, by reducing the number of buses you are running up that line of route, you improve reliability hugely in the outer parts of the city where those bus routes inevitably, ultimately serve, either on the way in or the way out. That is a really important point to emphasise. When we look at growing bus routes in outer London in places like Thamesmead, Lower Lea Valley, Wembley, Old Oak Common, Acton, Barking Riverside, Wandsworth Riverside, Hillingdon, Colindale and so many other places, that is precisely why we can do so, because we have managed to take away that capacity that we just threw in to deal with an increasingly infrequent service because of bunching and buses getting caught up in congestion.

This is a strange science, number of buses per hour and everything else, but if I just take you to other parts of the transport network, if you are running a train service, the key thing is having balanced headways, gaps between trains being properly managed so that you are able to optimise the number of people per vehicle that you can carry. The same principle is precisely true of buses. If I look at where we have reduced the bus service by some 40% along Oxford Street, hopefully in advance of the work that we are going to be doing in pedestrianisation, that has not had a negative impact in the number of people we have been able to carry or in the usage of buses along that line of route. It is a challenge, and we have to look at every route in every part of the city individually to make sure we get this right, but that is why the numbers come out as they do. Kilometrage is probably not the best figure to look at. It is about how many people we can move on the buses. There is no doubt that, given the objectives in the MTS, we have to move more, and that is why we are configuring the bus network to do just that.

Tom Copley AM: Where the bus kilometrage is important - as you have alluded to by talking about the fact that Kingsway and Oxford Street get overcrowded - I would agree that it is sensible to try to optimise that and ensure you are not creating congestion. However, you talk about increasing service in outer London. Why, then, have I and other Assembly Members had complaints from many people? I presented a petition to the Assembly very recently about cuts to the W12 in Wanstead; that is in outer London. I have had complaints anecdotally from all around areas of outer London where people have had their bus services cut. I completely get why you want to reduce congestion in Oxford Street and around these other areas, but why then are we not seeing this increase in outer London? Can you quantify what is happening in outer London for us?

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): Absolutely right.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): Yes. Again, I alluded to some examples of where we are increasing some bus services in outer London. Of course, I am very well aware because I see the correspondence and I am party to some of the questions that you get asked, and indeed I get asked them directly, as you will imagine. I have a very detailed list of, for example, the changes that we are doing in the next couple of months and the reason that we are doing them. On some, there are very minimal changes. We are reducing services to run, for example, on the 92, reducing it to every nine minutes instead of eight. The

evidence of that is that that small tweak in this situation has made a huge difference in terms of the reliability of the service. There are other routes that we have to continue to review, and we have committed to the W12 as a good example. We have committed to continually look at that to see that it is fit for purpose, that when people turn up at a bus stop they get the bus that they expect to get and it is reliably there. Previously, for some of these routes, that simply has not been the case; the bus service has not operated as it should do and as it has planned to do, and has had in some cases significant oversupply of capacity that has not ever been taken up, despite our original session when we look at the bus route in.

Tom Copley AM: From our point of view, you and the Mayor – and I have questioned the Mayor about this several times and I still do not feel any more enlightened, I have to say, about this – talk about increasing bus kilometrage or improving the bus service in outer London. Unless we can see it quantified, we cannot tell when it is happening, and we cannot then say to our constituents when they complain about it, “No, if you look at it, we are seeing an improvement”. What we need from you is if you can set out exactly how much it is increasing or what is happening to the level of the service in outer London so that we can hold you and the Mayor to account about it.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): I absolutely understand that, and that is work in progress at the moment. We are doing just that. I cannot give you all the exact figures right now. We are working this through. I have, as you will know, quite a new team looking at the bus service. One of the reasons that we have been able to break through some of the historical way we run the bus service in London is because I have brought in some new, fresh thinking to this dynamic. I know that Gareth Powell [Managing Director for Surface Transport, TfL], who now runs Surface Transport, has met with some of you, and I know that he and his team will be more than happy to meet with any of you to go through this in detail, or indeed, Chair, if it would be helpful to go through a wider discussion with the Committee at some point on this. I had hoped to bring Gareth with me this morning, but I understand you wanted to keep this a fairly low number of attendees from our side, which is absolutely fine. I just think that that might be almost worthy of a separate session on its own behalf. There is a really exciting story to tell on buses.

You are quite right, you need to know the numbers. I need to convince you that the credibility of the MTS – going back to the Deputy Chair’s question earlier on – is exemplified by a real increase in kilometres in certain parts of outer London. I can use specific example of Thamesmead. I can use specific examples of where before you get rail capacity, you use buses to grow market in those places. I visit outer London boroughs alongside all other boroughs in London on a regular basis, and I have very specific conversations with them about the requirements that they have, again, to emphasise the point about how the Strategy needs to be credible going forward. I am more than happy to share that detail as it continues to emerge. It is a very well-made point.

Tom Copley AM: Thank you. I think we need that, because I do sometimes feel like we are fishing around in the dark when it comes to this.

Joanne McCartney AM: I think Tom is quite right. If I look at my local bus route, the 329, you are planning to reduce it. It is just by about one or two minutes, and only off-peak, but to local people it does seem as if their buses are being cut. I am understanding what you are saying.

The danger that we see as well is that because lots of journeys in outer London are done by car, and they may only be ten-minute journeys, if they are going to have to wait for a bus that is almost ten minutes, why not just get into your car? I have been in contact with TfL about some night buses and how you calculate how many buses you need, and on that you take the demand at the busiest stop and then work out capacity. If that is the case, what you might find is that when you lengthen those waits, people’s demand is less because

people are returning to the cars, so you are into a spiral that, because demand is going down, the bus service is not needed and, therefore, you will take even more out. It is how you counter that and you look beyond just passenger numbers. The falling passenger numbers might mean that the demand is still there; it is just that the timing is not right.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): I could not have put it more eloquently myself. You are absolutely right. It is precisely striking that balance. You are correct, of course, in saying that you cannot get to a situation – and it is certainly the last thing we want to do – where people consider that travelling by private car for those short-distance journeys in outer London is a more viable option than using a regular, frequent, high-capacity bus service. I absolutely get that, and that sweet spot is a very important place to get to in all of these routes. That is why we do go through this in a very detailed way.

Again, for the first time, as part of our transformation and modernisation programme, we brought together the rail planning team, the bus-planning team. We have brought together that discipline of thought to ensure that we get this right and that we absolutely review where we think we have got things wrong. I can absolutely assure you, and I did the rest of the Members around this Committee, that if we have got this wrong in places, then we will put the bus service back in. This is not some sort of *diktat* from me or draconian process that we are applying ruthlessly without consideration of the local needs of local people in local communities across the city. We will absolutely respond to that.

As I say, I do think in the generality and in some of the specifics it would be useful to have Gareth [Powell] with some of his team here taking you through this, but the way you describe it is quite right. The last thing we want to do is put people back in their cars.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): I think we would welcome that meeting with Gareth and co.

Tom Copley AM: I will just come back on some of the questions. That is the final couple. Will TfL be introducing more express routes? Where will they be, and when?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): Yes, we are considering more express routes. I can give you a couple of examples. These are not fully confirmed yet so please bear with me. We are looking at an X140 express route from Harrow to Heathrow, for example, likely next year sometime. Actually, we are also considering some new feeder routes into the Elizabeth line as well, down Bexleyheath to Woolwich via Abbey Wood. Some of it may be express --

Tom Copley AM: Woolwich, Abbey Wood. Yes.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): Yes, absolutely. There are a whole range of ones that we are considering. Those are the ones that I have the most detail with to hand, Assembly Member Copley, right now. There certainly is something that we have seen. Where we have had some of these introduced, it has been very successful. Of course, it also gives the opportunity, as we have tried in some routes already, to brand the bus. You keep that bus on that line of route and it makes it much simpler for people. They can see this is a particular route because it is outside the bus as well, and they are very familiar with the reliability and the journey time it takes you from point to point. Yes, it is a really important consideration.

Tom Copley AM: Not that I want to suggest that we do not need or should not have the Sutton Tram Extension, which is very important – I would never say such a thing to you – but in the meantime, are there potentially places where you could operate express routes?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): Yes, there are, and that is something we continue to explore. Certainly, in advance of some of those areas – I mentioned Thamesmead, for example – in advance of rail links being provided, there is a really good start-up in terms of encouraging the use of public transport in a credible way prior to getting an effective rail link in place. Absolutely, the principle is a very good one.

Tom Copley AM: Finally, when will the review of bus driver working conditions be commissioned, as the Mayor has pledged? That was in response to one of our recommendations in our report.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): We have been looking at a number of things in parallel with our bus safety programme and in terms of looking at the working conditions of our bus drivers. Clearly, all bus drivers have gone through training in the Hello London programme, as it is called, all the bus drivers across London in a joint programme. I am delighted that the Mayor gave us an extra £6 million not so long ago, just a few weeks ago, to ensure that we can expedite the provision of decent toilet facilities on all routes much more quickly than we would have done. We would have done it anyway, and this just gives us an opportunity to deliver that more quickly, and the detailed plan of that is just being churned through right now to ensure that happens. We work regularly with Unite, the union, and others who have an interest in this area.

For the avoidance of doubt, bus drivers are hugely important to us with what they do. I was up at Willesden Bus Garage just a few weeks ago, meeting with some of them and the management team up there, to ensure that we hear first-hand what the challenges are for bus drivers. We are working this through. There is an overall plan of activity which, again, we can share with you. Things like the driver passport that allows people to move without having to reapply to individual companies when they move around. I think we are making great progress. You never do these things quite as fast as you might wish, but definitely real progress.

Tom Copley AM: The Mayor did promise a full review. Do you know when that is going to happen?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): I do not know off the top of my head for that, Tom, but again, I can come back to you with the detail. Yes.

Tom Copley AM: OK. Just a quick one, finally, on the bus driver toilets, which I really welcome. I think it is incredibly important. There is also an issue, of course, with taxi drivers. Are they going to be available to taxi drivers as well?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): We can consider that. I honestly do not know, but that is a very good thought. Yes.

Tom Copley AM: Excellent. Thank you.

Joanne McCartney AM: Last July, the Mayor issued a press release following the review of bus routes to hospitals, and you were hoping to make improvements to 40 routes that were looked at, but you had seven priority routes which the press release said you hoped to deliver in the next year. One of those was a bus route from my constituency that I have been lobbying for for about four years now to the North Middlesex Hospital, from Enfield Town through Winchmore Hill to the North Middlesex. I have followed this up on a regular basis since, and the Mayor's questions from this last month state that the route is subject to funding and consultation, and TfL will work with the London Borough of Enfield to identify external sources of funding. That "will" gave me a bit of concern that it is still in the future and it is not being worked upon at the moment.

Could you, today or in writing, give me a proper update as to where we are with that route to the North Middlesex Hospital? The reconfiguration of hospitals in my area has posed some real issues.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): I am aware of the specific issue. I do believe that does not give the right sense of the degree of urgency with which we are dealing with this, but I will give you a more full answer, if I may, back in writing. I will make sure you get that as soon as you can in the next few days because it is an important issue. Again, for the avoidance of doubt, this is an area where buses play a huge role in ensuring that often quite vulnerable people by definition who need to access the hospital, either to visit loved ones or for their own appointments or their own treatments in hospital, require such services. I will get back to you in the detail of where we are, but I think we are making more progress than perhaps that answer might have implied.

Joanne McCartney AM: That would be helpful, because I visited a sheltered accommodation along what would be that route only a couple of weeks ago, and residents were really looking forward to being able to have a direct route to hospital.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): I will certainly follow up as quickly as I can. Yes.

Joanne McCartney AM: Thank you.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): One of the key things you want to do is to get more passengers on to buses, so how are you looking at marketing the buses? Potentially - we have a lot of tourists coming to London - is there a way you could promote certain routes as a good way to see sites on a ticket, and maybe even work with developers to have an app, which, when you get to St Paul's, press 1 and you can listen to a bit of tourist information? Trying to sell a service as well as a passenger route.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): It is a great idea. I think we should hire you, Assembly Member Pidgeon. Honestly, I think that is a really good idea. I am not sure we have thought about that. Somebody in the team may have thought about that specifically. In the broader context of marketing, though, you are quite right. That is why I alluded to the branding of individual routes as well because that is part of all of that as well. Although apps have developed hugely in recent years, there are still some people in this city who are not as confident as they might be about using an unfamiliar bus route. They may use one or two that they are accustomed to in their own local area or in parts of central London that they use as part of getting around the city, but not necessarily if they happen to be in a different part of the city for whatever reason. The confidence is not always there. We continue to work with app developers on seeing what more we can do.

The thing of having information on some of the access to what buses are available in and around bus stops, which of course is a hugely useful physical asset that you can apply there, and indeed very importantly in Tube stations and other places where people arrive at, potentially then moving to a bus for the next part of their journey. It is a really good point, and in both we should just have a further review to see what more we can do. I do know that generally we are trying to encourage people on public transport by getting people more familiar with the lines of routes.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): Overseas tourism is booming.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): Yes, absolutely, it is.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): If you know when you are coming, with the information centres we have around the stations, here is something which shows you an app you could download, and potential to get income from that, but also, “Go on the number 11 route and you get to see these key things”, “Go on this route”. That would get more people on to the buses as well, rather than perhaps otherwise.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): That is true, and certainly you are right, our visitor information centres at the key hub stations do a lot of really good work. Many of the staff there are multilingual and do a great amount of work, for example, if you arrive at St Pancras or whatever and you get access to that information. I am sure there is more we can do and it certainly is a well-made point. Thank you.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): A quickie from me, a couple actually. I went to Abellio Bus Depot yesterday in Battersea - yes, I did get there, and I think I was the only Member who did - to look at their Mobileye trial that they are doing. I believe you have given them a quite substantial grant out of the Innovation Fund to do that. Are you monitoring the progress of that?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): Yes, we are. We are looking at all sorts of innovation in terms of general trials that we have out there. Some of the other stuff on bus safety in terms of intelligent speed assistance, all sorts of other things. As technology moves forward, we continue to work with the bus operators on all of this.

I would say that I think there has been a real step-change in our relationship with bus operators in the last year or so, where we had our first Bus Safety Summit, for example, not so long ago. If I am being honest, some of the chief executives of the owning bus companies did not necessarily understand the imperative of working together on some of these key strategic issues, and I think they do so much more now. I am very pleased that on all accounts we are working much more collaboratively with bus operators.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): What I saw were very, very impressive figures in the reduction of collisions going virtually from two or three a week down to zero, which must make a substantial saving, and the kit itself is relatively inexpensive.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): Yes.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): Can you give us an assurance that - you may want to try it a bit more - these kits or something similar are to be fitted to all buses if that kind of return is achieved?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): Absolutely, I can give you that assurance. The trick is on this that we do the right analysis of the data so we have some headline figures. You are ahead of me, I have to say, in knowing that, but I will certainly follow up to look at the detail of that particular statistic. It is really important that we have the right level of assurance, of course, so that we do not unwittingly import some unintended consequence of new technology for distraction or other issues that might emerge. A bit like we applied some technology of the aftermath of the terrible tram incident at Sandilands. We had to do a bit of considered assessment of what was right. We had to be very, very clear, as we were of course, that this was nothing to do with questioning the competency of individual operators. It was about proper alerting systems and ensuring that there was an additional tool, if you like, to assist the operation. With that slight caveat, just to make sure we properly validate these things, absolutely. We should not hold back on this stuff. There is nothing more important to me. Every single incident that either applies to a passenger on a bus or somebody who is in collision with a bus is just one too many. If we want to be serious about Vision Zero - by the way, I am absolutely committed to it - then we really have to move at pace on this, so we will.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): That is helpful. Thank you. Something I have mentioned to you a while ago, and you showed some interest. At the moment, as you know, uniquely, TfL demands that the buses have lines on the destination. Virtually every other company across the world used digital signs. Where are you with that?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): As I said to you last time, which was not so long ago, we were exploring how digital signs look and appear, particularly for those with potentially some visual impairment, so we have consistency and clarity of signage in front of buses. As I think I said to you last time, Chair, we now think we almost have an exact replica of what a manual sign, if I can use that term, looks like in digital format, and it looks really promising. I have seen it. It is really exciting. We have not got towards the implementation of these yet, but, as I said to you last time, we are on the cusp. We are even nearer to being on the cusp.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): Will that, again, be something unique to TfL, as opposed to something that is an industry standard?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): No. It could be an industry standard. What we have tended to see across the country in other operators – and you will all be familiar with visiting other cities – is that you tend to see what you might describe as ‘dot matrix’ type signage, which is the original stuff we had on Tube stations, for example, or indeed in some of the countdown signage we had on bus stops previously. Some of that is fine, but some of it does, for particular visual impairments, cause some difficulties. We have to be very clear that we are doing something that has no reduction in people’s ability to properly find their way around our network. It is really important to me that we have that validation.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): Any timelines?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): No. Off the top of my head, no, I do not.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): OK. All right. Thank you very much. Thank you.

Caroline Russell AM: Thank you, Chair. I am going to be asking you about walking and cycling, Healthy Streets type of stuff. First of all, it is very good to see in the latest version [of the MTS] that the first policy is still to reduce car dependency, and also that the second policy is that people are encouraged, I think it says, to walk and cycle. It would be good if they were enabled to walk and cycle.

Just before I get into some of the detail, one disappointment. Given the focus on traffic reduction and getting as many journeys done by public transport, walking and cycling, the road crossings in east London are still in here and they are road crossings rather than public transport, walking and cycling crossings. I wondered if you could comment on that, and in particular on Silvertown Tunnel, which in terms of the latest air pollution figures is still going to be a problem in terms of air pollution. That sticks out like a bit of a sore thumb in the Strategy when there is so much in there that is about reducing traffic and working in a very focused way to get to that target for 2041 of 80% of journeys.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): Silvertown is a public transport crossing in that it will enable 36 buses an hour to cross through it. Full-size, double-deck buses, clean, modern double-deck buses, to go through that very important strategic link across the river in that part of London. At the moment, the Blackwall Tunnel allows, at best, six single-deck buses to go through an hour because of its capacity constraints. With the fact that we will have a dedicated bus lane in the Silvertown Crossing, encouraging people to use public transport, crossing through the tunnel, we were considering how we might

ensure the provision for cycles to be carried on buses through the tunnel, how we might look at short-hop journeys for pedestrians through the tunnel on buses as well. It is a very important addition to our public transport network in --

Caroline Russell AM: Is it still going to have cars going through it?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): It will have cars going through it, but --

Caroline Russell AM: Have you thought about just making it buses, walking and cycling so that you are not inducing more car traffic demand in that area that is currently very polluted?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): We have looked at that, and, as you know, in advance of the Development Consent Order (DCO), the Government did call us in again and ask us to have a further look at the air quality assessment around this, which we have been doing in partnership with them, and our assessment is that this is still the right thing to do in terms of easing some congestion of traffic in other parts of London, particularly in the Blackwall Tunnel itself, where you can get some significant queues of polluting idling vehicles. This is a link through.

I do really want to emphasise, and I know that you and I perhaps will never see totally eye to eye --

Caroline Russell AM: We are not going to agree on this, so we should --

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): I do think that we should at least collectively rejoice on the public transport provision that is provided through here. This is a real opportunity to transform journeys for hundreds of thousands of people in that part of the city from cars to buses to public transport in a way that they have never had the opportunity before.

Caroline Russell AM: What I would hope is that we do not undermine that by making it easy for them. As Joanne [McCartney AM] says, if it is easy to get in your car, particularly in outer London, you will get in your car. By providing the extra car lanes through a tunnel, one is also inducing extra car traffic. We are not going to agree, so let us move on.

It is really fantastic to see your commitment to Vision Zero. I just want to relate that back to the relationship with buses, because Healthy Streets you are saying is about walking, cycling and public transport. What I and residents are beginning to find is that some TfL officers are out looking at, "Shall we put in a new crossing here?" Bus journey time reliability is being used as a reason why some things to help pedestrians and cyclists are being refused. The question for you is, how do you prioritise between bus journey time reliability and the needs of people who want to walk and ride their bikes?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): The first thing to say is just from a management perspective, this is all controlled by the same team. Again, this never was before, so the whole issue of looking at Healthy Streets is now in one portfolio, one programme. I really welcome and value the oversight that [Dr.] Will Norman, the Walking and Cycling Commissioner, gives me in this area, because he is not only committed to walking and cycling - he is hugely committed, as you know, because you will have met him several times - but also recognises the importance of buses in the city. Indeed, buses are contributing to more journeys by walking and cycling because we know that is a key factor.

Caroline Russell AM: Yes, absolutely.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): There will occasionally be tensions as to how this is resolved. I am disappointed to hear that sometimes people are using bus speeds as a reason for not providing decent pedestrian or indeed cycling provision at various locations. We will continue to try to get better at this. I cannot sit here and pretend we are perfect at this yet, but the governance infrastructure, for want of another term, is in place now to make sure that we continue to improve in this area. Certainly, if there are areas where you think we get it wrong, you will continue to challenge us and we will continue to have a proper look at it through Will and through the team.

Caroline Russell AM: That is great. The danger is that bus journey time reliability could become the new “smoothing the flow”, i.e. something that just shifts the priority away. The people who are walking and cycling should be getting first dibs in terms of road space and capacity, and then absolutely the buses come next before the cars, the freight and everything else.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): I absolutely agree with you. Yes.

Caroline Russell AM: It is just making sure that that filters throughout the organisation as a thing.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): I agree, and again I will assure you that both Will and myself are diligent in our pursuit of every last dark area of the organisation that might not have got this yet.

Caroline Russell AM: Excellent. Then on to the actual cycling. The Mayor pledged he was going to triple the current Cycle Superhighway provision from 12kms to 36kms. If the six new routes that were identified using the TfL Strategic Cycling Analysis are all delivered, then he could meet that pledge to triple the numbers. However, there is nothing in here that talks about Quietways, Cycle Superhighways. The standard for how this cycle provision is going to be built: is there clarity about that?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): Obviously, as you know, there is a hierarchy of types of cycle provision that we require. The first thing to say is – and I do appreciate you acknowledging it – the £2.2 billion being spent, with £600 million on cycle routes, including so-called Superhighways and Quietways, is really quite significant. Another 600 borough schemes, another 600 Healthy Streets on the Transport for London Road Network (TLRN) with some other work on air quality and bus priority. That is quite a significant amount of money.

There is a bit of a definitional thing here because I think we recognise that all cycling provision plays a part, and of course it will be different in different parts of London as to what you can physically do, whether it is a dedicated segregated cycleway or whether it is a Quietway or a Mini-Holland, indeed, but it gives you a --

Caroline Russell AM: Keith [Prince AM] and I went to visit a Mini-Holland. Was it earlier this week? It was indeed. It was the first day of snow. It was really inspiring. An eight-year-old could have cycled with us. What they had done was not hugely expensive, either. It was quite ordinary things, like filtering to prevent rat-running traffic and quite simple cycle tracks, but it really made a difference to how it felt cycling around.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): It really does, and that is why it is a combination of both. The work certainly on Cycle Superhighway 3, so-called, which opened in December [2017], as you know, then there is 4, 6, phase 2 of 6, 9, 10, 11 and where we get to with that. Then there is the work on the Quietways 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 13, 14, 15 – he says, reeling it off quite quickly – but those are already open, with 36 routes currently planned in total. We have construction under way on 16 Quietway routes, so there will be an additional 100kms by the end of the year, which is really quite significant.

It is the right hierarchy for these, but I would not want to give a sense in any way that we are taking our foot off the absolute gold standard of a segregated cycleway. This is why I am so unapologetic for anyone who ever criticises on this. If we avoid one single person being killed or seriously injured because we have put in a Cycle Superhighway, then that is worth it, in my judgement. It is absolutely worth it. Therefore, that is why we are doing this in the right, balanced way, whether it is Quietways, whether it is dedicated cycleways.

By the way, personally, I do not like the term “Cycle Superhighway” because I think it implies --

Caroline Russell AM: I was going to say I agree with you there, yes.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): I think it implies something a bit motorway-like. What I want to do is ensure that we are - I know [Dr.] Will [Norman] is very keen on this as well - encouraging all sorts of people from all sorts of London's community to feel comfortable. You mentioned an eight-year-old. I want people to feel comfortable through all generations and through all demographics of London in cycling around our great city.

Caroline Russell AM: Maybe we need a naming competition or something.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): Maybe we do.

Caroline Russell AM: The gold standard is what is absolutely important. We also did a tour around some of the Quietways recently, and we could not have had an eight-year-old cycling with us because there were delivery vehicles that were stopping across the route that meant we had to pull out into heavy traffic, or what we actually did was get off and push our bikes along the pavement. That is not cycling provision, and it really needs to be much better than that, particularly when you have planned things. There was a British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) Symphony Orchestra massive truck blocking the route by the Barbican. That should be planned and anticipated. That is not a surprise.

If the Quietways can evolve into something that becomes a bit of a better gold standard, that is going to need a real emphasis on looking at how deliveries and freight happens along those routes if we are going to feel OK about our eight-year-olds cycling along them.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): I absolutely agree. To use real examples is really clear, and I agree with you. Yes.

Caroline Russell AM: I have two final questions. Given TfL's financial position, how confident are you that the planned spending on cycling that is in the current TfL Business Plan will all go ahead?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): It is budgeted, it is there for provision.

Simon Kilonback (Interim Chief Finance Officer, Transport for London): Fully funded.

Caroline Russell AM: OK.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): Yes, we are very confident. This is an absolute priority. When the finance guy says it is fully funded, he means it is going to deliver it.

Caroline Russell AM: We will all take a note of that. We will hold you to that one. Finally, it is really good to see Cycle Superhighway 9 (CS9) going ahead. The issue of consultation and working with communities is obviously really important. People in Islington will not forgive me if I do not ask about Highbury Corner, which was meant to have been the results of the consultation which happened back in 2015. They were going to be fully announced before Christmas, then it was January, now it is February, and February has gone, and now it is March. Is this delay because there has been so much difficulty with some schemes that involve walking and cycling? Do you have thoughts about how you think it is best to engage with communities so that people can feed in constructive thoughts into plans?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): I think we can always do better. We have, again, as part of our transformation in the organisation, been reviewing the whole way that we engage with the community, boroughs and more generally the communities on this and every other subject.

I would say Highbury Corner is raised in the budget specifically as a named item, so we are very confident we will do the work on Highbury Corner. You are quite right on CS9; the consultation finished, and I think some 60%, the latest figures I had, were supportive of the scheme. It is a well-made point. These are sometimes controversial schemes and we need to make sure that we get the great mobilisation of the community behind us as we do these things. Again, that goes back to some of the terminology that we use. If people consider these as motorways of cycling, that is one more potential impediment to them wanting to walk, and that is clearly not an objective that we want to see fulfilled. We can always do better, but certainly we are intending to proceed.

Caroline Russell AM: OK, you are intending to proceed, but in terms of local people being able to feed into the more finalised designs --

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): I will take that away, certainly, and just see what we are doing. Yes, that is a good point. Thank you. Yes.

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

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): Thank you. It comes to me now, on future transport. Do you have a view on how the use of drones should be controlled in London?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): We successfully led a bid to something called the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA) to become a partner city in their Flying High programme, which focuses on drones. This programme, which is funded by Innovate UK, is investigating if and how drones could be introduced into the urban areas to the public's benefit. We are working with the Greater London Authority (GLA) and of course we have to work, Chair, as you understand, with London's emergency services, with London Councils, with other public-sector stakeholders and universities to see how this might forward. To that end, we are seeking to conduct stakeholder and public engagement discussions in May of this year. We have some discussion that we will be having at that time, and that will lead then NESTA to publish a vision for drones in London, we think, with a strategy for safely unlocking any of those benefits just after that, but probably in June this year.

There are huge issues for me around this that we just need to be very cognisant of. Obviously, there is the pretty clear safety issue that you have to consider. There is noise. There are legal hurdles around aviation and over built-up areas. Looking and seeing how public acceptance might work or might not work before any commercial use would be seen to be acceptable. I want to understand the risks. I want to understand the concerns. I do not want to be seen as being resistant to this, but I do think it is really important, when we are

going into something so different from what we have seen before, that we are very cognisant of all the issues that are there and that we deal with them sensibly and in a structured way.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): I have been informed that drones cover both air and surface vehicles. I always thought there were drones and droids, but apparently not. There are companies operating drones/droids as we speak on pavements and roads in London. Are you engaging with them? How is that being taken --

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): I am not aware that we are, but certainly that is something that I would want to look at as part of this overall approach, just because there are some definitional issues, as we imply, about things that are broadly hovering just above the surface. They are clearly quite a different issue that you face, compared to ones that are above head height.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): Are you having any discussions with the Government on possible need for legislation?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): Not so much with the Government that I am aware of. We have had some outline discussion with the European Commission on this, just so it is aware of the sorts of things that we are looking at. Clearly, when you do this from a more-than-one-country perspective, it is usually quite useful.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): I am just worried that we are not really getting ahead of the curve on this, but I will leave it at that because clearly you are doing some work. We have had examples in the past of where people have just moved in because there is this vacuum in relation to legislation or regulation or even Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs). As I say, it worries me that there is a company currently using drones/droids in a couple of the boroughs, I think three boroughs in London, that you are not engaging with them or you are not working with them.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): I will take that away and have a look at the specifics. Perhaps if you were able to share the details of the specifics, that would be very helpful.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): Yes. I do not want to advertise anyone today, but yes.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): I will happily do that. As I say, the difference between, for example, dockless bike hires, which you might be alluding to when you say that other nations --

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): We are coming to that in a minute.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): Sorry. The difference here is that in a sense there is already a regulatory framework that applies for drones flying above head height, which is that there are huge restrictions on that being able to be done, which is why it is important that we are in at the outset, and that is why we did bid for this partnership arrangement to get some funding to allow us to have this discussion in May this year. That will help inform us further. I would like to think we are, if not absolutely at the forefront, quite near it.

Shaun Bailey AM: I am slightly more encouraged by the fact that you bid for this and you are looking at it, but how wide-ranging is this piece of work? There is a great difference between a wheeled droid on the pavement and one flying above our heads. Obviously in London we have lots of tall buildings that block

signals, so it could affect autonomy. Obviously, London will be a big marketplace for anything. If we are leading on this, we would be able to set some of the rules to suit us and then not constantly be chasing it because we are in a very different environment to everybody else. How detailed is this work?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): That will depend on the discussion that we have leading up to May. As I say, just to be very clear, this is not just us because this clearly goes way beyond the remit of just TfL. That is why working with the GLA, working with all the emergency services in London, so the Fire [Brigade], Police, Ambulance Service and everybody else, is really important. Working with London Councils, of course, because there will be specific concerns and issues that they will raise from local communities. Other public sector organisations. Utility companies. Others will be hugely interested in, I am sure, having a dialogue on this as well, as well as those with an academic input into this, such as universities, technology colleges, and others who spend a lot of time thinking about this. I am pretty confident we will be as wide-ranging as we need to be. You never have perfect foresight as to what technology is emerging but it is important that it is not limiting, which I think is the substance of your point.

Shaun Bailey AM: I understand, because it is a developing piece of work. Yes. At least for us and TfL - I understand how some of the other stakeholders may have a different view to this - can we start to build a standard for London? A lot of these companies involved will have a vision for their product and what they want to achieve. We need to have an idea of what we want to achieve in London, what can happen.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): Yes, we should do, but we do need to get through this dialogue first.

Shaun Bailey AM: Yes, I accept that.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): There is a bit of a phasing thing here.

Shaun Bailey AM: This is a plea as much as anything else to make sure that we do not get subsumed in whatever lovely outcome they are looking for, and we get a specific outcome for London.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): I hear you very clearly. It is a well-made point. Thank you.

Shaun Bailey AM: Thank you, Chair.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): Thank you. Moving on to dockless bikes, if I may. They are starting to roll out through the different boroughs. In fact, tomorrow, two launch in one of my boroughs, Redbridge. We saw one in Waltham Forest. Very good. My worry with this is that unlike the "Boris" [Santander] bikes, where you can travel between one borough and another as long as they have one - another bone of contention - with these, if I were to cycle from, say, Havering to here, I might have to change bikes five times and also have to get off the bike on the borough boundary, then cross the borough boundary by foot and get another bike on the other side of the borough boundary. Is there any way that TfL could take a strategic role here and work with the boroughs to have some kind of framework agreement or borough-wide licensing scheme so that we become joined up rather than fragmented?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): It is a well-made point. I am smiling to myself because again this is a conversation I was having at the Transport and Environment Committee with the boroughs last week on this very subject about the challenge, as these schemes extend, of dealing with cross-borough boundary issues and how you ensure this is easy for individual cyclists. Again, you do not want

to deter people because of the mechanics of having to change from one provider to another at a borough boundary. You do not want to deter people who might otherwise be new to cycling and looking at this as an opportunity. Because this makes cycling more accessible to many more Londoners, it is vital that they are introduced in a way that suits our capital and suits that reality. We do not quite have all the answers to this yet but you are quite right.

I too saw the scheme in Waltham Forest, which I was very encouraged by. Ealing has been doing some good stuff. As you say, Redbridge is introducing it as well. As these increasingly emerge we now have this code of practice, as you know, in place to ensure compliance from the operators, which is an important part of this. As it extends more globally, we need to deal with exactly what it is you are saying and look at how the recirculation of bikes can happen as naturally as possible.

One of the reasons the Santander cycle scheme has been so effective is because it does allow that flexibility for people to move around the place. It is a very good point. Will Norman is, I know, working on this as we speak and I am sure he will be able to update you in due course.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): Is there any chance that TfL itself could make space available for dockless bikes?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): Maybe so. The Santander scheme has been a fantastic exemplar, beginning to get people used to the prospect of hiring bikes in the city, but as technology moves on I am sure there are things that we can collaborate with the operators more on. Yes, we are always up for that thought.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): Thank you. Can I move on to demand-responsive buses? You probably agree that there is a regulatory grey area around these vehicles. Are you going to be able to do anything to solve that issue of the greyness and are you concerned about them eating into your fare revenue? There is a danger, I would say, that they would cherry-pick the most lucrative routes, for instance.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): The answer to both questions is yes. We do have to be very cognisant of them and we have to work in, so far as we can, with the providers here. Sometimes of course they will fulfil a very important role where perhaps there is not sufficient demand for a viable bus route to be provided. These are smaller vehicles and often can provide a particular role in a demand-responsive way for particular times of the day or particular communities wishing to be served. We need to work with providers and we have done some work recently to look at just that.

You are quite right. This is something that blurs the boundaries in a sense, does it not, between private transport and public transport? Therefore, it is a new phenomenon and the important thing for me is that we work with those who are seeking to come to London. By the way, nearly everyone wants to play in London. If they want to play anywhere in the world, they want to play in London because London is what it is. How do we work with them? How do we ensure we do not undermine the viability and operability of our core public transport provision? How do we ensure, where there is a need, that we facilitate it from our role as regulator and allowor of such things? It is a finely balanced initiative and we have been working this through in the last few months.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): Have you made any contact with the Government in relation to possible additional legislation?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): No. The problem, Chair, as you know, is that at the moment any prospect of legislation is very limited. We almost try to do anything outwith that, first

of all. I do not think we have got to a point where we see legislation as being the ultimate answer here. What we see at the moment is a collaborative approach with prospective operators to work out what we can do together.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): OK. In 2014, [Rt. Hon] Boris [Johnson MP, former Mayor of London] promised that TfL would never buy another Tube train without driverless capability. I am not advocating that all the trains become driverless. When this question was asked of the current Mayor he expressed some opposition to driverless trains. Can I get an assurance from you that, whilst you may not introduce driverless trains, any new rolling stock will have driverless capacity or capability?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): I think all new rolling stock has the provision for a huge degree of automation. Even the trains that we have on the Victoria line, for example, that we run very effectively and very safely – including this morning, as I just checked before I came in, 36 trains an hour in each direction in the morning and evening peak – are, in effect, driven automatically. The driver fulfils the function of checking the platform, a critical safety function, and opening and closing the doors.

I have been consistent – I have said it on record in the previous mayoral administration and I have said it here – that if I look at a line like the Piccadilly line, it is unimaginable to me that we would not have a member of London Underground staff on the train. I lived through the horror of the bombings of 7 July 2005. I went to the site immediately after that terrible event. It was not a day I would ever seek to relive, I can tell you, and I am sure you understand why. One of the things that was extraordinarily helpful was having one of our highly fantastic, professional, trained staff on the train to do what he was able to do with the people affected.

People often say, “London Underground should never say they are unique”, but actually they are unique in one context and that is that unlike any other metro in the world we have single-bore, deep-level Tube tunnels very deep below our city. No other metro quite has that. Paris is not very deep and they are connected. They are a cut and cover design rather than bored tunnels. Other metros that have deep Tube lines as such tend to have one tunnel where the trains run alongside each other. London is different. I am of a view that we absolutely must exploit technology to get the maximum benefit for throughput of trains, exploiting digital signalling systems and optimal braking/acceleration curves and all the other things you get from automation, but the thing that defines our service provision in London, which I am very proud of and I have always said so, is having people.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): I am not advocating staffless trains and, for the second time, I am not actually advocating driverless trains either. I think you have hit the nail on the head. You can only really grind out these advantages, close working and maximum frequencies, by having trains that are automatic, that virtually drive themselves. We know that on the Elizabeth line, the central core will be automatic. As a result of that, I am asking for the assurance that all the trains that we buy in future will have that capability. I am not saying we have to, but even if we were to go to driverless trains, that does not mean to say we would not want to have, as we have on the Docklands Light Railway (DLR), a captain on the train to take over if really needed.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): That is exactly right. You are quite right to say that we will absolutely exploit technology as it exists, and I cannot imagine we will buy any new train that will not be fully automatic to correspond with new modern signalling systems. As you rightly say, that is not the same as having a fully qualified person on the train.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): Just a cheeky last question, really. I am sure you would have seen that we released our *Future Transport* report. Have you had a chance to read it yet?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): I have not read it in detail yet but I know the team is churning it through and I have asked for a full briefing before I do read it myself. It is always helpful for me when I am given some pointers by some of the experts in my team. I very much look forward to it and, for the avoidance of doubt, I hugely welcome it. It is a really important contribution and – as all your contributions are – very helpful to me in what I am trying to do.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): Thank you very much.

Steve O’Connell AM: I am continuing on the subject of the Underground, and the subject matter is particularly around extending the Night Tube services, which TfL continues to run and are welcomed very much by Londoners. It was touched upon earlier around falling numbers, notwithstanding the seasonal fall we are seeing at the moment. There is a trend of falling numbers. Passenger numbers have fallen 2.1% over the past year, *ergo* income would also have fallen. That is the Underground and also the Night Tube. In that context, is that having an effect on the service being financially sustainable?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): The first thing I would say is that clearly the benefits of the Night Tube are not just purely financial in the moment of the night. The night-time economy is growing hugely in London, which is great for London, good for the UK and good for jobs. We reckon that so far, as a conservative estimate, some 3,600 new jobs have been created with a contribution of £170 million to London’s economy in the first 12 months.

Very importantly as well, the Night Tube does give journey choices to people who work and serve the London economy on a Friday and Saturday night. I think it is really important. I often think of the provision of public transport from an individual human being perspective. If you are working a dead late or very early shift cleaning out a restaurant after everyone else has been there enjoying themselves and you are doing a very critical job, the fact you can get home faster via the Night Tube and now via the Night East London line – extended, as we know, to Highbury and Islington just a couple of weeks ago – just a couple of days a week, that can give you real, valuable additional time with your family. That is a very important imperative that is beyond the direct, immediate financial return.

The other thing I would say is that it allows people who might not normally use the Underground service to experience it. Again, the knock-on effect – which is a bit hard to quantify, I accept – of then people saying, “I am going to now return to the Tube, which I might not have used for many years, and try it during the daytime and other times as well”, creates additional new journeys there as well. I think this is going to continue to grow.

It is a bit too early to say. I did ask to look at some figures just the other day, Steve, in terms of what the critical connection of the East London line to Highbury and Islington was delivering for overall increase in ridership because I think that very night-time-focused line of route, on the north of the East London line in particular, is crucial in linking to the Victoria line. I have not yet seen those figures. It is a bit too early to say but we are very confident that will make a material difference.

Steve O’Connell AM: Of course the reasoning you have said is welcome but the question really was around – it is probably too early to judge this – the sustainability of the model should the numbers fall and rise. This is a relatively new model.

Your point was a very well-made one. Clearly it is a benefit for the night-time economy, particularly people who work late, but of course the Night Tube and the Tube itself has its limitations for the areas I represent. Some conversations were around how improve the Night Bus services to link into those good people who are

leaving their places of work at, I do not know, Brixton or Morden at whatever time. How is that link-up with either Night Buses or very early bus services, bus services generally?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): That is something we continue to keep under review. It is again one of the issues we look at with the bus service more generally. We have configured some bus routes, as you know, for Friday and Saturday night as a result of that to ensure they respond to those new termini, which would not necessarily be critical pick-up points previously on a Friday and Saturday night. We have looked at that.

There is also the whole issue about ensuring onward travel by PHVs and other means as part of the overall offering for people, so people feel safe and secure when they leave the safe and secure environment of a Tube station and continue their onward journey. That is part of the overall mix. It is something, Steve, we keep continually under review because there will be areas, as demand fluctuates, where we need to do things in a slightly different way.

Steve O'Connell AM: Thank you. On the same subject, this is about complaints. You were in front of us a year or so ago and I think you commented that there were 119 or 120 complaints from people. We have constituency members who represent them. I wish that some of my constituents had the chance to complain about the Tube rumbling past their house but we do not even have that opportunity. Having said all that, the fact is the Night Tube would bring noise. I did text Assembly Member [Tony] Devenish because I know he feels quite strongly about this, as do others. That was a year ago. Are you still receiving complaints, and how are you addressing those?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): Yes, we are still receiving some complaints. I have to say that since 2014 obviously we have been working very hard to reduce the noise from our tracks and we have been working with local residents and representatives in the areas affected. We have taken noise and vibration readings at properties affected by rail noise at over 300 locations. We have put in over 12,000 resilient track fastenings in areas where we have had the more serious ground-borne vibration. We have removed rail joints where we did not require them because that is the thing that gives a bit of vibration as the train passes over. We have put in already some 2kms of premium rail steel, which is a higher constituency of rail form that does also suppress the noise a bit, and we have trialled some innovative rail noise reduction technology as well such as noise suppression systems. We have a whole list of areas - Mornington Crescent, Highbury and Islington, South Wimbledon, Camden Town, Green Park - where we have very specific plans going forward in the course of this year, right through this year, to continue to track those areas of the highest priority.

Steve O'Connell AM: With the significance of the routes, 119 complaints is 119 unhappy families but I guess - I can say this, probably - the numbers do not seem to be very, very big and hopefully they are reducing.

Joanne McCartney AM: I questioned whether they were accurate numbers last time.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): It is not the same, of course, and I would not want to diminish the importance of bus safety, but the principle is the same that every one complaint we do take seriously. I take it extraordinarily seriously because I do recognise this is life-affecting for people. That is why the suite of work I have asked the engineering team to do is so important to apply this technology. I am very fortunate now in that the guy who runs the Underground, unlike his predecessor, is an engineer and therefore can come to grips with this. Mark Wild [Managing Director, London Underground] is really getting to grips with this. I know he is personally obsessed with this issue and the science behind Tube rail vibration and noise. We are doing a lot of work here.

Steve O’Connell AM: I have had quite a friendly and temperate text from Assembly Member [Tony] Devenish, saying that for his residents it is getting to a situation where it is deeply affecting their lifestyle, health and life experience. “How are they going to bring it to an end? Grinding alone is not working.” Clearly it is an issue and I wanted that input from someone who is experiencing it, as well as others. It is important. I am hearing that you are attending to it and I know others will comment.

Joanne McCartney AM: I know I am still getting complaints from Seven Sisters on the Victoria line. I think you have ground the track there at least once, possibly twice, I am not quite sure, but I am still getting complaints. What else can you try at those places? I assume these new noise suppression systems are expensive so you cannot put them everywhere, but I have to make a plea for that because I am now getting new complaints from that area about sleep disturbance in particular.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): Yes.

Joanne McCartney AM: I want to ask you about that, but secondly about the complaints as well. We did have concerns. If there were only 119, I would think I have about one-fifth of them in that one spot. We raised the issue about whether the complaints were being counted correctly. Even if we take just your 120 or so, do you know how many have been actually resolved, as in you have measured and it has been resolved, or is it just that people have complained so often that they are not bothering anymore? That is a danger as well.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair): To add to Joanne, will you consider floating track, as they have put under the Barbican, in certain cases to try to deal with the noise?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): Can I pick up Caroline’s question first? On floating track, that is very technically difficult to retrofit. It is quite a challenge. It is a fair question.

On the fact that people may have just given up, which is a less polite way of saying what you have just said, that is something we have to look at. That is why we should continue close work with you when you get these complaints and ensure that we are effectively dealing with them. I have this very detailed breakdown of individual locations here, what the mean noise level is northbound and southbound, what the specific intervention is literally by the metre of track form and what it happens to be.

Sometimes, of course, unwittingly, when you do some work at one part of the line of route there is a reverberation that then goes down further. The nature of sound and vibration in a Tube tunnel is such that the echoes and the feedback of sound behave in very odd ways which are beyond my B at O-level physics ability to describe to you. It is a very technically complex formula that we apply.

We need to continue to be alert to this. I would absolutely hate to think we are in a position where people are having just miserable nights two nights a week on the basis of them not feeling that their complaint was at least being heard and, where possible, actively responded to. If you sense that then please do keep raising it.

Joanne McCartney AM: The issue, being a constituency member, is that I get complaints, I raise them with you and I often get, “Well, there is nothing we can do”. At some point am I going to have to turn around and say to these residents, “You just have to live with it now”? That is not really acceptable either.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): I understand. It is a well-made point. Again, I am more than happy to have a regroup. Perhaps a face-to-face with Mark [Wild] and with yourself,

Joanne, might be helpful, just to see if we can resolve some of those very specific issues that are obviously not unique to the location you are describing at Seven Sisters but particularly prevalent there.

Shaun Bailey AM: Just two things. First, to what extent is a line tested before it is opened? Is it conceivable that a line could be so old, so noisy, so deep, so above ground, that it cannot be used for the Night Tube?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): Anything is conceivable. That is conceivable. The reality is that as we develop new trains, for example -- I alluded to earlier on the modernisation of the Circle, District, Hammersmith & City and Metropolitan lines. These 191 new trains, UK-built of course, are extraordinarily quieter, both in terms of noise and vibration, than the ones they replaced on the three lines they have been put in place in. There are always things we can do better in some locations but generally speaking, as technology moves forward, you get a lower level of noise.

Shaun Bailey AM: My point is, are we testing for this? If we are going to open up a new line and we are going to expose X hundreds of thousands of Londoners to potentially life-changing levels of noise, are we testing for it? With this problem, even as a non-constituency member I have received complaints as well. That is how deeply rooted this is. I know for a fact that 119 is not the level of complaints because communities, entire communities, complain *en masse*. That is reducing your numbers.

The point I am trying to make is that this is a very serious problem. What steps are taken to mitigate it? If you know you are going to open a line and you do the testing before the lines open, obviously you minimise the complaints. Londoners are now beginning to talk about the noise of the Night Tube and you are losing the reputational battle before you start if you do not do some work before you open a new line.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): It is a reasonable point. I am certainly ambitious to think that as we introduce new technology and modern signalling systems, we will be able to extend the reach of the Night Tube services going forward. We are some way away from being able to do that and it is a worthwhile question to ask what testing we could do over lines of route before we make the decision to do it. It is certainly something I will take away and have a look at.

Shaun Bailey AM: Just as a plea, I think that if you include the communities these lines run through you will get a much better response from the public about the positive aspect of the Night Tube, because of course it has great positives, but the noise is a very particular thing. Communities have to be involved in that conversation.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): I understand, yes. Thank you.

Shaun Bailey AM: Thank you, Chair.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): Sorry, can I just pitch in, finally? I did organise a meeting with the Mayor a couple of months ago, I think it was, and a number of Members attended. It seems that in some respects you have got a bit of a handle on the vibration aspect. There is more technology to mitigate that. However, in relation to noise, certainly in my manner, as I would say, I and the residents would absolutely agree that you cannot fault the efforts of your team. They have been amazing in the amount of work, effort and energy that they have put into reducing the noise, but all of the mitigation has had virtually no effect whatsoever. My question is: what happens when we get to the end of the line, when we have exhausted every technological solution and still people are suffering over 50 decibels of noise? What do we do?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): It is a very difficult area, is it not, because as you and many colleagues have rightly alluded to, the benefits of the Night Tube for the wider community are significant. Equally, you never want to see individuals going through a challenge. If we get to the point where we genuinely have reached the end of the line of what technology can deliver for us, then we probably need to have a case-by-case discussion as to what else we might do or what we do do going forward. I do not have the answer to that. It is a very difficult question. Again, I would just reassure you that we will continue to do whatever we can, within the bounds of technology as it exists, to try to ensure that the Night Tube can operate effectively but also that people can live and sleep, importantly, alongside it.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): I will not make sure any suggestions as to what other mitigation could be done outside of what you can do to the track itself, but when do we say that we have exhausted all alternative engineering solutions? When do we say that?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): That will depend on the individual circumstance. I could make a generic, rather glib comment that would not be helpful, I do not think, Chair, that says that obviously once you have put in the new type of rail form and you have put in noise suppression systems, you have done what you have done, but there are often engineering tweaks that you can do in and around that. There is an additional absorption pad that you can put in on a particular block joint or bit when the track changes from one rail to another or over a set of points or whatever. There are things that you can consider doing. It will depend, case by case, on what the geometry of the track is at the individual location.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): Are you prepared to accept that there is a point when you have to say, “There is no more that we can do”, and at that point you are prepared to have another conversation, a different conversation, with the affected residents?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): Inevitably, we have to be honest and upfront with people. If we have genuinely done everything we can on something, that could be done, absolutely. It goes back to what Joanne [McCartney AM] said. Yes, absolutely.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): That is helpful. Thank you.

Steve O’Connell AM: Just the last question from me. We mentioned earlier the financial challenges that TfL is facing, and that has been well rehearsed, but now we are on the subject of upgrades, capacity upgrades. I mentioned the figure earlier. We have a list of significant underground Tube upgrades totalling roughly £4.5 billion. We commented on losing direct grant and we commented on the fares effect on your income. Given those difficulties, are we likely to see parts of your upgrade programmes being cancelled or delayed?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): No, is my assertion. I will let Simon perhaps say a couple of words but my view is this is a fully costed capital programme and it is a huge imperative. The Piccadilly line trains were built in 1973. They are ancient by any sense of that meaning and they need to be replaced. The signalling system operates on a pianola roll, literally, at Earl’s Court, where it turns around on a barrel, and every hole in the roll is an individual signalling operation happening on the ground. It is incredibly safe but it is prehistoric. Well, not quite prehistoric but very old. We need to replace it in terms of value for money and affordability but also, very importantly, for the capacity enhancement. This does give you 60% capacity enhancement.

We know how to do this now. The first part of the Circle and Hammersmith and City line between Edgware Road and Euston Square will be running with the new signalling by the end of this calendar year. This is the

envy of railways around the world in terms of how this technology has been applied. We have the very best team anywhere in the world doing this.

Steve O'Connell AM: Not really the question. I think we kind of get that.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): Sorry. I like to give my team some credit because they do --

Steve O'Connell AM: We love to hear all this but --

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): I am sorry. I do get carried away. My passion sometimes gets ahead of me. The point I am making is that it is not just a financial perspective that it is crucial, not just from an MTS perspective and not just from a value-for-money perspective in terms of operational maintenance that it is crucial, but it is also crucial for maintaining the skills base that we have and, very importantly, for encouraging more young people - particularly, I would say, young women - into those science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subject areas. People will know that we are obsessed with all of this so we have to do it.

Steve O'Connell AM: The question, Simon, for you is: can we still afford it?

Simon Kilonback (Interim Chief Finance Officer, Transport for London): Yes.

Steve O'Connell AM: A little bit more than that.

Simon Kilonback (Interim Chief Finance Officer, Transport for London): In our 2017 Business Plan we fully funded the purchase of the Piccadilly line rolling stock. As Mike and I said back in January, we have committed to making that procurement later this year.

Joanne McCartney AM: At the Mayor's Question Time the issue of Carillion was raised with the Mayor. I know you have very limited exposure there but the Mayor did suggest that you are looking at your outsource contracts and seeing whether any of them would be better delivered by taking them back in-house. Is that a comprehensive look at every contract or when contracts are up for renewal?

Simon Kilonback (Interim Chief Finance Officer, Transport for London): We look at our critical suppliers on a regular basis. We look at the plans we have with those critical suppliers and when those contracts come up for tender. We have a forward look also at the contracts we have to let this year and next year. In every one of those we make a decision about whether we contract with the private sector to do things on our behalf or do them ourselves, based on what is a combination of the best overall value for money but also who is best placed to do that. In some areas where we do have better skills and it is cheaper for us to do it ourselves, such as the contract I mentioned earlier about bringing maintenance back in-house, we will do so. In other areas where we do not have the skills or there is a deeper market pool that could do that far more efficiently and effectively than we could ever do that ourselves, it makes far more sense, in value-for-money terms and also in terms of getting the right outcome from people who are experienced in doing those things, to contract with people to deliver them on our behalf. We constantly reassess those decisions.

Joanne McCartney AM: You are looking at those?

Simon Kilonback (Interim Chief Finance Officer, Transport for London): Yes.

Joanne McCartney AM: I am thinking of things that perhaps are not such specialist skills that you would have to go to the market for, for example taking cleaning back in-house and so forth. Is that something you would be looking at?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): On cleaning, we have just awarded a much more holistic facilities management contract. Just for example – Simon did allude to it earlier on in the larger discussion on finance – the last remaining bit of the old Public-Private Partnership (PPP) with the maintenance contract for Jubilee, Northern and Piccadilly. That has now come back inhouse. That is a significant saving to us, for doing that inhouse. That is the type of thing that we need to be always on the ball looking at. I have asked Simon and the team to ensure that we are actively looking before we automatically get into a re-procurement process and that we have a kind of gate to go through where we ask the question, “What is the best value for money?” on an individual, contract-by-contract basis.

Joanne McCartney AM: Of course, I hope you realise – you will do – that value for money does not necessarily mean the lowest price. It is often the quality and the security of employees --

Simon Kilonback (Interim Chief Finance Officer, Transport for London): No, no.

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): That is why we use that terminology. It is exactly why that terminology is important. You are quite right.

Shaun Bailey AM: Earlier on we spoke about changes in inflation rates affecting your forecast and so on. Has there been anything else that has impacted on your income that may affect these capital investments going forward? When you set your budget up and it was all fine, those assumptions were made. Have any of those assumptions changed significantly enough to put any of the projects at risk?

Simon Kilonback (Interim Chief Finance Officer, Transport for London): Between publishing the Business Plan in December [2017] and the current budget process that we are taking to our Board later this month, there have not been any significant changes in terms of the underlying assumptions. Except for those additional items that the Mayor has chosen to fund, additional money for the boroughs in terms of Local Improvement Plans (LIPs) and additional bus driver facilities, there are no changes to what we are planning to do and there is no change really to the budgeted position in terms of the net operating deficit for next year. As things stand today, the current expectations in terms of the underlying things that affect both our income and our costs are that the assumptions we have made in the business plan hold true and therefore we will be able to fully fund everything on the investment programme we are looking to do.

What I should also say, though, is that – as we demonstrated over the last two years – those forecasts are obviously just forecasts. Mike and I will absolutely not allow the organisation to miss its budget and we will make additional savings in-year where we need to in order to deliver the important investment and services we need to deliver by finding cheaper ways to do things.

Shaun Bailey AM: OK. The last thing I would like to say is that the passenger number estimates have been generous in the past and we have missed. How confident are you going forward that we have a better idea of the reality of how that might be?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): They were within 2%, it is fair to say, and I think that is an extraordinarily good projection of passenger numbers, particularly when you do get some external factors such as the terrible terrorist events that I alluded to, which were material in terms of our passenger numbers last year and which were unforeseen. I will assure you, though, because it is a very fair

question, that I have insisted, and Simon has endorsed that insistence, on an extraordinarily prudent approach to our demand projections in the Business Plan and the Budget so that we are at the lower end of optimism – in fact, you could argue, at the pessimistic end – so that if there is any upside that is positive. The budget is based on the very pessimistic projection because this is the first time we have seen softening of demand, apart from the small blip in 2008, for some 20 years.

Shaun Bailey AM: Thank you.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): Right. That pretty much brings us to the end. I just want to ask you a quick question but I do not necessarily want the answer right now. I have had a number of complaints recently about the delays on the Central line. Could you look into that and give me the reasons why that is, and hopefully also an assurance that things will improve?

Mike Brown MVO (Commissioner of Transport for London): I can give you the assurance that things will improve because we have an improvement programme for the Central line in place. We have had some challenges with the trains. That plan is now in place and we will definitely give you some improvement, but I will ask Mark Wild perhaps to give you a separate note on that.

Keith Prince AM (Chairman): OK. Thank you.

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