

# **28th Mayor's Report to the Assembly**

## **Mayor's Question Time 18 January 2024**

This is my twenty eighth report to the Assembly, fulfilling my duty under Section 45 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999. It covers the period from 8 December 2023 – 4 January 2024.

Please note that the information in the Mayor's Report is accurate at the time of publishing.

## **Executive Summary**

### **Chanukah 2023 – Menorah Lighting Ceremony**

I was proud to join London's Jewish community leaders in Trafalgar Square on Monday 11 December as we lit the Menorah in celebration of the fifth night of Chanukah.

Keith Black, Chair of the Jewish Leadership Council (JLC), opened the ceremony, which included speeches from me and Marie van der Zyl, President of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, and blessings and prayers from Rabbi Pinchas Hackenbroch, with David Baddiel closing the event.

Chanukah is a joyous time of year – but we must always remember that Chanukah celebrates freedom from religious oppression. As we reach the end of a challenging year, we can all find comfort in Chanukah's central message that – dark as days may seem - light and hope can always be found.

The recent rise in antisemitism in London is incredibly concerning and will not be tolerated. I have always been clear that we must do everything we can to tackle antisemitism and I continue to work closely with Jewish communities, the Met, CST and other partners to address this.

### **Christmas Carol Service**

My annual Christmas Carol Service took place on Wednesday 13 December and was attended by over 300 invited guests in the glorious setting of Southwark Cathedral.

This year's theme, 'Together at Christmas', celebrates a society that can find togetherness through areas of commonality, of which Christmas often is one. It denotes unity, family and community but also shines light on those who may be lonely this Christmas.

This year's address was delivered by the newly appointed Dean of Southwark, The Very Reverend, Dr Mark Oakley who also led the Service. I was also joined by Judith Banjoko, Director of Services for Shelter, Natasha Godsiff, trainee solicitor at Clifford Chance and Dr Onkar Sahota, Deputy Mayor of the London Assembly who all delivered biblical readings.

11-year-old Divine Cole, a scholar of London Music Fund, who is currently playing Young Nala in the Lion King, began this year's event singing the opening verse of 'Once in Royal David's City' beautifully. We also welcomed DayThree Music choir whose voices magically resonated throughout the Cathedral.

This year, we held a collection for TAP London, which provides shelter services for homeless people. My Team London Volunteers helped meet and greet the guests, collected donations during

and provided general assistance. Team London Volunteers are a true reflection of this year's theme 'Togetherness at Christmas'. We are inspired by their positive energy and kindness.

### **New Year's Eve**

I was delighted to welcome in 2024 with our best and biggest ever New Year's Eve celebration. Our unique combination of fireworks, drones, lighting and music have put on a fabulous show for the 100,000 ticket holders lining the banks of the River Thames, and the millions watching around the globe, sending a message of unity and showing why London is the greatest city in the world.

2023 was filled with so many special moments, including the Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III, 75 years of the NHS, 75 years since the arrival of Empire Windrush and 10 years since same-sex marriage became legalised. As we move into 2024, I feel more inspired than ever to continue our work building a better, greener and more prosperous city for everyone.

The soundtrack to the show included a wide range of recent hits and classics from all across the world, featuring bhangra, k-pop and reggaeton, alongside global and British pop classics. Messages were delivered throughout the show by Dame Helen Mirren, Bella Ramsey, Stephen Fry, Joanna Lumley, George the Poet and Baroness Floella Benjamin, who read a poem by the late Benjamin Zephaniah.

My Team London volunteers once again supported the event, with 170 volunteers on hand across 9 central London locations, welcoming domestic and international guests with wayfinding, directional support and ticket checks as they made their way to a spectacular show.

### **New Deputy Mayor for Business**

I have appointed Howard Dawber as my new Deputy Mayor for Business. Howard replaces Rajesh Agrawal, who stepped down from his role last month after being selected as a candidate in the next General Election.

Howard will focus on championing London's interests across the globe, banging the drum for the capital as a place to visit, expand to and invest in, and work to protect jobs and growth as London continues to recover following the pandemic. He will also focus on supporting the thousands of small and medium-sized businesses at the heart of London's economy.

Howard has a wealth of experience at the very centre of London's business community. For nearly 20 years he was Strategic Advisor and then Managing Director of Strategy for Canary Wharf Group, and he has been involved in some of the most significant projects the capital has seen in recent years, including the Olympics and the Elizabeth Line. Howard gets as much as anyone that it's the continued success of London's businesses that will drive economic growth, not just in London but across the country.

### **First Elizabeth line stations get high-speed mobile coverage**

Customers on the Elizabeth line received an early Christmas present in December as four central London stations received mobile coverage for the first time.

The four stations – Bond Street, Tottenham Court Road, Farringdon and Liverpool Street – are some of the busiest in Central London and all now have mobile coverage in the ticket halls, connecting corridors and platforms for the Elizabeth line. The introduction at Tottenham Court

Road also means that the whole station now has mobile coverage, with work to expand coverage to the Central line, and then onto the Jubilee line at Bond Street taking place throughout 2024.

I am delighted to see the promise I made of delivering 4G and 5G across our transport network continuing to progress, with the four busy Elizabeth line stations joining an ever-growing network of lines and stations with full connectivity.

The new mobile coverage at these stations will be a major boost for those travelling around London – connecting key business centres and some of the popular parts of Central London and the West End. It will help Londoners and visitors to the capital to better navigate the capital and stay connected underground. Growing numbers of underground Tube stations now have 4G and 5G services, with many more to come as we continue to build a better London for everyone.

### **Record number of night workers receiving at least the London Living Wage**

On 8 December, new data revealed that a record, four in five (80 per cent) workers in night time industries now receive at least the London Living Wage.

Research from The Liminal Space shows that those who work at night are 37 per cent more likely to have a heart attack, 44 per cent more likely to have diabetes and six times more likely to get divorced than those who work during the day.

The number of workers in night time industries receiving at least the London Living Wage has risen to a record 80 per cent, up from 72 percent in 2017. However more than a third (39%) of night time cultural and leisure workers – including hospitality, private security, arts and entertainment- are still paid below the London Living Wage.

I'm calling on the government to step forward and recognise the distinct needs of night workers and commission further research into how the impact of working at night can be reduced.

More information on the research is available online at <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/london-at-night--research-and-analysis>.

### **More than 17 million free school meals already provided**

On 12 December, I visited Mandeville Primary School in Hackney to celebrate the fact that more than 17 million free school meals have been funded for state primary school children in the capital this school term, thanks to historic £135m funding from City Hall.

The unprecedented funding helped up to 287,000 children each day since the start of September and a class were visited by celebrity chefs BOSH! to help prepare and enjoy a special lunch in celebration of free school meals.

City Hall's 'Love your lunch' challenge asked primary schoolchildren across the capital to create a piece of work in any medium along the theme 'The best thing about school lunches is...'. Year 5 pupil Ishall's poem championing the benefits of free school meals wowed the judges and scooped the top prize – lunch for the whole class, courtesy of the famed chefs.

State primary school children across the capital have been enjoying free school meals since the start of the school year in September thanks to City Hall funding.

An estimated 1.4m meals each week are being funded to help support families as they struggle with the ongoing cost-of-living crisis. Families in every borough in the capital are saving upwards of £440 per child across the school year.

### **London continues to lead the UK in reducing emissions from new buildings**

On 19 December, a new report revealed that London continues to outperform the rest of the UK in cutting energy use, driving down carbon emissions and supporting investment in green technologies from new developments through our London Plan policies.

The 2022 Energy Monitoring Report summarises the impact of Mayoral policies on the 47,862 new dwellings and 2.4 million m<sup>2</sup> of non-residential floorspace approved in 2022 that were referred to the Mayor. This includes that:

- London is achieving far higher carbon savings than national requirements for new buildings;
- London Plan policies has ensured record numbers of buildings have taken up clean technologies including heat pumps and solar panels; and
- London's greenhouse gas emissions fell by 44 per cent compared to 2000.

The report is available to view online at <https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/environment-and-climate-change/environment-and-climate-change-publications/2022-energy-monitoring-report>.

### **GLA Group consultation budget**

On 19 December, City Hall published the GLA Group consultation budget.

The government's refusal to provide enough funding for the Metropolitan Police Service, the London Fire Brigade and Transport for London meant that City Hall was left with little choice but to plan to increase council tax by £37.26 next year - the equivalent of £3.10 a month - for an average Band D household.

Our budget proposals focus on protecting London's public services and building a safer, fairer, greener and more prosperous London for everyone. The consultation budget is available to view online at [www.london.gov.uk/budget](http://www.london.gov.uk/budget).

### **Night Transport Outreach Team expansion**

On 21 December, we delivered a further £200,000 to expand the pan-London Night Transport Outreach team to end the cycle of homelessness for hundreds of people sleeping rough on the TfL network.

The funding will provide emergency shelter for people found sleeping rough on the transport network and targeted support to find long-term routes out of homelessness for service users.

The latest case studies from Thames Reach show the expanded outreach service is already having a transformative impact, with more than 100 Londoners helped out of homelessness in 2023 alone.

New staff members now join the night outreach team to locate more people identified as sleeping rough via the StreetLink alert system.

### **Investigating single free, open-access Wi-Fi network across London**

On 27 December, I announced that £20,000 was being allocated to create a plan for City Hall and London & Partners to improve internet connectivity for visitors and Londoners, the first step towards a possible open-access Wi-Fi network for London, with a single seamless experience to increase accessibility and convenience.

I want every Londoner and visitor to have the very best experience possible and in our connected world that means having access to fast, reliable, seamless internet access. This will be the first step towards delivering better digital services for all, building a better and more prosperous city for everyone.

### **London delivering twice as many council homes as the rest of the country combined**

On 3 January, new government statistics revealed that last year, local authorities in London started building twice as many council homes than the rest of the country combined, with nearly 11,000 new council homes started in 2022/23. The figures show that an average of 89 council homes a week have been started in the capital between May 2016 and the end of the last financial year.

Since 2016, more than 32,000 council homes have been started in London, with 23,000 directly funded by City Hall. This compares to just 3,520 council homes started in London in the entire decade before I became Mayor.

I'm urging the Government not to completely give up on council housing as a vital way of delivering affordable homes. In London, I'm determined that we continue to do all we can to build on the success of recent years, empower councils and work with all those involved in building new council homes, so we build a safer, fairer, greener and more prosperous city for all Londoners.

## Policing, Crime and Security

### On patrol with the Met Police

I am a passionate supporter of neighbourhood policing, and I have backed that with record investment in the police since becoming Mayor – including funding 1,300 officers and recruiting 500 new police community support officers to deal with local priorities in high-harm areas. On 13<sup>th</sup> December I joined local neighbourhood and specialist police officers on a Winter Nights patrol in Greenwich, alongside Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime Sophie Linden and Deputy Assistant Commissioner Matthew Ward. We met up with a Safer Neighbourhood patrol working after dark in the town centre, busy transport hubs and around major tourist attraction the Cutty Sark to see how officers are targeting robbery, violence and burglary hotspots.

Winter nights can lead to an increase in burglaries and people feeling unsafe after dark, with criminals taking advantage of the shorter days as a cover for their activity. In response, officers like those in Greenwich are carrying out targeted patrols to tackle crime, anti-social behaviour and violence across London. This includes visible patrols on busy locations such as transport hubs and Christmas markets and working with businesses, shops and venues in the capital's night-time economy.

In Greenwich, there is evidence to show this approach is beginning to show results, with robbery remaining below pre-pandemic levels and burglary offences down by seven per cent in the last 12 months. I'm grateful to the team for welcoming us along, and for their work throughout the year to protect their communities.

## Transport

### Walking and Cycling Grants London

On 14 December, TfL and the London Marathon Foundation awarded more than £575,000 of funding to 78 new projects and 69 continuing projects run by community groups, as part of the Walking and Cycling Grants London (WCGL) programme. Each investment will make a real difference to communities across the capital, allowing organisations to deliver projects and programmes to enable more people to enjoy the benefits of active travel. More than £198,000 of the funding has been awarded for 69 existing projects to continue their work in the community.

WCGL aims to encourage more people to walk and cycle, helping to break down the barriers that prevent people from getting active and helping to make London a more sustainable, inclusive, and healthy city. All projects give people the chance to connect with their local communities, learn new skills, get active and improve their physical and mental health.

The successful projects target a wide range of traditionally underrepresented groups. These include disabled people, those from minority ethnic backgrounds, those who are disadvantaged (which includes issues such as low-income, lack of outside space nearby and home living space, those in receipt of benefits, free school meals and other social issues), homeless people, refugees, asylum seekers and those part of the LGBTQ+ community. The projects aim to enable participants to feel confident while walking and cycling in London. Funding has been awarded to schemes covering all 32 boroughs and the City of London.

Walking and cycling are great ways for people to keep active, stay healthy and connect with their local communities. I'm delighted that the grants programme is supporting these important projects, which are removing barriers to active travel for traditionally underrepresented groups.

I will continue to work with community groups to make the capital's transport network more sustainable and accessible, building a fairer, greener and better London for everyone.

### **Safer, more reliable and accessible Central line trains**

On 15 December, I saw the first Central line train to be overhauled as part of the £500m Central Line Improvement Programme (CLIP).

CLIP is the most significant overhaul project undertaken by TfL engineers in the history of the Tube and will transform journeys for millions of customers every week. The trains on the Central line are more than 30 years old and are among the least reliable on the Tube. The crucial and innovative work done on the CLIP project will install wheelchair bays to improve accessibility, screens in carriages to enhance customer information during travel and new refreshed seating including a new moquette.

Following significant testing over the summer period, the first newly refurbished train is based at Hainault depot as it finishes live testing on the railway. The newly refurbished trains feature more reliable motors, better accessibility, improved customer information and a new moquette. Each carriage is also fitted with CCTV cameras, the first time CCTV has been installed on trains on the Central line. The Central line, which operates throughout the night at the weekend, is the longest Tube line and one of the busiest on the network with around 4.5m customer journeys completed each week.

The introduction of CCTV on trains is a significant step in the continuing effort to ensure that Londoners feel, and are, as safe as possible when using the transport network. It will add to TfL's extensive CCTV network which includes all stations on the London Underground network, complementing the staff and enforcement activity already in place across the transport network. Staff are working on the Tube whenever services are running and, in addition to more than 2,500 police and police community support officers, TfL also has 500 enforcement officers who patrol the whole network.

The safety of Londoners is my top priority and I want everyone to feel safe, and be safe, when travelling around London at all times.

These newly refurbished Central line trains will improve safety, accessibility and reliability for Londoners – supporting my aim to continue building a safer, greener London for everyone.

### **TfL launches its first podcast series to celebrate 160 years of the London Underground network**

On 18 December, TfL launched its first podcast series to celebrate the 160th anniversary of London Underground. Hosted by railway historian and broadcaster, Tim Dunn, the four 30-minute podcasts shine a light on the iconic transport network, looking at the architecture and history of stations, innovation in transport and how public transport connects people and places.

In the first three episodes of the 'Mind the Gap – Tube 160' podcast series released today, Tim Dunn, who presents 'Secrets of the London Underground' on UKTV's Yesterday channel and UKTV Play, interviews a broad range of people – united by their love of the Tube. Special guests include

Wayne Hemingway, world-renowned designer and co-founder of HemingwayDesign, who designed the uniforms for London Underground frontline staff; the 'Tube Mapper' photographer Luke Agbaimoni; Amy Lamé, the co-founder of Duckie and London's Night Czar; and Geoff Marshall, a popular online video producer who runs a transport-themed YouTube channel and website, as well as many other experts and TfL staff.

The fourth episode is a special festive episode in which Tim meets – and journeys with – one of his broadcasting heroes, TV and radio presenter (and fellow self-professed Tube fan) Rylan – from central London towards Rylan's home town in Essex.

We've had a fantastic year paying tribute and celebrating 160 years of the London Underground. This podcast series brings those celebrations to a close with a bang, uncovering the secrets behind its success, from the beautiful architecture of stations to the future of innovative technology and new trains. 'Mind the Gap' is a fantastic opportunity to learn more about the London Underground's journey.

### **New funding for Colindale and Leyton stations**

On 19 December, TfL welcomed confirmation from the Government that £43.1m from the Levelling Up Fund has been allocated to the upgrade of Colindale and Leyton Tube stations, meaning both stations will become step-free for the first time.

It follows the announcement from the Department of Transport (DfT) in January 2023 that it would provisionally provide the funding, subject to TfL submitting a Full Business Case for both schemes.

The decision by the DfT to approve the business case means that the Levelling Up funding will be allocated to the redevelopment of Colindale station on the Edgware branch of the Northern line immediately, and to Leyton station on the Central line on completion of detailed design work in early 2024. Financial contributions will also be made by the GLA, Barnet Council (for Colindale), Waltham Forest Council (for Leyton) and local developers.

I am delighted that the Government has confirmed funding to upgrade Colindale and Leyton stations. These vital updates will include making both stations step-free along with increasing their capacity, helping us to continue building a better, fairer London for all.

### **TfL draft Business Plan improvements**

On 22 December, TfL confirmed that it will deliver the full programme of improvements and vital infrastructure renewals for London in 2024/25 as set out in its recently published Draft Business Plan.

Within its Business Plan, TfL has set out how, following a programme of work to rebuild ridership, increase income and reduce costs, it is now on track to be financially sustainable in terms of its day-to-day operations. TfL has always been clear that it could fund around 75 per cent of its vital capital investment programme for the next year (2024/25) – but required government support for capital investment across its business plan.

Alongside London's business groups and other stakeholders, TfL has been making the case to Government that a proportion of Government capital investment is necessary in order to fund the remainder of the plan. Government funding is a feature of every major transport authority around



the world and investment in transport within London benefits the whole of the UK through TfL's extensive supply chain that supports 100,000 jobs around the country outside of the capital.

These past few years have been the most challenging in TfL's history, but following a programme of work to rebuild ridership, increase income and reduce costs, I'm pleased that TfL is now on track to be financially sustainable for the first time in its history in terms of its day-to-day operations.

As the Government has only provided half of the capital funding that TfL needs, TfL has had to make difficult decisions about their business plan to ensure they can continue to make vital upgrades to London's transport network.

That's why it is still vitally important that we agree a sustainable long-term funding settlement from the Government that allows us to plan and invest for the infrastructure London will need over the coming decades. Expanding our transport network and supporting jobs and economic growth in London has real and sizeable benefits for the economy of the whole UK.

### **London roars back for a Christmas 'Too Big to Miss'**

London continued to roar back from the pandemic this festive season, with soaring ridership numbers at key Tube stations close to Christmas attractions, and entries and exits at Oxford Circus station 27 per cent higher on Black Friday than on average for each of the previous four Fridays.

The run-up to Christmas, known as the 'Golden Quarter', is a vital period for the retail and hospitality sectors, with many businesses relying on it for a significant proportion of their annual profits – and TfL figures reveal how Londoners and visitors have used the capital's transport network to enjoy the vast array of retail opportunities and festive events.

TfL and Visit London launched a new Tube map titled "A Christmas Too Big to Miss," marking the locations of the best festive attractions across London. Similarly, to other Tube maps, it offered guidance on accessibility, as well as advice on how far the attractions are from the stations.

London is also one of the world's best retail destinations, and it's great to see that promotions such as Black Friday and Small Business Saturday were huge successes.

## **Environment**

### **London Green New Deal Expert Advisory Group**

On 14 December, my Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, Shirley Rodrigues, attended the London Green New Deal Expert Advisory Group meeting. The meeting focused on providing an overview of the three joint areas of work with London Councils: green jobs and skills, green finance, and retrofit. The updates focused on current and upcoming work plans, with questions around what roles different partners can play.

### **London Climate Resilience Review – meeting with Chair**

On 14 December, the Chief and Deputy Chief of Staff and Shirley Rodrigues, the Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, met with the Chair of the London Climate Resilience Review, Emma Howard Boyd, and her team, to discuss progress on the Review. I commissioned the independent Review to take stock, identify the gaps in London's climate resilience and adaptation, and make recommendations to guide London's preparations for more extreme weather. Given the extensive

evidence and feedback the Review Team has been provided an Interim Report will be published in January 2024, ahead of the publication of the full Review later in 2024.

### **London Climate Change Partnership – meeting with Chair**

On 19 December my Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, Shirley Rodrigues, met Bob Ward, the new Chair of the London Climate Change Partnership. The meeting focussed on the proposals for the work programme of the partnership.

## **Fire and Resilience**

### **London Fire Brigade Christmas Carol Service**

On 11 December, my Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience, Baroness Twycross, attended London Fire Brigade's Christmas Carol Service at Westminster Cathedral and gave a reading.

### **Resilience First**

On 12 December, my Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience, Baroness Twycross, met with Resilience First, a business network which sets standards for resilience leadership in the private sector for a safe, secure, and sustainable future.

### **Deputy Mayor's Fire and Resilience Board**

On 13 December, my Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience, Baroness Twycross, chaired a regular meeting of her Deputy Mayor's Fire and Resilience Board.

### **Mayor & London Fire Commissioner**

On 13 December, my Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience, Baroness Twycross, and I met with the London Fire Commissioner for our regular discussion on matters relating to the London Fire Brigade.

### **Fire Brigade Union Dinner**

On 18 December, my Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience, Baroness Twycross, attended a dinner hosted by the Fire Brigade Union.

## **Growth and Skills**

### **Research report: Supporting London's Migrant Communities through the Adult Education Budget (AEB)**

In December, I published research looking at how AEB flexibilities that I introduced have improved access to adult education by London's migrant communities. The research highlights how thanks to these flexibilities refugees from Afghanistan and Ukraine who did not arrive on the dedicated emergency schemes, as well as other migrant communities are able to access learning they would have been locked out of. It also shows how skills providers have created bespoke provision to meet the diverse needs of migrant Londoners and how adult learning has helped people build confidence for everyday life, foster connections and integrate with local communities. The research includes recommendations for the GLA and local delivery partners to provide additional support to

London's migrant learners and explore opportunities to further expand the eligibility criteria for the Adult Education Budget. The full report can be accessed online here:

<https://data.london.gov.uk/skills-and-employment/our-research/>

### **Indicative Adult Skills Fund allocations and approach to national reform**

From the start of the 2024/25 academic year, the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) is reforming the national adult skills model, with the Adult Education Budget (AEB) set to become the Adult Skills Fund (ASF).

In December GLA Skills officers wrote to all GLA grant funded adult skills providers to notify them of my approach to the funding reform and how I will adapt the new national model to ensure it continues to align to my [Skills Roadmap for London](#) and meet the needs of London residents and business. As part of the reform, the rates at which regulated qualifications will be paid will be revised, with the majority receiving an uplift as a result.

Providers were also notified of their indicative allocations for the 2024/25 academic year, and will be informed of their final allocation in March 2024.

### **AEB Data Publication**

On December 22, I published London's AEB data for the 22/23 academic year. This release includes statistics on AEB-funded Further Education and Skills in London. From August 2022 to July 2023, 487,100 learning aims were funded by the GLA, this represents a 5 per cent increase compared to the same period in 21/22. These courses were taken by 230,060 GLA-funded learners, which is an increase of 4 per cent compared to in 2021/22. In addition to the headline measures, the publication outlines the number of enrolments by level, subject and funding model, and the number of learners by protected characteristic including ethnicity, age, gender and disability.

## **Housing**

### **Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme (SHAP)**

On 28 of November, alongside government, I announced funding allocations for the first four bidding rounds of the SHAP programme in London. SHAP funds homes and support services for people sleeping rough or at risk of sleeping rough. The successful bids will provide supported housing, Housing First and housing-led accommodation for two target groups: adults experiencing multiple disadvantage who may have a history of rough sleeping and require high levels of support, and young people at risk of or experiencing homelessness or rough sleeping. In London we announced allocations for a total value of £52m, which will result in much-needed supported accommodation throughout the capital.

### **Mayor's winter rough sleeping campaign**

On 14 December, one week after the launch of the capital's first ever Rough Sleeping Charter, I launched my annual winter rough sleeping campaign, urging Londoners to join me in my mission to help end rough sleeping in London. With the alarming rise in the cost-of-living worsening the capital's crisis in rough sleeping, there has never been a more important time to support homelessness charities. City Hall is working with charity partner TAP London this winter to raise

money for frontline homelessness services in the capital so that they can continue their life-saving work. Since 2017, Londoners have donated over £700,000 to nominated rough sleeping charities, helping to fund vital initiatives, projects and support services. The campaign also encourages people to use the StreetLink website to connect people they see sleeping rough with local support services.

## **The Economy, Business and Enterprise**

### **London Business Forum**

On 19 December, I chaired my London Business Forum at City Hall with leading business representatives to discuss the impact of recent developments on London's businesses and economy. We discussed London's enormous offer over the festive period, including the NYE fireworks, the Government's recent immigration measures and business and consumer confidence. We also discussed the work that Amy Lamé and the team were doing on making London a fair, inclusive, safe and sustainable 24-hour city, including the Women's Night Safety Charter and Night Time Enterprise Zones.

## **Children and Young Londoners**

### **Child Poverty Action Group NEU report launch**

On 12 December, my Deputy Mayor for Children and Families, Joanne McCartney, spoke at the launch of a new report by the National Education Union and the Child Poverty Action Group. The report builds on what we have seen in previous research about the life changing impact Universal Free School Meals (UFSM) has on children, their families and their communities. It does this by exploring the benefits of UFSM through the lens of the lived experiences of families and school staff in two London boroughs where UFSM entitlements have been in place for more than a decade. I am so proud that for the first time, this provision has been extended to all London boroughs, meaning nearly 300,000 more primary school children in our city are now receiving a free school meal, and families in all boroughs are set to save upwards of £440 per child. By the end of this term, we will have funded more than 17m meals for children in London.

## **Culture**

### **Westminster Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

On 14 December my Night Czar, Amy Lamé, attended Westminster City Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee hearing. The session reviewed the balance between resident and business needs at night. Amy presented her views on London at Night and the wider benefits and challenges associated with local authorities developing their own night time strategies, and set out the work and programmes currently being undertaken by her team.

### **London Business Forum**

On 19 December my Night Czar, Amy Lamé, presented at the London Business Forum, which looks at the impact of key issues on London's businesses and economy and identifies actions to support them. Amy shared insights and learning from the 24 Hour London programme. These included the positive impacts of Night Time Enterprise Zones and Business Friendly Licensing projects on local

economies across London, and new data on night workers from a recent report published by the City Intelligence Unit.

## Civil Society and Sport

### Sport Internships

On 8 December, I launched our London Sport Internships, funded by the Mayor's Office of Policing and Crime (MOPAC) Violence Reduction Unit (VRU). This programme will enable eighteen young people aged 18-24 to access high-quality 12-month paid internships at 8 different sporting organisations and National Governing Bodies, including the Lawn Tennis Association, English Cricket Board, ThinkBeyond Sports, Women in Sport, and more.

The sport sector workforce is not representative of the diverse groups of young people we have across London, and the eight organisations funded through this programme are committed to diversifying their organisations by providing these opportunities to young people from underrepresented backgrounds who are interested in pursuing a career in sports. Each young person will be provided with a mentor aligning with my commitment to provide quality mentoring for young people across the Capital.

### Future Ready Fund Round 2 Now Open

Following the success of the Future Ready Fund Pilot, on 13 December I launched the second round of the Fund, which supports young people during the critical transition between primary and secondary school.

A successful transition is impacted by a multitude of factors including social and institutional adjustments, curriculum interest and continuity. In recent years it has become apparent that this is a crucial time for young people to be supported with protective factors to reduce their risk of being affected by violence and stay in education.

Round two will award eight successful organisations from the pilot up to £50,000 over two years to deliver a person-centred after-school sports and mentoring programme in a school setting. The projects will work with underserved young Londoners in years 5 and 6 to have access to physical activity and a mentor who will boost their self-esteem, self-confidence, and engagement with education. When the child transfers to secondary school, the activity – and crucially, the trusted adult, will remain with them, so that in the year 7 transition they will still have the relationship, familiarity, and trust to fall back on as they get used to their new school environment.

## Health

### Six Tests: Children's Cancer Services in South London

As part of my commitment to champion, challenge and collaborate with the NHS on behalf of all Londoners, I have developed six tests for all major changes to NHS services in London. On 18 December I wrote to the NHS to set out my position on proposed changes to children's cancer services in South London. This was informed by an independent review of the proposals that I commissioned from the Strategy Unit.

My letter set out several areas in which further development is needed. This included calling for clear plans and targets for how the changes will reduce health inequalities, greater analysis of expected travel times and

costs for patients and families, and further work to understand and address any impacts the changes might have on other children's services.

## **IHE Skills Report**

In 2022 I provided a grant to the UCL Institute of Health Equity (IHE) - led by internationally renowned expert on health inequalities Professor Sir Michael Marmot - to produce a series of independent, intervention-focused evidence reviews.

On 4 January 2024 they published their third review on Skills and Health Inequalities in London. The report details the links between skills programmes, employment and health inequalities and outlines evidence on effective interventions relating to the design and delivery of skills programmes, to address health inequalities most effectively. This work will help me and a range of organisations in the city to think about what more we can do to help address health inequalities through adult education.

The report is available to view online at <https://www.instituteofhealthequity.org/resources-reports/skills-and-health-inequalities-in-london>.

I am pleased to say that London is in a strong position as we have already implemented many of the recommendations, such as promoting uptake of programmes among people with low incomes, and monitoring health and social outcomes of our Adult Education programmes through the Adult Learner Survey.

This is one of a series of reviews, following those focussing on the [cost of living](#) and [housing](#) in London.

## **International Relations**

### **US Holiday Reception**

On 14 December, I attended the US Holiday Reception hosted by Ambassador Jane Hartley, the US Ambassador to the UK. The reception was an opportunity to reinforce the message that London looks forward to promoting further business, cultural, social and tourism connections with the USA - London's most important market for trade and investment.

## **Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation (OPDC)**

### **Planning update**

On 21 December, OPDC issued planning permission for Atlas Wharf, a new canalside, mixed-use development of 457 new homes (35% affordable) and 682 sqm of commercial space, in the heart of Old Oak West.

### **Budget and Performance Committee**

On 12 December, OPDC's Chief Executive David Lunts, OPDC's Planning Director Emma Williamson and OPDC's Chief Financial Officer Gurdip Juty attended the London Assembly's Budget and Performance Committee at City Hall. The full public hearing can be viewed [here](#).

## **GLA Oversight Committee**

On 14 December, OPDC's Director of Communications, Engagement and Strategy Roz Henville and OPDC's Planning Director Emma Williamson attended the GLA's Oversight Committee – focusing on consultation across the GLA group. The full public hearing can be viewed [here](#).

## **London Legacy Development Corporation**

### **Budget and Performance Committee**

On 12 December, LLDC Chief Executive, Lyn Garner, and LLDC Deputy Chief Executive, Gerry Murphy, appeared in front of the London Assembly's Budget and Performance Committee at City Hall. Lyn and Gerry were asked about LLDC's affordable housing delivery, East Bank and the MSG Sphere planning application. The full public hearing can be viewed [here](#).

### **Major League Baseball economic impact report**

On 13 December, it was [reported](#) that the return of Major League Baseball (MLB) at London Stadium had boosted the London and the rest of the UK economy by nearly £53million and £8m respectively.

This analysis follows studies of previous sporting events at the Stadium which found that the MLB series in 2019 generated £37m for London's economy while the 2017 World Athletics Championships brought in more than £100m to the UK economy.

As part of the three-year deal I signed as Mayor, MLB will return in June 2024 when New York Mets face Philadelphia Phillies with a fixture in 2026 that is yet to be decided.

### **ABBA Voyage economic report**

On 21 December, it was revealed that in its first year ABBA Voyage generated nearly £500m for the UK economy. According to a report (link when press release is published) compiled by global research and strategy consultancy Sound Diplomacy and social value consultancy RealWorth, the show, which is based at the 3000-capacity, purpose-built ABBA Arena at Pudding Mill Lane, contributed £322.6m in turnover to the London economy and £177.7m in GVA (Gross Value Added) between May 2022 and May 2023.

It was also reported that 42% of this total was generated in the four growth boroughs of Newham, Hackney, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest, equalling £134.1m in turnover and £73.7m in GVA. The fantastic success of ABBA Voyage shows once again how London is the music capital of the world and that its entertainment and cultural offer is roaring back from the impact of the pandemic. I am so proud that City Hall was able to help ABBA bring this pioneering show to east London, providing huge benefits to both the local and wider London economy.

### **Spirit of 2012 / Elevate**

Elevate, formerly LLDC's Legacy Youth Board, received £120,000 in funding from the Spirit of 2012, the official London legacy charity funder. The funding will mean the young people of Elevate will be able to organise more events in and around Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, helping to gather insights on the existing and future legacy of the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

## Planning and Regeneration

### Planning

#### Planning Decisions

I have sent a letter in response to the following Statutory Stage 2 referrals. I have informed the relevant Local Planning Authorities that I am content for them to determine the cases themselves.

#### Planning Decisions (Stage 2 referrals)

GLA Number	Development Name	Local Planning Authority	Decision date	Decision	Application Type
2022/0492	Symal House and 421 Edgware Road	Brent	18/12/2023	Allow LPA to approve	Stage 2
2022/0262	2-4 Ringers Road and 5 Ethelbert Road	Bromley	18/12/2023	Allow LPA to refuse	Stage 2
2023/0302	1 Westmoreland Road	Bromley	19/12/2023	Allow LPA to refuse	Stage 2
2021/0661	Block C - Land north of Westfield	Hammersmith and Fulham	18/12/2023	Allow LPA to approve	Stage 2
2023/0401	Former Car Pound, 25 Mandela Way, London, Southwark	Southwark	18/12/2023	Allow LPA to approve	Stage 2
2023/0431	Chalk Gardens (currently B&Q Sutton)	Sutton	18/12/2023	Allow LPA to approve	Stage 2
2022/0151	15-27 Byng Street, 29 Byng Street (Flats 1-6 Dowlen Court) and 1-12 Bellamy Close, London, E14	Tower Hamlets	18/12/2023	Allow LPA to approve	Stage 2

#### Planning Decisions (Stage 2 referrals)

The Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration & Skills, under powers delegated to him sent a letter in response to the following Statutory Stage 2 referrals. The Deputy Mayor informed the relevant Local Planning Authority that he was content for them to determine the case themselves.

GLA Number	Development Name	Local Planning Authority	Decision date	Decision	Application Type
2023/0202	Jablite	Bexley	11/12/2023	Allow LPA to approve	Stage 2



2022/0297	O2 Masterplan Site	Camden	11/12/2023	Allow LPA to approve	Stage 2
2023/0102	100 Gunnersbury Lane	Ealing	11/12/2023	Allow LPA to approve	Stage 2
2023/0510	Plot M0121 - The Tidemill	Greenwich	18/12/2023	Allow LPA to approve	Stage 2
2023/0367	Inmarsat House	Islington	11/12/2023	Allow LPA to approve	Stage 2
2022/0153	Land at Atlas Wharf	Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation	11/12/2023	Allow LPA to approve	Stage 2
2022/0784	Ludgate House	Southwark	11/12/2023	Allow LPA to approve	Stage 2
2021/0524	Asda Cross Harbour	Tower Hamlets	18/12/2023	Allow LPA to approve	Stage 2

### Planning Decisions (Stage 1 referrals)

I have asked officers to send letters giving comments about the following Stage 1 referrals:

GLA Number	Development Name	Local Planning Authority	Decision date	Decision	Application Type
2023/0707	The Green Quarter	Ealing	18/12/2023	Does not fully comply with the London Plan	Stage 1
2023/0790	Tottenham Hale Station	Haringey	19/12/2023	No Strategic Issues	Stage 1
2023/0735	Ham Wharf	Hounslow	11/12/2023	Does not fully comply with the London Plan	Stage 1
2023/0736	Land south of Billet Road	Redbridge	18/12/2023	Does not fully comply with the London Plan	Stage 1
2023/0714	Liberty of Southwark	Southwark	11/12/2023	Does not fully comply with the London Plan	Stage 1
2023/0779	4-5 Paris Garden, 18-19 Hatfields	Southwark	18/12/2023	Does not fully comply with the London Plan	Stage 1

### Local Plans

On 15 December GLA officers responded on my behalf to LB Hounslow's Regulation 18 on the Single Local Plan. In the response, I supported the case for bringing together the four separate volumes of the Local Plan Review (that were withdrawn earlier this year) as a consolidated document into a single Local Plan. I supported the approach of updating the content of this plan and the evidence supporting it to align with the London Plan policies and address previously raised general conformity issues. I supported the Council's intention to include the Council's

climate change priorities and the transition towards net zero which reflects my own commitments and priorities.

### **Planning for London Programme**

This month, GLA officers hosted four stakeholder events and spent six days engaging with young people from London's schools as part of the Design Future London Programme. These activities concluded Phase 1 of the Planning for London Programme, which comprised 9 different programmes, 67 different engagement opportunities and over 3,500 participants.

### **Design Future London / C40 Reinventing Cities**

As part of my commitment to C40, and delivering a more sustainable city for the future, I partnered with C40 in launching the Reinventing Cities event at the Building Centre,

This saw over 100 university students attend the event over two weeks, giving them the opportunity to explore options for the future of the Pool of London (a stretch of the River Thames from London Bridge to below Limehouse), and apply their imagination in responding to a design brief for this complex site.

Meanwhile, 600 secondary school students (500 of whom were from high pupil premium schools) participated in events at the Building Centre which gave them the opportunity to explore careers in the built environment and to share their views on key issues and priorities in relation to their neighbourhoods and London as part of the Planning for London Programme.

### **Single Policy Map for London**

This month, the first single planning policy map was released for London. This included the release of over 3000 datasets. The policy map allows datasets to be accessed, downloaded and used by Londoners and the development community. This constitutes a major data release, and it can be found at [Planning London DataMap | London City Hall](#)

## **Regeneration**

### **High Streets Data Service – Digital Incubator Programme Event**

On 14 December, the six teams from across London who participated in the High Streets Data Service Digital Incubator Programme fed back on the findings of their work. Teams were able to analyse the impact of footfall and spend as part of the programme and reported back on analysis ranging from impacts of single initiatives (such as improvements to a pedestrianised space) through to tracking the impact of post covid policy interventions on town centres. This work showcased the value of the programme to the built environment sector.

## Key engagements

Among my additional engagements since my last report were the following:

- I switched on the City Hall Christmas Tree lights on 8 December
- I spoke at a Christmas Reception at City Hall on 8 December
- I officially opened the new Brent Cross West Station on 10 December
- I took part in the lighting of the Menorah for Chanukah at Trafalgar Square on 11 December
- I joined Met Police Officers for local neighbourhood policing patrol in Greenwich on 11 December.
- I visited a Hackney primary school to see the free school meals programme first-hand on 12 December
- I chaired the Homes for Londoners Board on 12 December
- I chaired the Transport for London Board on 13 December
- I held my regular meeting with the London Fire Commissioner on 13 December
- I chaired a meeting of the VRU Reference Group on 13 December
- I attended the City Hall Christmas Carol Service on 13 December
- I spoke at the City Hall Christmas staff event on 14 December
- I visited the US Embassy for their Christmas event on 14 December
- I visited the newly refurbished Central Line trains on 15 December
- I met with the Grenfell Tower Trust on 18 December
- I held my regular planning decisions meeting on 18 December
- I held my regular meeting with Transport for London on 18 December
- I chaired a meeting of the London Business Forum on 19 December
- I visited Bond Street to officially launch 4G and 5G services on the Elizabeth Line on 20 December
- I attended a Christmas Service at Westminster Cathedral on 20 December
- I attended Mayor's Question Time on 21 December
- I attended an exhibition: Domestic Abuse Through the Lens of Creative Expression on 21 December
- I held my regular meeting the Deputy Met Commissioner on 21 December
- I attended the New Year's Eve Fireworks display on 31 December