



Elly Baker AM
Chair of the Transport Committee

Andy Lord
TfL Commissioner
(Sent by email)

2 September 2025

Dear Andy,

Fare evasion

The Transport Committee takes the issue of fare evasion on our transport network extremely seriously. Those who deliberately or systematically avoid fares are causing revenue losses for TfL at a time of financial pressure, over half of incidents of violence and aggression towards TfL frontline staff are linked to fare evasion, and crucially, fare evasion undermines Londoners' faith in the fairness of our transport network. The Committee welcomes TfL's *Revenue protection summary* and supports its aim to reduce fare evasion to 1.5 per cent by 2030¹, but we believe more is needed in order for TfL to achieve this aim in a way that delivers for all passengers and for TfL staff.

At the Committee's meeting on 8 July, which focussed on fare evasion, we heard from Michael Roberts, Chief Executive of London TravelWatch, that TfL's *Revenue protection summary* "sets out the right elements but the jury is out on whether the approach is going to have the impact that we would all want to see, including TfL, which is to reduce fare evasion."² He went on to say there are questions over how effective the strategy will be as while "the headlines are all there, but the substance is missing."³

¹ TfL, [Revenue protection summary](#), April 2025, p. 2

² London Assembly Transport Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Fare Evasion – Panel One](#), 8 July, p. 1

³ London Assembly Transport Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Fare Evasion – Panel One](#), 8 July, p. 6

Michael Roberts also told us “the large majority of Londoners think it is just downright unfair that some people are deliberately dodging their fares”.⁴ And that 80 per cent of Londoners told a recent TravelWatch survey they thought TfL is not doing enough to tackle fare evasion.⁵ We heard there are some key areas that TfL should more carefully consider its approach. These are set out below.

Data

Given the range of reasons behind fare evasion, we are clear on the need for tailored interventions. Different approaches will be required for those who accidentally buy the wrong ticket to individuals deliberately and repeatedly avoiding payment. Just as there will be different interventions for those who cannot afford to pay the fare and for those limited instances where fare evaders become violent.

We were therefore pleased to hear from Siwan Hayward OBE, TfL’s Director of Compliance, Policing, Operations and Security, that TfL’s approach is data-led, providing “insights into the different types and patterns of fare evasion on different modes, but also the different types of fare evaders”.⁶ However, we heard from Michael Roberts that for a data-led approach “it is surprisingly data light” and there is a lack of detail about what level of resource will be put into infrastructure, gateline staff, Revenue Protection Officers and Transport Support Enforcement Officers.⁷

We heard that TfL started using a new measure for fare evasion in 2022/23 and that before this it did not consistently track or measure levels of fare evasion.⁸ Michael Roberts told us that the lack of historic data around rates of fare evasion make it difficult to track what factors influence fare evasion, and that “more data around trends over a period of time, not just over the last couple of years” is needed to understand trends.⁹

Recommendation 1: TfL should carry out analysis of its data on fare evasion by the end of 2027 after five years of consistent data collection. TfL should commit to publishing this data, to enable further scrutiny. Alongside the data TfL should publish the details of the financial resources that are being committed to the issue in terms of infrastructure, staffing and other measures (such as advertising campaigns).

Ticket barriers and gatelines

TfL’s *Revenue protection summary* identifies fare evaders by four categories; accidental, opportunistic, calculated and chronic.¹⁰ Jared Wood, London Transport Regional Organiser for RMT, told the Committee that “if there is an open barrier, it presents a greater opportunity for fare evasion” and that two of TfL’s four categories of fare evader, accidental and opportunistic, “are eliminated if the barrier is staffed and if it is up and running”¹¹

⁴ London Assembly Transport Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Fare Evasion – Panel One](#), 8 July, p. 1

⁵ London Assembly Transport Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Fare Evasion – Panel One](#), 8 July, p. 1

⁶ London Assembly Transport Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Fare Evasion – Panel Two](#), 8 July, p.1

⁷ London Assembly Transport Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Fare Evasion – Panel One](#), 8 July, p. 6

⁸ London Assembly Transport Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Fare Evasion – Panel Two](#), 8 July, pp. 5-6

⁹ London Assembly Transport Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Fare Evasion – Panel One](#), 8 July, p. 3

¹⁰ TfL, [Revenue protection summary](#), April 2025, p. 4

¹¹ London Assembly Transport Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Fare Evasion – Panel One](#), 8 July, p. 7

The Committee also heard from Michael Roberts that one area Londoners want to see more action from TfL is on gatelines, he said “people do want to see gatelines used where they are available.”¹² He also said that where there are no gatelines in place they should be installed, and that TfL should ensure there are sufficient members of staff to operate these.¹³ In 2017, TfL reported that it had developed a gateline management tool, to assist local managers in identifying where and when gates were being left open and unstaffed.¹⁴ We were reassured to hear that TfL is looking at gateline design, both the potential opportunity to upgrade current gatelines and different measures for parts of the network where it is not feasible to install gatelines.¹⁵

Recommendation 2: The Committee is concerned that unstaffed gatelines are not a priority for TfL. Over the next six months, TfL should monitor planned and unplanned instances of when and where gatelines are being left open and unstaffed and share the findings with this Committee. TfL should then set a target to reduce these instances occurring to ensure that gatelines are being used and sufficiently staffed consistently across the network.

Station staffing

Although only a small number of people evading fares become violent or aggressive, TfL staff and passengers own safety can be at risk when a minority of those without a valid ticket become violent. And around half of all incidents of violence and aggression towards TfL staff stem from fare evasion or payment disputes.¹⁶ This understandably results in safety concerns for staff tackling fare evasion. The Committee heard from Jared Wood that lone working and reduced station staffing contribute to staff feeling unsafe and less confident in managing confrontations.¹⁷ He said “it is a small proportion of people that are travelling irregularly who engage in violence”¹⁸, but that “the perception of staff is that things have got worse.”¹⁹

While TfL told us there is no clear link between lone working and increased risk, staff perception strongly suggests otherwise.²⁰ Jared Wood told us that lone working makes staff feel more vulnerable, less confident to intervene and “makes someone more likely to perhaps resort to some sort of physical violence than they would if there were more staff around.”²¹

Recommendation 3: TfL must reconsider its approach to staffing stations and its routine use of lone working without sufficient mitigation to improve both the reality and perception of staff safety in the context of fare evasion.

¹² London Assembly Transport Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Fare Evasion – Panel One](#), 8 July, p. 6

¹³ London Assembly Transport Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Fare Evasion – Panel One](#), 8 July, p. 6

¹⁴ TfL, [Customer Service and Operational Performance Panel](#), November 2017

¹⁵ London Assembly Transport Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Fare Evasion – Panel Two](#), 8 July, p. 22

¹⁶ TfL, [Revenue protection summary](#), April 2025, p. 3

¹⁷ London Assembly Transport Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Fare Evasion – Panel One](#), 8 July, pp. 3-4

¹⁸ London Assembly Transport Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Fare Evasion – Panel One](#), 8 July, p. 9

¹⁹ London Assembly Transport Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Fare Evasion – Panel One](#), 8 July, p. 3

²⁰ London Assembly Transport Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Fare Evasion – Panel Two](#), 8 July, p. 24 see also London Assembly Transport Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Fare Evasion – Panel One](#), 8 July, pp. 3-4

²¹ London Assembly Transport Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Fare Evasion – Panel One](#), 8 July, p. 4

British Transport Police response

The Committee also heard concerns about slow British Transport Police (BTP) response times, with reports that officers often do not arrive before an assailant has left the scene. Jared Wood told us that outside of a busy central London station “it would be unusual for the BTP to arrive while an assailant is still present.”²²

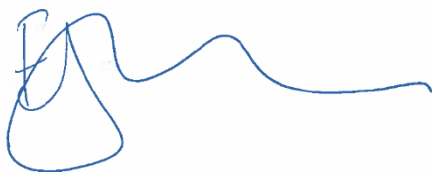
Rapid police responses are vital. As Jared Wood told us “perpetrators of violence do not see alternatives to the BTP as much of a deterrent as they do the police themselves.”²³ TfL told us that “Ideally, we want policing presence alongside enforcement presence there to prevent violence and aggression happening in the first place, rather than to just to think about response capability.”²⁴ We believe closer cooperation between TfL, BTP and the Met Police is essential to tackle incidents of violence and aggression towards TfL staff. We have also written to BTP’s Chief Constable, Lucy D’Orsi, regarding this issue.

Given the importance you place on ensuring the safety of frontline TfL staff, and on reducing levels of fare evasion we hope you will commit to a review of TfL’s approach to the issues highlighted in this letter by 2 March 2025 and to implementing the recommendations set out in this letter. We would also request that TfL provides us with annual updates on progress towards its target to reduce fare evasion and a breakdown of the financial resources that are being committed to this issue, in line with Recommendation 1 in this letter.

Recommendation 4: TfL should provide the Committee with annual updates on progress toward its target to reduce fare evasion by 1.5 per cent by 2030, starting in January 2026, and a breakdown of financial resources that are being committed to this issue.

I would be grateful if you could respond to this letter by 14 October 2025. Please send your responses to Hannah Barlow, Principal Committee Manager, hannah.barlow@london.gov.uk and Eleanor Haigh, Senior Policy Adviser, eleanor.haigh@london.gov.uk.

Yours,



Elly Baker AM
Chair of the Transport Committee

²² London Assembly Transport Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Fare Evasion – Panel One](#), 8 July, p. 5

²³ London Assembly Transport Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Fare Evasion – Panel One](#), 8 July, p. 4

²⁴ London Assembly Transport Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Fare Evasion – Panel Two](#), 8 July, p. 24