

# MAYOR OF LONDON

**Tony Arbour AM**  
Chairman of the London Assembly  
City Hall  
The Queen's Walk  
More London  
London SE1 2AA

**Our ref:** MGLA150318-6647

**Date:** 15 MAY 2018

Dear Chairman Arbour,

## **London Assembly (Plenary) Meeting 8 March 2018 – Motions**

I am writing in response to your predecessor's letter of 13 March about the motions agreed at the London Assembly (Plenary) meeting on 8 March. My reply to each motion is set out below. I am sorry for the delay in replying.

### **Motion 1 – Royal National Lifeboat Charity**

I am grateful to the Assembly for highlighting this issue and the invaluable work of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI). Together with the Metropolitan Police Marine branch, London Fire Brigade, London Ambulance, Port of London Authority and Coastguard support, the RNLI provides a truly remarkable and world-class service to London, saving many lives. However, as you note, there are sadly still too many Londoners that drown in the river each year and there is more that can be done to support these efforts.

In May last year I established a Thames and London Waterways Forum to bring together key stakeholders, including Transport for London (TfL) and local riparian boroughs, to advise on all river transport and waterways issues. Safety is at the very heart of this work and I will ask the Forum to give full and proper consideration to the proposals put forward by the Thames River Safety Forum to enhance prevention and safety measures to reduce the number deaths caused by drowning.

### **Motion 2 – National monument dedicated to Sikh soldiers**

I announced my support for a national monument dedicated to Sikh soldiers first in 2016 and reaffirmed my commitment during my visit to Sri Harmandir Sahib in Amritsar on 6 December 2017. Since then, the National Sikh War Memorial Trust has been set up to campaign, raise funds, and commission a memorial which will commemorate the Sikh servicemen and women who lost their lives in the first and second world war. The Trust is chaired by Andrew Fane OBE, who has been Deputy Chairman of English Heritage in the past as well as Chairman of the Planning and Conservation Committee of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and the Historic Buildings Council. He is joined on the Board by representatives of the Sikh community with expertise in a range of areas including education and experience in support of other war memorials in London.

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The Board of Trustees has already secured £325,000 in pledges and are confident they can raise the necessary funds for a memorial.

My team is supporting the National Sikh War Memorial Trust in seeking a suitable site for the memorial.

## **Motion 3 – Air pollution in London**

Improving air quality in London is one of my main priorities in office. Since being elected Mayor I have introduced the T-Charge in central London, brought forward the start date of the ULEZ in central London to April 2019, and begun cleaning up London's bus fleet, introducing the first two of twelve Low Emission Bus Zones.

TfL and the boroughs are taking targeted action to reduce vehicle idling. This includes information campaigns and Engine Action Days to educate drivers about engine idling, which are funded by my £20m Air Quality Fund. The information campaign that is referred to in the Motion is led by the City of London, and it has now engaged with 15 boroughs.

TfL's Roads and Transport Enforcement Officers routinely address engine idling as part of their deployments across the capital. Additionally, officers have undertaken 24 days of intelligence-led anti-idling enforcement and education in the last 12 months as part of Operation Island. Officers are educating drivers about the law relating to engine idling and the impact of their actions on air quality and public health. TfL is also working with the Metropolitan Police Service to identify further ways to educate and encourage motorists to turn off their engines when required to by law.

TfL continues to address the air quality impact, including engine idling, of buses, taxis and private hire vehicles. Bus drivers are reminded to switch off their engines at their garages and at bus stands. Signs are also displayed to drivers, and TfL follows up reports of idling with bus operators. On some of the newest and cleanest vehicles, the engine automatically switches off if the vehicle is stationary for a brief period, and, as you know, I am investing heavily to continue cleaning up the bus fleet and reduce pollution caused by bus engines.

TfL regularly includes information in its publications to licensees, and works with boroughs to engage with drivers and target problem areas. Of course, the pollution caused by idling taxi and private hire vehicles will be significantly reduced thanks to my bold and necessary changes to licensing requirements, which have meant that, since 1 January 2018, all taxis presenting for licensing for the first time must be zero-emission capable. By 1 January 2023, all vehicles granted a private hire licence for the first time will be zero emission capable, regardless of age.

I have also called on Government to provide additional support, powers and regulation to improve air quality. Stronger idling enforcement powers for Local Authorities will be included in the list of requests that we put to Government. We are also requesting TfL be given the power to issue penalties for idling, which it does not currently have.

While enforcement powers to tackle engine idling need to be addressed, enforcement alone will not change behaviour. There needs to be a combination of education, engagement and enforcement, and agencies working together. I will continue to pursue all these avenues, working with all the appropriate agencies, including London boroughs, to tackle engine idling.

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Thank you again for writing to me.

Yours sincerely,



**Sadiq Khan**  
Mayor of London