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**[www.havering.gov.uk](http://www.havering.gov.uk)**

5<sup>th</sup> December 2016

Dear Alex

**Re: Taking Havering's transport aspirations forward with the London Mayor and Transport for London**

Thank you for your letter of November 24<sup>th</sup> 2016 which summarised the main points from our meeting on November 3<sup>rd</sup> 2016 as well as setting out further actions for Transport for London and Havering.

We were very pleased to share with you the exciting changes that are taking place in Havering and to be able to make very clear how keen we are to work with the Mayor to realise the considerable potential in Havering to take forward the approaches set out in his 'A City for all Londoners' document.

We see considerable overlap and similarity between our ambitions and the Mayor's. We look forward to working with him as he seeks to reflect the document in the new London Plan and then to deliver the outcomes in Havering that he aspires to. We agree with his comments last week that 'new infrastructure is key for economic growth'.

We agree with the Mayor about recognising the inevitability of growth across London and this very much underpins our approach here. We strongly support his commitment to 'good growth' and we believe that with his support we can deliver this in Havering.

Our work on the new 'Vision' for Havering is at an advanced stage and has Cabinet Member support. It looks to take Havering forward across four key themes – **Places, Communities, Opportunities and Connections**. As soon as we have the final 'Vision' confirmed, we'll be pleased to share it with you.

The 'Vision' sees change and growth in Havering as both a challenge and an opportunity. We share the Mayor's focus on meeting as much of London's growth within London as is possible. We want to work with the Mayor to put Havering at the centre of this.

We note the Mayor's clear intention to protect the Green Belt and other designated open spaces. Our own approach is expected to accord with that. Our current work provides us with some optimism that Havering's housing requirements can be addressed within the existing built up parts of the borough in the next few years.

The delivery of our two Mayoral Housing Zone proposals are very tangible and visible evidence of how we are taking positive steps to accommodate growth in two prominent areas of the borough (Romford and Rainham - London Riverside).

We are encouraged by our Members' appetite for taking these to encompass high quality residential schemes at higher densities and, in appropriate circumstances, with taller buildings such as locations around transport nodes like Romford station. Across the combined Housing Zones proposals there is potential to provide some 9-10,000 new homes and we see this as very much aligned with the Mayor's views on how and where new growth should be.

Additionally, a comprehensive renewal and redevelopment programme across our own housing stock is expected to deliver some 2,000 nett additional dwellings and has the potential to be increased.

We do see this as much more than just driven by numbers. Our Vision aims to create places where people want to live, put down roots and invest themselves in the considerable opportunities in the borough.

In short, Havering is a place where more than circa 12,000 new homes can be delivered provided the right infrastructure is in place particularly transport. We are encouraged by the Mayor's intention to 'fully join up my plans for transport with those for housing and other kinds of land use to make the best possible use of space and get the right things built'. We want to work with the Mayor to deliver this.

The Mayor has highlighted his intention to use transport investment to make the most sensible use of space in London. He also highlights the synergies between new housing developments and areas where new transport links will open in the future and the importance of 'getting more housing built by linking it to transport projects' He affirms how important it is that 'proper planning takes place at an early stage' and this is why our meeting with you was so timely.

Improving **Connections** is a big part of Havering's new 'Vision' and this will encompass fast and accessible transport links and access to jobs and opportunities.

We identified a number of key strategic transport interventions that we believe will help us achieve our own ambitions and chime closely with the Mayor's approach.

It is especially important that connections between the north and south of Havering are improved. TfL's ELTOS work needs to capture this and it is welcome that Julia (Bray) and her colleagues will be contacting Martyn Thomas to take this forward.

Public transport connections between Romford and the London Riverside – Beam Park area comprise no more than one bus service. Existing road links between the south of the borough and Romford are an imperfect network of congested and inadequate residential roads. Residents either side of these are badly affected by noise, vibration and air quality issues because the roads are wholly unsuited to the traffic volumes. The resilience of Havering’s highway network is extremely fragile and it does not take much in the way of unexpected events to bring traffic movements to a standstill.

We want TfL’s ELTOS work to look at the feasibility of modes such as light rail, tram or guided bus to provide a step change in connectivity between these parts of the borough. There may be scope to ‘host’ this on existing highways but we are open-minded about looking at options that may encompass routes outside of the established built up areas if that will facilitate a better scheme and help us to secure the necessary better connections.

We specifically referred to the Harold Hill area and identified that there would be scope for considerable further increase in new homes here were it not for the constraints imposed on the connectivity of this area to the rest of Havering especially Romford and the south of the borough.

We also see the potential to capitalise on the Crossrail ‘Elizabeth’ line by improving connections between Harold Hill and Harold Wood station.

‘Freeing up’ capacity on Havering’s roads will benefit businesses and may encourage more take-up of ‘active’ modes such as cycling as well as improving the conditions for people and businesses alongside these transport corridors. We are developing an Air Quality Action Plan for Havering and these interventions will assist in delivering important improvements in air quality.

Because direct linkages between the north and south of Havering are so poor, working in the south of the borough can only be considered by those with access to a car. Better north-south connectivity between here and London Riverside will enable residents in Harold Hill to take up jobs there. This will be very much in line with the **Opportunities** and **Connections** themes in the Vision.

You will recall that as well as emphasising the importance of this link, we also want to better connect the Harold Hill area to Romford.

Harold Hill is immediately to the north-east of the Gallows Corner junction. It is a critical part of the transport infrastructure in Havering and one that highlights its inadequacies.

We want to work with the Mayor to explore the scope for radical overhaul of this junction. Options we raised with you, encompassed ‘sinking’ the road beneath ground and taking the opportunity to develop across the site with mixed uses. Development capacities for the wider Harold Hill area could be significantly uplifted as a result and there would be better **Connections** between the many new homes and residents and the ‘offer’ we are seeking to improve in Romford. We welcome your commitment to looking with Havering at the scope for development opportunities and the potential for delivering wider economic benefits here

Romford is to benefit from the delivery of its Housing Zone as well as other elements such as the arrival of 'Elizabeth' line Crossrail services and the opening of the Council's new leisure scheme in Western Road.

Much remains to be done in Romford and we firmly believe there is scope for making use of some key transformational projects to facilitate this.

We are enthusiastic to look at the possibility of putting the western part of the Romford Ring Road beneath ground so that residential areas to the west of Romford (part of the Housing Zone) can be better integrated and connected with the enhanced town centre. This would provide scope to provide more new homes in and close to the town centre in line with the Council's exciting 'place making' ambitions in the **Place** theme of the 'Vision'. There will be scope in the new residential quarter provided to provide a setting where the 'active travel', health and public realm advantages from cycling and walking can be maximised. We will be contact to discuss the initial feasibility work we have done.

Queens Hospital in Romford is a major part of Havering's social and community infrastructure. Ensuring that the hospital is safely and conveniently accessible to all in the community is a major concern for the Council. We are working closely with a wide range of stakeholders to address various issues linked to it. At the moment localised congestion occurs to the south west of Romford linked to traffic to / from and passing the hospital. We are exploring the scope for securing better linkages to the hospital to / from Romford town centre for pedestrians, trying to secure better bus access / routeing and looking at how the significant pressure for car parking may best be addressed. We recently discussed with the CCG the importance of improving connections to the Hospital as well as the scope for reconfiguring some services to reduce its 'pull' so that only essential visits are made there.

We have been quite clear about our concerns about the issues of blight and the resilience of the wider highway network to accommodate the proposal for a bridge / tunnel between Belvedere and Rainham. It would also completely fly against the enhanced residential environment that we are seeking to provide with the delivery of the Housing Zone at London Riverside.

The Mayor's recent announcement about where he is focussing his attention in regard to further TfL river crossings is welcomed but it is a concern that a Belvedere-Rainham crossing proposal may re-emerge in the next Mayor's Transport Strategy.

Havering recognises the importance of further river crossings but any further crossing in this part of London must be complemented by improved connections to the rest of Havering. This would improve the resilience of the wider network and also provide the opportunity for people and businesses in the rest of Havering to enjoy the benefits of improved access across the river.

Havering supports the Thames Estuary 2050 Growth Commission initiative. We submitted a response that reflected our comments to the Mayor's draft Infrastructure Plan for London 2050 in 2014/ 2015. We feel that our ideas above may be the 'game-changer' proposals that are needed for Thames Estuary to thrive and prosper.

We recently had a ceremony to launch construction of a 'state of the art' innovation hub at the former Beam Reach 5 site in London Riverside. We were delighted to hear the GLA Director for Land and Housing (David Luntz) speak positively about the scheme and its role in helping to regenerate almost 90 acres of brownfield land : 'This is almost the only part of London which has the land available to build not only projects for economic growth but also good quality housing'. We feel that these sentiments don't just apply to London Riverside but have a relevance across the whole of this borough and we want to make clear our commitment to putting Havering at the front and centre of the drive to realise the opportunities from what the Mayor terms 'good growth'.

We will reflect these key transport interventions in our emerging 'Vision' and future strategies. They will be referenced in our Havering Community Infrastructure Levy, the new local plan for the borough and our next local implementation plan strategy document.

I hope that our comments made plain Havering's ambition and the opportunity within the borough. It is clear that our ideas touch upon many aspects of the current Mayoral agenda. We welcome his comments in his document about 'transport keeping pace with the number of people needing to travel' and about new transport investment acting as a catalyst for regeneration and introducing new opportunities beyond Central London. I note that in anticipation of the Government's Autumn Statement the Mayor commented on the importance 'of London being allowed to get on with building the new infrastructure London needs to support growth and prosperity'.

Havering is keen to engage with the Mayor and his planning advisors directly. I am copying this letter to Sadiq Khan himself and to his deputies. I envisage that the Leader of the Council will be seeking to meet with the Mayor in the near future to talk through our ideas.

Yours faithfully,



Andrew Blake-Herbert  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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## **London Borough of Havering comments on the Mayor's document : 'A City for all Londoners' (October 2016)**

Set out below are officer comments from Havering Council to the Mayor's 'A City for all Londoners' document. The comments are provided under the headings and sections of the report and follow the order of that document.

The comments should be read in conjunction with the letter from the Havering Chief Executive to Alex Williams of Transport for London (copy provided with this response).

### **Executive Summary**

#### **Accommodating growth**

- **agree** with accommodating as much of London's growth within London as possible through the London Plan and his Transport Strategy
- **support** intensifying housing development around stations and well connected town centres so more people can live in convenient locations. This is consistent with the approach in the emerging Havering 'Vision' and the draft local plan for Havering. In particular, Havering considers that there is scope to provide many new homes in Romford Town Centre around the Romford Station on the Elizabeth / Crossrail line) and in the adjoining Romford Housing Zone currently being delivered at sites such as Bridge Close and Waterloo Road.
- **support** more emphasis to be placed on more mixed use development
- **agree** with the Mayor doing all he can to ensure that people can access decent and affordable housing, jobs, culture and social infrastructure across the city, that methods of transport keep pace with people needing to travel and that the environment is protected and enhanced

#### **Housing**

- **recognise** that new housing has failed to keep pace with demand
- **support** the Mayor pursuing a partnership approach with local authorities and developers
- **welcome** that the Mayor intends to secure more homes being provided on TfL land and other public sector land
- **agree** with looking at offering more affordable housing types

#### **Economy**

- **support** the Mayor's determination for London to remain the world's top global business city
- **want** to see all Londoners can benefit from London's economic success

## Environment, Transport and Public Places

- **strongly agree** that it is vital for health and well - being to protect and enhance the environment including the Green Belt
- **strongly support** air quality being brought back to safe levels as soon as possible and agree with the Mayor's aim of London being zero carbon by 2050. Havering is keen to secure transport infrastructure improvements across the borough such as the radical overhaul of Gallows Corner and the Ring Road around Romford as these have the potential to make a significant improvement to air quality. Havering is developing an Air Quality Action Plan and will be engaging with the Mayor on this shortly.
- **support** the Mayor's intention to reduce traffic and encourage cycling and walking on 'healthy streets'. Proposals for cycling and walking improvements must take account of the importance of ensuring the vehicles can still get around the borough safely and conveniently. There is likely to be more scope for such improvements in the major development opportunities at London Riverside and in the borough's Housing Zones in Romford and Rainham.
- **agree** with the Mayor protecting London's heritage and culture and promote good design in public spaces to improve everyone's quality of life

## A City for all Londoners

- **agree** that social integration will be essential and relies on an affordable, accessible transport system, measures to improve health and reduce health inequality

## Part One : Accommodating Growth

- **recognise** that London needs new homes as well as places to sustain economic growth. In accommodating growth and raising densities it is essential that communities are comfortable with the scale and change in their neighbourhoods.
- **agree** that there are many competing demands for land
- **strongly support** the Mayor's intention to protect the Green Belt and other designated open spaces and strongly agree that that means taking bold measures to meet as much of the city's growth within London as possible.
- **support** the intention to intensify development across London and significantly in well-connected locations that are well served by existing or planned public transport. Comments above on the significant scale of opportunity around Romford station apply here as well. Similarly, better connections between Harold Hill and the Crossrail station at Harold Wood will make it easier for residents in Harold Hill to make use of Romford and have better access to destinations outside the borough. Recognition must be given to well connected town centres also being important for business uses as well as homes.



- **Very strongly support** the Mayor's intention to join up plans for transport with those for housing and other land uses. Improvements in transport provision such as better linkages between the north and south of Havering have the potential to join Romford to London Riverside / Rainham such that the shopping, job and culture opportunities in the former are easily accessible to residents in the south of Havering and residents in the north of the borough have the opportunity to work in the London Riverside area. The London Plan and its linked strategies (such as the Mayor's Transport Strategy) must ensure that the right things are built in the right places.
- **agree** with protecting and sustaining the job creating role of areas of strategic national and international importance for jobs by resisting office conversion to housing unless this is justified
- **strongly support** the Mayor's intention to encourage development in non-central locations with good public transport
- **agree** with the intention to promote viable strategic locations for office space including in outer London. There is scope for Romford to build on the accessibility improvements enabled by Crossrail / Elizabeth line and have more offices.
- **very strongly** agree that new transport investment should act as a catalyst for regeneration. Improvements in transport infrastructure such as better north-south links and better connections between Romford and Harold Hill have the potential to stimulate much greater levels of regeneration activity than are currently proposed. This would have the potential to increase the housing stock in Havering and help tackle the priority that the Mayor is giving to housing. For example, a radical overhaul of Gallows Corner from sinking the roads using this junction would provide scope to intensify the scale of development being delivered through the Council's own estate renewal programme by creating more land for development. The Mayor has himself said that retaining the status quo at this junction is not an option. Havering will be keen to explore the scope for options linked to Crossrail 2 to provide much enhanced connectivity through the ELTOS work being led by TfL..
- **agree** with the Mayor encouraging a more compact and connected city with more walking and cycling to reduce car dependency
- **recognise** that the absence of river crossings in east London is a constraint and recognises the importance of building more. Havering's objections to a bridge / tunnel crossing between Bexley and Rainham remains even though this proposal is no longer 'on the table' If further crossings are to be provided then it is essential that there are complementary improvements to the adjoining borough network and improvement beyond it so that Havering residents are able to benefit from the access improvements that a new crossing will provide.
- **recognise** that some industrial land may be surplus and could be better used for housing. Agree that it may be feasible for housing and industrial activity to co-exist in certain locations.



- **Agree** that there is a need to be creative about the use of space and promote mixed activity
- **support** more development in town centres and intensifying development around well connected transport hubs (see comments above regarding Romford station and the adjoining Housing Zone).
- **strongly support** the Mayor's intention to explore potential of around a number of stations for significant and much higher density housing development (see comments above regarding Romford station and the adjoining Housing Zone).
- **strongly support** the principle of 'good growth' and **agree** with creating desirable places to live where environmental and social infrastructure, enterprise and leisure are integrated into zero emission resilient developments. There is significant potential to achieve this through the Housing Zone developments in Havering at Romford and London Riverside – Rainham.
- **agree** with new homes in areas where new transport infrastructure will take place and want to see such infrastructure being provided in a timely and efficient manner to support the development rather than 'retro-fitted' afterwards.
- **support** accelerating development in 40 Opportunity Areas and in Intensification Areas. Havering is keen to explore the scope for Romford to be recognised as an Opportunity Area. The Mayor should ensure that existing OAs such as London Riverside benefit from transport improvements to and from them and within them – this has hindered London Riverside so far.
- **support** the Mayor's intention to bring forward all 31 housing zones to full capacity and use GLA land to build more homes. Other comments in this response have highlighted that with complementary investment in transport infrastructure there is scope for the Housing Zone proposals in Havering to make an even more significant contribution towards addressing the housing issues that the Mayor has identified in earlier sections of the document
- **agree** with most growth to be contained within London and the need to work with neighbours to develop growth corridors of joint infrastructure investment
- **strongly support** the Mayor's view of the importance of planning for social infrastructure as well as plan for physical infrastructure. Havering recognises that appropriate provision of infrastructure such as health / childcare and school facilities will be essential if the full potential of the Housing Zones are to be realised. Providing necessary social infrastructure must be seen as a fundamental part of 'good growth'. The Mayor should understand the challenge of providing suitable sites for schools and recognise that boroughs may need to look at the scope for school sites in the Green Belt.
- **recognise** the importance of changing the way London travels – encourage use of more low –emission vehicles and overall less car and van use.

- **support** looking at innovative demand management ‘tools’ and more trips being undertaken on foot or bike
- **support** the Mayor’s plans to increase the capacity of the transport system and develop bus services to reduce crowding
- **welcome** the Mayor’s intention to set out proposals to improve the reliability of existing road capacity and will reduce congestion by tackling disruption linked to roadworks, encourage overnight deliveries and promoting smart technology

## **Part Two : Housing**

- **agree** that London’s housing market is unique and that the housing crisis is having an adverse impact on businesses
- **welcome** the Mayor taking a leadership role on ‘rough sleeping’ and homelessness
- **note** the Mayor’s intention to work towards a 50% target for affordable homes
- **support** identifying different forms of affordable homes
- **strongly support** concentrating housing developments at higher densities around transport infrastructure and using major transport infrastructure to develop major housing schemes (see earlier comments)
- **support** the use of Transport for London land for homes as well as the Mayoral Development Corporations.
- **agree** that there is a need to support smaller developers as well as big companies and need to use new development models and promote smaller sites

## **Part Three : Economy**

- **support** the Mayor’s intention to use planning and transport powers to protect and enhance London’s global attributes and competitiveness.
- **strongly support** the Mayor developing a common strategic infrastructure investment programme covering Network Rail, TfL, water, waste, energy, green infrastructure and digital.
- **support** the expansion of digital infrastructure
- **agree** with supporting small and medium sized businesses and will explore innovative finance models to support small creative businesses

## **Part Four : Environment, Transport and Public Space**

- **agree** with the Mayor highlighting air quality as a key problem and addressing road transport / building emissions and supports the intention to work with partners including Government (see earlier comments). Havering is responding to the latest consultations on the ULEZ and an emissions surcharge.

- **recognise** that the Mayor wants London to be zero-carbon by 2050 and will lead the shift towards more affordable, lower carbon energy system and more energy efficient buildings
- **strongly support** the concept of 'Healthy Streets' which aim to reduce traffic, pollution and noise and create more attractive, accessible and 'people friendly' streets. Healthy streets will make a significant contribution to quality of life and will be an integral element of creating places where people want to live and stay.
- **note** the aim to make cycling easier and safer, to develop a Zone 1 'Grid', more 'Quietways' and a better programme of Cycle Superhighways (see earlier comments)
- **strongly support** the recognition given to the importance of public space, character, good architecture and design. The Council's new 'Vision' gives a very high priority to 'place making' and its principles will underpin the Council's delivery of the two Housing Zones and the estate renewal programme.
- **Strongly support** that 'higher density does not necessarily mean high rise' and that higher densities can be achieved through a variety of means including mid-rise buildings.
- **understand** that tall buildings will continue to play a role and agree that they must encompass 'good growth' and add value to the community.
- **welcome** that tall buildings will only be permitted if they add value to the existing community. There is scope for tall buildings in Romford Town Centre adjoining the station and in the Housing Zone (as identified above).
- **agree** that it is vital to preserve intrinsic character of historic London
- **strongly agree** with the intention for the London Plan to have an 'Inclusive Neighbourhoods' principle and this concept should be the basic building block supporting London's communities.

## **Part Five : A City for all Londoners**

- **agree** with the Mayor's intention to secure a fairer and more equal city
- **agree** with the importance of building strong and successful communities with active citizenship
- **agree** with the role that sport can play a part in bringing communities together
- **note** that London's relatively poor health (relative to other comparable cities) is identified as an issue.
- **agree** that transport services must be affordable and journeys should be easier or people who find travel challenging. Welcome the Mayor's intention to improve customer service in regard to travel.
- **agree** that London's culture is crucial and that it should be more accessible to Londoners
- **support** the Mayor's vision.

Martyn Thomas

December 16 2016