

MAYOR OF LONDON

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Jean Pennette,

Thank you for your letter of 8 July about the motions agreed at the London Assembly (Plenary) meeting on 4 July. My reply to each motion is set out below and I am sorry for the delay in replying.

Motion 1 - Croydon Tram Crash

Transport for London (TfL) has always cooperated fully with all of the investigating bodies following the tragedy at Sandilands in November 2016. It has also apologised for the human error which meant a single report, which was commissioned following a separate incident on the tram network in May 2017, wasn't immediately shared with the regulators. TfL rectified this error once it became aware of it. TfL had already notified the Office of Rail and Road and the Rail Accident Investigation Branch (RAIB) of this separate incident as soon as it happened.

The RAIB carried out a thorough investigation into Sandilands, including forming an independent view on the issue of fatigue management, and included a summary of TfL's audit in its final investigation report. TfL also commissioned an independent investigation into Sandilands which included an independent view on the issue of fatigue management, as well as its separate audit of the management of fatigue by the tram operator, FirstGroup.

TfL produced a report for its Board in July 2018 explaining why its internal audit report (following the May 2017 incident) was not issued to the external organisations investigating Sandilands immediately upon its completion. This report is available on the TfL website and provides a full and adequate explanation. I do not believe a further investigation is necessary given the comprehensive and transparent way in which TfL have responded to this matter once a regrettable, but simple, human error was identified.

My thoughts remain with all those affected by the terrible events at Sandilands. TfL and I are committed to supporting all those affected by the tragedy in any way we can, and our attention is firmly focused on preventing anything like this from ever happening again.

Motion 2 - Crossrail 2

I agree that Crossrail 2 is essential for the capital's future, and indeed it is central to both my Transport Strategy and to the London Plan. TfL has recently submitted a further Strategic Outline Business Case to the Department for Transport (DfT). I have sought from the new Secretary of State for Transport a firm commitment to funding Crossrail 2 and a timetable for the introduction of a hybrid Bill – particularly considering the Prime Minister's support for the scheme.

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Crossrail 2's outdated safeguarding directions are also a particularly important issue for the scheme. TfL continues to work with the DfT in order to expedite that process and I raised the urgent need for safeguarding directly with the Secretary of State when I met him recently.

Motion 3 - Single-use plastic

In my London Environment Strategy (LES), I have set out policies and proposals to reduce waste, recycle more and transition London to a circular economy.

I have a programme of work to encourage recycling and reduce the number of single-use plastic water bottles used in London. To date, there are more than 2,700 places where the public can now refill their water bottles for free under the water refill scheme (Refill London), up from less than 200 in March 2018 when my Refill pilots were announced. Over 40 operational fountains are also open to the public. The first 20 water fountains monitored have already dispensed the equivalent of 150,000 half litre plastic bottles in 12 months. In July, I also announced the locations of 50 fountains under the partnership with Thames Water, which will install more than 100 fountains across the capital by summer 2021.

My officers have already responded to the Government's consultation regarding the Waste and Resources Strategy and the four subsequent consultations (Consistent Recycling Collections, Extended Producer Responsibility, Deposit Return Scheme and Plastics Tax).

These consultation responses set out my strong support for the introduction of a tax on plastic packaging as an effective mechanism to reduce the environmental impact of unnecessary plastics. I see this as a fundamental strand of a circular economy approach, ensuring that the full environmental costs of virgin product are reflected in their price and alternatives are incentivised.

I have asked that the Government ensure that any alternative materials coming to market as a result of a plastic tax must be sustainable, do not continue to damage the environment and have a lower carbon footprint.

I understand that further consultations will be held on these aspects of plastic waste and I will continue to engage and lobby the Government for strong action to reduce single-use plastics. This will include lobbying the Government to go further by setting clear and binding minimum design standards for packaging (particularly plastics) to be made predominantly from recyclable content and to be 100 per cent reusable or recyclable.

I am also keen to see our reliance on disposable coffee cups reduced. I continue to lead by example by introducing a charge for disposable coffee cups in the café at City Hall. Industry is now taking action on this issue with most chains offering reductions for people using reusable cups and some London landlords, such as Canary Wharf, having installed bins which facilitate recycling by allowing people to segregate their coffee cups from other waste. Costa Coffee are now running a national coffee cup recycling scheme with the necessary infrastructure in place which will accept disposable coffee cups from any vendor.

I am keeping this issue under review and if there is a case for me to intervene further, I will do so.

As mentioned above, I supported the Government's consultation on a nationwide deposit return scheme. In my LES, I offered London as a pilot for a deposit return scheme. It now appears that the Government is intending to introduce this scheme nationally and a pilot scheme is no longer necessary. However, if the Government decides a pilot would be of value then I of course would be happy to work with them with London as a test bed.

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Motion 4 – Metropolitan Police Service

I welcome the London Assembly's Motion, which notes the inadequacy of the pay award to police officers in 2018. Police officers perform an extraordinary job in difficult circumstances, and it is right that they are fairly rewarded.

I have repeatedly expressed my deep disappointment that previous recommendations made by the Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB) have not been fully implemented by the Government. I have made clear on several occasions the importance of the PRRB's independent role and that I, like police officers, expect its recommendations to be enacted and that the Government provide the necessary funding to deliver increases in officer pay.

More recently, the Home Office has announced that it has accepted the PRRB's 2019 report recommendations to provide an increase of two and a half per cent to base pay for all ranks. This pay award is of course to be welcomed, but as this will have to be met from existing budgets the truth is that this increase will also place further burden on the Metropolitan Police Service's (MPS) budget. It is imperative that the Government acts to fund the increases in pay it has awarded.

Police officers must be supported through fair remuneration and the Government must properly fund forces to ensure this happens.

Motion 5 – Vaccines for Measles, Mumps and Rubella

In order to achieve a Healthy Early Years London (HEYL) award, settings (e.g. nurseries, children's centres, preschools) are required to:

- have a written immunisation statement that includes an approach to promoting and supporting the uptake of immunisations for children under five including a system for recording children's immunisation status;
- be able to advise parents and carers on where to go for information about immunisations;
- be aware of the importance of immunisation;
- offer information and advice for parents and carers in preparing children for vaccination injections; and
- have a procedure in place for checking and recording children's immunisation status which helps them to quickly identify which parents/carers need to be informed if there is an outbreak of a specific disease.

In order to achieve a Healthy Schools London (HSL) Award, schools must demonstrate how they are providing opportunities for parents and carers to access information, support and advice on health and wellbeing. This includes examples of opportunities that they give for parents and carers to access information and health messages from school nursing, Public Health and the Fire Brigade on topics including oral health, immunisations, healthy lifestyles and safety.

My team and I will explore how to incorporate the history, science and importance of vaccines as part of an upcoming refresh of the London Curriculum KS3 STEM units.

Motion 6 - TfL & Passengers with disabilities

Londoners rely on well-trained staff to make travelling easier. All London Underground Customer Service Assistants (front line station staff) receive Disability Equality Training as part of their induction. This includes a section on invisible disabilities such as autism, the barriers faced by customers, and what staff can do to help. London leads the country in having audio/visual announcements fitted on all buses, trains and stations.

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Disability must be at the core of TfL's strategic thinking as well as the support it provides its customers every day. The same Disability Equality Training is being rolled out across TfL's senior leadership, and TfL has established an Independent Disability Advisory Group (IDAG) to involve disabled people in the way it shapes and develops its strategy for making London more accessible for all. IDAG is made up of six people, appointed for their extensive expertise and knowledge, as well as their direct experience of disability.

TfL provides a travel support card which customers can show staff, particularly if they have difficulty communicating or lack the confidence to ask for help. Inside the card is a space for people to write down a short message to ask for help, for example, if they need the member of staff to speak slowly and clearly. The card can be used by any customer and can be ordered by contacting TfL's Travel Mentoring team (travelmentor@tfl.gov.uk).

Motion 7 – Glyphosate

This is an important issue, which I am aware of. I understand the Government's regulatory process for authorising plant protection products, like glyphosate, take into account all scientific knowledge available. Neither the EU's current assessment of glyphosate as an active substance nor the UK's assessments of applications for authorisation of products which contain it have found the substance unacceptable for use.

Whilst the use of glyphosate is currently legally acceptable, the Greater London Authority and TfL are phasing out its use on land they manage where there is a viable alternative.

However, TfL's need to keep the ballasted area of railway tracks free of vegetation to ensure safe operation of the network makes a total ban on glyphosate and/or other herbicides extremely challenging, given there are currently limited viable weed removal options that can be used at scale. TfL is currently seeking and trialling safer alternatives including electrocide, hot foam, steam, and stem injection. Following successful trials using electrocides (a non-chemical technique that kills weeds by transferring a strong electric current through them), they are currently securing the necessary approvals so they can make greater use of this method. They expect the appropriate approvals to be in place by next spring, after which they will undertake further testing to ensure it meets their operational requirements. Other new weed removal options will continue to be explored as they arise, and TfL will continue to work closely with suppliers and contractors to minimise the use of glyphosate across the network. Where glyphosate is still being used, TfL is duty bound by legislation to ensure its safe use.

In addition to the ban in Hammersmith & Fulham, many boroughs are already reducing the use of herbicides through more precisely targeted application and the testing of alternatives to chemical treatment. London Councils are monitoring the effectiveness of these measures and sharing best practice, and plan to convene discussions on phasing out the use of glyphosate and other harmful herbicides.

Thank you again for writing to me.

Yours sincerely,



Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London