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Title: Better bus Journeys – TfL Consultation

Executive Summary

At the Transport Committee meeting on 22 July 2020, the Committee resolved:

That authority be delegated to the Chair, in consultation with the Deputy Chair and party Group Lead Members, to agree a response to the Transport for London consultation on extending bus lane hours.

Following consultation with the Deputy Chair and party Group Lead Members, the Chair agreed a letter in response to the Transport for London (TfL) consultation – *Better Bus Journeys*.

Decision

That the Chair, in consultation with the Deputy Chair and party Group Lead Members, agree a letter in response to the Transport for London (TfL) consultation – *Better Bus Journeys*, as attached at Appendix 1.

Assembly Member

I confirm that I do not have any disclosable pecuniary interests in the proposed decision and take the decision in compliance with the Code of Conduct for elected Members of the Authority.

The above request has my approval.

Signature

Date 5 August 2020



Printed Name Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair, Transport Committee)

Decision by an Assembly Member under Delegated Authority

Notes:

1. *The Lead Officer should prepare this form for signature by relevant Members of the Assembly to record any instance where the Member proposes to take action under a specific delegated authority. The purpose of the form is to record the advice received from officers, and the decision made.*
2. **The 'background' section (below) should be used to include an indication as to whether the information contained in / referred to in this Form should be considered as exempt under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA), or the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR). If so, the specimen Annexe (attached below) should be used. If this form does deal with exempt information, you must submit both parts of this form for approval together.**

Background and proposed next steps:

At the Transport Committee meeting on 22 July 2020, the Committee resolved:

That authority be delegated to the Chair, in consultation with the Deputy Chair and party Group Lead Members, to agree a response to the Transport for London consultation on extending bus lane hours.

Following consultation with the Deputy Chair and party Group Lead Members, the Chair agreed a letter in response to the Transport for London (TfL) consultation – *Better Bus Journeys*, as attached at Appendix 1.

The letter will be reported back to the next suitable meeting of the Transport Committee, currently expected to take place on 8 October 2020.

Confirmation that appropriate delegated authority exists for this decision

Signed by Committee Services



Date 4 August 2020

Print Name:

Laura Pelling

Tel: X. 5526

Financial implications NOT REQUIRED

NOTE: Finance comments and signature are required only where there are financial implications arising or the potential for financial implications.

Signed by Finance

Date

Print Name

Tel:

Legal implications

The Transport Committee has the power to make the decision set out in this report.

Signed by Legal



Date 5 August 2020.....

Print Name

Emma Strain, Monitoring Officer

Tel: X 4399

Supporting detail/List of Consultees: Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair), Keith Prince AM, David Kurten AM, Caroline Russell AM.

Public Access to Information

Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the FoIA, or the EIR and will be made available on the GLA Website, usually within one working day of approval.

If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the decision (for example, to complete a procurement process), it can be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods should be kept to the shortest length strictly necessary. **Note:** this form (Part 1) will either be published within one working day after it has been approved or on the defer date.

Part 1 – Deferral

Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? No

Part 2 – Sensitive information

Only the facts or advice that would be exempt from disclosure under FoIA or EIR should be included in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a part 2 form - No

Lead Officer/Author

Signed



Date 5 August 2020

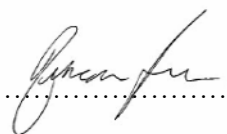
Print Name

**Gino Brand
Senior Policy Advisor**

Tel: x 5792

Job Title

Countersigned by
Assistant Director



Date 5 August 2020

Print Name

Rebecca Arnold

Tel: X 4421

Chair of the Transport Committee

Dr Alison Moore AM

Londonwide London Assembly Member



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4 August 2020

Transport for London

Palestra - Blackfriars Road

London SE1 8NJ

(Sent by email)

Dear TfL,

Extending bus lane hours to help more people travel safely and reliably

The London Assembly's Transport Committee recognise the challenges that TfL has experienced as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Ridership has dramatically fallen, impacting revenue, and capacity has been significantly curtailed. The Assembly supports TfL's efforts in its Restarting London campaign, the plan to help London re-open carefully, safely and sustainably as a response to COVID-19.¹

The Committee appreciates that retiming the operating hours across different industries in the capital, including schools and construction sites, will change travel patterns across London. This makes the extension of bus lane operating hours a sensible consideration in order to maintain reliable bus journey times for passengers. However, with any reallocation of London's constrained road network there will be winners and losers. Careful consideration must be made of the impacts of the proposed change, particularly where they impact businesses that are struggling to recover for the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We strongly urge TfL to monitor the impact of any change and to be prepared to amend the operating hours appropriately where the impact on emergency services or business deliveries is shown to be severe. We have set out below the areas of the proposed change the Committee supports and those where we have specific concerns.

Benefits of 24/7 bus lanes

- More reliable bus journey times will benefit all Londoners accessing work, healthcare, education and shops.
- Standardised operational hours for bus lanes improve clarity and consistency of messaging across the TLRN. The combination of similar but different signage showing the time frame and accepted modes/vehicles for bus lanes can be confusing especially if

¹ TfL Restart London: <https://tfl.gov.uk/campaign/restart?intcmp=62808> May 2020

a driver or cyclist is unfamiliar with the area. The introduction of a uniformed approach on TLRN will reduce this confusion.

- To help mitigate against a car-based transport recovery from COVID-19. The reduction of congestion and delays along bus routes, caused by vehicles in bus lanes, will aid the movement and efficiency of buses improving their chances of arriving at bus stops on time.²
- With the rise in the number of cyclists, increased safety is paramount particularly for those who are less experienced with riding on the road with other vehicles. Creating and reinforcing protected space for cyclists will support the uptake in active travel.³
- The proposed 80-kilometre route accounts for a small percentage of London's roads in kilometres which totals 14,815km, however as a pilot it provides the opportunity to evaluate and replicate in other areas, particularly principle borough roads.⁴

Concerns around 24/7 bus lanes

- We appreciate that the current environment requires rapid and innovative change. However, this is a significant change to the operation of the road network and we are concerned about the short window to respond to this proposal.
- We recognise that large areas of the outer London boroughs that have small amounts of the TLRN will benefit marginally from the pilot. Therefore, **the Committee recommends that TfL co-ordinate extending the pilot to all appropriate bus lanes, assessed on a case by case basis, on Borough roads.**
- The Committee recognise that TfL is not proposing to remove any disabled parking bays or blue badge parking facilities as part of the trial. However, it is unclear which of the proposed routes will have more general car-parking suspended during the trial. **The Committee recommends an EqlA is conducted to ascertain how such a change will affect residents and local business as they recover from the economic impact of COVID-19.**
- Consistent messaging may reduce income generated from Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) for TfL⁵ and Boroughs (should the scheme be extended to Boroughs).
- Not all roads on the network operate a 24-hour bus service or night bus. Making these bus lanes operational for 24-hours may not be appropriate. In these cases the impact on general traffic should be considered alongside the benefits to other road users such as taxis, motorcyclists and cyclists before implementing a network wide change. This should also be considered against the benefits of a simple to understand blanket approach.
- This will have an impact on the road capacity for other network users, including business.⁶ **The Committee recommend that careful consideration is made of the impacts of the change on businesses that are struggling to recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.**

² [London Assembly Transport Committee London Stalling: reducing traffic congestion in London](#) (2017) pg. 43

³ [Prime Minister encourages cycling and walking after lockdown](#)

⁴ [Road length \(kilometres\) by road type and local authority in Great Britain](#) (2019) sheet 1

⁵ [Mayors Question: fines for Motorists in Bus Lanes 2018](#)

⁶ [Mayors Question: Road Capacity](#)

- This change will require an extensive change of signage and clear communication to all stakeholders including residents impacted by the change.

In the Transport Committee's March 2018 report into motorcycle safety in London it was recognised that motorcyclists are allowed to ride in bus lanes on the TfL Road Network. Some boroughs have adopted the same policy, and allow motorcycles to ride in bus lanes on roads they manage. However, this is inconsistent across London. The Committee reiterates its recommendation that TfL become more proactive in how it encourages boroughs to open bus lanes.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alison Moore." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr Alison Moore AM
Chair, Transport Committee