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Title: Environment Committee - Transport Decarbonisation

Executive Summary

At the Environment Committee meeting on 20 July 2020, the Committee resolved:

That the Committee delegate authority to the Chair, in consultation with the Deputy Chair and party Group Lead Members, to agree a joint response with the Chair of the Transport Committee to the Department for Transport consultation on decarbonising transport.

Following consultation with the Deputy Chair and party Group Lead Members, the Chair agreed a joint response with the Chair of the Transport Committee to the Department of Transport consultation on decarbonising transport as attached at Appendix 1.

Decision

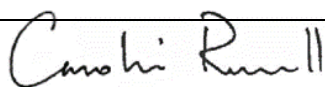
That the Chair, in consultation with the Deputy Chair and party Group Lead Members, agree a joint response with the Chair of the Transport Committee to the Department of Transport consultation on decarbonising transport, as attached at Appendix 1.

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 28 August 2020

Printed Name Caroline Russell AM (Chair, Environment 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:

On 8 July, the Department for Transport launched a consultation entitled [Creating a plan to decarbonise transport: call for ideas](#). The deadline for submissions is 31 August 2020.

At the Environment Committee meeting on 20 July 2020, the Committee resolved:

That the Committee delegate authority to the Chair, in consultation with the Deputy Chair and party Group Lead Members to agree a joint response with the Chair of the Transport Committee to the Department for Transport consultation on decarbonising transport.

Following consultation with the Deputy Chair and party Group Lead Members, the Chair agreed a joint response with the Chair of the Transport Committee to the Department of Transport consultation on decarbonising transport as attached at Appendix 1.

MDA 1198 confirms the use of the Chair of the Transport Committee's delegated authority to agree this joint response.

The submission will be reported back to the next suitable meeting of the Environment Committee, currently scheduled for 17 November 2020.

Confirmation that appropriate delegated authority exists for this decision

Signed by Committee Services L.Harvey

Date 27 August 2020

Print Name: Lauren Harvey

Tel: X. 4383

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 27/08/20

Print Name

Emma Strain, Monitoring Officer

Tel: X 4399

Supporting detail/List of Consultees: Leonie Cooper AM (Deputy Chair), Tony Arbour AM and David Kurten AM.

This is a joint response with the Chair of the Transport Committee, Dr Alison Moore 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


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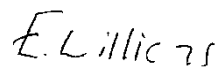
Date 28 August 2020

Print Name
Job Title

Haley Bowcock
Senior Policy Advisor

Tel: x 4880

Countersigned by
Executive Director


.....

Date 28 August 2020

Print Name

Ed Williams

Tel: X4399

Department for Transport: *Transport decarbonisation plan – call for ideas*

CONSULTATION SECTION: Organisation details

This is a response to the consultation regarding decarbonising the UK's transport network on behalf of the London Assembly's Transport and Environment Committees (the Committees).¹

The London Assembly is an elected body of 25 members, who are elected at the same time as the Mayor of London. The Assembly holds the Mayor and Mayoral advisers to account by publicly scrutinising policies and programmes through committee meetings, plenary sessions, site visits and investigations. London Assembly investigations are carried out by cross-party committees which cover issues such as: transport, policing, housing and planning, the economy, health and the environment, among others.

In December 2018, the London Assembly passed a motion to declare a climate emergency, calling on the Mayor to do likewise and on the Government to provide him with the powers and funding needed to make London a carbon neutral city by 2030.² The Mayor declared a climate emergency shortly after the Assembly and in early 2020, set a target for London to be net zero-carbon by 2030, alongside his manifesto commitment for London to be zero-carbon by 2050. Given the contribution of transport to overall carbon emissions, decarbonisation of transport networks will be an important part of meeting any London or national zero-carbon targets. As such, the Committees welcome the opportunity to contribute to this consultation.

CONSULTATION SECTION: Share your views

Consultation question: What should the Government be doing to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that are produced from:

Cars

Measures to promote mode shift will be a vital element of any approach to reducing greenhouse gas emissions from cars. This is particularly important in the context of recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, which is likely to impact on public transport use for some time. This is also reflected in the Government's recent announcements and funding packages designed to enable a substantial increase in walking and cycling during and post the COVID-19 pandemic.³ Further detail of the Committee's views on this is set out in the consultation section related to local journeys.

In addition to encouraging mode shift, the Committees would welcome additional Government efforts to encourage a rapid switch from petrol and diesel cars to electric ones, particularly through support for the provision of sufficient charging infrastructure to match growth in, and encourage further, electric vehicle (EV) use and ownership. In 2018, EVs accounted for 2.8 per cent of vehicle sales in London.⁴ At the start of

¹ This submission reflects the views of the majority of the London Assembly Environment and Transport Committees. The Member of the Assembly's Brexit Alliance Group on the Environment and Transport Committees does not support the proposals within this submission relating to net-zero carbon by 2030, mode shift, taxis, government subsidies for green technology, the Healthy Streets and Streetspace programmes, putting more cycle lanes on main roads, and micro-mobility vehicles.

² <https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/assembly/call-on-mayor-to-declare-climate-emergency>

³ See e.g., <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-kickstarts-2bn-cycling-and-walking-revolution> and <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/2-billion-package-to-create-new-era-for-cycling-and-walking>.

⁴ <https://lruc.content.tfl.gov.uk/london-electric-vehicle-infrastructure-taskforce-delivery-plan.pdf>

2020, there were almost 5,000 EV charge points in London, one for every six electric cars in the capital, one 25 per cent of all points in the UK.⁵

As the Environment Committee discovered in its 2018 investigation into EVs in London, the growth in the number of these vehicles in the city was outstripping the number of charge points. It found that encouraging Londoners without their own driveway or garage to get an EV was the biggest challenge for their take-up, as these households would rely on on-street charging points, which were not being installed quickly enough. It also found that the spread, location and accessibility of electric charging points was more important than the number of charging points, so a strategic approach to provision was needed.⁶

Car clubs present a clear opportunity to support reductions in overall car use and ownership, particularly in areas not well served by public transport, but alongside efforts to ensure a widely accessible and affordable public transport network. As the Environment Committee found in its investigation into EVs,⁷ unfortunately supplying electric charging points for sole use by car clubs breaches rules on state aid, which mean only €200,000 can be paid to each car club operator over a three-year period. The Office for Low Emission Vehicles should review the lack of an exemption for car clubs for future state aid rules.

It is likely that similar issues exist in other cities and towns to those identified in the Environment Committee's investigation into EVs. The Government could therefore encourage Local Authorities to provide free or subsidised parking for electric vehicles (EVs), as for example, the City of Westminster does.⁸ As recommended in the Environment Committee's investigation, such a measure should only be considered in the short term, and for a limited period only, to help incentivise EV take-up.⁹ In addition, as the Transport Committee found for London in *Transport Now and in the Future*, the numerous different EV charging networks require different apps, subscriptions to separate membership schemes and can incur different costs for drivers. If EV use is to be seamless for drivers, attention needs to be paid to the harmonisation of EV charging networks.¹⁰

To encourage a strategic approach to the spread, location and accessibility of charging points, the Government, particularly the Department for Transport (DfT), could consider mapping private sector offers of charging point installations for EVs. Where necessary, the DfT could support Local Authorities with capacity issues and offer direct funding in those areas where private sector investment is not happening quickly enough.¹¹ The Committees would also encourage more funding for rapid charge points in strategic locations across the country. In comparison to standard charge points, which can take seven to eight hours for a full charge, rapid charge points can charge an EV in 20-30 minutes, enabling drivers to use them while on the move. Rapid charge points are therefore a key part of the EV charging infrastructure network. These could take the shape of strategically-placed rapid charging 'hubs', following a model outlined in the Mayor's EV infrastructure delivery plan.¹²

The Committees, however, also caution about the impact charging infrastructure can have on pavements and their accessibility to pedestrians, especially those with buggies or wheelchairs. To this end, the Committees encourage the Government to ensure that Local Authorities install charging points between parking spaces and not obstruct pavements.¹³ Furthermore, creative, low cost and low street-impact charger options should also be investigated. In particular, lamppost chargers, pop-up chargers and/or concealed

⁵ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/pollution-and-air-quality/electric-vehicle-infrastructure>

⁶ <https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/london-assembly/london-assembly-publications/electric-vehicles-london-0>

⁷ <https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/london-assembly/london-assembly-publications/electric-vehicles-london-0>

⁸ <https://www.westminster.gov.uk/electric-vehicles>

⁹ See <https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/london-assembly/london-assembly-publications/electric-vehicles-london-0>

¹⁰ See https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/transport_now_and_in_the_future.pdf

¹¹ A similar recommendation was made by the Environment Committee to TfL to help ensure a strategic approach to EV charging infrastructure delivery in London – see https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/environment_committee_-_ev_report.pdf

¹² <https://lruc.content.tfl.gov.uk/london-electric-vehicle-infrastructure-taskforce-delivery-plan.pdf>

¹³ A similar recommendation was made by the Environment Committee in its investigation into electric vehicles in London – see https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/environment_committee_-_ev_report.pdf

sockets in the ground can all reduce street impact. Such innovations in design can reduce costs, and this in turn can facilitate an increased uptake in desired locations, but all charging infrastructure must be inclusive and accessible to be successful.

London has long been a pioneer in road user charging schemes targeting congestion and road transport emissions, including the Congestion Charge and the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ). A nationally-funded vehicle diesel scrappage scheme could help drivers to comply with Clean Air Zones that operate like the ULEZ by supporting a shift to cleaner vehicles as well as encouraging mode shift, through for instance grants for bikes or public transport vouchers,¹⁴ which could support efforts to reduce emissions of road transport air pollution (and greenhouse gas) emissions.

In addition, taxis and private hire vehicles can represent a significant proportion of vehicles in many city and metropolitan areas. In the context of decarbonisation, serious consideration needs to be given to supporting the transition of this fleet to zero emission vehicles. This includes support for taxi and private hire vehicle owners to make the switch to low and zero emission models, and for sufficient capacity of rapid charge points for this fleet. As part of this, the Government could consider the role of LPG conversion for this fleet to serve as a bridging fuel as it transitions to zero emission. Likewise, the Government should consider what support public sector fleet managers require to ensure their fleets are compliant with CAZs and on a path to zero emission.

Buses and coaches

The Committees welcome the Government's aim, as set out in the consultation document, to replace conventional buses with "zero emission buses and infrastructure" over a period of time.¹⁵ This could help, for instance, drive real increases in the electric bus fleet in the UK, which leads Europe in absolute terms but which lags market leader China, where electric buses made up around 17 per cent of the total Chinese bus fleet in 2017.¹⁶ However, there is currently no specific date for when this will be achieved nationwide, nor specific interim targets concerning, for instance, when the bus and coach fleets are to be fitted with Euro VI or better engines. Setting targets could help provide businesses with clarity about future fleet requirements and help drive lower emissions, ensuring that drivers of these vehicles are compliant with schemes such as London's ULEZ and Low Emission Zone,¹⁷ as well as similar Clean Air Zones that are being rolled out across the country. At the present time in London, already 90 per cent of buses used on TfL services are ultra-low emission, with a plan for 100 per cent by October 2020¹⁸. This is part of the Mayor's roadmap to meet an overall target of a zero emission target for London's transport to be zero emission by 2050, which the Environment Committee has supported¹⁹ and which the Government could look to emulate. In particular, the Committees would highlight the need for such transformations in the bus and coach fleet as they pertain to schools. It is imperative that buses and coaches that serve schoolchildren do not contribute to poorer quality air around schools.

In order to achieve the above, the Committees recognise that the Government will have to support development of emerging technologies for this fleet, such as hydrogen-fuelled engines for heavy vehicles, and incentivise private bus and coach fleet owners to upgrade their vehicles. This could be achieved through

¹⁴ As supported by a London Assembly motion in 2017: <https://www.london.gov.uk/motions/diesel-scrappage> and in the Environment Committee's response to TfL's ULEZ phase 3b consultation: https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/london_assembly_ulez_3b_response_final.pdf

¹⁵ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/878642/decarbonising-transport-setting-the-challenge.pdf

¹⁶ <https://data.bloomberglp.com/professional/sites/24/2018/05/Electric-Buses-in-Cities-Report-BNEF-C40-Citi.pdf>. Note that the share of electric buses in the UK's municipal bus fleet was still below 1% in 2017.

¹⁷ Note that the latter scheme will from March 2021 require heavy diesel vehicles to meet Euro VI emissions standards, or be subject to a daily charge to drive within the Greater London area, see: <https://tfl.gov.uk/modes/driving/low-emission-zone>

¹⁸ TfL Transport for London safety, health and environment report Q4 2019/20 p38 <http://content.tfl.gov.uk/joint-panel-sshrp-csop-10-june-2020-supplementary-agenda-and-papers.pdf>

¹⁹ https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/london_assembly_response_to_2017_draft_environment_strategy.pdf

support schemes such as a nationwide retrofit or fleet renewal fund that could build on previous Government initiatives such as the Clean Bus Technology Fund or enhanced Clean Air Fund and could help bus and coach fleet owners to upgrade their existing fleets.

Freight

In 2019, the Transport Committee set out several recommendations to inform the Mayor's freight strategy for London.²⁰ Amongst other recommendations, it was the Transport Committee's position that TfL should reinstitute a dedicated freight team, led by a senior officer. This would allow teams across TfL and external stakeholders to co-ordinate and deliver a holistic freight strategy.

In line with the above, the Committees welcome the Government's plan to publish a freight strategy by the end of 2020.²¹ Such a strategy could incorporate regional public transport bodies such as TfL and other external stakeholders. This would help ensure a holistic freight strategy that is informed by local and national needs and priorities, allows for the sharing of best practice and identifies opportunities for consolidation schemes. Amongst other things, such a strategy could identify how best to stagger timings in ways that prevent traffic and reduce peak hours emissions in towns and cities, whilst continuing to protect residents from road danger, noise and other disturbance.²²

Alongside the above, it is worth noting that the COVID-19 crisis has led to an increase in online shopping,²³ with an attendant increase in deliveries. The Transport Committee heard in 2019 that the location and size of space available for logistics for freight has a large effect on what vehicles are used.²⁴ In London the provision of more small sites for 'last mile' logistics is enabling a shift to smaller, electric vehicles and e-cargobikes. This supports both consolidation centres and local distribution centres for operators of all sizes. This productive use of local commercial space should be a priority as we recover from the pandemic.

The Committees would also welcome action by the Government to encourage the uptake of 'Click and Collect' services at strategic locations. This could reduce the number of miles that polluting vehicles have to drive with large amounts of freight, especially as the country continues to emerge from the COVID-19 epidemic. In its response to the consultation on the Mayor's freight strategy, the Transport Committee suggested expansion of the use of train stations as strategic locations for Click and Collect facilities.²⁵ The Government could consider similar at public transport hubs across the country to coincide with commuters returning to public transport in greater numbers, or at other strategic locations, provided these are made COVID-19 safe.

Aviation

²⁰ <https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/london-assembly/london-assembly-publications/freight-london>

²¹ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/878642/decarbonising-transport-setting-the-challenge.pdf

²² See a similar recommendation from the Transport Committee:

https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/chair_of_transport_committee_to_mayor_re_freight_in_london_final_updated.pdf

²³ <https://www.essentialretail.com/news/aocom-online-shopping-rise/>

²⁴ https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/chair_of_transport_committee_to_mayor_re_freight_in_london_final_updated.pdf

²⁵ <https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/london-assembly/london-assembly-publications/freight-london>

The Government notes in the document accompanying the consultation that “[a]irport expansion is a core part of boosting our global connectivity and levelling up across the UK.”²⁶

The Environment Committee has taken a keen interest in aviation in London, due to the environmental consequences of overflying Londoners’ homes.²⁷ The Committees are aware that Londoners living under flight paths for London Heathrow and London City airports in particular are subject to high levels of noise pollution. The London Assembly, as a whole, opposes plans to build a third runway at Heathrow²⁸ for this, and other reasons, such as the air pollution and surface transport impacts of airports.²⁹ The Environment Committee also opposed increases in the quantity of air traffic using Heathrow and London City airports in its report on aircraft noise in 2019.³⁰

The Committees welcome the Government’s plans to publish a consultation on net zero aviation later this year. The Committees reiterate the recommendations of a previous London Assembly – made in 2012 – for a phased approach to reducing aviation emissions, with short, medium and long-term milestones and continued Government support for research and development to encourage improved aircraft performance and efficiency, and the use of renewable transport fuels.³¹

The Committees would also urge that in the context of any expansion plans, business cases should be assessed against cost/benefit analyses that use realistic carbon policy assumptions.³² It will also be important for the Government to ensure that careful consideration is made of the surface transport-related impacts of any airport expansion proposals, with suitable mitigation measures clearly defined. The Committees have both highlighted concerns related to the surface transport impacts of airport expansion, particularly in terms of road traffic-related air pollution and public transport capacity,³³ both of which are also relevant to efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Alongside this, the Committees would urge the Government to work with the aviation industry to prioritise the reduction of carbon emissions. As set out in it the Environment Committee’s response to the London City Airport Draft Master Plan, this could be done by focussing on reducing emissions from flights (including take-off, landing and in-flight emissions), producing realistic timelines for the introduction of aircraft and fuel technology; and outlining clear targets for the introduction of new generation aircraft and their contribution to carbon emission reductions.³⁴

CONSULTATION SECTION: Local journeys

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions on short journeys

The Committees welcome further Government support to measures that encourage walking and cycling for short journeys. This would bring positive effects not only on greenhouse gas and air pollution emissions, but also on people’s broader health and wellbeing.

²⁶ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/878642/decarbonising-transport-setting-the-challenge.pdf

²⁷ See, e.g. <https://www.london.gov.uk/media-centre/london-assembly/aircraft-noise>

²⁸ <https://www.london.gov.uk/motions/heathrow-airport>

²⁹ <https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/assembly/give-londoners-a-break-from-aircraft-noise>

³⁰ https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/aircraft_noise_report.pdf

³¹

https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/gla_migrate_files_destination/London%20Assembly%20Aviation%20consultation%20response%20final%20pdf.pdf

³² As recommended by the Environment Committee in its response to the Government’s 2017 draft National Policy Statement on aviation with respect to Heathrow expansion:

https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/environment_committee_response_to_national_policy_statement.pdf

³³ https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/environment_committee_response_to_national_policy_statement.pdf

³⁴ https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/london_city_airport_master_plan_2020-2035_consultation_letter_final.pdf

The Mayor's 2018 London Transport Strategy sets out a target of ensuring that 80 per cent of journeys in London be made by walking, cycling or public transport by 2041, with a target for all Londoners to undertake at least 20 minutes of active travel per day.³⁵ A key part of delivering on this ambition is the 'Healthy Streets Approach'. This approach, which the Transport Committee welcomed,³⁶ is designed to make individual streets more appealing for walking, cycling and spending time in. Lessons from the Healthy Streets Approach, along with those from the Mayor's 'Streetspace' programme,³⁷ could usefully inform the Government's efforts in promoting active travel, particularly given it also has aims for a substantial increase in cycling and walking,³⁸ including as a part of the COVID-19 recovery.³⁹ Further investment in dedicated cycle lanes, secure storage and cycle safety, including training – as earmarked in the Government's plans⁴⁰ to boost cycling and walking – coupled with UK-wide journey planners that prioritise and/or highlight walking/cycling routes could further encourage a shift away from cars towards these modes.

As the Transport Committee heard during its investigation, *Transport Now and in the Future*,⁴¹ micromobility vehicles, including e-scooters and dockless bikes, have the potential to improve the way that people move around London. If they replace journeys that would otherwise be made in cars, they could contribute to taking cars off the road and help to realise the associated benefits such as reduced emissions and congestion. E-scooters and dockless bikes could provide particular benefits for first and last mile journeys; connecting public transport to users' journey start and end points.

While there may be some benefits to micromobility vehicles, the risks associated with introducing these into the transport network must also be considered. As the Transport Committee heard in *Transport Now and in the Future*,⁴² the main risks of e-scooters relate to safety: safety of the user, safety of other road users and safety of people on the pavement. Risk to users' safety must be mitigated by adequate regulations to govern speed and visibility of vehicles (through, for example, front and back lights and reflectors). Risks to all road users must be considered when regulating on which roads e-scooters are permitted, and the maximum speed of vehicles. Pavements already designated for shared use with cycle facilities need careful consideration. Some of these shared use pavements are designed as a safety measure to avoid dangerous junctions. The importance of improving the quality of cycle infrastructure as a whole and considering the safety of all road and pavement users, is further highlighted if e-scooters are to be introduced. The Committee's investigation into accessible and inclusive transport in London drew particular attention to the negative impact that poorly designed shared space can have on disabled and older people.⁴³

It is also vital that shared micromobility schemes, including e-scooters, are provided with adequate parking space and users are incentivised to leave these vehicles in places that do not obstruct pavements or roads: vehicles left on the pavement can have particularly negative consequences for older people and disabled people, such as those using a wheelchair or visually impaired people. As the Committee heard in its investigation, *From Step-Free to Stress-Free*,⁴⁴ careless abandonment of dockless bikes can eventually make blind and partially sighted people unwilling to leave their homes for fear of collisions or serious harm. There is the potential for this problem to grow if numbers and types of e-scooters proliferate without adequate regulation.

³⁵ <https://tfl.gov.uk/info-for/media/press-releases/2017/june/mayor-sets-out-ambitious-plan-to-reduce-car-use> <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/transport/our-vision-transport/mayors-transport-strategy-2018>

³⁶ <https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/london-assembly/london-assembly-publications/embedding-healthy-streets>

³⁷ <https://tfl.gov.uk/travel-information/improvements-and-projects/streetspace-for-london>

³⁸ The Government's 2017 Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy has an aim to double cycling and increase walking by 2025: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/908257/cycling-walking-investment-strategy-document.pdf.

³⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-kickstarts-2bn-cycling-and-walking-revolution>

⁴⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-kickstarts-2bn-cycling-and-walking-revolution>

⁴¹ London Assembly Transport Committee, *Transport Now and in the Future*, 2020.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ London Assembly Transport Committee, *From Step-Free to Stress-Free: Accessible and inclusive transport in London*, 2020.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

As such, the Committees look forward to seeing the outcomes of the Government’s e-scooter rental trials currently underway,⁴⁵ and how they might inform future regulation and increased use of these and other forms of micromobility.

As social distancing requirements ease, increased provision and usage of (low or zero emission) local buses will need to be a key part of encouraging mode shift and decarbonising shorter journeys, provided this can be done in ways that are safe for passengers and staff. As the Transport Committee has previously outlined, improving the design of bus networks and delivering increased usage requires measures such as distributing services more strategically to ensure coverage in underserved areas, making the bus experience more attractive to new passengers, and exploring a more efficient network design based on the ‘feeder/trunk’ model.⁴⁶ Also, a flexible approach to tendering and the frequency with which routes are tendered may be required to allow for a more responsive approach to route design.⁴⁷ As the Transport Committee found in investigative work on the topic,⁴⁸ demand-responsive buses could also help give people a public transport service tailored to their needs, particularly through increased service capacity in underserved areas. The Committees would stress that any such services should be prioritised for areas with less dense public transport coverage and ensure accessibility for older and disabled passengers. The Committees would also urge the Government to consider devolution of Vehicle Excise Duties (VED), as the Environment Committee has recommended for London to help reduce air pollution,⁴⁹ to help local and regional authorities in their transport decarbonisation efforts. As well as providing a disincentive for the ownership of diesel and other high-polluting vehicles, such a measure could help provide additional funding for mode shift schemes operated by local and regional authorities, such as the Mayor’s Streetspace plan.

CONSULTATION SECTION: Longer journeys

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions on long journeys

Improved provision and usage of rail will need to be a key part of encouraging mode shift and decarbonising longer journeys. As with buses, as social distancing requirements ease, this will need to be done in ways that are safe for passengers and staff and will likely require a concerted communications effort to encourage passengers back onto rail, and indeed other public transport modes.

As the Transport Committee found in its investigation *Broken rails: A rail service fit for passengers*,⁵⁰ rail travel in London would be greatly enhanced by measures such as more frequent, longer trains, strategic infrastructure upgrades and improved passenger engagement. The Committees would urge the Government to review which rail services are most in demand to identify and target investment in longer trains, improved infrastructure and more frequent and affordable services which could lead to a significant uptick in intercity rail journeys.

⁴⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/rental-e-scooter-trials-to-be-allowed-from-this-weekend#:~:text=Users%20will%20have%20chance%20to,public%20spaces%20and%20the%20environment.&text=New%20regulations%20allowing%20trials%20of,Minister%20Rachel%20Maclean%20has%20announced.>

⁴⁶ https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/transport_ctee_mts_response.pdf

⁴⁷ London Assembly Transport Committee, *London’s Bus Network*, 2017.

⁴⁸ See London Assembly Transport Committee, *Future Transport: How is London responding to technological innovation?*, 2018, and London Assembly Transport Committee, *Response to the Mayor’s Draft Transport Strategy*, 2017.

⁴⁹ See https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/london_assembly_response_to_2017_draft_environment_strategy.pdf and https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/london_assembly_environment_committee_to_rt_hon_andrea_leadsom_mp.pdf

⁵⁰ <https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/london-assembly/london-assembly-publications/broken-rails-rail-service-fit-passengers>

Alongside the above, the Committees draw the Government's attention to the Mayor of London's commitment to electrify TfL rails,⁵¹ and to shift TfL's energy supply to renewable sources.⁵² The Government could seek to make a similar commitment, ensuring that the rail network across the UK is electrified, and powered by green energy sources. This would almost certainly lead to significant decarbonisation. The Government do not currently have any set targets for rail electrification. The Committees note that approximately 42 per cent of the UK's rail network is electrified, which is significantly low in comparison to other West European countries.⁵³ The Committees have kept a significant interest in rail electrification in London. Rail electrification, including the Barking – Gospel Oak part of the network, has also been pushed for by the Mayor as part of his efforts to improve air quality.⁵⁴ The Committees welcome such schemes as it reduces reliance on diesel, which is often the fuel of choice for unelectrified rails. The Committees note that the Government is investing £589million into rail improvements, and would urge that electrification, preferably with renewable energy sources whenever practicable, be part of this improvement strategy.

In the aftermath of the COVID-19 crisis, it is likely that working patterns may shift to accommodate greater numbers of people working from home. In such an event, staggered services with greater capacity could allow for safer travel from commuter hubs to larger metropolitan areas such as Greater London, Birmingham and Manchester.

CONSULTATION SECTION: Final comments

Should you have any further questions about the Committees' response and work that informed it, or would like to speak to members of the Transport or Environment Committee directly as part of the ongoing consultation, please get in touch via Haley Bowcock, Senior Policy Adviser, Transport and Environment – haley.bowcock@London.gov.uk.

Further detail about both Committees can be found on their respective websites.⁵⁵ You can access the Committee reports referenced in this response at the links below:

- Transport Committee, 2020 – [Transport Now and in the Future](#)
- Transport Committee, 2020 – [From step-free to stress free: Accessible & inclusive transport in London](#)
- Transport Committee, 2019 – [Freight in London](#)
- Environment Committee, 2019 – [Aircraft Noise](#)
- Environment Committee, 2019 – [Consultation Response to London City Airport Draft Master Plan](#)
- Environment Committee, 2018 – [Electric vehicles](#)
- Transport Committee, 2018 – [Broken Rails: A rail service fit for passengers](#)
- Transport Committee, 2018 - [Future Transport: How is London responding to technological innovation?](#)
- Transport Committee, 2017 – [London's Bus Network](#)

⁵¹ <https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/mayors-transport-strategy-2018.pdf>

⁵² <https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/plans-to-power-tfl-network-with-green-energy>

⁵³ https://rail.nridigital.com/future_rail_jul18/will_the_uk_ever_get_electrification_back_on_track

⁵⁴ https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/london_environment_strategy_0.pdf

⁵⁵ See www.london.gov.uk/about-us/london-assembly/london-assembly-committees/transport-committee and www.london.gov.uk/about-us/london-assembly/london-assembly-committees/environment-committee