

<b>MDA No.</b>	1	2	2	9
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Title: How COVID-19 is Shaping Public Transport Provision

### **Executive Summary**

The Transport Committee meeting on 22 July 2020 was used to discuss how COVID-19 is shaping London Transport Provision with the Walking and Cycling Commissioner, Transport for London (TfL), London Councils and academics. At the meeting, the Committee resolved:

*That authority be delegated to the Chair, in consultation with the Deputy Chair and party Group Lead Members, to agree any output from the meeting.*

Following the meeting, the Chair, in consultation with the Deputy Chair and party Group Leaders, agreed a letter to the Deputy Mayor for Transport setting out the Committee's views on the Streetspace programme as well as concession travel for under 18s, as attached at Appendix 1.

### **Decision**

That the Chair, in consultation with the Deputy Chair and party Group Lead Members, to agree a letter to the Deputy Mayor for Transport on how COVID-19 is Shaping Public Transport Provision, 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**

13 October 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:

The Transport Committee meeting on 22 July 2020 was used to discuss how COVID-19 is shaping London Transport Provision with the Walking and Cycling Commissioner, Transport for London (TfL), London Councils and academics. At the meeting, the Committee resolved:

*That authority be delegated to the Chair, in consultation with the Deputy Chair and party Group Lead Members, to agree any output from the meeting.*

Following the meeting, the Chair, in consultation with the Deputy Chair and party Group Leaders, agreed a letter to the Deputy Mayor for Transport setting out the Committee's views on the Streetspace programme as well as concession travel for under 18s, as attached at Appendix 1.

The letter will be reported back to the next suitable meeting of the Transport Committee, currently scheduled for 1 December 2020.

### Confirmation that appropriate delegated authority exists for this decision

Signed by Committee Services



Date 8 October 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	9 October 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**

Until what date: (a date is required if deferring)

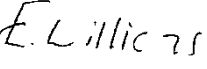
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**Part 2 – Sensitive information**

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	L Rigg .....	Date	13 October 2020
Print Name	<b>Luke Rigg, Policy Advisor</b>	Tel:	07511 782731
Job Title			
Countersigned by Executive Director	 .....	Date	13 October 2020
Print Name	<b>Ed Williams</b>	Tel:	X4399

## Chair of the Transport Committee

**Dr Alison Moore AM**

Londonwide London Assembly Member



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**Heidi Alexander**

Deputy Mayor for Transport

(Sent via email)

14 October 2020

Dear Deputy Mayor,

We would like to extend our appreciation to your Transport for London (TfL) colleagues for attending the London Assembly Transport Committee meeting on 22 July 2020, to discuss how the COVID-19 pandemic is influencing public transport provision in London.

We commend TfL's efforts to develop, at speed, the new approaches needed to enable Londoners to move around the city safely amidst the ongoing COVID-19 crisis. We would like to share with you our initial observations arising from the meeting on how implementation of one aspect of this – the Mayor of London's Streetspace programme – is progressing.

The Committee recognises the potential of Streetspace to enable Londoners to maintain social distancing on streets and free up space on public transport, whilst tackling some of London's key environmental, health and economic challenges as it recovers from the pandemic. For instance, where it enables and encourages further active travel, we recognise the potential of Streetspace to improve Londoners' health and wellbeing.<sup>1</sup> Senior public health officials have stated that active travel is a vital part of building communities' physical and mental resilience to COVID-19, whilst helping to manage or mitigate against the impacts of chronic conditions.<sup>2</sup> Active travel has also been cited by health experts as means to tackle some of the wider health inequalities linked to COVID-19.<sup>3</sup> Streetspace schemes also have the potential to contribute to cleaner air insofar as they encourage a shift away from private cars towards greater walking and cycling, and are most effective when they are designed in a way that considers the impact of additional walkers and cyclists on the road, and balances the need of essential road users. The Committee welcomes TfL's commitment to monitor the safety, health, equality and accessibility impacts of Streetspace schemes on taxis and private hire vehicles. We look forward to receiving an update from TfL on the progress of its equality impact assessments.

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<sup>1</sup> TfL, [London Streetspace Plan- Interim Guidance to Boroughs](#), 15 May 2020, page 6.

<sup>2</sup> London Assembly, Health Committee, June 2020.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

With this in mind, the Committee would like to share its initial observations and seek further information and assurances, to help ensure that the further roll-out of Streetspace is done in ways that maximise benefits for Londoners as the capital recovers from COVID-19.

It should be noted that the letter represents the majority view of the Committee with the GLA Conservatives and Brexit Alliance dissenting.

### *Funding allocation*

The rapidly developing COVID-19 context has created many challenges for London's transport system. We therefore recognise the imperative this created for swift implementation of projects, particularly in the early stages of Streetspace implementation. We are also conscious that when assessing bids in this context, TfL has had to strike a balance between plan quality, feasibility of rapid implementation, and value for money, particularly given that, as we heard during the meeting on 22 July, demand for funding is outstripping supply.<sup>4</sup>

During the meeting we heard that a portion of initial allocations of funding were directed at the sunk costs of some boroughs' pre-existing active travel schemes.<sup>5</sup> We appreciate the need to ensure short-term costs of existing projects were managed and we also understand the value of building on schemes in areas with existing infrastructure, provided these align with the aims of Streetspace. In the longer-term, however, we would like to see decisions about funding allocations being made based on where benefit will be greatest. **The Committee would like to be kept updated on where any subsequent Government funding will be allocated across boroughs, and how decisions are being made on awarding bids.** As part of this, and as highlighted in the meeting on 22 July, we are keen to see copies of agendas and minutes of the Active Travel Oversight Group, and as such appreciated you raising this point with Government colleagues. We were disappointed to learn in your letter on 4 August that Government is not minded to share notes from these meetings.

The Committee was informed during the meeting that there has not always been a clear understanding between TfL and boroughs about scheme priorities during the bidding process and that steps were being taken to rectify this.<sup>6</sup> We were also informed that the ability to produce effective bids and deliver quality, good value-for-money projects varied across boroughs. We heard that this was determined by several factors, including boroughs' political will, capacity, history, demographics and physical characteristics.<sup>7</sup> All Londoners should have an opportunity to benefit from well-designed schemes; not just those in boroughs where bidding abilities are greatest. **The Committee would like to see TfL working with boroughs who face the greatest challenges to understand what is preventing them from developing successful bids, and delivering good projects, and support them to overcome this.** This would likely bring benefits beyond the Streetspace programme.

### *Monitoring, evaluation and consultation*

The meeting on 22 July highlighted the need to consider what impacts Streetspace schemes are having on aspects such as traffic congestion, emergency vehicle access, business operations, and accessibility.<sup>8</sup> The Committee notes that statutory mechanisms guiding implementation of the current schemes requires consultation with the chief officer of the blue light services.<sup>9</sup> We were

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<sup>4</sup> London Assembly Transport Committee, 22 July 2020, page 25

<sup>5</sup> London Assembly Transport Committee, 22 July 2020, page 22

<sup>6</sup> London Assembly Transport Committee, 22 July 2020, page 23

<sup>7</sup> London Assembly Transport Committee, 22 July 2020, page 23

<sup>8</sup> London Assembly Transport Committee, July 2020, page 18.

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2020/536/regulation/2/made>.

pleased to hear during the meeting on 22 July that TfL was working closely with emergency services to ensure schemes were not preventing access.<sup>10</sup> We would welcome further information on the progress of this ongoing engagement to understand if any issues are emerging with individual schemes, and if so how they are being addressed. The Committee understands that for monitoring and evaluation purposes, data is being gathered on several areas, such as traffic volumes, general traffic speeds, bus speeds and patronage, counts and surveys of cyclists and pedestrians, safety and quality of the public realm.<sup>11</sup> **We would add the impacts on businesses to this list and would also ask that TfL shares monitoring data with us on an ongoing basis to inform our understanding of how the schemes are progressing.** We have made requests of your colleagues for details of monitoring and evaluation work being done for temporary schemes and understand a response is in preparation; we look forward to receiving this information at the earliest opportunity.

The Committee also recognises the importance of aligned working between TfL and boroughs on the delivery of Streetspace. We are aware that TfL is working with boroughs to ensure that monitoring approaches are aligned as far possible.<sup>12</sup> **The Committee would like further detail about how scheme level monitoring is informing TfL's assessment of programme outcomes. Additionally, the Committee would like to see TfL support shared learning across boroughs from the first funding round to support effective implementation in further funding rounds.**

We are aware of TfL's and boroughs' commitment to accessibility and inclusion in the implementation of Streetspace. We note that the Streetspace guidance recognises the need to ensure accessibility needs are met as per Part 3 of the Equality Act 2010.<sup>13</sup> During the meeting on 22 July we heard some of the additional design features required to enable wider pavements whilst retaining step free access.<sup>14</sup> We understand that TfL is engaging with stakeholders who represent older and disabled Londoners to deepen understanding of the impacts of the Streetspace plans on these people.<sup>15</sup> We are also aware that TfL is assessing the impact of schemes on accessibility and inclusion and intends to mitigate any negative impacts arising from their implementation.<sup>16</sup> **The Committee would like further detail on how stakeholder engagement with accessibility groups is informing the development of temporary schemes. We would also like TfL to keep us updated on its approach to embedding accessible and inclusive design principles into temporary schemes and how it is working with boroughs to resolve any accessibility issues arising as schemes are put in place.**

We understand that emergency Streetspace schemes are being implemented under the Government's statutory guidance on traffic orders, which has been temporarily amended to enable swift implementation of measures across the country to deal with the effects of coronavirus.<sup>17</sup> As acknowledged in the Committee meeting on the 22 July, the need to implement changes at such speed means that schemes need to be able to quickly adapt to emerging issues and challenges.<sup>18</sup> The need for proper consultation was raised during the meeting, particularly for those schemes that are proposed to become permanent.<sup>19</sup> **The Committee would like to know if and how TfL is working with boroughs to share any emerging best practice on public engagement on proposed schemes across boroughs. The Committee would also like further details about the consultation processes that will guide decisions on making any schemes permanent.**

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<sup>10</sup> London Assembly Transport Committee, July 2020, page 18.

<sup>11</sup> Mayor of London, [Monitoring of the Streetspace programme](#), 16 July 2020; TfL, [Streetspace for London](#).

<sup>12</sup> Mayor of London, [Monitoring of the Streetspace programme](#), 16 July 2020

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> London Assembly Transport Committee, 22 July 2020, pages 28-29.

<sup>15</sup> MQT, <https://www.london.gov.uk/questions/2020/2244>

<sup>16</sup> MQT, <https://www.london.gov.uk/questions/2020/2244>

<sup>17</sup> [Traffic Regulation Orders: guidance on the traffic orders procedure \(Coronavirus\)](#), 29 June 2020.

<sup>18</sup> London Assembly Transport Committee, 22 July 2020, pages 14-18

<sup>19</sup> London Assembly Transport Committee, 22 July 2020, page 16.

We are aware that TfL is intending to work with local authorities to collect knowledge and feedback from residents and community stakeholders on the schemes,<sup>20</sup> and has developed, in partnership with Sustrans, a platform for gathering views on schemes.<sup>21</sup> **The Committee would like further detail on how TfL is using any feedback gathered from residents and community stakeholders to inform the ongoing development of temporary schemes and how TfL is addressing any immediate concerns and challenges raised by communities.**

The Committee appreciates that changes to the transport network, such as those being encouraged through Streetspace, require time in order to become fully embedded. Equally, we recognise that the success of the schemes is reliant on behaviour change and a fundamental shift in travel choices, which occur over time. **The Committee would like to see TfL design a clear performance framework, guided by a set of standardised measurable targets, to ensure that learning from temporary schemes can inform future funding allocations and any decisions about making schemes permanent. Such a framework could also enable TfL to understand the London-wide impact of the Streetspace programme.**

### *Under-18 concessions*

An additional point that was discussed at some length during our 22 July meeting was the impact of the temporary suspension of the under-18 travel concession that is part of the Government's emergency funding agreement with TfL.<sup>22</sup> We note that this condition is yet to be implemented, and that the London Assembly has expressed its concerns in a motion about the consequences that this decision will have on young Londoners, air quality and low-income families. In the motion, the Assembly agreed for its Chair to write to Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP and the Chancellor, Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP on its behalf, to call for a reversal to the decision to end free TfL travel for under-18s.<sup>23</sup>

During the 22 July meeting we heard from your colleagues that the existing system already works well for young Londoners.<sup>24</sup> We also heard about the challenge and complexity for boroughs of planning the eligibility requirements for a new, temporary fare system, not least because across London the number of children on free school meals and universal benefits changes.<sup>25</sup> Nicole Badstuber, a transport policy and travel behaviour researcher at University College London and the University of Westminster, outlined for us some of the wider implications of the suspension beyond access to education. She highlighted the potential of the measure to hinder young Londoners' access to employment and other opportunities the capital has to offer. She also highlighted potential knock-on effects on the transport network, including the risk that such a ban may lead to a shift to the use of cars for trips formerly taken by bus, with possible traffic and air pollution impacts. **The Committee would like to be kept updated on developments regarding any ongoing negotiations with the Department for Transport over the temporary suspension of the concession. Also, were the suspension to come into force, could you indicate what work would be required to understand its impacts and plan for any resulting shifts in travel patterns across the network?**

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<sup>20</sup> TfL, [London Streetspace Plan- Interim Guidance to Boroughs](#), 15 May 2020, page 9.

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/streetspace-for-london/>.

<sup>22</sup> London Assembly Transport Committee, July 2020, pages 38-40.

<sup>23</sup> London Assembly, [Reverse decision to end free travel for under 18s](#), 3 September 2020.

<sup>24</sup> London Assembly Transport Committee, July 2020, page 39.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

We would appreciate a response to areas raised in this letter by **6 November**.

Again, we would like to extend our thanks to TfL and yourself during this time. Please contact Luke Rigg ([Luke.Rigg@london.gov.uk](mailto:Luke.Rigg@london.gov.uk)), Policy Adviser, if you have any questions about the contents of this letter. I'd be grateful if he could be cc'd in to your reply.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alison Moore." The signature is written in a cursive style with a period at the end.

**Dr Alison Moore AM**  
Chair, Transport Committee