

<b>MDA No.</b>	1	2	5	8
----------------	---	---	---	---

Title: Changing Nature of Work After COVID-19

### **Executive Summary**

On 15 December 2020, the Economy Committee resolved:

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

Following consultation with party Group Lead Members, the Chair agreed the Committee's letter to the Mayor on the changing nature of work after COVID-19, as attached at **Appendix 1**.

The terms of reference for this project were approved by the Chair under delegated authority. Officers confirm that the letter and its recommendations fall within these terms of reference. The letter will be reported back to the next appropriate meeting of the Committee for formal noting.

### **Decision**

That the Chair, in consultation with the party Group Lead Members, agrees the Committee's letter to the Mayor on the changing nature of work after COVID-19, 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** 27/01/2021



**Printed Name** Léonie Cooper AM, Chair of the Economy 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 15 December 2020, the Economy Committee resolved:

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

Following consultation with party Group Lead Members, the Chair agreed the Committee's letter to the Mayor on the changing nature of work after COVID-19, as attached at **Appendix 1**.

The terms of reference for this project were approved by the Chair under delegated authority. Officers confirm that the letter and its recommendations fall within these terms of reference. The letter will be reported back to the next appropriate meeting of the Committee for formal noting.

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

Signed by Committee Services	L J Harvey	Date	25/01/2021
Print Name: Lauren Harvey		Tel:	x4383

**Financial implications**  
**NOT REQUIRED**

Signed by Finance	N/A	Date	.....
Print Name	N/A	Tel:	.....

**Legal implications**

The Chair of the Economy Committee has the power to make the decision set out in this report.

Signed by Legal



Date 25/01/2021

Print Name

Emma Strain, Monitoring Officer

Tel: X 4399

Additional information should be provided supported by background papers. These could include for example the business case, a project report or the results of procurement evaluation.

**Supporting detail/List of Consultees:**

Shaun Bailey AM (Deputy Chairman) and 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 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: N/A

**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

Dan Tattersall

Date:  
25/01/2021

Print Name

**Dan Tattersall**

Tel: x1328

Job Title

**Senior Policy Adviser**

Countersigned by  
Director

*E. Williams*

Date:  
26.01.2021

Print Name

.....  
**Ed Williams**

Tel: x4399

**City Hall**

The Queen's Walk

More London

London SE1 2AA

Tel: 020 7983 4000

[www.london.gov.uk](http://www.london.gov.uk)

# LONDON ASSEMBLY



**Leonie Cooper AM**  
**Chair of the Economy Committee**

Sadiq Khan  
Mayor of London  
(Sent by email)

26 January 2021

Dear Sadiq,

I am writing to you as Chair of the London Assembly Economy Committee on the current economic issues facing our city. London's economy and industries are at a critical juncture. With vaccines being rolled out there is hope at the end of a very challenging year for many, and a return to some kind of normality is on the horizon. However, a low Christmas trading period has left many retail and hospitality businesses in a perilous position during a very testing time, and now with a third national lockdown to add to the mix, the chance of a January recovery has been stifled.

The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme are scheduled to run until the end of April 2021. The unprecedented levels of support provided through these schemes have been a lifeline for businesses and employees, but many are worried about a cliff-edge end to support. Additionally, as much as 10 per cent of the UK's workforce may have fallen through the cracks in receiving full support from these government measures, for a variety of reasons such as being newly self-employed, or missing a period of work used to calculate average income due to maternity, paternity or adoption leave.<sup>1</sup>

With millions of Londoners approaching nearly a full year working from home, the hard-hit businesses that rely on London's commercial centres continue to suffer. Normal working habits are unlikely to ever resume, and home-working Londoners are looking for support to ensure that employment standards remain high and the benefits of office-based working are not lost.

With all of these issues coming together, nearly all Londoners have in one way or another been impacted heavily by the changes to London's economy. Our Committee wants to highlight these issues to you following our investigations with businesses, community leaders and Londoners, because you have the power to help those struggling as the leader of our city.

## **London's labour market**

London's labour market is on a knife-edge. Unemployment rates rose in the capital across 2020, and in the three months to October, London witnessed the largest quarterly rise in London's unemployment since 1992 (when the data started being collected in this way).<sup>2</sup> The number of Universal Credit claimants has risen at a far higher rate in London than the rest of the country (167 per cent increase between March 2020 and November 2020 compared to 115 per cent increase across the UK).<sup>3</sup> The latest figures show that 430,000 Londoners are furloughed under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme – 10 per cent of those Londoners who are employed.<sup>4</sup> In addition, 465,000 Londoners have made claims under the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme.<sup>5</sup> That means at least 885,000 Londoners are relying on Government support throughout COVID-19, nearly 10 per cent of London's total population. Whilst the support delivered through these schemes has been a much needed lifeline to those most impacted by the pandemic, both the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme are currently set to draw to a close at the end of April, and many Londoners and London businesses are concerned about what will happen if this support ends suddenly, whilst the return to normal levels of economic activity are more gradual.

**Recommendation:** It is absolutely vital that, as Mayor of London, you are ensuring that our city is prepared for the transition out of this most difficult period of lockdown and other restrictions. The Economy Committee therefore requests that you write to the Government to establish joint working on this issue, and then provide us with details of how you and the Government are working together to ensure that this transition towards a fully opened economy will be managed over the coming months to protect jobs and save businesses in London. In particular, we would like to know what support will be given to the Central Activity Zone, whether there will be ongoing support in terms of Business Rates and rent, and how employees will be supported in specific sectors such as culture and creative, retail and hospitality, which have been hardest hit and are so essential to London and the UK's recovery.

## **London's retail, hospitality and culture businesses**

We know that the Christmas trading period is pivotal to the year-round success of London's high streets. London's streets in the run up to Christmas are usually filled with festive cheer, meaning that the trading done in December can help businesses throughout the quiet month of January. Yet, unsurprisingly, footfall on the London's high streets was significantly reduced between the end of November 2020 and the start of January 2021, compared to the equivalent period last year, due to the Tier 4 and lockdown restrictions. For the Greater London region, this reduction amounted to 39.3 per cent, and in the heart of the city footfall was down 57.8 per cent.<sup>6</sup> This was a further blow to businesses who already had to work through an extremely challenging year.

In December, the Economy Committee published a [report](#) that highlighted the impact that COVID-19 would have on London's Christmas Economy.<sup>7</sup> In a survey, our Committee found that 4 in 5 Londoners planned to do their Christmas shopping online, bringing further evidence of reduced footfall to London's high streets for December.<sup>8</sup> Our Committee recommended that the Mayor needed to help

businesses to get trading online – and the footfall figures emphasise just how important that is. As well as retail, our Committee also explored how reliant the hospitality and culture sectors are on the Christmas trading period to get them through the rest of the year. With these businesses largely closed throughout the Christmas period, and now closed until the current lockdown measures are eased (which could be possibly until the end of March, or even May) it is vital that these businesses receive the support needed to survive, so that Londoners and visitors to the City can continue to enjoy our city's world-famous cultural attractions and hospitality venues when they are able to re-open.

Significant proportions of London's retail and hospitality businesses, especially in the city's commercial centres, rely on office workers and commuters. Londoners are currently advised to work from home when possible and the return to offices is likely to be a staggered process, with social distancing maintained for a period of time. Additionally, many businesses are reducing their office presence in the city, opting for a mix of home- and office-based working, going forwards. This will have a continued impact on the retail and hospitality businesses in the commercial areas of the city.

**Recommendation:** The Committee recommends that the Mayor updates his plans to support and advocate for London's retail, hospitality and culture businesses and, in particular, adapts these plans to take account of the unprecedentedly low 2020 Christmas trading period.

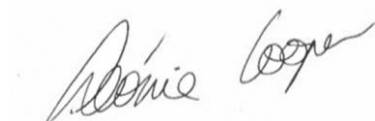
### **London's homeworkers**

This anticipated fundamental shift to greater homeworking has implications for London's employees too, with consequences for social interaction, training, and employers' health and safety responsibilities. In our December meeting, we heard from the Trades Union Congress that there are concerns over the practices of some employers with regard to the support they are offering their employees whilst working from home.

**Recommendation:** Our Committee recommends that, in light of the increase in working from home, the Mayor reviews the Good Work Standard<sup>9</sup> – the benchmark for good employment practice in London. This review should assess whether the Good Work Standard captures the true nature of work in London in 2021 or now needs updating to account for major changes to employment arrangements and considers adding new recommendations to ensure the best employment practices cover these new employment arrangements.

We would be grateful to receive your response to this letter by 23 February 2021. Please send your response by email to the Economy Committee's Clerk, Lauren Harvey ([lauren.harvey@london.gov.uk](mailto:lauren.harvey@london.gov.uk)).

Yours,



**Leonie Cooper AM**  
**Chair of the Economy Committee**

- 
- <sup>1</sup> [Who is Excluded?](#), ExcludedUK, 2020
  - <sup>2</sup> [Labour market update for London – December 2020](#), London Datastore, 15 December 2020
  - <sup>3</sup> [Labour market update for London – December 2020](#), London Datastore, 15 December 2020
  - <sup>4</sup> [Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme statistics: December 2020](#), Gov.uk, 24 December 2020
  - <sup>5</sup> [Self-Employment Income Support Scheme statistics: November 2020](#), Gov.uk, 25 November 2020
  - <sup>6</sup> BRC-Shoppertrak Footfall Monitor, December 2020
  - <sup>7</sup> [4 in 5 Londoners plan to do Christmas shopping online](#), London Assembly Economy Committee, 15 December 2020
  - <sup>8</sup> [4 in 5 Londoners plan to do Christmas shopping online](#), London Assembly Economy Committee, 15 December 2020
  - <sup>9</sup> [What is the Mayor's Good Work Standard?](#), Greater London Authority