


LONDON ASSEMBLY



Annual Equality Report

LONDON ASSEMBLY CONTRIBUTION
2016 – 17

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Greater London Authority
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Greater London Authority
City Hall
The Queen's Walk
More London
London SE1 2AA

london.gov.uk
enquiries 020 7983 4000

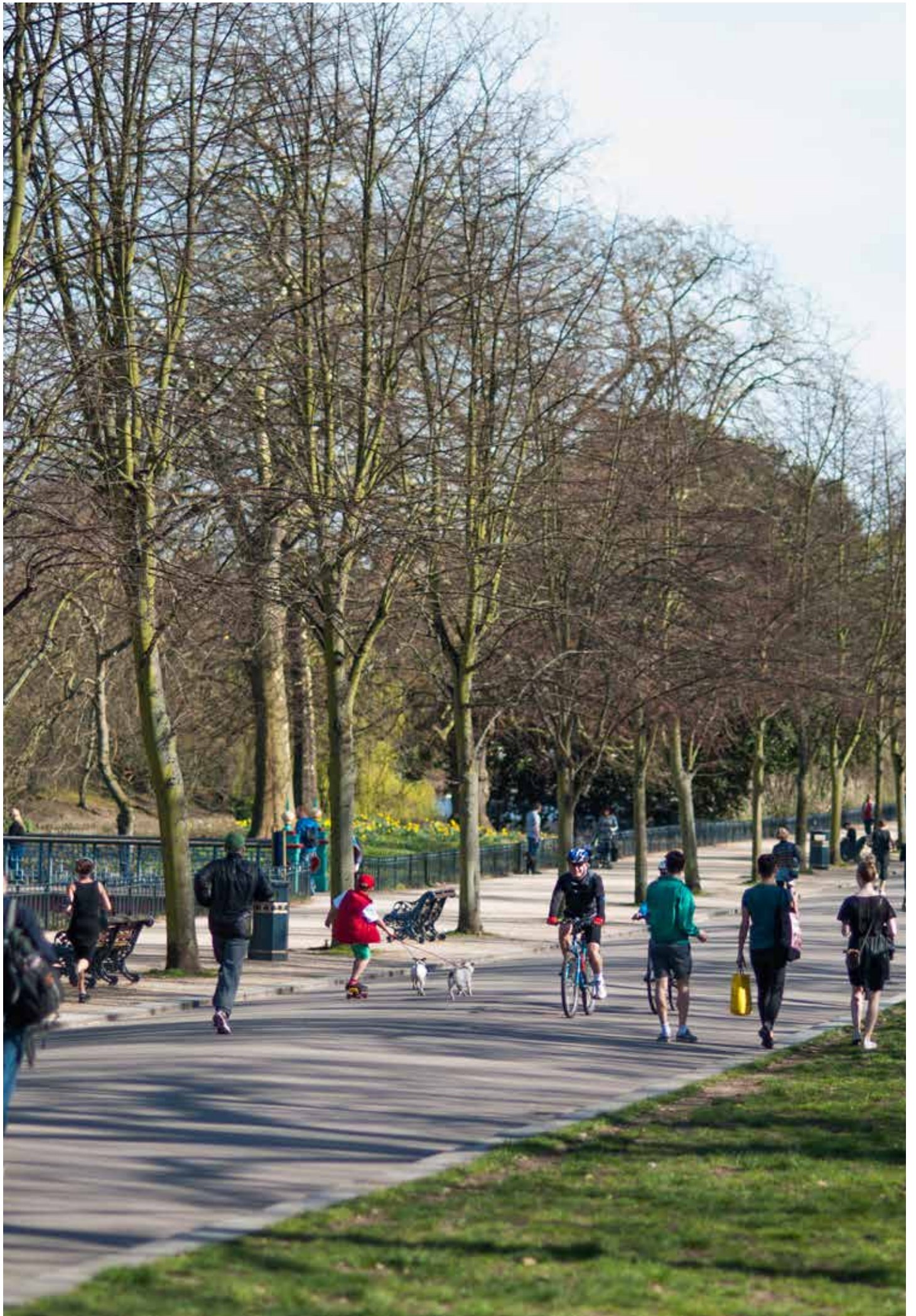
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Introduction

The London Assembly is elected to hold the Mayor to account and investigate issues that matter to Londoners. An important part of its work is assessing the impact of the Mayor's policies on particular groups. Much of the Assembly's work is carried out by committees and below are some examples of how the committees have considered equalities issues in 2016/17.



Health and wellbeing

ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR MARGINALISED COMMUNITIES

Mental ill health is a significant cause of health inequality. People with mental health issues typically live shorter lives with life expectancy reduced by 20 years on average. Particular groups within the London population are at considerably higher risk of mental ill health and have poorer treatment outcomes.

The Health Committee identified three key marginalised groups to examine in depth: the LGBT+ community; Deaf Londoners and disabled Londoners; and offenders. In its work with these very distinct communities, the committee identified several common issues which the Mayor should address:

- Members of these communities are not only more likely to experience mental ill health than the general population, but experience greater difficulties in accessing quality support.
- Mainstream mental health services are failing to meet current need, for both access and quality of care. Without specialist and tailored support for these communities, Londoners will continue to experience mental health inequality, stigma and discrimination.

The Mayor is uniquely placed to provide a leadership role on this issue.

The committee published two reports on access to mental health services, [LGBT+ mental health](#) and [Mental Health – disabled people and Deaf people](#) (a third, on offenders, will be published later in the year). These reports aim to support the Mayor's development of a mental health road map for London. The committee will also use the evidence gathered to scrutinise the Mayor's forthcoming Health Inequalities Strategy.

SUICIDE IN LONDON

Every week, an average of 14 Londoners end their own lives; circumstances that are devastating for family and friends. The number of deaths by suicide in London increased by 33 per cent between 2014 and 2015. Men remain over-represented in suicide statistics: three quarters of people who die by suicide in London are male, and suicide remains the biggest killer of working age men. Following a meeting with stakeholders from public health bodies, the committee wrote to the Mayor to outline steps he could take to fulfil his manifesto commitment to reduce suicide in London. These included improving the quantity and quality of data available to public health bodies and providing more support for specialist services in the capital.

HIV PREVENTION

In July, the Heath Committee held a formal meeting to discuss the topic of HIV prevention. London is currently home to 40 per cent of the UK's diagnosed HIV population, with over 2,500 new cases identified each year. The committee discussed the importance of early diagnosis with a range of experts, and heard that almost 4 in 10 diagnoses in London were late, with significant implications for illness, mortality and onward transmission. The committee wrote to the Mayor, welcoming his manifesto commitment to focus on HIV prevention and screening, and making a number of suggestions for further action. In particular, the committee urged the Mayor to use his position to increase awareness of HIV and encourage more people to get tested.

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) refers to procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. Recent research showed that 52 per cent of newly recorded instances of FGM were from London. Assembly Member Jennette Arnold OBE hosted the London Assembly 'Tackling FGM' conference in January 2017. The event was chaired by Hibo Wardere, an anti-FGM campaigner and survivor of FGM, and was attended by almost 100 professional frontline practitioners from the fields of health, education, social care and policing. It provided an opportunity for professionals to share best practice and talk openly about the challenges of tackling FGM. The presentations and participant discussions highlighted a number of practical recommendations for the Mayor and partners to strengthen London's response to FGM.

DOMESTIC ENERGY AND FUEL POVERTY

One in nine London households is officially fuel poor, and many more face difficulty in paying their energy bills. A large number of those suffering from fuel poverty include families, especially lone parents, and older people. This has potentially serious consequences for health and wellbeing. The Environment Committee held two meetings on the topic of domestic energy and fuel poverty. Their report, [Getting Warmer: The Mayor's role in domestic energy and fuel poverty](#), highlighted the potential benefits of community scale energy generation for community engagement and social mobility, and called on the Mayor to support local schemes.



Safety and policing

SERIOUS YOUTH VIOLENCE

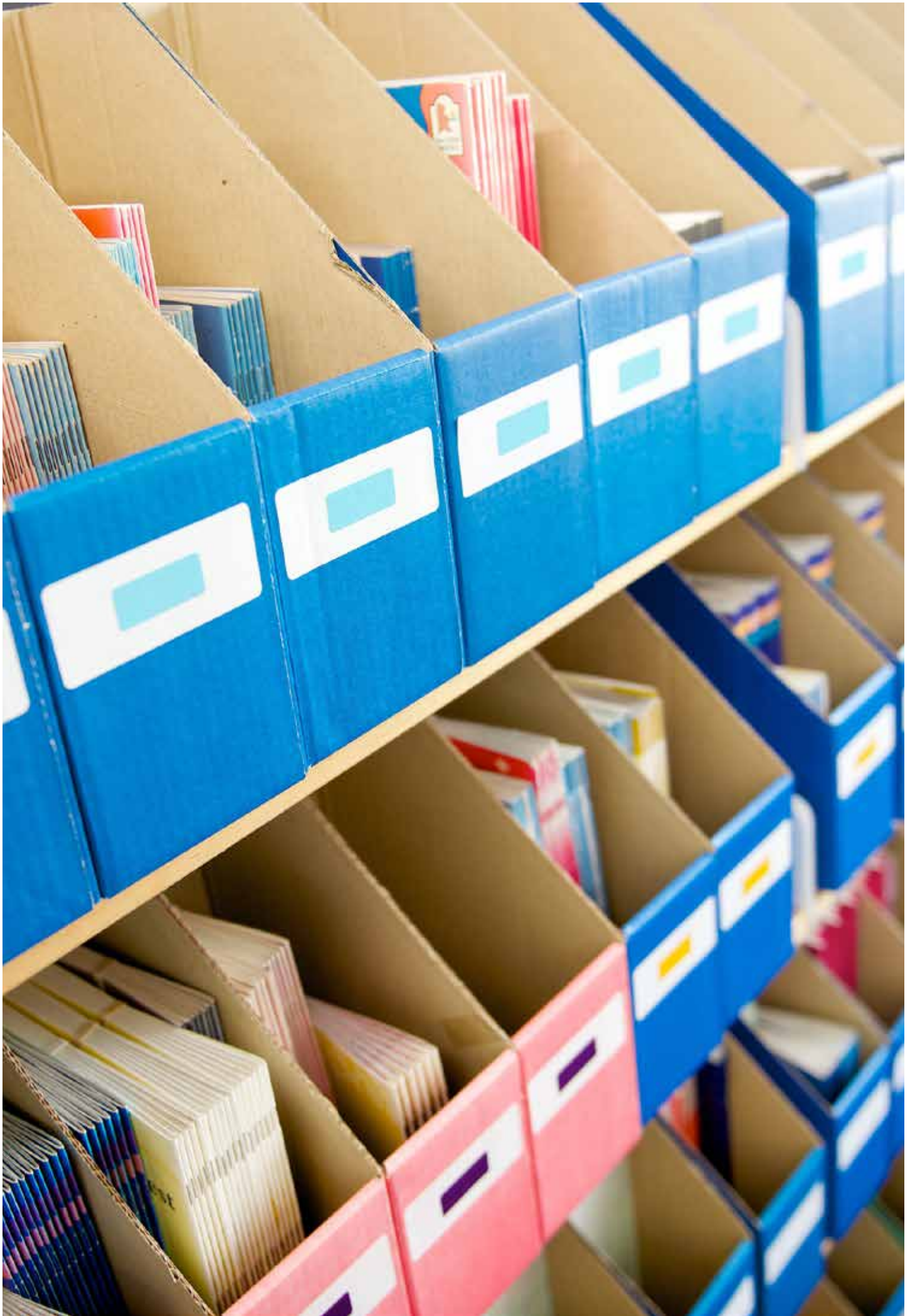
The number of victims of serious youth violence in London has been rising over the past four years. In July 2016, the Police and Crime Committee investigated the increase and the reasons why some young people, aged 19 and younger, find themselves victims or perpetrators of serious violence. It found that knife crime plays a significant part in serious youth violence, and that young women are becoming increasingly involved in violence. The committee's report, [Serious youth violence](#), recommends earlier intervention with younger children and a focus on young victims through measures such as restorative justice.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

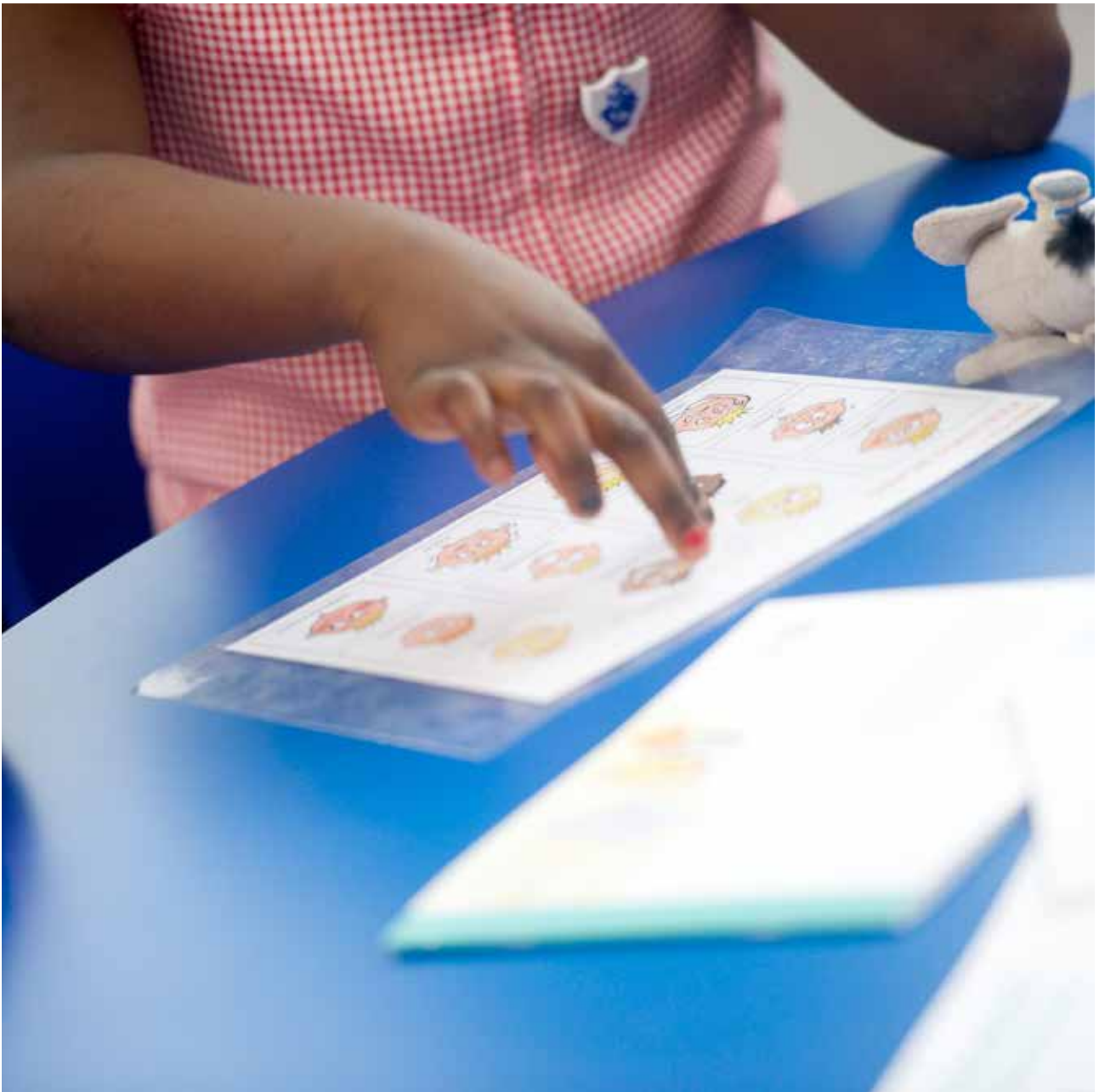
Violence against women and girls (VAWG) continues to be of concern to the Police and Crime Committee and its report, [Violence against women and girls](#), made a number of recommendations for the Mayor's Police and Crime Plan, including ensuring London's VAWG strategy is adequately resourced and developing London's network of specialist support services.

PREVENTING EXTREMISM

In October 2016, the Police and Crime Committee looked at the issue of preventing extremism in London. In a public meeting, the committee heard about a range of projects within boroughs that are making good progress in working with different communities. Following the meeting, the committee wrote to the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime to make a number of recommendations regarding the work of MOPAC and the CONTEST Board, including improving information sharing and transparency. The report contributed to the development of the Mayor's Draft Police and Crime Plan, with the findings and recommendations from the letter and previous work by the committee directly reflected in the draft plan.



Education, skills and employment



SCHOOLS

Improving educational attainment among poorly performing groups should be a priority for London's education sector. By age 11 the most persistently disadvantaged children in London are over 10 months behind their peers. The disadvantage gap in London is evident across all ethnic groups at both Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4. In its 2016/17 work programme, the Education Panel addressed the three key strategic challenges facing London's schools:

- In September 2016, the panel examined London's progress in increasing the number of good quality school places. It noted the work done to provide for growing pupil numbers while improving quality, but raised concerns about how the DfE plans and funds new school provision.
- In November 2016, the panel discussed the challenge faced by London's education sector to recruit and retain experienced and quality teachers. While London remains a very popular place for newly qualified teachers, it suffers a high level of turnover as many teachers look to move out of the city.
- In February 2017, the panel explored the likely impact of the Government's proposed National Funding Formula on London's schools, as well as the wider pressure on school budgets. The panel heard that London would be particularly affected by the Government's proposals, with up to 70 per cent of schools losing funding, and schools in inner London facing the worst cuts.

Following the meeting in February, the Education Panel submitted a response to the Government's consultation on the National Funding Formula. It recommended that the Government ensure that no schools lose out due to the introduction of the new funding formula and that schools should be given greater support to manage reduced budgets.

APPRENTICESHIPS

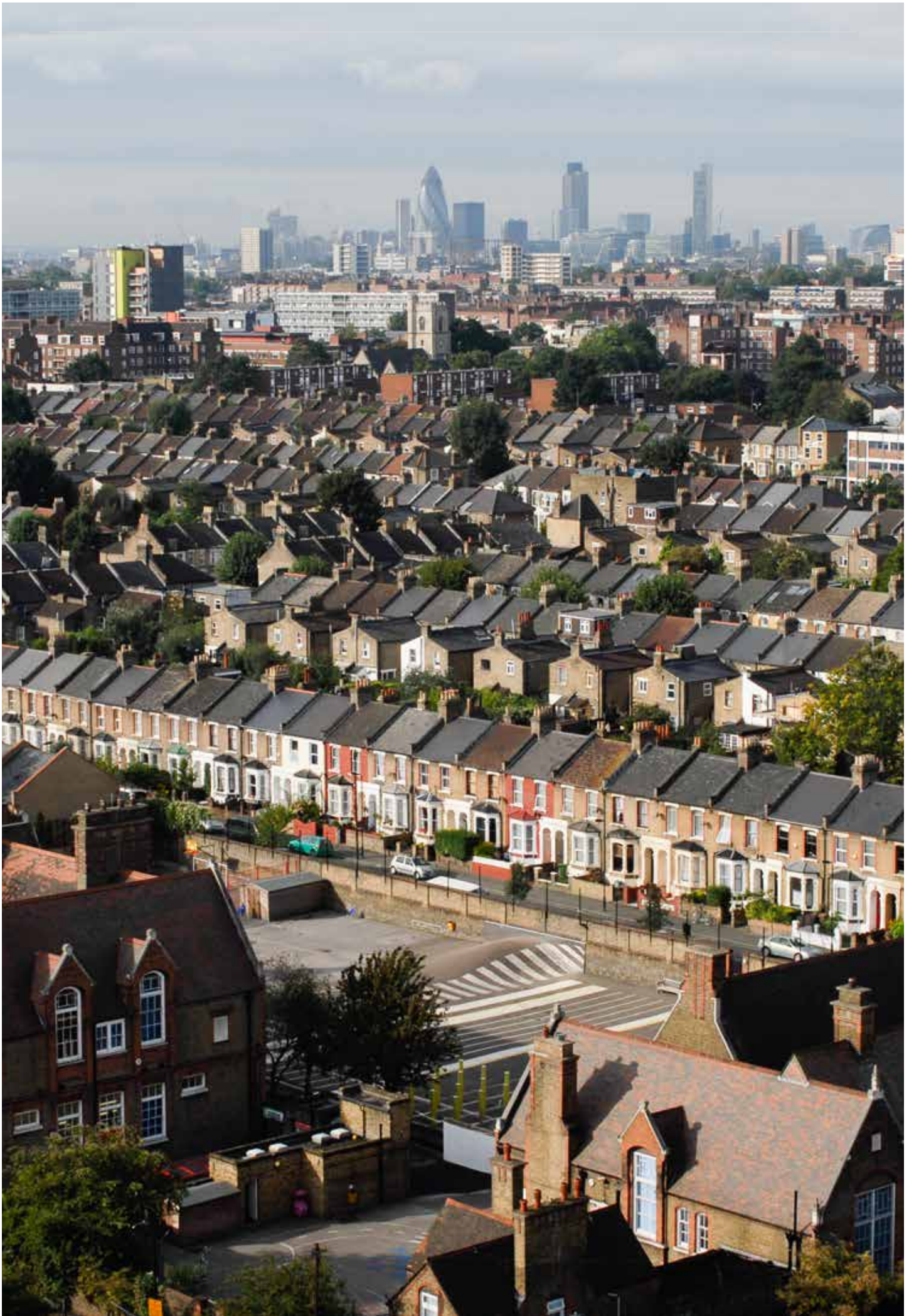
Apprenticeships are one of the Government's key proposals to help young people develop their skills. London has a particularly poor record on apprenticeships, both in terms of volume and the quality of outcomes. In January 2017, the Economy Committee published its report, [Apprenticeships: an un-level playing field](#). The report highlighted that the proportion of apprentices failing to achieve a qualification is growing across all ethnic groups, and that black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) and female apprentices tend to be clustered in lower level and lower paid apprenticeships. The report recommended that the Mayor, through his developing Skills for Londoners taskforce, should place a renewed focus on encouraging more businesses to provide higher quality apprenticeships, and work with the Government to improve data collection on diversity and quality for the London region.

EU EXIT

The Economy Committee investigated the impact of leaving the EU on workers' rights and the labour market. The investigation considered the need for the Government to ensure the protection of all workers and highlighted the risk that people on low pay will see a fall in real income, leading to increased levels of in-work poverty. The report, [EU exit: workers' rights and the London labour market](#), called on the Mayor to continue on-going work towards a more inclusive and fair working environment that adequately rewards all workers. The committee's report on the impact of EU exit and migration on London's economy highlighted the opportunity to do more to enable older people and disabled people to join London's workforce, as well as tackling the number of young people not in education, employment or training in London (around 8,700 16-18 year-olds in 2014).

UNIFORMED YOUTH GROUPS

In February 2017, the London Assembly celebrated the work of the thousands of volunteers who keep London's uniformed youth organisations running. Hosted by Assembly Member Tony Arbour, Chairman of the London Assembly, the event celebrated programmes that help young people from all walks of life learn and develop skills and qualities that broaden their horizons. The event was attended by over 150 guests, including adult volunteers from 13 London-wide uniformed youth groups and some of the young people themselves.



Housing, planning and the environment

SUPPORTED HOUSING

Supported housing provides homes for some of the most vulnerable people in our society. However, it is in relatively short supply due to uncertainty over funding, and many new schemes have been put on hold. The Housing Committee investigated the provision of supported housing in the capital, meeting with experts in July 2016 followed by a site visit to a scheme in Newham. In November 2016, the committee published its report, [Supported housing in the balance](#). The report urges the Mayor to review his funding scheme, which lacks flexibility, and to press the Government to decide on a long-term funding arrangement which will incentivise the development of appropriate provision.

ROUGH SLEEPING

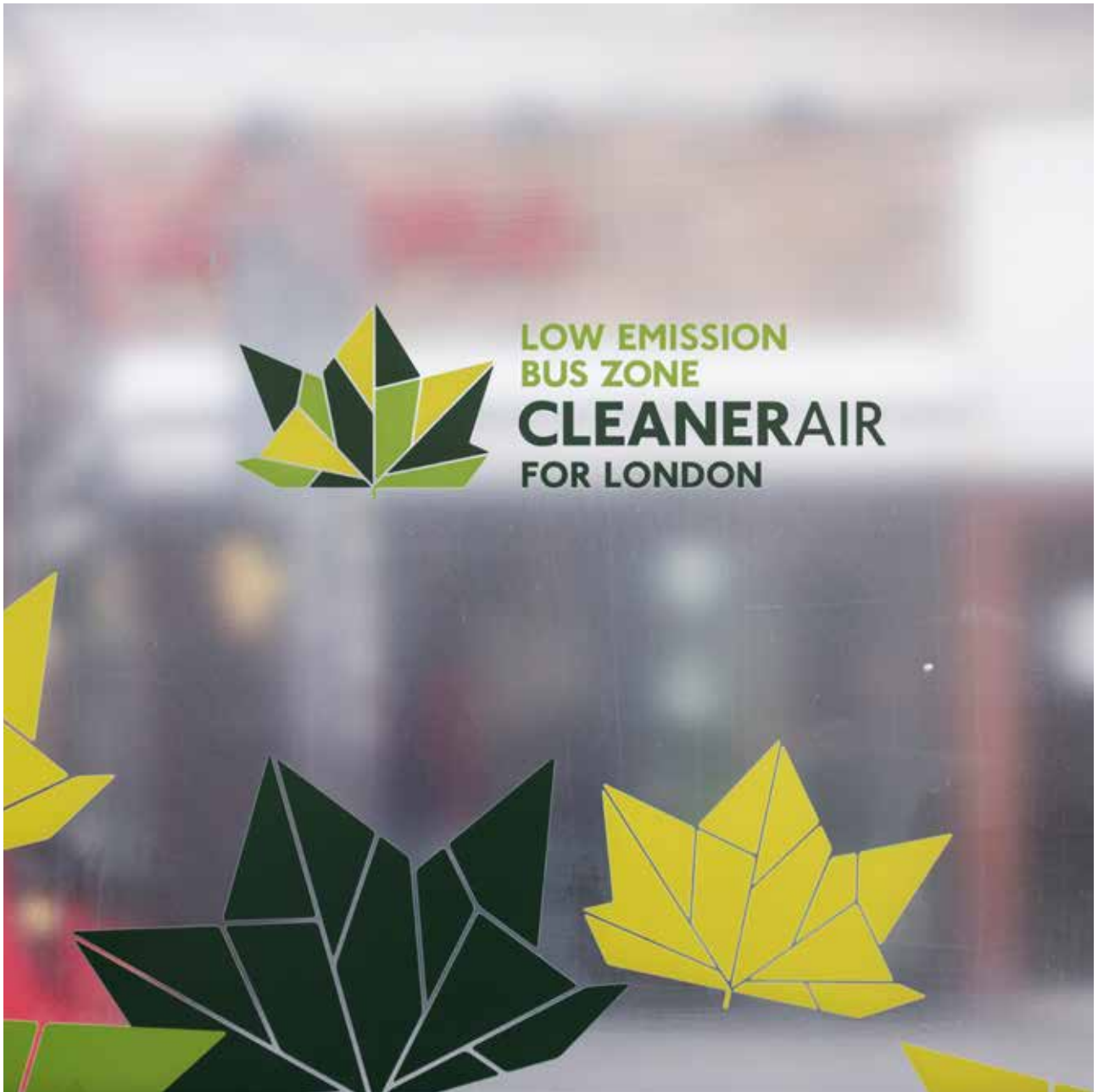
In the first part of 2017 the Housing Committee investigated homelessness which, despite London being one of the most prosperous cities in the world, remains a rising problem. In February, the committee heard an update on work currently being done to tackle rough sleeping by the Mayor and his No Nights Sleeping Rough taskforce. The committee heard that the number of reported homeless women was statistically low, but that often these women seek shelter in places that leaves them unreported by statistics. Committee members also heard that many homeless people from European countries were illegally being paid wages below the minimum wage and agreed that more resources should be put into preventing this. The evidence gathered will feed into a further investigation into hidden homelessness next year.

PLANNING

London's population continues to grow at great speed and is expected to reach 10 million by 2036. The Planning Committee's work has focused on the upcoming revision of the Mayor's London Plan, looking at how London's growth can be maintained without being detrimental to the life chances, health and wellbeing of all of the city's citizens. At a committee meeting, the Deputy Mayor agreed to consider undertaking a London-wide assessment into the housing needs of Gypsies and Travellers, following earlier work by the Housing Committee into the needs of this group. The Deputy Mayor also agreed to clarify the definition of family sized housing and remove the inconsistency between the Strategic Market Housing Assessment and the London Plan. Members urged the Mayor to carefully monitor the effect of relaxation of size and space standards for rental properties, particularly for families where overcrowding would have serious health implications and severe negative impacts on the educational attainment of children.

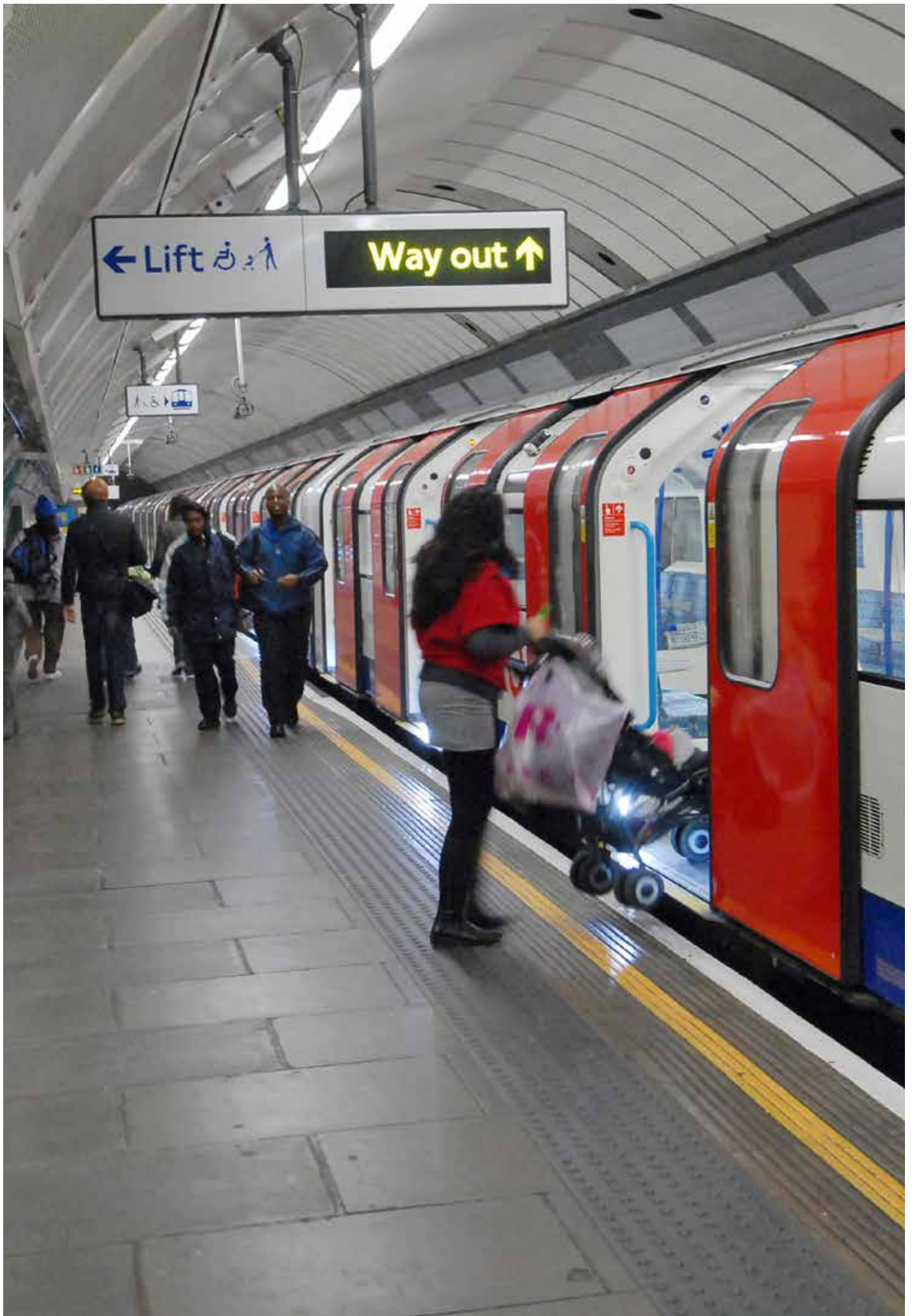
CULTURE-LED REGENERATION

Regeneration projects across London have often led to the exclusion of local communities of residents and artists. In July 2016, the Regeneration Committee started an investigation into the links between culture and regeneration. The committee published a report, [Creative Tensions](#), identifying the need to protect cultural and artist workspaces and to ensure that regeneration does not negatively affect existing communities. The report was widely hailed by creative communities in London for recognising the need to protect London's culture and ensure that everyone benefits from regeneration equally.



AIR POLLUTION

Air pollution has a negative effect on the health of Londoners, with a disproportionate effect on non-white ethnic communities who are over-represented as residents of the inner city. The Environment Committee wrote to urge the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to act to reduce air pollution in London, and in particular to take forward the measures recommended by the Mayor, including a new Clean Air Act, regional powers and local funding.



Transport

TUBE STAFF AND ACCESSIBILITY

Every day in London over 1.3 million journeys are made by disabled people, and 700,000 trips are taken by people aged over 75. In November 2016, the Transport Committee questioned TfL over the closure of ticket offices and changes to staffing at Tube stations. They raised a number of concerns relating to those with mobility support needs:

- The overall reduction in staff numbers reduces the likelihood that they will be available to take time to meet the needs of disabled passengers.
- New uniforms are less visible to those who are visually impaired and those with support needs.
- The reduction in staff numbers and lack of training mean that staff are sometimes unavailable to operate lifts and manual boarding ramps.

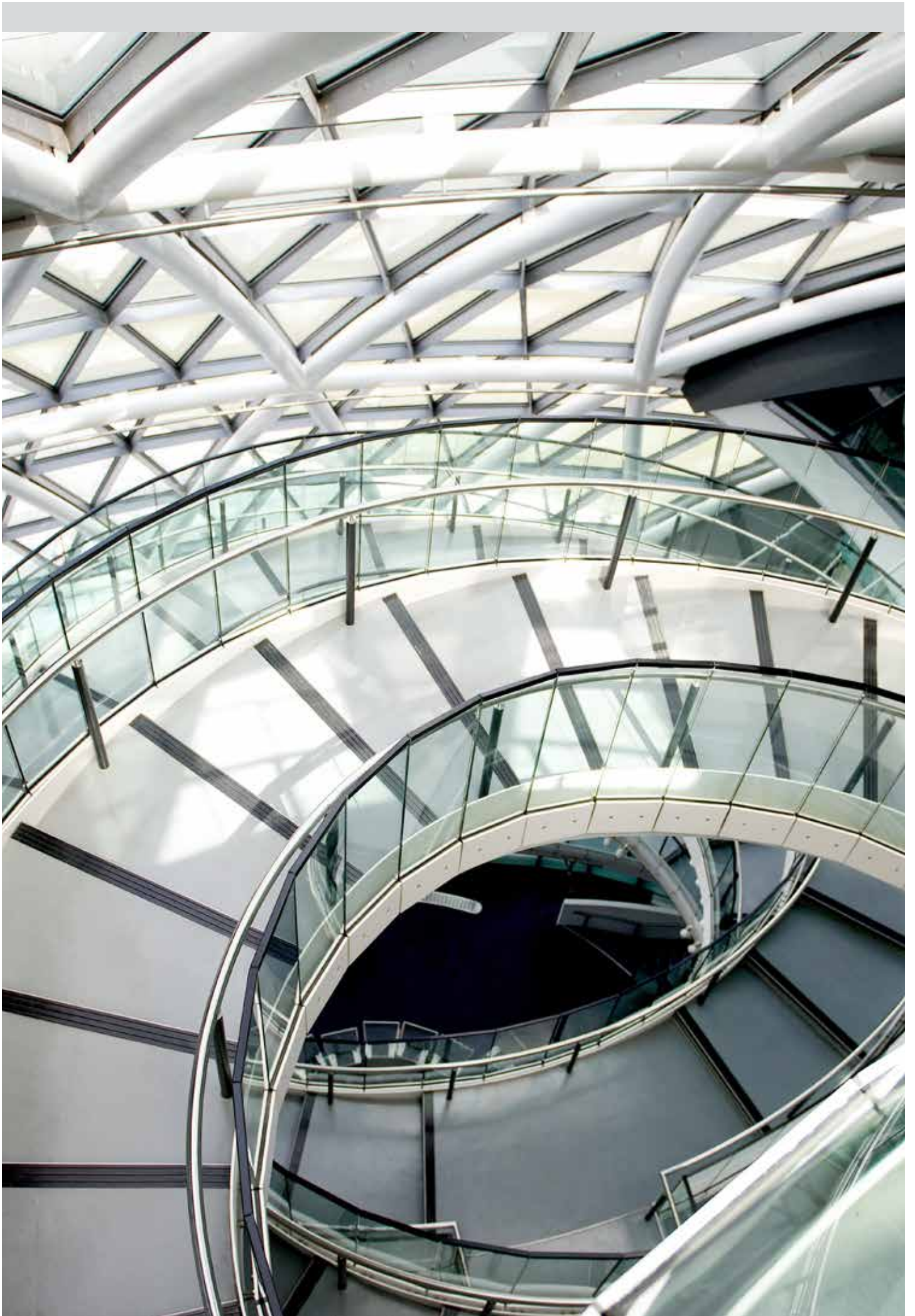
The committee also asked for an update on plans for increasing step free access to stations. TfL agreed to look into changes to the uniform and said they wanted to speed up progress on accessibility.

PEDESTRIANISATION OF OXFORD STREET

The Transport Committee discussed the pedestrianisation of Oxford Street with a wide range of stakeholders. In September 2016, the Transport Committee wrote to the Mayor highlighting the need to avoid an adverse effect on those with mobility issues, including older people and disabled people, who are likely to need support to get around on Oxford Street after it is pedestrianised. The letter recommended that the Mayor explored options for supporting people with mobility needs. The Mayor responded to the committee stating that an Equality Impact Assessment would be commissioned to assist with the development of the proposal. He agreed that access for those who arrive by bus, taxi or car via a blue badge must be considered.

DOOR-TO-DOOR TRANSPORT SERVICES

Specialised transport services for the oldest people and people with limited mobility continue to suffer from poor performance and a lack of clear strategic direction. Assembly Member Keith Prince's rapporteurship on door-to-door transport services explored the potential introduction of personal budgets for door-to-door service users. It assessed whether this reform could help people with mobility problems exercise more control over their lives, or increase the quality and efficiency of services. The Transport Committee received formal submissions from Londoners, service providers and other organisations, as well as speaking to a range of stakeholders and service users. The committee's report, [Door-to-Door Transport in London – Delivering a user-led experience](#), makes a number of recommendations to the Mayor and TfL about exploring how personal budgets could be introduced as part of an integrated, user-led door-to-door transport service.



London Assembly Motions

During Assembly Meetings, Members may propose a motion. These are put forward, usually in writing, by individual Members who speak in support of them. The motions are debated and voted upon. Votes on motions are carried by a majority of those Members present and voting.

The London Assembly agreed 39 motions in 2016/17, of which several dealt with equalities issues and were agreed unanimously:

- On 6 July 2016, the Assembly agreed a motion calling on the Mayor to set out how he will fight homophobia, bigotry and extremism, and promote community cohesion in London. The motion also expressed condolences to the people of Orlando following the mass shooting at the Pulse nightclub.
- On 7 September 2016, the Assembly agreed a motion supporting the 'Guide Dogs for the Blind' campaign to ensure that there are more effective sanctions against private hire drivers who refuse access to assistance dogs.

- On 8 February 2017, the Assembly agreed a motion calling on the Mayor to share the good practice of the GLA and the benefits that flexible working bring to London's businesses by ensuring a diverse, skilled workforce.
- On 8 February 2017, the Assembly unanimously agreed a motion urging the Mayor to join them in supporting a campaign for a national HIV memorial in the capital. The memorial would pay tribute to the men, women and children who have died from HIV and AIDS in the UK and abroad.
- On 23 March 2017, the London Assembly condemned the attack on Westminster during an emergency meeting at City Hall. The motion, agreed unanimously, said terrorists will not change London's democratic way of life or undermine Londoners' tolerance and solidarity. The motion extended condolences to those affected by the attack and expressed their gratitude to the emergency services.

Further motions were passed by a majority vote:

- On 8 June 2016, the Assembly agreed a motion calling on the Mayor to set out his position on refugees seeking shelter in the capital. The motion was agreed by 20 votes for and 2 against.
- On 2 November 2016, the Assembly agreed a motion concluding that the law preventing different-sex couples from forming a civil partnership is unfair. The motion called on the Mayor to support the equal civil partnerships campaign. The motion was agreed by 16 votes for, to 0 votes against.
- On 2 November 2016, the Assembly agreed a motion which asks for the Mayor to make representations to the Government to keep the 50 per cent cap on religiously selective admissions for new academies and free schools. The motion was agreed by 11 votes for and 4 votes against.

- On 7 December 2016, the Assembly agreed a motion calling on the Mayor to recognise the scale of the homelessness problem. The motion was agreed by 12 votes for, to 0 votes against.
- On 8 March 2017, the Assembly agreed a motion calling on the Mayor to work with London's businesses, Transport for London (TfL) and the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) to ensure that London is a city in which women are safe from violence and sexual harassment, and to challenge stereotypes and work towards ensuring that economic barriers are removed to allow all Londoners to prosper equally, regardless of gender. The motion was agreed by 17 votes for, none against.

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