

London Assembly (Mayor's Question Time) – 19 March 2014 Transcript of Agenda Item 5 – Questions to the Mayor

2014/1365 - Ultra Low Emission Zone

Stephen Knight

Will your Ultra Low Emission Zone ensure compliance with European Union (EU) legal limit values set for nitrogen dioxide across London?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): The Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ), Stephen, is part of the package of measures that will achieve this, and it will go a long way towards it; however you also have to go ahead with zero-emission-capable taxis, the programme that we are launching for zero emissions, essentially taxis with range extenders. We think that we should remove the tax incentives for more polluting types of diesel cars. One of the problems we have had, in common with many European cities, is that the Euro 6 vehicle emissions standard was not all it was cracked up to be, therefore we need that to be changed and improved as well.

If you take the ULEZ in conjunction with all the other things that we are doing on buses, on taxis, on cycling, on walking, improving air quality generally, we think that we can crack the problem of nitrogen oxide (NOx) and what will happen then is that London will comply with all nine of the air quality standards that we need to comply with.

Stephen Knight AM: Mr Mayor, I am not sure you have answered the question, which is whether the ULEZ will ensure compliance with EU legal limits for nitrogen dioxide when it comes in 2020.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Do you want me to repeat the answer?

Stephen Knight AM: I think you have accepted the fact that it will not.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Not on its own, however as part of a package it will.

Stephen Knight AM: It will not do that and indeed I understand that compliance is not expected until five years later, in 2025 at the earliest. Given that these are legal limits that were adopted by the European Union back in the 1990s and were supposed to be complied with by January 2010, more than four years ago, does it not show that your ULEZ is clearly not fit for purpose if it does not even deliver air quality at legal limits by 2020?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Getting back to where we started, we have already brought NOx down by 20% since I was elected, which is outstanding performance. We have a huge package of measures, including the ULEZ. We are proceeding with turning the taxis into zero emission capable vehicles. That will be absolutely fantastic for the city. We have loads of low-carbon buses on the streets now, and to get back to Len's question earlier on, we will increase that, however --

Stephen Knight AM: Mr Mayor, I am aware of all the things that you are doing, the question is whether they are enough.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I have answered your question, Stephen, very directly. The ULEZ on its own will not crack it. ULEZ will go a long way. However ULEZ has to be part of lots of other measures, accompanied by other measures.

Stephen Knight AM: Mr Mayor, your Ultra Low Emission proposals as they stand at the moment, as I understand them, do not even require buses and taxis in 2020 to comply with Euro 6 standards, the standards which become the minimum from this year for new vehicles. Mr Mayor, is it not true that you could have a much more rigorous ULEZ coming in six years' time?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): You could pastoralise the entire UK economy if you wanted to reduce --

Stephen Knight AM: That includes stricter standards for buses and taxis so that they all comply with Euro 6 standards. What is more, Mr Mayor, why does the ULEZ have to be restricted merely to the central London congestion zone? You have six years between now and 2020 to install the necessary infrastructure for a much wider zone across central London that could tackle the huge problems in outer London boroughs like Islington and Camden and Hackney and other parts of London that are all suffering from very poor air quality?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): There is a conversation that obviously we are having, Stephen, with places like Islington and Hackney and those other boroughs that you mention, about their possible membership of the ULEZ, and that is under discussion and I think there is a question about that very matter later on. That is what we are doing there.

It does make sense though for us to look at the areas where the exceedances are really happening, let us look at where the air quality is foulest and let us deal with it there first. What you are doing with the ULEZ is a big ask of consumers, a big ask of motor manufacturers, people buying cars, people who have bought cars in good faith, and you have to be very careful that you do not, when times are very tough --

Stephen Knight AM: Mr Mayor, what about buses and taxis, we are not talking about private owners of cars, you are already insisting they are going to be Euro 6 standard; however, you are not insisting the same for buses and taxis. With buses you are not insisting in your current proposals on Euro 6 compliance and with taxis you are not insisting on Euro 6 compliance either, indeed you are talking about 10-year-old, 12-year-old diesel taxis carrying on, on the streets of London, with no extra requirement. We know that taxis alone account for 46% of all vehicle particulate matter in central London, which kills over 4,000 Londoners a year, therefore this is a fleet that needs to be cleaned up, Mr Mayor.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): On the taxis, as --

Jenny Jones AM: Those are Transport for London (TfL) figures.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): -- I am sure you know, we have not only instituted the first ever age limits for taxis under this administration, which meant retiring 3,000 of the oldest and most

polluting taxis, which was never done before. This was of course very difficult for people for whom the taxi is, apart from their home, their most important investment, and we were asking them to forego that investment, to get rid of it, for the sake of air quality. That was a very tough thing to do. We have done it.

Now we are going to go forward with an ULEZ that will actually involve taxis being either plug-in hybrids or having range extenders, and one way or another, or indeed as Deputy Mayor Kit Malthouse would doubtless say, possibly hydrogen or nuclear-powered taxis, and that again will involve a considerable psychological shift, it will be --

Stephen Knight AM: Mr Mayor, there are things you could do now to help taxi drivers to convert because you have been promising since 2009 to implement a Cleaner Taxi Fund to help taxi drivers convert to low-emission vehicles and you have still failed to implement it. You could right now implement a scheme to differential charging in the Congestion Charging Zone for diesel and petrol vehicles to give people incentives right away to start switching their vehicles without waiting six years until 2020. There are things you could do right now to clean up London's air and to ensure we get much cleaner air and we do get compliance by 2020.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): There are always --

Stephen Knight AM: Why, Mr Mayor, are you not trying to do that?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): There are always measures, Stephen, that you can bring in, and it is always within the power of politicians to do things to affect the lives and livelihoods of people in all sorts of ways. What you should not do is things that are unfair that will unnecessarily damage the economic prospects of people who work very hard and that come as a surprise and an unexpected blow.

We are going ahead with a very, very aggressive plan to make our taxis zero tailpipe emission within the central London zone, within the Congestion Charging Zone. That is a fantastic thing to have on our agenda. There is no other city that is doing that and to do it will require a great deal of negotiation and discussion with the taxi trade; however, it is the right thing to do.

Jenny Jones AM: Mr Mayor, I thought you had told some of these boroughs that they would have to set up their own LEZ areas, however from what you have just said it sounds as if you have not done that; therefore, when you consult on your scheme will you include the option for boroughs to opt in to your LEZ scheme rather than create their own?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Yes. You are asking a question about this later on, Jenny, however through you, Chair, I will just say that I am happy to work with any borough interested on how to develop and extend the ULEZ.

Jenny Jones AM: That is absolutely brilliant. I would challenge you on your definition of "work with", however perhaps we can leave that for another time. My problem is your ULEZ would only deal with 7% of the main roads that are very heavily polluted. Now 7% just is not very much and, although it is something, expansion of the scheme would obviously have much more impact. You talked about it being unfair on businesses and that sort of thing, however I think it is unfair that some people

pollute the air so badly that other people's health is damaged, to me that is a bigger unfairness, and you as Mayor of London care about the health of Londoners.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I am, and that is why we are bringing in these very aggressive series of measures and that is why I am pleased that, if you look at the pollutants that we have in this city, they have come down so dramatically thus far, and we will go on.

Jenny Jones AM: This is not an aggressive set. You are putting off the LEZ; you are putting it off for another six years. Six years.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Sorry, it did not exist, the ULEZ was devised by us, it has not been put off, it has been put in.

Jenny Jones AM: Based on what you are more or less planning, it could be done very, very quickly. You are delaying this, you are harming the health of Londoners by doing this. Therefore you really need to speed up.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I obviously do not accept that criticism because I think that we have put in a lot of measures. There are other cities in Europe that have worse air quality than London and --

Jenny Jones AM: You cannot deal with those other cities; your job is here in London.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): They are relevant comparators and we have reduced --

Jenny Jones AM: Yes, and we are often more polluted than Paris.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): -- nitrous oxide by 20% and PM10s and PM2.5s --

Jenny Jones AM: And Beijing.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): -- by 15%, we have put the cleanest bus on the streets of London, we have a programme to have zero tailpipe emission taxis, and we are putting in an ULEZ. That will radically transform the air quality in the centre of London by 2020. You cannot tell millions of people who own cars; I know you basically want to ban the private car and you --

Jenny Jones AM: Do not tell me what I want.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): You always tell me what I want.

Jenny Jones AM: You are talking nonsense.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): You are always imputing beliefs to me. Let me tell you, as far as I understand it, you have an absolutely manic hostility to the internal combustion engine and private motor vehicles --

Jenny Jones AM: Could you stop our clock please because he is talking nonsense.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): -- and private motor vehicles.

Jenny Jones AM: He is just droning.

Darren Johnson AM (Chair): Thank you.

2014/1438 - Undercover officers

[Joanne McCartney](#)

Do you welcome the call for a full public inquiry into the actions of undercover officers in the Metropolitan Police Service?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Yes, Joanne, I do, because obviously what happened, the revelations that we have had from the [Mark] Ellison [QC] Review and Operation Herne are very shocking and clearly there are some allegations that are deeply troubling. It is right that they should be investigated and it is right that there should be proper oversight of what undercover officers get up to, the support they get, the kind of rules of engagement under which they operate. Everybody understands that and everybody wants that.

What I do not think you can have is a situation in which you completely turn your back on the use of undercover policing because they are there to infiltrate organised crime gangs, to bust paedophile rings, and so on, you are always going to need undercover policing.

Joanne McCartney AM: Yes, thank you for that. The last time I questioned you on policing matters it was a couple of weeks ago, in fact the day before the Ellison Report came out. You were here with the Commissioner [Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe, Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis] and I asked you both if you were satisfied that the Metropolitan Police Service had a grip on the culture of the Metropolitan Police Service and you said that you were satisfied, however not complacent. Were you surprised then that the following day Mark Ellison said that he was concerned that the Metropolitan Police Service still have not been completely transparent in their disclosure of evidence? He referred to the mass shredding in 2003, where material relating to corruption had been shredded. He added that there are significant areas where Metropolitan Police Service records should exist however cannot be found. He commented on the 2012 review by the Metropolitan Police Service and he quoted that this was another example of the force providing misleading reassurance to the family and to the public and that the Metropolitan Police Service had claimed only two years ago to have found nothing new, however it held material of some potential importance. Did that shock you, Mr Mayor?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): As I said in my answer to you two weeks ago, I am not remotely complacent about this, and it is absolutely vital that we get to the bottom of what happened and clearly information was shredded. If huge quantities of documents were shredded in 2003 then that is a matter for grave concern. Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe and his senior officers are doing absolutely everything - I know because we have discussed this - to make sure that every shred of possible evidence that they think might be relevant to these matters, to how undercover policing was conducted, is turned up. Although plainly what happened in 2003 was not on Sir Bernard's watch.

Joanne McCartney AM: There are, however, recent matters that Mark Ellison raised. He raised the 2012 review, which I just quoted, where they did have evidence, however they did not disclose it. He said they claimed to have found nothing new, however the Metropolitan Police Service held material

of some potential importance, which is recent. You said that you had a conversation with the Commissioner about this. Can I just ask you, can you honestly put your hand on your heart now and say that the Metropolitan Police Service now are not destroying any documents and are actively looking for any documents regarding undercover policing that could be important, not only to the Lawrence family, but to the wider public inquiry?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I can certainly put my hand on my heart and say yes to the second part of your question. However, what I cannot say, is that there are no documents out there or in some salt mine in Derbyshire or wherever they store these things that might or might not be relevant. That is the problem. In the conversations I have had with the Metropolitan Police Service what they are basically telling me is that there is such a profusion of them, and they are obviously deeply shocked, as you are, by what happened in 2003. I note that Jenny [Jones AM] who knows an awful lot about policing, as she has told us, was probably on the Metropolitan Police Association (MPA) then. She knows an awful lot about policing, however she did not know that documents were being shredded in 2003 when she was on the Metropolitan Police Authority. It might have been useful for her to know that then; anyway she chose not to acquaint herself with those facts.

Joanne McCartney AM: I do not want to be flippant about this because it is extremely serious. Can I ask then, that you have had your talk with the Commissioner and you are satisfied you have made --

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): No, I am not satisfied; let me be clear with you, I am not satisfied.

Darren Johnson AM (Chair): Let Assembly Member McCartney ask the question and do not answer with more information about Assembly Member Jones; she is asking about the Metropolitan Police Service, not Assembly Member Jones.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): It is what happened in 2003.

Joanne McCartney AM: Mr Mayor, you are satisfied that now you have made it quite clear that you expect full disclosure from the Metropolitan Police Service and nothing less will do. You have said previously, because Assembly Members on the Police and Crime Committee, and in this body, have been raising, for the last two years now, since that 2012 review that was obviously failing, about the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime's (MOPAC) oversight of undercover officers. We were first told by your Deputy that he was not aware of any oversight. He then suggested it would probably go to the Audit Panel of MOPAC to deal with. It was then discovered that Audit had not looked at this issue and then at the House of Commons Select Committee a year later you said that you were thinking of possibly setting up some sort of ethics panel. Can you tell me, what has happened with the ethics panel? I know you have appointed a Chair. We have not heard anything more about whether you have appointed other members, whether it is meeting, whether they are looking at this.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Thank you, Joanne, for giving me the chance to tell you that yes, Lord Alex Carlile [of Berriew CBE] QC has been appointed, he is --

Joanne McCartney AM: He was appointed back in October.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): There is a panel, I will be very happy to supply you with the details of the people on the panel and of their proceedings, however it is underway. Indeed, one of

the first things that they are going to be doing is looking at the circumstances and the management of undercover policing. That is the issue; it is what happens, who controls the activities of an undercover police officer? Because this person by definition will be doing things for a long time, going underground as it were, out of normal police supervision, and as Members have repeated very often, we need to have proper rules of engagement for these people.

Joanne McCartney AM: Do you accept now that MOPAC does have to have some oversight over the Metropolitan Police Service?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Yes, absolutely right, and it will.

Joanne McCartney AM: It has been two years coming, however I am very grateful for that now.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): It was with the Home Office, it has now come back to London. The Home Office did have explicit charge of the Special Demonstration Squad, from my recollection.

Joanne McCartney AM: Yes, however the National Domestic Extremism Unit was always housed in the Metropolitan Police Service, and on the MPA there was oversight. It was not there with MOPAC, and we have been asking for that oversight to be there for the last two years; therefore I am glad it is now there, Mr Mayor.

However, the public inquiry that has been set up, you will obviously, I am assuming, be asked your views, or you can make views to the Home Secretary as to what you think that public inquiry should cover. Can I ask, are you asking - as I would like you to do - for this inquiry to be as wide as possible? We do know that at the moment that, at the High Court, there is a challenge with regards to Metropolitan Police Service undercover officers who have fathered children, who have had intimate relations with women. Are you going to be urging that the inquiry looks into these aspects as well?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I am sure the inquiry will look into all those matters; all those rules of engagement. Just to give you a picture of how it works at the moment, obviously I am generally accountable for the management of policing in London.

Joanne McCartney AM: I know how it works, Mr Mayor.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): You do know how it works?

Joanne McCartney AM: I do, which is why we have been asking you for two years to fill that gap that we identified.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I do not know why you bother to ask questions you know the answers to.

Darren Johnson AM (Chair): Let us bring in some more Members, Assembly Member Jones.

Jenny Jones AM: Thank you. Mr Mayor, there are a lot of facts and figures and stories and all sorts of information to be found still, however the police spent two days shredding ten years' worth of documents from a top-secret anti-corruption unit within the Metropolitan Police Service. The then head of anti-corruption, when he heard that his work had been shredded, said it was 'gold dust stuff'.

How can you go to those lengths and spend all that money and it is not there? I am just amazed. In the past, you said a public inquiry into this whole issue was not necessary.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): What year was this?

Jenny Jones AM: You have changed your mind now; you agree that a public inquiry into this mess is necessary.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I do not remember saying there was no need for a public inquiry into this. As far as I can understand it - are you talking about the shredding of the documents in 2003 when you were on the MPA?

Jenny Jones AM: That is right.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): You did nothing and you knew nothing, in spite of your vast omniscience about policing, which you boasted so many times this morning, you knew nothing about the shredding of those documents?

Jenny Jones AM: I did ask you if you thought a public inquiry was worthwhile into this whole issue around undercover spies.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I do think it is worthwhile, yes.

Jenny Jones AM: You said it was not. However, now you think it is necessary, a public inquiry?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I do think it is necessary to have a public inquiry. I do not think I made any comment about the shredding of the documents, I do not think I was aware of the shredding of the documents, rather like you, although I was not serving on the MPA at the time.

Jenny Jones AM: The point is, this has been rumbling on for some time, we are not talking about all undercover officers, we are talking about undercover officers that target political groups, innocent people, and you somehow have managed to close your eyes to this and I am very glad that you have agreed that public inquiry is necessary, I am glad that Theresa May [Home Secretary] has made you see the light.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I think it is very important that we should be --

Jenny Jones AM: What a wonderful woman, I am sure you agree.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I do not think you should be tarring all undercover officers with the same brush, they are doing a very valuable job in infiltrating organisations and I know you think they are all spying on Green Party members, they are not, they are trying to stop terrorism and --

Jenny Jones AM: You keep telling me what I think, Mr Mayor, however you are way off the mark.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): You tried to tell me that I was against an inquiry when I am not against an inquiry.

Jenny Jones AM: I will send you my CV; that might help you.

Roger Evans AM (Deputy Chairman): This raises a key question, does it not, Mr Mayor. Do you feel that the Metropolitan Police Service is fit for purpose in its current form?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I do. I think that they do a fantastic job and that the proof of the pudding is in the eating, crime is down by I think about 7% just in the last year, over the last six years it is down by 12%, and across the board, except for some very specific types of crime, domestic violence, sexual abuse, where we are seeing increases in reporting, which may or may not reflect people's greater confidence, you are seeing crime coming down. That reflects hard work and professionalism of the roughly 31,000, as they currently are, members of the Metropolitan Police Service.

Roger Evans AM (Deputy Chairman): The results you mention are creditable, however that does not address the issue here, which is about the manageability of the force for the Commissioner who is supposed to be in charge of it. There was a very interesting interview with Assistant Commissioner Cressida Dick in one of the broadsheets I think last week, in which she stated that she would not want to be the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service because she felt the job was impossible to do. It is well worth you reading it and you might like to consider whether the Metropolitan Police Service is too large as an organisation and perhaps bits of it need to be broken up so that proper control can be exercised over all the parts of it.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): That is something that has often been proposed in the past. I do not think it is right. I think that Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe does a fantastic job, the proof of the pudding is in the eating, crime is coming down in every borough of our city and that is of massive economic benefit to London and it helps the quality of life for everybody.

Darren Johnson AM (Chair): Thank you.

2014/1668 - Apprenticeships for unemployed young Londoners

[Andrew Boff](#)

Do you agree with Pimlico Plumbers that the Government should divert some of the £2.5 billion spent on out of work benefits for unemployed young people (under 25) towards funding small firms to take on these unemployed young people as apprentices?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Andrew, yes, I think it is an interesting idea. We are trying to get to the target of 250,000 apprenticeship starts by 2016, it is proving a real challenge, however a challenge I think we can meet. We have done about 140,000 thus far. I think Charlie Mullins' [Managing Director, Pimlico Plumbers] idea in setting up the Pimlico Plumbers training academy, and I really congratulate him on that, he gets loads of young people into work and into his business. What we want to do is to continue with our support for apprenticeships and to make sure that we continue with the £3,000 support for small and medium-sized enterprises (SME), the £3,000 per apprentice grant that we are able to make to SMEs to encourage them to take it up.

It is quite difficult at the moment to increase very rapidly the number of apprentices when the unemployment figures are starting to go down and employment is starting to go up, therefore as young people naturally start to get into work the apprenticeship numbers are getting harder to fill, however we are going to do it.

Andrew Boff AM: I welcome those comments on a day when we have seen a further decline in the number of unemployed. In London, and I am anticipating nationally, the number of young people or the number of people on Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) was down by 34,000 according to today's figures, all very welcome. However, that still leaves nationally close to 330,000 people on Jobseekers Allowance, which means that there are probably around 29,000 to 30,000 in London, which is costing the taxpayer £85 million for those people not to be economically active. Would it not be a better use of that money to effectively enhance apprenticeships, direct that money towards small businesses who have reported to me that, much as they welcome the support that has come from you with regard to supporting apprenticeships, if the Jobseekers Allowance, which would amount to about £3,000 per claimant, were to be applied to small businesses, it would effectively double the support that you are currently giving to small businesses to encourage apprenticeships.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): It is a very interesting idea. You would have to work out whether there were deadweight costs, whether you were continuing to pay JSA, as it were, when people were effectively in employment. However I think it is definitely worth looking at.

Andrew Boff AM: I appreciate that, because we are not talking about creating apprenticeships that would not get filled. Charlie Mullins from Pimlico Plumbers reports that there are 15 applicants to every one apprenticeship he is offering in his remarkable scheme that he has. Therefore it is not as though that would be a misuse of the money, this would mean real opportunities, real qualifications, and as one of Charlie Mullins' apprentices said, he kept applying for six months for this apprenticeship position because the young unemployed know that if you get an apprenticeship, and as he says, effectively he is set up for life. Through that scheme he now has National Vocational Qualifications that mean that he would always be employed as a heating engineer, this is Billy Utting who has an apprenticeship at Pimlico Plumbers, he will always be employed because of the skills he has received from apprenticeships. Should we not start being more intelligent with public money and investing it in real lifetime skills rather than paying for people not to work?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I understand that and it is the same logic, by the way, that led us to set up the Day One support thing we did with Chris Grayling [Secretary of State for Justice], which was when you had a 16 to 24-year-old who was just coming on to JSA. Mandatory employment was a condition of their getting the JSA. It is a variant of that kind of idea. I think it is well worth exploring. We have not yet evaluated the Day One support programme.

Andrew Boff AM: I very much appreciate that. I appreciate your commitment, as I understand, to looking into this idea and, should it become favourable, could we jointly present it to the Department for Work and Pensions?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Yes. I am very keen to look at it in more detail. I think we need to think through the consequences of continuing to pay JSA for a long time when somebody is effectively in work; we need to work out how that would work.

Andrew Boff AM: Thank you.

2014/1366 - High Net Worth Club

Jenny Jones

Will you instruct London & Partners to drop proposals to encourage wealthy investors to buy up luxury property in London?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Jenny, I can give you a very short answer to this: there is no such proposal to encourage wealthy investors to buy luxury properties in London, therefore the answer is I will do whatever you want in this respect; however you have nothing to worry about.

Jenny Jones AM: I just wish that were true. However, London & Partners gets funding from the GLA and you sign off their business plan and when you went to China, London & Partners sent out information to partners from the luxury property sector and they were encouraging club members to buy up property in London. That is speculating, is it not, here in London? That means it is harder and harder for Londoners to buy a house or even rent a property if you have rich investors coming in, buying up properties, and speculating on our housing market.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): There are several questions in there. Yes, it is true that London is attracting a great deal of international investment and we are certainly seeing overseas money coming into the London property market. It is still true however, that by market value, total sales in London to overseas buyers are running at about 6.5%, and by number of homes it is only at about 3%. In those figures, by the way, are included buyers for instance from the Republic of Ireland and I am sure that you would not want to discriminate against international investors in our city.

Where I think there is a legitimate concern is when in some prime areas I think there is a phenomenon now, and actually there has been for some time, of homes being unoccupied for a long time. You saw that in the pictures in Bishops Avenue and those were disgraceful. Empty homes as a whole are not running at high levels. You are asking a lot of connected questions here, however you could do something to deter under-occupation.

Jenny Jones AM: My concern is that you are promoting London as a place where it is going to be profitable to speculate in property.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): No, I do not, that is completely untrue.

Jenny Jones AM: This means it makes it harder. I do not want to discriminate against anybody from outside the UK; however I think you are discriminating against Londoners --

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): No.

Jenny Jones AM: -- who cannot afford the housing that is in London at the moment.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): That is complete nonsense. As I said in my opening statement, we have a concordat for the first time with developers that they will market homes in London first, and that is exactly right.

Jenny Jones AM: Your club, your High Net Worth Club, is just attracting rich --

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I do not have a High Net Worth Club.

Jenny Jones AM: You have set it up.

Darren Johnson AM (Chair): A quick response to this because the Green Group are running out of time.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb or wherever, do you have a second property anywhere?

Jenny Jones AM: I do not live in Moulsecoomb anymore sadly.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Do you have a second property anywhere?

Jenny Jones AM: I have a bungalow.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): What about the people living in that village. They resent people who are affluent peers of the realm from London, coming in and buying up their scarce properties.

Jenny Jones AM: Can I just point out that the idea is that we ask you questions? We ask you questions and you answer us.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Leaving it vacant while they are pretending to be serving as Members of the London Assembly but the lights are dark the whole time. That home could be used by young people in Devon and there you are inflating the property market in Devon, ruthlessly --

Darren Johnson (Chair): The Green Group is now out of time. Before we get carried away on the housing market and Dorset and the southwest of England. Green Group is now out of time.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Driving out young people from Devon where you have your second property, leaving it. I think it is a disgrace.

Darren Johnson AM (Chair): All right, we then move on to the next question on the order paper, which is our statutory question on Croydon, in the name of Assembly Member O'Connell.

2014/1691 - Croydon Tech City

[Steve O'Connell](#)

Are you aware that recent Companies House records show that around 13,000 businesses have been created in Croydon in the last three years?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I am aware of that, Steve, thanks to you for pointing that out. It is good news. It is something that is part of amazing things that are happening in Croydon and I congratulate you and the borough for a lot of the hard work you are putting in. There are obviously a

lot of start-ups, maybe thanks to the Free for a Year campaign, which you played a part in supporting 100% relief on rates for the first year of occupation for new businesses. I support that.

Croydon could be, and already is becoming, one of the great tech hubs of London and we totally support that.

Steve O'Connell AM: Thank you very much Mr Mayor. It is pleasing that so many boroughs have increased in businesses, particularly under your Mayoralty. Also my other borough Sutton has had an increase, but a more modest increase indeed. However, your point is a well-made point about the aspiration of Tech City that has already grown organically within Croydon and is second only to Hackney in terms of the speed of its growth with a 23% increase. Indeed one could say that Croydon is becoming the Silicon Valley of the south.

You have a good record of supporting the tech clusters throughout London, particularly in Central London and the East. There are many advantages there. Will you add your own energies to supporting Croydon's tech city and other tech cities that are in the outer London areas?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Yes. We had a couple of very good sessions about this recently, as you saw. We had a launch of the new TechHub in the Old Street Roundabout just the other day with Kit [Malthouse AM, Deputy Mayor for Business and Enterprise] and I think that the effect is spreading out beyond Hackney, beyond Shoreditch. I think the interesting thing now is the whole London effect is starting to spread into other cities in England and you are starting to see, in Manchester, in Birmingham, you are starting to see the growth of these kinds of young dynamic start-up industries.

I think it is very telling when Angela Merkel [Chancellor of Germany] slagged off broadband, or discussed broadband, but she said broadband in Britain is not as good as it should be. It was a criticism but to my mind that indicated an anxiety in Germany about how Britain, led by London, is actually starting to do far better than Germany in these kinds of new 21st century industries. I think that augers very, very well for the future.

Steve O'Connell AM: I know you are doing a lot of work with your Deputy Mayor for Business and Enterprise, because initially the geographic centre of the Tech City concept was relatively narrow, but I think Croydon has shown that it can be spread out into other parts of London and indeed, as you said, to other parts of the country. You would agree that this would be a good thing for the country?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Yes. It is all about good transport links and building enough homes and making sure that there are spaces available. I think your tax discount, your rates relief is a very good idea. Obviously we put in loads of dosh through the Mayor's regeneration fund and the growth funds, and I hope that has been helpful.

Steve O'Connell AM: Thank you, Chair.

Darren Johnson (Chair): Thank you very much.

2014/1439 - Local Policing Model

Len Duvall

One year on from the roll out of your Local Policing Model, do you plan to make any changes to it?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): The Local Policing Model, Len and John [Biggs], is not yet a year old. I think the significant thing about it for me is that it helps us to fulfil the pledge that I made about 2,600 more police in neighbourhoods and of them 2,336, I think, have already been deployed. There may be changes that we could make, we will evaluate proposals and suggestions, but at the moment the Local Policing Model is having a great deal of success in helping to bring down crimes.

John Biggs AM: History will record you as a man who redefined the word 'affordable' and you have also redefined the word 'neighbourhood' because it is pretty clear to us that neighbourhood policing, to our constituents, and this comes from Conservative Members as well, has effectively been abolished. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC), which is a statutory body whose reports you almost certainly do not read either, has highlighted that London now has the third least visible police service.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): London?

John Biggs AM: The third least visible policing service, according to surveys, in England and Wales. Are you anxious about that?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): The poll I saw suggests that people think that the police in their neighbourhoods has increased, and obviously that is very much a question of perceptions. The Public Attitude Survey shows that there has been an increase of people who say they have seen police on patrol at least once a week.

John Biggs AM: That is not what I hear, and that is not what your Conservative helpers hear as well in their constituencies. They go on about little else actually, about the lack of conspicuous policing. They will all be looking at the floor at the moment. They do not feel supportive of you on this issue.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I do not think they are listening to you, John.

John Biggs AM: I will give you a quote then. A quote which is, "The police service is in danger of retreating to a discredited model of reactive policing" this is your new Local Policing Model, "Neighbourhood policing that is responsive to the concerns of local communities is being threatened". I think that is the case, that is the anecdotal evidence and that is the evidence from the polling, or from surveys by HMIC, who are not a bunch of dodgy politicians like you and I.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): No, I understand.

John Biggs AM: The question is, are you at all anxious that by redefining 'neighbourhood' so it is no longer a neighbourhood, you can still maintain this myth that people are getting more police on their patch?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): They are. All the time I have sat here with you I was not wedded to a strict geometrical model of the Safer Neighbourhoods Team (SNT). We had this

conversation for a long time. They did not have always to be one sergeant, two police constables (PCs), three police support community officers (PCSOs) in every single ward. That was clearly going to be unnecessary in some wards and in other wards you would want more. I think that would be common ground between us.

John Biggs AM: The evidence is it is most wards where this is happening.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): What we are guaranteeing is that there will be a complement of a minimum of one PC and one PCSO per ward and they will be there 95% of the time. That is what the Local Policing Model guarantees.

I do think it is important to give borough commanders flexibility to try to deal with the crime problem as they see it and as they must manage it in their neighbourhood. What they are achieving is, across all crime types, to bring those crimes down.

Yes, obviously it may be that local people will want to make representations about how certain SNTs need to be beefed up or need to be seen, need to be more visible, and we can certainly work on that.

John Biggs AM: Are you anxious about reassurance and public confidence in policing?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I am.

John Biggs AM: I assume you are, because you are an elected representative and you want people to be confident in their policing.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I do.

John Biggs AM: If the evidence suggests that they are feeling less confident then you should be anxious about that.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Let us go to the evidence. The evidence is --

John Biggs AM: One of the consequences of your change to the Local Policing Model is a two-thirds decrease in PCSOs in boroughs in London, so two out of three have just disappeared, they are no longer there. You talk about extra police officers but we are now 3,062, one in ten police officers fewer than when Mr Cameron [Prime Minister] was elected. If we were to define categories of crime there is a reckless negligence crime there, if you ask me.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Clearly I think most people, what they really care about is lower crime on their street and it is happening in London.

John Biggs AM: Yes, OK.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Those crimes are coming down across the board and they are coming down partly because we have been able to cut pointless expense on other areas and put an extra 2,336 police into the SNTs. Yes, there has been a reduction in the number of PCSOs but there are still more than 2,000 PCSOs across London, but I think most people given the choice of putting a police constable with full powers of arrest and intervention, would rather have a police constable than

a PCSO. That is in no way to deprecate the work of the PCSOs and they will continue to be very, very valuable. I think getting 2,336 police into the SNTs as we have done, and there are more to come, is the right way.

You talk about confidence, by the way, you said should I care about confidence because I have a responsibility. Yes of course I do. We set the target for the Metropolitan Police Service to increase public confidence in policing by 20% and in spite of all the stuff that has been in the papers over the last few months public confidence in policing is rising and it is rising because people are looking at what is happening in their neighbourhoods.

I am not going to pretend to you, John, that everything is perfect. I began my answer by saying that if there are ways we can improve the Local Policing Model to be more sensitive in getting the resources we have to the place where they are needed, of course we are going to do that. I think at the moment the results show that we are on the right track.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: A key part of local policing is the Safer Transport Teams who work closely with the Neighbourhood Police to ensure the bus network and transport hubs are safe. I understand in the next few weeks the Metropolitan Police Service will announce that the Safer Transport Police and the Traffic Police are to be merged into a Road and Transport Policing Command and as a result, we are looking at facing major cuts to police and PCSO numbers in the Safer Transport Teams.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Right.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: For example, I understand in Richmond it is likely we are going to see cuts to PCSOs from 14 to four and in Sutton I hear we could be losing a sergeant, a PC and 11 PCSOs. Are you aware of this and do you support these changes and cuts to frontline Safer Transport Teams?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Again, you have to cut your coat to suit your cloth. I am not aware of the exact redeployments that you are talking about. What I do know is that we made an absolutely priority of tackling crime on public transport, when I was elected. We beefed up the Safer Transport Teams, we are going to continue to support them in whatever guise and the proof of the pudding is in the eating.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: I am very concerned because you have always committed to that and we can see huge cuts there, Mr Mayor.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): There are now fewer crimes on the London Underground per million journeys than any other network in any other Tube system, any other Metro system in Europe. We have the safest Tube system in Europe.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Buses, because it is the Metropolitan Police Service that police buses.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Bus crime, which is not crime committed by buses, which is very rare indeed, but crime committed on buses. Bus crime is down.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Is at risk of going up with these cuts.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): No it is not.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: With these cuts it could go up, Mr Mayor.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Bus crime is down by 40% since I was elected and crime on the London Underground is down by more than 20%.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Which are under threat by your cuts.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Those are very considerable achievements by the police and by the Safer Transport Teams and I congratulate them on it.

Darren Johnson (Chair): Thank you.

Roger Evans (Deputy Chairman): Mr Mayor, are you aware that the reduction in PCSOs has happened, of course because quite a lot of them have been promoted and become fully warranted police officers, the good ones? Do you think we should be celebrating the fact that the Metropolitan Police Service is actually recruiting and promoting officers when so many other forces throughout the country are not doing that?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Yes. As I told you all last year a lot, the Metropolitan Police Service is the only force in the country that is actually recruiting about 5,000 officers. It is a great time to have a career in the police - it is always a great time to have a career in the police. I want to congratulate them on what they are doing. They are helping to bring down crime a lot in London. Yes, there is always more that you can do and, yes, there are areas that I have concerns about, but overall the picture is very encouraging.

Roger Evans (Deputy Chairman): Do you think the flexibility that is built into your new neighbourhood policing model, which allows you to move officers around a larger area and focus them on particular issues, is actually leading to an improvement in the detection and solving of crime in the Metropolitan Police Service?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): It is possible, because after all what was not going to help them was having a rigid system that kept them stuck in one place, in some relatively safe, leafy ward, when their energies might be better deployed elsewhere where things were in need of real attention. Flexibility is a very, very important part of cracking all this.

Roger Evans (Deputy Chairman): Do you think that council wards, whilst of course entirely suitable for electing local councillors and providing a number of voters in a particular area are much less suited to providing policing services, or indeed any other service based on those boundaries? Not least because a lot of those wards abut on high streets, so you can have a high street like Elm Park, in my constituency, for example where three different wards abut onto the high street, but crime does not stop at any of those boundaries.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Absolutely right and clearly one of the reasons to be flexible was that crime does not know boundaries and certainly you would not want SNTs to be stopping at frontiers, which would be ludicrous.

Roger Evans (Deputy Chairman): Thank you.

Richard Tracey AM: Mr Mayor, I am inclined to make judgements based on results. I hear from my Borough Commander in Wandsworth, which is apparently statistically the safest inner London borough, that in the last 12 months, and the Local Policing Model was introduced six months ago into Wandsworth, we have seen 400 fewer burglaries, 300 fewer robberies, 200 fewer thefts from vehicles and almost 200 fewer vehicles taken in the borough. Over the same period --

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): That is because Wandsworth is so well represented unlike east London.

Richard Tracey AM: I appreciate that comment, but also over the same period the satisfaction with the police has apparently risen from 74% to 80%.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I think that is fascinating. It is very, very interesting. I know that John will pour scorn on this, but if you look at the figures that I am seeing, the public satisfaction or public confidence in policing is actually on the up. That is in spite of all the stuff in the papers about Plebgate and Ellison, and all the stuff that we talked about earlier on. That leads me to think there is more than a grain of truth in what you are saying. People are judging it by the results and the relationships they are having with the police in their neighbourhoods. I am not going to pretend to you that the local policing model is beyond improvement. Where we can improve it we will, but as far as I can see it is on the right path.

Richard Tracey AM: Thank you.

Andrew Dismore AM: I think people are also interested to know that when they dial 999 the police are going to turn up. You have what is called the '1 call' which means in most emergency calls the police have to turn up within 15 minutes, 90% of the time is your target, the 'S call' within an hour, 90% of the time. In Barnett for the last three months they have consistently failed to meet the targets for both I and S calls, second worst performance in the whole of London. What are you going to do about it?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I am afraid I do not have the targets here for what we are achieving in Barnet because --

Andrew Dismore AM: I have them here, I have just told you.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I cannot confirm those figures for you, but I have the figures for what we are doing in Greenwich and in Lewisham.

Andrew Dismore AM: I am not interested in that, I asked about Barnet.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I will look at what you are saying and if there is something we can do to address it, Andrew, then I shall. I repeat that the most important indicator for me is not only that crime is coming down but everybody who is the victim of a crime under what we are doing, under the plans that we have rolled out, gets a visit from a police officer.

Andrew Dismore AM: The thing is, they want the visit to come promptly within the scheduled time. The point about it, Mr Mayor, is this: it goes beyond this. Due to the target-driven culture you have got here, the position is actually worse. I understand from police sources that if they miss the attendance times of one hour for an S call, if you do not get the police officer in an hour and ten minutes, or an hour and 15 minutes, it goes to the back of the queue and you could wait hours. I have heard from police sources that if they are outside the attendance time they will start to book in before they have actually arrived, by three or four minutes before they arrive, so it makes it look like they have actually met the target, when they arrive five minutes or so later. If that is true that is a despicable and unsavoury practice and they are fiddling the figures.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Sorry, who are you calling despicable?

Andrew Dismore AM: The fact is, will you look into the fiddling of the figures?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Who are you calling despicable?

Andrew Dismore AM: I am calling a practice despicable, where officers are booking in before they have actually arrived to make it look like they are meeting the time when they are not.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I do not think you should say that the police officers who are coming to the assistance of people in Barnet are despicable --

Andrew Dismore AM: No, I did not say that.

Darren Johnson (Chair): I think, to be fair, he was saying the practice was despicable rather than the individuals.

Andrew Dismore AM: I am saying the practice of booking in before they have arrived is wrong and will you look into this and make sure it is dealt with, because I suspect it is not just Barnet, I suspect your target-driven culture has created this problem throughout London?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I do not know quite what despicable behaviour of the police you are referring to. I do not think the police behave despicably. My impression is that the police behave very honourably and very courageously and do their best to look after people in this city.

Andrew Dismore AM: Will you look into it?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I think they will be amazed that the Member for Barnet has said that they are doing something that is despicable.

Andrew Dismore AM: Are you quite happy for this to continue then? You are not prepared to look into it, because it suits your targets, it makes it look better than it really is, doesn't it? That is why you are prepared to let it continue.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): We are succeeding in reducing crime in your borough --

Andrew Dismore AM: You are prepared to let it continue because it suits you.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): -- and all you can say to give thanks to the police who are helping to make your constituents safer is that they are doing something despicable. I think you should withdraw your assertion.

Andrew Dismore AM: I think you should look into the issues of your targets because it suits you. It suits you not to look into this abuse, doesn't it?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I really think that if Barnet has a problem it is only that it is very, very badly represented by its Labour Assembly Member. That is my view. If there is something we can do to get faster response times for the I calls and the S calls then yes, of course we should do that. The truth is that our police, and your police, Andrew Dismore, are doing an exceptional job of helping to bring down crime and they deserve your support.

Darren Johnson (Chair): Thank you. We note that commitment from the Mayor to look into that.

Joanne McCartney AM: Yes, Mr Mayor, I am very happy that you are seeking to recruit officers to replace the ones you have already cut. I think we all agree that we have to do our utmost to make sure that those new officers are representative of London's communities. I know that is something that you feel strongly about as well.

I was very concerned to read that according to the Metropolitan Police Service's own Equalities Impact Assessment in January that currently the Metropolitan Police Service has a 10.5% of officers are black and minority ethnic (BAME).

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): That is about right.

Joanne McCartney AM: It is only projected to increase to 11% by 2016. At that rate of recruitment it would take the Metropolitan Police Service 120 years to reach a comparative level with London's population. I questioned you about this last June, because at that state the Metropolitan Police Service had floated the possibility of changing legislation to have something like a Northern Ireland Police Service model where a pool of candidates are drawn according to necessary populations. You stated that you were supportive of positive action. That idea has been floated again by the Commissioner after the publication of the Ellison Review. I am just wondering what you have done to encourage any positive action? It is a challenge that no one has failed to crack yet, but is there something now bold and radical that we do need to look at, and will you be supporting the Metropolitan Police Service?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I am grateful to you, Joanne, for the manner in which you pose the question, because it is a very serious problem. When I took over the officer numbers were running at about 8%. It is now up to, as you say, 10.5%. The current rate of growth is very slow. Obviously there are lots of ways of addressing it. We had a big recruitment programme with the BAME community and it produced a huge number of expressions of interest. It was very, very successful in mobilising support for the idea of joining the police. It was then incredibly disappointing to see how many expressions of interest basically fell away and were not converted into successful applications, even though, as I say, we are recruiting now. We are trying to dig into that. We are trying to see what we can do to buck that trend, to steepen the angle of improvement so that the police start sooner to resemble the London that they serve. There is a programme of work underway to do that.

We are also trying to encourage entry at senior level, up to the rank, I think, of Chief Superintendent, which is very senior indeed, so we are looking at that mid-career entry for people from communities across London.

There is then the additional question, which you raise and which Sir Bernard [Hogan-Howe, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service] raises, of going for a quota system, of going for basically what they have in Northern Ireland and for having a very strict system like that. I can see the attractions of that, in one way, but it is a very blunt tool. It is something that if you do for the police you have to consider the implications for all sorts of public service, all sorts of walks of life. It is something that we do not really do in this country so far. It would be a big step forward.

At the moment I want to concentrate on some of the really dynamic, evangelical approaches that we are running, to try to recruit more officers from the communities that they need to represent.

Joanne McCartney AM: Mr Mayor, I think we both agree that the talent is out there, but what they found in Northern Ireland was that it is actually leading that critical mass and the assurance that when you join a service that you are going to feel at home in it. Can I ask you how long are you going to wait before you--

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): If you look at the junior ranks and you look at PCSOs you are seeing the numbers really quite high now, and getting towards levels where they are entirely reflective of the whole of London. In the future, if you assume normal progression and promotion patterns, we will get that.

Joanne McCartney AM: It could be 20 years.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I will not deny, Joanne, it is slow going at the moment.

2014/1437 - Fire attendance times

[Fiona Twycross](#)

Based on the modelling data used for London Fire Safety Plan 5 (LSP5), if Woolwich Fire Station had remained open, how long, on average, would they have taken to attend the fire that broke out on 23 February in a flat at Riverview Heights that sadly cost a life?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Thank you, Fiona. Obviously the sympathies of everybody are very much with the family of the victim concerned. This incident is subject to an inquiry by the London Fire Brigade at the moment. I am told it would not be appropriate for me to go into details, but what I am told I can say is that the analysis of what had happened shows that the closure of the Woolwich Fire Station, which you referred to, did not have any material bearing on the handling of the incident. They plainly will want to keep people informed once the Fire Brigade has continued its inquiries.

It should be seen in the context of a continuing success by the Fire Brigade in reducing death by fire in London. They are running about 100 a year in the 1990s and they are now down to about 50 a year.

Fiona Twycross AM: Thank you. I think we can debate a bit further perhaps when that inquiry finishes exactly what the circumstances were, but I noted earlier in relation to the questioning on water cannon, you said that if things go wrong you would accept full blame and responsibility. I just wanted to ask whether in relation to incidents relating to your fire cuts you would accept the same full blame and responsibility, should it be found, following the inquiry, that there was a link between the cuts and the incident. I share your sympathy, obviously, with the family.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Yes. I think, to be fair, we had discussions about the implications of the programme of changes to the Fire Service.

Fiona Twycross AM: Cuts.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): In which I said exactly that, I think, when we launched it. I said that one of the reasons it was so difficult a decision to take and one of the reasons I thought about it so long and hard was because I did accept that when you take a decision like that, when you launch programmes like that, there must be some measure of responsibility.

Fiona Twycross AM: With respect, we did not actually feel that you thought about the cuts long and hard, we thought you drove them through willy-nilly in complete disregard for what Londoners wanted, what the Assembly wanted and what the Fire Authority wanted. In fact, if you have your way with MOPAC approach and then eventually abolish the Fire Authority, I think you can expect more questions like this about the impact of your cuts, rather than less.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): That is what comes with the job.

Fiona Twycross AM: Yes, I am glad that you accept your responsibility in that respect. What personal responsibility are you taking for monitoring the impact of the cuts? Because that is what I cannot quite get to grips with, is what personal responsibility and what questions have you personally asked about this incident and what have you asked to have reported to you about this.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): What I said to Ron Dobson [Commissioner for Fire and Emergency Planning] and the Fire Brigade is, "Can you guarantee to me that as a result of what we are doing we will be able to continue to reduce deaths by fire and to reduce fires in London?" That is what I have done and I received those assurances.

Fiona Twycross AM: The problem is deaths are actually going up though. Unfortunately deaths are going up, so statistically you are incorrect on that because deaths are currently going up.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): That is not the information I have. The information I have is actually that --

Fiona Twycross AM: Well last year they went up on the year before, so I think that you need to check your facts. I think that in terms of what personal monitoring you are doing if all you are saying is that you are relying on expertise, that is what you said in relation to the Metropolitan Police Service, then I do not accept that you are accepting responsibility.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): We can rerun the whole conversation that we had many, many times.

Fiona Twycross AM: I am sure we will.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): It turned on this: was I going to place my confidence in the expertise of people who devote their lives trying to reduce death by fire or was I going to listen exclusively to those who, in my view, sometimes try to make political capital out of this issue, and indeed to fan apprehensions where I think they are unnecessary. That was the choice I had to make. I accept that it is a difficult choice but I do think that we had a huge session, we had endless consultations with Londoners about this.

Fiona Twycross AM: Which you did not listen to.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): That is not true, we did amend the plans.

Fiona Twycross AM: You ignored it. You might have listened to it but you did not then carry it through. Moving on from this --

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): You were not even paying attention yourself, "Let's change the plan". You did not even notice.

Darren Johnson (Chair): Let the Mayor respond to this and then come back with your other question very quickly.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I have a clear recollection that we did change the London Fire Safety Plan 5 to take account of the consultation. If that is not listening I do not know what it is.

Fiona Twycross AM: I do not think I have anything else to add. I do not think he listens on fire and I think we will come back to every single incident that happens as a result of these cuts and we will come back and we will question you on these. Thank you.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Of course you will try to blame me for everything that happens, that is what you will do because that is what the Labour Party always do. That is your prerogative.

Fiona Twycross AM: Thank you, I have not got any more questions.

Darren Johnson (Chair): Thank you.

James Cleverly AM: Mr Mayor, do you share my disappointment that in the 18-month process by which the London Safety Plan 5 was produced, the 18 months, which Fiona Twycross described as 'rushing it through' but the 18-month process --

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Even though we had amended it.

James Cleverly AM: -- that many members of the Fire Authority basically refused to engage with that process.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Are they paid to be members of the Fire Authority?

James Cleverly AM: People who you appointed on to the Fire Authority, they refused to sensibly engage with it and refused to put up any credible or deliverable alternatives. Do you share my disappointment?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I share your disappointment, although I am not surprised. There you go, what do you expect? Are they paid, these fellows on the Fire Authority?

James Cleverly AM: Mr Mayor, do you also think that it puts a bit of a question mark over the credibility of some of the people on the Fire Authority, when given the explicit instruction to put forward a plan which saves in the region of £40 million over two years? Their proposal actually increased the running cost of the London Fire Brigade by £4 million a year. Do you really feel that that could be described as a credible proposition for your appointees on the Fire Authority?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I did not. I thought it was disappointing that they did not come up, as you say, James, with an alternative plan. There they are, they are sitting on the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA), there was a plan being put forward. It may have defects. It was always possible to come up with a rival plan. They had no rival plan. All they did was say, "No, no, no, no, nothing, nothing, nothing" that was incredible.

James Cleverly AM: Mr Mayor, do you also find it remarkable that certain members of the Fire Authority are claiming victory that the plan was amended?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Fiona Twycross forgot, she just said I railroaded it through. Get your story straight. You cannot claim victory for saying that you got it amended and say and say I railroaded it through. You have to have a consistent line, it is called logic.

James Cleverly AM: If an alternative proposal had been put forward by some members of the Fire Authority, which in any way mirrored the final version of LSP5, do you think that that would have been a fair claim to make? Or do you share my view that it is ridiculous of the Fire Authority who flatly refused to put forward credible alternatives and then claim credit for something which was brought to you, discussed between the Commissioner and myself and then put forward as the professional amendment, based on a public consultation which was always planned as part of the delivery of LSP5?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): As I say, I think there is inconsistency in the approach adopted by the Labour Members of the Fire Authority in that they simultaneously seek to claim credit for amending the LSP5 and yet to allege at the same time that I forced it through without amendment. I think they have to make up their minds which story it is.

James Cleverly AM: Thank you.

Darren Johnson (Chair): Thank you very much.

2014/1432 - Bus services and population growth

Valerie Shawcross

Do you believe that you are adequately meeting the demand for bus services in London?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Yes, Val, we are, and that does not mean that buses are not under increasing pressure and they are facing every greater demand because they are. They are a wonderful service. I think our bus drivers, our buses do an absolutely fantastic job. I may have mentioned that bus crime, crime on buses is down by 40%. We carry 6.5 million passengers a day and we are constantly seeking to improve our service.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM: Yes, thank you, Mr Mayor. I am glad you admitted that the bus service is under pressure. At the Assembly Transport Committee last week the Transport Commissioner came along and he said:

"In our view generally we are going to come to a point maybe in 2016 also when we are going to have to buy some extra mileage, otherwise we are not going to be able to get everybody on".

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Who said this, Leon [Daniels, Head of Surface TfL]?

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM: That was Sir Peter [Hendy CBE, Commissioner of TfL].

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Sir Peter, yes.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM: What concerns me, Mr Mayor, is are you actually trying to meet the demand for the highest pressured services by cutting back on routes elsewhere? Is that what you are doing?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Most Londoners complain to me, particularly motorists, that they think the buses are too empty. They are in fact no longer as empty as they were. Average ridership is now up from 16.6 people per bus to 17.7 people per bus, so you have more than an extra person, given that people are now fatter than they were too, crowding is obviously going to be more of a problem.

What we are doing is we are listening to people who want changes to bus routes and we are much faster with the technology, we have in plotting new routes and changing routes so as to increase capacity. There were 50 changes to routes in 2013, that included route 343, that is in your patch, Val, where an additional northbound morning peak journey was added to increase capacity, and there is going to be a major increase in capacity through the expansion of route 136 to the Elephant & Castle.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM: Those are very welcome improvements. My fear, Mr Mayor, is that they are being paid for by cutting back on services elsewhere. There was a report to the TfL Finance Committee in November last year and basically it was a scenario document. They talked about minimising the impact on passengers, the most effective way would be to reduce a large number of routes by a small amount rather than remove the whole services. For illustration, some 200 routes would have their midday, evening and Sunday services reduced by one bus per hour. It also discusses withdrawal of 15 night bus services and the possibility of withdrawing 15 outer suburban low

frequency routes. There are also a few examples like route 38, Clapton Pond to Victoria and the route 12, Dulwich to Oxford Circus, where we have seen some burning back, some reduction on relatively high frequency routes which are incredibly busy routes actually. That has been used to buy services elsewhere.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Yes.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM: If the fact is we have got massive growing population demand, there are some wards in London like Colindale, which have got double the population now than they had. You cannot really tackle growing demand in London just by reducing services in the suburbs and at night.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I understand, it is like robbing Peter to Paul, is what you are saying.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM: Is that what you are doing?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): No. We are also increasing the bus fleet and we are increasing mileage, but what Sir Peter had to say to you the other day is right. We are facing growing demand on our service and I think we will have to think about how we expand the bus fleet and how we expand the mileage travelled. What you cannot do, we certainly would not have been able to do if we had had a 7% cut in fares, which was a proposal on which you campaigned and would have been absolutely catastrophic.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM: Are you promising London --

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): As you know, buses are the most subsidy hungry form of transport.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM: Bus subsidies have gone down massively under you, Mr Mayor.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): They have, thanks to me but they are still the most subsidy hungry form of transport in the city.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM: Sorry, Mr Mayor, could you just promise Londoners that they will not see cuts to their suburban and night services?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I can guarantee that they will not see cuts to services across London because the services across London are going to increase. What I cannot guarantee is --

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM: Sorry. Are you going to promise Londoners that they will not see cuts to their suburban and night services?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I can guarantee that services across London will increase and, therefore, across London they will not be cut. What I can certainly tell you, and I am answering your question, fatuous though it is, we will continue --

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM: It is quite clear, there are people in the suburbs and who use night buses as well, who want to know: are you going to be reducing their services, yes or no?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): It depends what you mean? Where? Which services? I mean, yes, where you have an under-used --

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM: The 200 that you listed in the Transport Committee Report.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Where you have an under-used service, and you talk about a midday service, a lot of people moan to me that they see buses in the middle of the day with nobody on them. We all know that there are reasons --

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM: Mr Mayor, you are telling me yes you are going to be cutting back on services?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): No we are not. The answer is yes, we are going to be increasing services.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM: Can you promise me you are not going to be cutting back on suburban and night bus services?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Again, I can repeat my answer, we are going to be increasing services across London where it is possible to improve a service that has a particular need, and where you need to expand capacity, such as in Val's constituency then we may vary other services.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM: Sorry, Chair, I am out of time. I do not believe the Mayor has answered my question but I have run out of time.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I have answered your question.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM: Perhaps I might write to him and try to get something a little bit more definitive.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I can tell you we will increase services across London.

Darren Johnson (Chair): We will seek clarification in writing on this then. Thank you Assembly Member Shawcross.

Roger Evans (Deputy Chairman): Mr Mayor, one of the causes of loss of bus services and delays is attacks on staff, which are currently running at a rate of four per day, according to TfL's own figures. Obviously some of the routes in London are going to be worse for this than others, in much the way that bus crime attaches itself to certain routes. Will you ask the policing managers on buses to target some police resources at those places where our drivers are being assaulted or abused, so that we can actually put an end to this sort of behaviour which our employees should not have to face out there on the buses.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Absolutely. As I said, the crimes on buses, including attacks on drivers, are at an all-time low. They have come down a long way. If there are some particular routes we can tackle where this is a problem then of course we should do that.

Roger Evans (Deputy Chairman): Yes, that is good news, but talking to everyone involved in the bus industry, I think there is a general acceptance amongst employees and managers that there is an under-reporting of assaults and verbal abuse on bus drivers.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): We do not tolerate that, Roger, as you know, and we are very tough. We have signs up for members of the public to inform them of the risks that they run. We do prosecute. We prosecute members of the public who assault or who verbally abuse our staff and abuse bus drivers and we will continue to do that. It is very important to publish and know that.

Darren Johnson (Chair): Thank you very much.

2014/1703 - Beds in sheds

[Victoria Borwick](#)

Does the Mayor support the efforts of Harrow Council to tackle the problem of beds in sheds, for example, by the use of thermal imaging technology, and would he encourage other boroughs to follow this proactive approach to crack down on this issue across London?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Yes I do, Victoria, and I particularly want to congratulate and applaud the efforts of Councillor Susan Hall in Harrow who has done so much to tackle some of the worst abuse by landlords who charge people for accommodation in sheds and other structures unfit for human habitation. Thanks to the lobbying of Susan and others, we have the lion's share of the funding for London to support local authorities in tackling this issue.

Victoria Borwick AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. It is obviously a very difficult issue for those who are involved, so I am delighted to hear about your --

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Yes, Susan Hall. John [Biggs AM] wants to know which party Susan Hall is in. She is a Conservative, that is what she is and she is doing a great job in Harrow.

Victoria Borwick AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. Obviously one of the ways that Harrow was able to tackle this problem was by using heat mapping from a helicopter, just another resource of course that the police have, which they use also for tackling drug enforcement. I hope that you will encourage others to look at innovative ways of using their resources in order to reveal this problem.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Yes. Heat mapping, using helicopters to map beds in sheds, is one way of doing it. Obviously there are slightly cheaper methods as well, hotlines, local initiatives to root out the landlords who are doing this, and we support all sorts of interventions.

Victoria Borwick AM: Thank you. Is there any other work that you are doing that you wish to tell us about?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Well, now that you mention it, yes. There is a great deal of work going on in London, particularly in tackling the crisis of affordable housing, which was a residue of neglect by the Labour Party and I think I am right in saying that under the previous administration, Victoria, you may not know this, the number of affordable homes in London actually fell by 15,000. Yes, absolutely true, 15,000. Since I have been Mayor it has gone up on average net by 11,000.

I think that is a great achievement and we continue to go forward with measures to make London safer, to improve the air quality of our city and continue to attract investment that is leading to more regeneration in London than anybody has seen in the last 50 years. Things are happening across our city that most people never thought they would see in their lifetimes. Thanks to you and to all your Conservative supporters who are helping to bring that about.

Victoria Borwick AM: Yes.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): That is about as party political I am allowed to be.

Victoria Borwick AM: Thank you.

2014/1429 - Social housing

[Tom Copley](#)

What are you doing to ensure all London boroughs are working to deliver social housing?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Yes, thank you. Here we go. Thank you, Tom, excellent. The great man who told the truth about the record of the Labour Party and Margaret Thatcher's [Former Conservative Prime Minister] Government in building council homes. Absolutely right, the point you make.

The housing revenue counts, Tom, have been devolved to boroughs who have more freedom to build social housing themselves. Clearly we all want that cap on borrowing to be lifted, so as to build as much as possible. I just remind you of the statistic that I told Victoria just now. Over two terms of my predecessor, Mr Livingstone, the stock of social rented housing in London declined, under their watch, by 15,246 homes. In my first term alone I increased it by 11,683. In the next spending round we are going to be putting in an additional £1.25 billion to deliver 45,000 affordable homes. We are on target to deliver 100,000 over these two terms, an eight-year period.

Tom Copley AM: Mr Mayor, it is worth remembering of course that your distinguished predecessor did not gain powers over housing in this city until 2007, which was one year before he left office, but I am glad you want to talk about political party's records, Mr Mayor.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Who was in Government? The Labour Party. What party do you support? The Labour Party. What were you doing? Nothing.

Tom Copley AM: Mr Mayor, would you be quiet for a moment?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): No.

Tom Copley AM: The GLA's monitoring figures show that between the last set of local elections in 2010 and February this year, the average Labour council in London built twice as many social homes as the average Conservative-controlled council in London. Why are Conservative boroughs performing so badly?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Actually they are not. The figures I saw, was it Bromley, built a phenomenal --

Tom Copley AM: I think you hallucinate the figures that you see, Mr Mayor.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): No. Who was it who said that the Labour Party should apologise for the fact that more council homes --

Tom Copley AM: Will you answer the question?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): You have asked me about comparatives between Labour and Tory records.

Tom Copley AM: No, I asked you about the Labour boroughs and Conservative boroughs and you are evading the question as usual. Answer the question.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Somebody said recently that the Labour Party should apologise because more council homes were built in the last year of Thatcher's Government than were built in 13 years of Labour Government.

Tom Copley AM: I am talking about the homes that have been built in the last four years in London, Mr Mayor, under your Mayoralty.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Who said that? Assembly Member Tom Copley of Labour.

Tom Copley AM: If we can concentrate on borough comparisons, rather than Government comparisons, Mr Mayor.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I do not know how they still allow him to be in the Labour Party after that kind of thing, unbelievable.

Tom Copley AM: Mr Mayor, why over the last four years have Conservative-controlled boroughs built half as many homes, on average, than Labour-controlled boroughs? I know, Mr Mayor, why do you not apologise for the record of Conservative-controlled councils? Go on.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I am told you have been expelled from the Labour Party, Tom, for blowing the gaff on the pitiful record.

Tom Copley AM: Mr Mayor, you must have heard that from the same place you hear your affordable housing statistics from.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I just heard it from Assembly Member Biggs.

Tom Copley AM: Mr Mayor, do you know in the last four years Conservative controlled Kensington and Chelsea Council have built just 87 social houses and Conservative controlled Hammersmith and Fulham Council have built just 54 social houses? What do you say to those boroughs, Mr Mayor?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): They have to get on and build more affordable homes, and that is what we say to them. I think Bromley was actually in the lead on the figures I saw, or maybe it was Bexley, one of the two. Both superb boroughs and brilliantly represented, and they are part of a general drive that has allowed us in London to build 71,000 affordable homes this Mayoralty, already a record number and I am confident we will go on and do that.

Tom Copley AM: I will tell you something Mr Mayor, about Bromley and Bexley, in the league table, Mr Mayor, of the number of social houses delivered over the past four years, Bromley is 17th in the table, and Bexley is 24th. Nine out of the top ten boroughs are Labour. I hope you will congratulate Southwark Council for building 959 social houses over the past four years. He is not going to.

Darren Johnson (Chair): Do you wish to respond to that?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I congratulate all boroughs on their success.

Tom Copley AM: On that case I will end on a high then. Thank you very much.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): What it shows is that with solid Conservative leadership in City Hall the city is finally able to get things done that mysteriously eluded us in previous years.

Darren Johnson (Chair): Thank you.

Richard Tracey AM: Mr Mayor, I am rather perplexed by what Tom Copley has just been telling you, because are you aware that Wandsworth Council apparently granted planning permission for over 1,000 affordable homes last year, by far the highest of any council in London?

Tom Copley AM: They were not social.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I am not remotely surprised. I do not know what definitions Tom is using to make his points. The figures I have seen show huge numbers of affordable homes being built across London by all boroughs. I congratulate them on that. Some people need to do more and we are on their case.

Andrew Boff AM: Mr Mayor, could you, if possible, do some research and produce a figure that would analyse the effect on housing funding of adopting the Labour Party's plan to restrict council house sales? Because of course now under this Government we have an agreement that the proceeds from council house sales can be used in order to build new council houses.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Absolutely right.

Andrew Boff AM: Could you do an analysis of what the Labour Party's plan of restricting council house sales would have on housing funding in London?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I will do some investigations into that for you, Andrew. I will find out what their odious policy would achieve. What they want to do is stop the proceeds of council house sales being used to build new housing, which is what their policy was.

Does anybody happen to know how many council homes were flogged off under the Governments of Tony Blair and Gordon Brown [Former Labour Prime Ministers], which they supported, whose boots they licked? Do you know how many council homes in London were sold off? 85,000, yes, 85,000 sold. Look at them, look at their guilty faces. Look at them. 85,000 they sold. How much of the proceeds of those council housing sales were used to build new homes in London? How much? Not a penny.

Andrew Boff AM: Not a penny, absolutely.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Not a penny, and then they have the effrontery to try to criticise the Conservative record on house building, when we are finally showing the guts, determination, dynamism to get homes built across London in huge numbers.

Darren Johnson (Chair): Thank you.

2014/1679 - HS2

[Richard Tracey](#)

Given that you stated last month that HS2 has a worse business case than Crossrail 2 and that both have a worse business case than a new Estuary Airport, does the news that HS2 legislation won't be through Parliament before the General Election give you hope that taxpayers' money will be spent as wisely as possible?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Yes, thanks very much, Richard. Your question really is about the relative merits of HS2, Crossrail 2 and a new airport and other schemes. My view, as I have made clear many times before is that HS2 is not a bad scheme, it is not the best scheme that you could be pursuing. Right now Crossrail 2 has a business case of about four to one that it is a much better project from that point of view. A new airport is absolutely indispensable for our future commercial success as a nation, so both those rate high. That does not mean that I think HS2 is a bad project. As I was saying earlier on, one of the things that this country is going to do well in now is when the London effect starts to spin out across the rest of the country. You are starting to see it, the more connections there are the better the connectivity between London and the north, the better it will be all round.

Richard Tracey AM: Were you surprised that the David Higgins [Chief Executive, Network Rail] Report on Monday did not find significantly lower costs? I thought that was what he was promising to do. Perhaps it is early days.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I think David is always a pretty realistic cost assessor. If you think about what he did with the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) budget, he basically decided quite a long way out that the £2.5 billion that we were initially promised was not really going to be realistic. He went for the £9.3 billion and he delivered it for under £9.3 billion, so I think we can take his figures as being solid.

Richard Tracey AM: Presumably though, in the long term, it actually makes sense to link up High Speed 1 (HS1) and HS2, does it not?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Yes, of course it does, because the medium-term future is obviously to exploit the incredible things that are happening in the east of London and all the opportunity areas there. Ebbsfleet is now going to be a new town. You are going to need the connectivity out to that part of the world, and you are going to need Crossrail 2. What you do not need, this will be controversial, but the business case I have not yet seen, is for lots of people wanting to travel on the same train from Manchester to Brussels or Lille. I have not seen them. Maybe there are, but I do not think you would fill more than a train a day with that kind of traffic. I might be wrong about that, people might object, but I do not see much evidence for that. The HS1/HS2 link has to be got right, but it does not need, in my view, to be got right for that purpose.

Richard Tracey AM: Did you also find it interesting and perhaps agree with what David Higgins said that maybe work should start in the north at the same time as in the south, or indeed possibly start the whole project in the north?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I am not sure that is what David was saying.

Richard Tracey AM: He was certainly pointing to the north --

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I think the story was spun that way but I think what he actually said was that you should begin with the Birmingham to London link.

Richard Tracey AM: Do you believe that perhaps bringing the north forward might be a good idea?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I think you have to get it all done and, as I understood what he was saying, looking at it closely, he was saying do the Birmingham to London link and then do the 'Y' up to Manchester and Leeds.

Darren Johnson (Chair): Thank you.

Andrew Dismore AM: I think one of the problems with the Higgins Report is that there is still no recognition of the inadequate compensation arrangements for Camden residents, where they are going to be rehoused, the impact on the Drummond Street businesses that are going to be ruined, the lack of the mitigation measures for those who live near the works, that has not been covered in the Higgins Report at all.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): No it has not.

Andrew Dismore AM: Nor has, in fact, the importance of building simultaneously Crossrail 2, so that when people get off HS2 they do not suddenly find that they end up at Euston Station Underground finding it closed because of overcrowding.

I am a bit concerned about what you have just had to say about the HS2/1 link because the Higgins Report finally recognised that it was a silly idea to devastate Camden Town for ten years to build this on the existing railway tracks.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): No, we will not do that.

Andrew Dismore AM: I am very concerned that you still seem to think that we want an HS2/HS1 link. Is it about time you started listening to your father again?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): No. Just so you understand what I am saying, Andrew, TfL's objection to the HS1/HS2 link, as it was initially proposed, is that it did indeed clog up the existing tracks in a way that would be completely detrimental to freight carriage and to passenger carriage in London. We thought that the scheme was hopeless. What you could ultimately do is do it in tunnel. You should do it in tunnel or you should go all the way out to Stratford and you should basically build a Crossrail 3 and that is where we will end up.

On your point about compensation in Camden and all that kind of thing, I think there are patently strong voices being raised against what is happening in Camden and they are not yours, so far as I can make out. Clearly, that needs to be reflected.

One proposal is to have something called 'double deck down', which you will be familiar with. That is basically to save a lot of the disruption in Camden by doing as they do at Grand Central Station in New York. You have two tiers, so you would be able to contract the overall footprint of the site and have less disruption. I know that HS2 is going to be looking into that. What I cannot tell you now is that they are going to be able to promise it because intuitively most parties would agree that it would almost certainly add to the cost and probably also to the delay. It might also make it more difficult to deliver the regeneration that we want to see in Euston.

Andrew Dismore AM: Do you support double deck down?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I will support anything that is cost-effective and that reduces disruption.

Darren Johnson AM (Chair): Thank you very much. Let us move on, then, to the next question on the order paper.

2014/1705 - 'SmartWater' ink

[James Cleverly](#)

Would you consider using 'SmartWater' ink during public order disturbances to allow offenders to be more easily traced and convicted?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Yes. A characteristically brainy idea, James. I would be in favour of using SmartWater. The police and the Home Office are looking for a role for SmartWater in identifying people involved in incidents of disorder.

James Cleverly AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. It is a statement of public record that there is a mixed view across the Assembly about the use of certain tools in the public disorder arsenal. However, what I was very keen for - however we move forward or however the Government decides to move forward

with regard to water cannon - was for us to recognise, as you have done, that any procedure or piece of equipment can only be one part of a portfolio of solutions to public order.

I was very struck by the fact that in August 2011 when we had the widespread civil disorder, it really started to calm down when people started being arrested. I am very keen that as well as looking at --

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Jennette had it right earlier on, yes.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: No. The police needed to do their job and arrest them.

James Cleverly AM: Yes, indeed. Thank you, Jennette. I am very keen that as well as using the immediate tools to either calm, disperse or contain, that actually the ability for the police to quickly, and very close to the scene and time of the incident, arrest people, is very, very important. Will you commit to not just this but perhaps a broader review of the arsenal of capabilities in public order policing to run in parallel with whatever work is going on with water cannon?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Yes. We are certainly looking at this SmartWater traceable liquids idea. One of the problems is that if you squirt lots of SmartWater at a crowd and somebody gets drenched in SmartWater, the risk is that they will go off and embrace their tearful loved ones or whatever and then everybody will be contaminated. There will be SmartWater all over the place. SmartWater gets progressively dumber because the forensics become very difficult. You cannot really tell who has been at the incident.

James Cleverly AM: Indeed. Mr Mayor, at no point is anyone claiming that any solution comes without practical difficulties or implementation issues. I am just very conscious that public bodies - this is not a particular criticism of the police - have a habit of latching on to what they perceive to be a knight-in-shining-armour solution to a problem. I just want to make sure that whilst we investigate further the decision about water cannon, a decision which - you are completely right - is in your gift as Mayor of London, we do not miss the opportunities to also look at other capabilities which may sit very comfortably and work in parallel with those, so we have a spectrum of capabilities from the very subtle and non-intrusive through to the much more forceful if that is what is needed.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Yes. As I have said, we are interested in the potential of SmartWater. Whether it is a replacement for water emitted with greater pressure, which is what the water cannon would do, I do not know, but they are studying it.

James Cleverly AM: Or allied to it, not necessarily replace it. I am completely comfortable with it. You make a decision and, whilst you might not agree, we have had a debate and you have outlined a way forward. I completely understand and respect that. What I am suggesting is that we look at things which may be used in parallel.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Yes, absolutely. SmartWater is being used now and it is being very effective, actually, in catching burglars. It is a fantastic thing.

James Cleverly AM: Thank you.

Darren Johnson AM (Chair): Thank you very much.

Tony Arbour AM: You will recall in relation to this, Mr Mayor, that at the last meeting I raised the subject of sound cannon and I drew your --

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Yes, you did and you totally baffled me.

Tony Arbour AM: -- attention to the fact that sound cannon had been deployed during the Olympics. You, unusually, expressed the opinion that this was something you knew nothing of. I wonder whether or not you would, whilst you are looking at the SmartWater option or indeed any other option for crowd control, look to see what the effect is of sound cannon, particularly in relation to the point I made as to how cheap the implementation or the acquisition of sound cannon would be. You have already told us in our discussion of water cannon earlier today that a great many major cities already have this as part of their arsenal. Similarly, many major cities have sound cannon as part of their arsenal. Therefore --

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Is this some sort of April fool?

Tony Arbour AM: If it was an April fool, Mr Mayor, why on earth was a substantial sum of public money invested in this during the Olympics to have sound cannon on barges outside this building and in the Olympic area.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: Where? Who used sound cannon?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Tony, I am going to apologise to you very sincerely because you did raise this last time when I was sitting here with the Commissioner, and both the Commissioner and I were completely flummoxed by what you said. The truth is that in the interval it has just slipped my mind to acquaint myself of the facts. I do not know what you are talking about. I am very, very sorry. I am going to have to find out about the sound cannon, if they existed and whether they are any use.

Darren Johnson AM (Chair): I did check the transcript of that meeting as Chair and the Mayor's response was that we do not need sound cannon when we have Jenny [Jones], in case you missed that. We will move on anyway to the next question.

2014/1434 - Apprenticeships

[Fiona Twycross](#)

Are you on course to meet your targets for increasing apprenticeships in London?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Fiona, I hope so. We are trying to do 250,000 by 2016 and, as I was saying in an earlier answer to Andrew [Boff], it has been going very well but we are now in the hard yards and there are lots of things we need to do to try to keep the programme going at the rate we want.

I want to stress, since people will be watching this and thinking whether they should hire an apprentice, it is a fantastic thing to do and 85% of them stay on and get full-time jobs. They are brilliant employees. They will reduce your costs. It is the way forward for young people.

Fiona Twycross AM: OK. I share your aspiration for increasing apprenticeships, although I was not quite clear about the points being raised earlier by a colleague opposite, but why have apprenticeships started to decline in London in the past year? How can you be confident or hopeful of reaching your target if the rate of growth has slowed down to the extent it has? With levels of youth unemployment particularly among young black men in London too high, do you not think that a bit stronger action is needed?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I do. Obviously, the answer is partly the one I gave earlier on, which is that natural economic confidence has started to ease. Some of the people who might have got into the apprenticeship programme are getting jobs just in the normal course of things. There is a group that really needs help, a group that is particularly hard to reach. They are exactly the sorts of people who would benefit from apprenticeships and from the apprenticeship campaign.

We are putting money into a big publicity campaign. We are trying to get SMEs, who are particularly capable of taking on this type of young person, to see the benefits to them, try to explain the programme, sell it better and put more money into it. One of the things we want to do is get back to the £3,000 a year in support for SMEs to take on young people. We will be putting some money into that as well.

Fiona Twycross AM: One of the things I have been looking at in relation to apprenticeships is the age profile. You have repeated and I think most people assume that apprentices are young people who are starting out in life, going out to get the skills and vocational training that will set them up for a career longer term. However, there is something about the age profile that is out of kilter with the impression people have about the role. The number of apprenticeships in the under-25 age group increased by 452 from 2009 to 2010, compared to an increase of 20% for under-19s and 63% for 19 to 24-year-olds. In fact, in 2012 to 2013, almost half of the apprenticeship starts were under-25s.

I have been looking at it. One of the reasons for this - because I have been trying to dig down into exactly why this would happen and why it would happen around a change of Government - is that the Government appears to have reclassified over-25s who are already in work but working towards a qualification as an apprenticeship. To be honest, I am not at all sure that those classed as apprenticeships for this purpose will even necessarily be aware that they are as a result.

Will you make sure that the 250,000 apprenticeships you are committed to creating do not simply constitute a reclassification of existing roles, but are new roles to provide much-needed work skills and experience and are helping young people first and foremost find their feet in the workplace?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Yes. The brief I have is that most of the people we classify that have become apprentices in London since 2009/10 have been under the age of 25. There is no reason why you should not have apprenticeships for older people at all. That is not a bad thing. I am slightly with you on the reclassification thing and we will dig into that and find out.

Fiona Twycross AM: I will send you the figures we have on that and I agree with you that people over 25 should also be encouraged to take up apprenticeships if it is appropriate. However, I am concerned that there is an issue around reclassification rather than creation of the roles.

The other thing I just wanted to ask briefly was whether you are concerned that some employers appear to be using the role of apprentice to pay less. Do you agree there needs to be greater control

over this area to avoid potential exploitation? For example, I have two adverts for jobs at a major high street chain that are almost identical, one for a retail apprenticeship paid at £2.68 an hour and the other for a sales adviser paid above the minimum wage. Both, when you look at the actual content of the advert, appear to contain the same element of training. Do you think this is appropriate? If I pass on the details of the retailer to you, would you contact them and ask them to think again about their approach?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): What are they doing wrong again, Fiona?

Fiona Twycross AM: They appear to be paying people who are classed as apprentices obviously at the apprenticeship rate, but identical jobs paid over the minimum wage are being advertised with the same training element.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): That is interesting and we should look into that, yes.

Fiona Twycross AM: Yes. I will pass that on because there is a serious issue around low pay anyway in London. If people are trying to avoid it, then there is a real issue.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Yes, absolutely. The apprenticeships programme goes hand-in-hand with what we are trying to do with the Living Wage. There we have made progress but, as you and I have said many times, there is a lot more to do.

Fiona Twycross AM: Thank you.

Darren Johnson AM (Chair): Thank you very much. Can we under standing orders agree to extend the meeting to complete the remaining business?

All: Agreed.

Darren Johnson AM (Chair): Thank you, Members. Can we then move on to the next question on the order paper?

2014/1435 - Broadband

[Andrew Dismore](#)

Are you satisfied with the coverage of high speed broadband in London?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Andrew, yes. I have said I want London to have the fastest broadband of any European city and the fastest Wi-Fi connections. This year, we are rolling out the SME broadband voucher scheme, which will allow businesses, charities and other non-profit organisations to claim up to £3,000 for putting in high-speed broadband. We also wanted to use the fund to address unserved residential addresses because there are problems in some areas of London. Unfortunately, the European Union state aid guidelines on broadband investment in cities means that we need to change the scope of this, rather infuriatingly.

One of the things I have done in the long term Infrastructure Plan is ask for a series of steps we can take to make sure that London basically has the best broadband coverage in the world and that

everybody can be completely confident of getting a signal. Wi-Fi, as you know, is being extended everywhere in transport networks and is currently available in 130 Underground stations, with plans for 150 stations to have Wi-Fi by the end of 2014 and 56 Overground stations.

Andrew Dismore AM: You are trying to put a brave face on it, but the fact is you have presided over a high-tech train wreck. If you would like to look at the figures, London is sixth from the bottom of European capitals for broadband.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I am sorry. This is completely ludicrous.

Andrew Dismore AM: There will be only 85% coverage at the end of the rollout in a few weeks' time. Over half of those who are connected get speeds two-thirds below the Government target. If you look at my constituency, the HA postcodes in Barnet, 5,000 will have no access to broadband and 90,000 are below speed. In the EC district in Camden, a central London business district, 7,000 have no access and 11,600 are below speed. That is hardly a success. The fact is that it is a shambles, is it not, really?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): You are talking about a city that has more tech start-ups and more high-tech businesses than any other in Europe --

Andrew Dismore AM: They are all complaining about it.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): -- and indeed is lengthening its lead over the rest of the EU. Obviously, I am not saying I am totally satisfied with broadband provision in London and clearly we need to do more. It is something I have raised with both British Telecom (BT) and Virgin and we need to have better coverage. You are slightly running London down if you say that we have a high-tech car crash. On the contrary, you are seeing an extraordinary success in this city. It is the tech capital of the world.

Andrew Dismore AM: I have to say that is the most complacent approach to one of the most serious obstacles to growth in London I have ever heard. In fact, it is not just the European Union. BT is in large part to blame. It has a complete lack of communication with people who want to find out what is going on. I have a resident in Mill Hill who has been trying to find out for months what is happening in relation to connections. He cannot get anything done about it. It was their legal challenge against Birmingham which actually stopped local authorities providing some support, a dog-in-a-manger attitude. It is BT who actually decides what is or is not economic to provide. It is not monitored. It decides whether there is enough demand or not. That is not monitored. It is no surprise, then, that their Openreach company, which is responsible for broadband rollout, made £5 billion in revenue last year. The fact is they are making a huge profit by not providing the service Londoners deserve. It is about time you got tough with them. It is about time you called them and gave them a seeing-to and made them spend some of that £5 billion on plugging the gaps they have created.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): As I say, we have been very tough in our representations both to BT and to Virgin Media about what they are doing to provide better coverage and we will continue to do so. Just to repeat: we are rolling out a voucher scheme that will allow all businesses, charities and others to avail themselves of broadband.

Andrew Dismore AM: This broad-brush waffle is not going to do anything about getting broadband into London. It is about time you pulled your finger out, got tough with BT and got something done about it and you have not. This is a serious obstacle to growth in London and you are so complacent you do not even recognise it.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): On the contrary, we are this year putting out our voucher programme for £3,000 for all businesses, SMEs, charities and non-profit organisations.

Andrew Dismore AM: That will not pay for a single bit of extra infrastructure, will it?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I am not going to pretend to you that everything is perfect.

Andrew Dismore AM: It does not pay for any infrastructure improvements at all, does it?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I cannot hear a word you are saying when you speak so fast. Since in my experience you never say anything worth listening to.

Andrew Dismore AM: Take your hair out of your ears and listen.

Darren Johnson AM (Chair): Let us stop getting stroppy with one another.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I am not getting stroppy. He always gets stroppy. He gets incredibly irate when --

Darren Johnson AM (Chair): Assembly Member Dismore, do you want to repeat your question?

Andrew Dismore AM: No, it does not matter.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): OK. He always gets in a terrible strop and I do not know why. Let me tell you --

Andrew Dismore AM: You are not doing your job. That is why.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Actually, we are leading this city into a most extraordinary flowering of tech across the board and Steve O'Connell mentioned earlier on what is happening in Croydon. We have seen 28,000 tech start-ups just since I have been Mayor, more than any other city in Europe if not the world. I am not going to pretend to you that our broadband is perfect, but we are putting in, as I say, a voucher scheme that will allow all businesses £3,000 to get them the broadband they need.

2014/1680 - New Tube for London

[Richard Tracey](#)

Will London Underground be running an open competition for the design of the New Tube for London?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Up to a point, Richard. What we have is the broad outlines of the design which will be shortly made available: a beautiful new train with no conventional driver's cab, air-cooled, walk-through; a gorgeous, sinuous thing. Seats everywhere.

Obviously, what will happen now is there will be an open competition for the procurement of that train, which will almost certainly be first deployed on the Piccadilly line, and in the course of that procurement the detailed design work will be done. However, it is an opportunity to create a New Tube for London, like the New Bus for London, which will be beautiful.

Richard Tracey AM: Yes, precisely. It is a wonderful opportunity to showcase really good British design rather like the Thomas Heatherwick design for the New Bus. The other thing: do you believe that Londoners will embrace the whole idea of driverless trains? These trains are going to be produced without a driver's cab. Following the example of so many cities in the rest of the world, it will be a very good move forward.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): It will. I cannot guarantee the nationality of the designer and whether the designer would be from London. That would be to infringe Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) procurement rules. It will, I hope very much, be the equivalent of the New Bus for London. It will be a train that will last 50 years at least and I am sure it will be beautiful.

Richard Tracey AM: Thank you.

Darren Johnson AM (Chair): Thank you. I am assuming it is not a hop-on, hop-off design.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): You will be able to get off it and you will be able to get on it. There is no point in having a train when you cannot either hop on or hop off.

Darren Johnson AM (Chair): Let us move on.

2014/1677 - Business crime and confidence

[Roger Evans](#)

My report High Street Blues found that, of the random sample of shop owners I spoke to, 94% had been a victim of crime more than once and, of these, 47% had suffered a serious crime such as burglary and violence. However, the majority would not bother to report a crime to the police. What will you do to encourage shop owners to report crime?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Yes, Roger, thank you very much for the work you are doing in this area on business crime. Obviously, it is a concern if what you say is correct and businesses are not reporting crime, although clearly it is some consolation that reported levels of crime are coming down. If businesses are experiencing crime that they are not reporting, then they need to report it.

Roger Evans AM (Deputy Chairman): One of the features of business crime we encountered when we did our survey was that quite a lot of small retail businesses owned by people from black and ethnic minorities in inner London see themselves as virtually under siege because they are victims of shoplifting and other crimes and they do not always report them. Would you consider our

recommendation of designating a special point of contact for areas where there are a lot of BME businesses who may be suffering from that sort of crime?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Sorry, what sort of point of contact? What do you mean?

Roger Evans AM (Deputy Chairman): This would be an officer who is actually a point of contact for the force.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): To try to tackle business crime in particular?

Roger Evans AM (Deputy Chairman): Yes.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Yes. That is the kind of suggestion that certainly should be taken up within the Local Policing Model. The obvious people to be in charge of that would be the Safer Neighbourhood Teams.

Roger Evans AM (Deputy Chairman): You have also stated in the MOPAC strategy that you are going to conduct a pan-London business attitude survey. Clearly, the strategy recognises that business crime is important. It is one of the key issues you intend to address. Could you just tell us how often you are going to be conducting that survey and what you will do with the material that comes from it?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): The survey will be conducted at a decent interval in order for us to frame it with relevance. I cannot give you the exact frequency with which we are going to do it, no. Clearly, you are worried that businesses are not reporting crime. So am I, if that is correct. You did a big survey of businesses. You rang a load of businesses. You said, "Have you had crime?" They said, "Yes". You said, "Have you reported it?" They said, "No". We need to dig into that and find out why they are not reporting it. If it is stuff like shoplifting or assaults on staff that are not being reported, it needs to be reported.

Roger Evans AM (Deputy Chairman): Would you agree that if we take a strong line on things like shoplifting and thefts from businesses --

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): We should take a strong line.

Roger Evans AM (Deputy Chairman): -- it will make it very clear that it is unacceptable and maybe, if we - God forbid - find ourselves facing another riot situation like the one in 2011, people will not so casually indulge in taking things from businesses because they will know it is wrong?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): That is right. If people become habituated to business crime and to shoplifting, obviously the psychological threshold they have to clear in order to do something worse is lower and we need to be very tough on it.

Roger Evans AM (Deputy Chairman): Thank you.

Darren Johnson AM (Chair): Thank you.

2014/1663 - Whitton Station

Tony Arbour

Ahead of the Rugby World Cup next year, will you work do everything possible to persuade the Government that Whitton Station is not fit for purpose and needs urgent improvement work?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Tony, actually, I was down at Whitton Station the other day and a lady came up to me and said, "Nothing has been done here for 40 years. It has been the same since I was a kid. Nothing has happened". Obviously, this not one of our stations. This is a Network Rail station. I am told, though, that South West Trains and Network Rail are at last carrying out some improvements and I fully support those and will lobby for them.

Tony Arbour AM: Whitton is one of the places that were recipients of your Outer London Fund.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): They have done a great job in the high street.

Tony Arbour AM: When you were there, you will have seen how Whitton has been transformed from the Ultralux double-glazing firm right down to the Nelson Public House. You made the point that this station is not your responsibility, but of course during the World Cup, London as a whole will be on display and Whitton is one of the principal stations for access to the Twickenham rugby ground. Under those circumstances, it may be that you may be able to access funding to provide a catalyst to see that Whitton Station is improved in time for the World Cup.

Darren Johnson AM (Chair): Thank you. A quick answer to that because the Conservative group is now running out of time.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): How could I have a catalyst? Do you mean catalytic TfL funding? We either fund the station improvements or we do not.

Tony Arbour AM: No, I said a catalyst for funding, not for TfL funding.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): OK. Sorry, Tony.

Tony Arbour AM: You are a lightning rod.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): A lightning rod? I agree with all of this. I am. I am certainly a lightning rod. Listen. I definitely want to get Whitton Station done. I think it will be done. More importantly, the thing we should focus on is travel demand management during the Rugby World Cup. We did a great job during the Olympics. We cannot be complacent. It is coming down the track very fast now. It may be that the demand will be much lower. --

Darren Johnson AM (Chair): It is something we do not have time to deal with today because --

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): It is very interesting, though.

Darren Johnson AM (Chair): It is very, very interesting.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Come on. I worry about it. We have to sort it out.

Darren Johnson AM (Chair): It will have to come back as a future question because the Conservative group is now out of time.

2014/1433 - Labour market equality

[Fiona Twycross](#)

Given your responsibility for economic development, what are you doing to promote gender equality in London's labour market?

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Fiona, I am committed to promoting gender equality in London's labour market, including through the apprenticeships campaign, which we have just discussed. In the apprentice numbers we spoke of, in 2012/13 they were about 56% female, a bit higher than the national average. In City Hall, 51% of staff are female.

Clearly, there is no case for complacency because one of the biggest barriers we have to economic success in London is the shortage of affordable childcare. With Elizabeth Truss [Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Education and Childcare], we are trying to get some more affordable childcare going into London's schools.

Fiona Twycross AM: Thank you. I am quite a big fan of leading by example and you mentioned what is happening here at the GLA. In February, you admitted - as you have done today - that women are nowhere near achieving equal employment opportunities in the labour market. I just wanted to point out that in your pool of advisers, in which you stated almost half of the staff were women, actually only four of your 14 paid advisers are women, which is about 28%.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): That is not true.

Fiona Twycross AM: In the figures I have, it is for paid advisers. In the GLA, women are overwhelmingly employed on lower salaries than their male counterparts and few women reach the highest pay scales.

Darren Johnson AM (Chair): OK, thank you. A quick response to that because the Labour group is now running out of time.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I see at least five paid advisers here who are --

Fiona Twycross AM: Rather than count them now, four or five out of 14 is still quite low. Can you commit to doing something more in your office, please, about gender equality and setting a good example?

Darren Johnson AM (Chair): A very quick answer.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): I am very pleased that we have a large number of women in my senior team, including three Deputy Mayors out of a total of seven: the Deputy Mayor for Transport, the Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture - Victoria Borwick, an illustrious statutory Deputy Mayor who is not in her place - and Veronica [Wadley] who does volunteering, Rosie Boycott [Chair, London Food Board], Kate Hoey [Mayoral Adviser on Sport, GLA] and --

Darren Johnson AM (Chair): We do not need to list them all.

Boris Johnson (Mayor of London): Why not? Zandra Rhodes [CBE, London Breast Cancer Ambassador], Barbara Windsor [MBE, Ambassador for Street Parties], Cllr Teresa O'Neill [Adviser on Outer Borough Relations, GLA], they are all there.

Darren Johnson AM (Chair): The Labour group is out of time now, so that does conclude the questions. All the groups are now out of time, so we thank you for coming along today.

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