

Mayor's Question Time – Thursday, 16 January 2020

Transcript of Item 5 – Questions to the Mayor

2020/0123 – Crossrail 2

Tony Devenish AM

With HS2's budget out of control, how are you going to build confidence that Crossrail 2 is deliverable to time and budget?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you. Transport for London (TfL) has always been open about the costs of Crossrail 2 and current cost estimates include an additional 54% to allow for risk. This is in line with Treasury requirements. Regarding timings, I believe it is still possible to deliver Crossrail 2 in the 2030s but, as has always been the case, this will require Government support and funding.

Crossrail 2 is learning lessons from a wide range of major infrastructure projects and the project team has undertaken extensive benchmarking exercises, including internationally. Of crucial value has been its detailed analysis of the actual cost of Crossrail, including the current overruns. That analysis has confirmed that TfL's estimates for Crossrail 2 are prudent.

The Crossrail 2 team has also subjected its cost-estimating and programming approaches and benchmark analysis to external scrutiny and assurance. This has included extensive work in 2018 by the Government's Independent Affordability Review, work by the Treasury's project assurance reviews and a review by a dedicated independent assurance panel established jointly by the Department for Transport (DfT) and TfL to scrutinise the project. All this has endorsed TfL's cost and programme projections for this scheme.

Progressing the scheme at the pace we would like would require us to reach agreement with the Government around funding for the scheme. We have set out in detail how London could fund 50% of the cost. However, the Mayoral Community Infrastructure Levy (MCIL) funds earmarked for Crossrail 2 have been temporarily diverted to repay the central Government package to complete the Elizabeth line. This means that unless there are other ways of agreeing with the Government how construction will be funded, London will not now be able to pay its 50% without delaying Crossrail 2. We will be in discussion with the Government ahead of this year's spending review to explore options in this context for taking Crossrail 2 forward to the next stage.

Can I just end by saying this; I am very much in favour of proper investment in all the regions of the country but this cannot be a zero-sum game. If crucial investment in London suffers as a result, then since it remains the engine of the national economy this will not ultimately help other regions. We need investment in both Northern Powerhouse Rail and in key London infrastructure improvements, including Crossrail 2.

Tony Devenish AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor, and I totally agree with your last statement there, but just for the record, to be clear, are you for or against High Speed 2 (HS2), please?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): For.

Tony Devenish AM: But you do recognise that the business case for Crossrail 2 is significantly better than for HS2?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I agree. Actually, one of the things we can pray in aid - and I am sure the Assembly will join me in doing this - is that the National Infrastructure Commission report also agreed that investing in infrastructure in London benefits the country. You will be aware of the figures and also the business case as well that you have alluded to.

Tony Devenish AM: Thank you, and you will be aware of a recent poll by Savanta that found that three-quarters of London businesses believe that HS2 is too expensive while 64% thought, to quote, "The project has or will cause too much disruption". Do you back London's businesses on that?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I think we have to be a bit careful here not to give the impression that London is in favour of infrastructure investment in London but against and at the expense of infrastructure around the country. I am well aware of businesses, particularly those businesses in London that have offices and presences across the country, who know the benefits to our country of increased investment in infrastructure projects. I think we can invest in both Crossrail 2, HS2 and other big projects across the country. The Chancellor indeed has said that he will be announcing significant funds for infrastructure and I am looking forward to him agreeing that it is not a zero-sum game.

Tony Devenish AM: Thank you. On Crossrail 2, would you agree that we have not made that much progress in your three and a half years as Mayor? What more can you do, please?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I have the timeline and actually one of the reasons for the delay is the delay from the previous DfT run by the previous Secretary of State. I am really pleased the current Secretary of State is quite keen to make progress. For example, in 2016 we were talking to the Government before the reshuffle. We gave the Government the further evidence they required and they had been reviewing that for some time. They asked for a further strategic business case, which we have submitted to the Government. They have had it since last year. We have been responding to all the additional information requests from the Government and if criticism is being made - I think that is what you are alluding to - about any delay, that criticism should be directed towards the Government, not City Hall or TfL.

Tony Devenish AM: On Crossrail 2, would you agree that because it is an infrastructure project it is all about homes and jobs, and could we get those large figures across in terms of more investment equals more homes and jobs for London?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Absolutely, but the other big point - and you will be aware of this from your interests - is that it is not just London that will benefit. Both Crossrail 1, which starts outside London and ends outside London, and Crossrail 2 mean more jobs and more homes for everyone. You will also be aware that the jobs created on the supply chain benefit the entire country as well. It is really important that we persuade the Government this is a national infrastructure investment with huge benefits in jobs and homes but also infrastructure as well.

Tony Devenish AM: Thank you. I will leave it there.

2020/1037 – Airborne Particulate Matter (PMs)

[David Kurten AM](#)

What level of particulate matter (PMs) do you consider to be hazardous to human health?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): All Londoners deserve to breathe clean air. We have been cleaning up, since I became Mayor, our buses and taxi fleets, improving air quality around schools, supporting Londoners to make more trips by active or sustainable modes, and encouraging a switch to electric vehicles. Last year we introduced the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) in the face of opposition from some Members of the Assembly - the world's toughest vehicle emission standards - in central London to reduce toxic air pollution and protect public health. The ULEZ is already having a real impact with roadside nitrogen dioxide pollution reducing by around a third in the zone. This shows what we can achieve when we are brave enough to implement such ambitious policies.

When it comes to hazards to human health, I take my advice from medical experts. The World Health Organisation (WHO) states, "There is no safe level for ambient particulate matter and there is evidence of some health effects even at lower levels". They have set an annual average recommended guideline of 10 micrograms per cubic metre. The best current evidence links concentrations above this level to the most severe health impacts. This standard refers explicitly to particulate matter in ambient outside air. There is not yet an equivalent for indoors. This limit is under review by medical experts and I will continue to be led by evidence.

Despite recent improvements, the vast majority of Londoners still live in areas that exceed this limit and that is unacceptable. That is why under my leadership London was the first world megacity to pledge to meet the WHO guidelines by 2030 and my Environment Strategy lays out the necessary actions to bring London's toxic air down to these safer levels, including the expansion of the ULEZ, but we cannot do it alone. We need the support of central Government and crucially the additional powers I have requested to tackle non-transport sources of toxic pollution.

David Kurten AM: Thank you for your answer, Mr Mayor, but you must know that the legal limit for PM2.5s, which is the measure it is usually taken as, is 25 micrograms per cubic metre and it has been decreasing since 2008, before you became Mayor. Yes, it has decreased as well since you have been Mayor, but it was already going down beforehand.

On the Tube, in the Victoria line, we have a level of 361 micrograms per cubic metre. That is 15 times the legal limit set by the EU which you so love. Is that a matter of urgency for you to deal with, Mr Mayor?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): It is a matter of urgency. Can I just distinguish Tube dust and the particulate matter we see in the ambient outdoor air? Tube dust tends to be iron oxide and there is some work being done by experts from around the world, who include Europeans who are EU citizens, some who are British residents and some who are not. TfL commissioned a report from the committee on the medical effects of air pollution. That concluded there was currently insufficient evidence of the health effects of Underground particulate matter and more research is needed. We have commissioned that research.

We are working with others to do further research, including King's [College London], Imperial [College] and Queen Mary [University], but it is a source of concern and that is why we have paid for a clean air exercise. This has led to proactive action to prevent and contain Tube dust at source, which is a £60 million cleaning regime. The good news is that initial trials have shown a 73% reduction in respirable dust on the Piccadilly line following the trial. We are now going to go into doing a similar trial on the Bakerloo and the line you mentioned, the Victoria line, as well.

David Kurten AM: OK. Thank you for your answer and it is good there has been a reduction, but there was a letter from TfL written to the Environment Committee in October [2019] that said they are going to be testing

for chromium-6 and arsenic. Arsenic, as you know, is a highly toxic substance and chromium-6 is a class 1 carcinogen. What will you do if it is found that there are significant levels of those two substances in the air that people are breathing in the Tube?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I hope you are reassured by the fact that TfL is leading the way. We are not burying away reports. What we are doing instead is commissioning reports to find out what the situation is. TfL will do what they always do, which is follow the advice from the experts where they can. You will be aware one of the challenges we have is that TfL has the oldest Underground in the world, it is very deep and some of the tunnels are very narrow, which means the space is limited between the train and the station. We will do what needs to be done to make sure we improve the situation.

David Kurten AM: Great. That deals with the Underground. Now let me ask you another question about what is happening above ground because we know that PM2.5s are within the legal limit, we know that nitrogen dioxide levels have come down, but you are proposing that from October 2020 lorries will have to pay a £100 fee to come into the Low Emission Zone. That is the whole of greater London. That is not including more recent lorries but it is including Euro IV and Euro V lorries and that is going to be devastating for a lot of haulage businesses, particularly businesses that have renewed their fleets perhaps in 2014 and 2015 and bought a whole new load of Euro V lorries to carry out their businesses. Will you consider those plans, considering the devastating effects that it is going to have on a lot of haulage businesses? I do not think that is the right thing for you to do in terms of business in London.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The Assembly Member in his question referred to the reductions in nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter without giving credit for why the reductions happened. Last year there was a one-third reduction in nitrogen oxides (NOx) and a 13% reduction in particulate matter directly attributable to the ULEZ in central London. The obvious question that begs is: why can we not increase the pace of progress in reducing nitrogen dioxide, NOx and particulate matter? The answer is that with me as Mayor, we can.

One of the ways we can do that is that this year, you are right, we will be taking action against the bigger vehicles who are polluting. The very easy thing to do is to have compliant vehicles but if you are going to pollute you should pay. From next year we will be extending the ULEZ up to the North Circular and South Circular for other vehicles currently caught by the central section.

I make this point --

David Kurten AM: Mr Mayor, I wish we could carry on but I am sort of out of time here. I do not agree with your assessment that that is the right thing to do for the future but perhaps we can carry on this conversation over a cup of tea. That would be very nice.

2020/0042 – Policies for fairer fares

[Siân Berry AM](#)

The Centre for London report, Fair Access, published in December 2019, concluded that your fare policies have disadvantaged regular travellers and commuters, while benefiting less regular travellers such as visitors or tourists. Is this the right balance of priorities?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I have frozen TfL fares for the fourth year in a row, making travel more affordable for everyone who lives, works and visits our city. This means many Londoners using TfL services

need not pay a penny more than they did in 2016. In contrast, National Rail fares have risen by nearly 10% over the same period. I am proud that by 2020 my fares freeze will have saved the average London household around £200. Under the previous Mayor, TfL fares increased by more than 42% in eight years.

I have consistently called on the Government to follow my lead and freeze fares on the rest of the rail network, which would allow Travelcards to be included, providing a better deal to London's suburban rail passengers who continue to be let down. The Government's failure to do this explains why the Centre for London's report indicates that infrequent travellers are favoured over regular Travelcard users.

We know that people on low incomes are particularly reliant on the bus network. Around 60% of all Londoners use the bus at least once a week compared to over 70% in the lowest income households, and that is why my Hopper fare helps those who need it the most. The Hopper allows unlimited travel on buses and trams within an hour for only £1.50 and has saved people money on over 450 million journeys since it was launched in September 2016.

Travelcards and bus and tram pass season tickets can provide good value for those travelling on a regular basis. For example, an annual ticket gives 12 months' travel for the price of seven and a half months. Those who have less regular patterns may benefit instead from pay-as-you-go fares, which have been frozen since 2016. Fares are based on which service you use and the time of travel, and a daily cap limits the amount you will pay in a day. With many people now working more flexibly, including working from home and cycling and walking more, using pay-as-you-go is increasingly popular and can represent better value for ordinary travellers and commuters.

Siân Berry AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. As you point out there, your fares freeze is not a freeze for regular commuters. Our work has shown that someone reliant on a zone 1 to 4 Travelcard, for example, is now £253 a year worse off in their travel costs since you became Mayor, and I think the Centre for London's report, *Fair Access*, makes a very good point about the benefits to infrequent travellers from your policies so far. As well as commenting on your policies as the current Mayor, the Centre for London report also says that a future Mayor should review the zone and fare structure to improve affordability, including reducing the difference in fares between zones, reducing the number of zones and rezoning particular stations in low affordability areas. Now, I have put this idea forward before. Are you going to model and investigate the benefits of this kind of policy now?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): There is a lot in that question, which I will try to unpick very, very shortly to give time for further questions, but actually the pattern of travel is that for Oyster pay-as-you-go transactions, it is going up. It was 40%. It is now 60%. For those using Travelcards, it is going down, 54% to 31%, because --

Siân Berry AM: That is understandable because they are less good value than they used to be.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): What that is, is people recognising the benefits of this Mayor's policies and using the mode of paying that benefits them the most. What we want to do is persuade the Government to do the same as what I have done, which is to lower fares. The way the Government can do that is, rather than allowing privatised train operating companies to have services that have cancellations, which are overcrowded, have delays and where the fares go up, to persuade them to freeze their fares as well. That is the best way of reducing travel in London.

Siân Berry AM: I will come to the fares agreement another time because I do not have much time, but specifically on the zone inequality, you could move the fare zones around.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): That is one thing you could do. You will be aware that what we have done is frozen fares and introduced unlimited Hopper at the same time as investing in TfL infrastructure going forward. In the future, Londoners will continue to benefit from our fares freeze because now what we have priced in is four years' worth of fares freeze. Even in the future, if we decided to increase TfL fares - you will have seen the Business Plan - they still benefit from the freeze we have done over these four years in my first term as Mayor.

Siân Berry AM: As I say, the Centre for London does conclude that regular travellers are not benefiting from your policies and I hope you will look again at the fare zone proposals which I have put forwards before, but I am out of time now and I will have to move on to my next question later on.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): Assembly Member Duvall.

Len Duvall AM: Mr Mayor, I am not sure if Members fully understand why we cannot put a fares freeze on those Travelcards. Can you just explain? If I have it right, my understanding is it is not in your control or TfL's control and if it was in your control we might well consider it in terms of extending the benefits of a fare freeze. Is that right? Is that correct?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): That is absolutely right. Had, for example, the Government kept its promise to devolve to us the commuter trains, South Western, Southeastern and Southern, everyone would have benefited from the fares freeze, including those using Travelcards. I would have hoped somebody who believes in devolution would be making the point that we should ask the Government to keep their promise rather than the point that has been made over the past few minutes of questioning with very little time for answering.

Len Duvall AM: Thank you.

2020/1073 – Impact of Exiting the European Union on London's Economy

[Léonie Cooper AM](#)

What will the impact be on London's economy if the United Kingdom exits the European Union on the terms set out in the Government's Withdrawal Agreement and Political Declaration?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Both our and the Government's own previous economic impact assessments have shown that the harder the Brexit, the worse the economic outcome. For all the talk of getting Brexit done, the Government has given no consistent indication about what kind of trade deal, if any, it wants. Worse still, the Prime Minister has said he will not extend the transition period whereby EU rules still apply in UK beyond 31 December 2020. That means we have 11 months to sort out a deal with the EU, otherwise all the risks to people and businesses predicted by the Government's own Operation Yellowhammer in 2019 will still apply. There could be queues at the border for people and goods, and tariff and non-tariff barriers between the EU and the UK that prevent us from trading goods and services. The Government has also said it wishes to diverge from existing EU rules and protections without specifying how. That means there is unlikely to be time to negotiate sensible new agreements with the EU.

We have to be honest with ourselves. All of the evidence points to our long-term growth, inward investment and jobs market being hurt by Brexit. London could be less adversely affected than other parts of the UK but Brexit will leave us worse off. To succeed, the Government's negotiations with the EU must secure more than a bare-bones deal for trade in goods. What London needs is an agreement that also protects other invaluable trade in services with the EU. London accounts for half of the UK's exports in services and services account for 80% of the UK economy. Outside of the EU, I have always said that retaining membership or access to the Single Market and Customs Union would be the next best way forward for the UK's economy and people.

Léonie Cooper AM: As you know because I have asked you questions about Brexit before, the two areas that have particularly concerned me have been uncertainty - and in one sense we can say that 31 January [2020] has solved uncertainty - but the other one, as you rightly point out, is the issue of the hard nature of the Brexit. What does Government really need to do now if it is focusing in on what London needs, and what can you do to persuade Government to provide things that London will need to help us through the difficult period that may emerge after December 2020?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The good news is the Prime Minister has held this office and he understands - he has spoken about it in the past - the massive contribution London makes to our economy and indeed the rest of the country makes to London doing so well. I am sure he would not want to cut off our nose to spite our face. The key thing is for a deal to be done with the EU. What we cannot afford is a cliff-edge fall at the end of December 2020. Will we continue to work with the Government? It is in all of our interests to get a good deal with the EU. At the end of this month we do leave the EU but we have 11 months of transition period so that we can carry on trading with the EU and carry on having the security arrangements we have with the EU. That stops in December unless a good deal can be done. My fear is a bare-bones arrangement. What I am hoping the Prime Minister does is use his experience as the Mayor to make sure that he persuades those negotiating on behalf of our country to do a good deal with the EU. That means divergence of things rather than moving away from EU rules.

Léonie Cooper AM: So that we can continue to have those benefits.

I think most financial commentators have said this and certainly it was also in the Conservative manifesto, the phrase that there is going to be a 'pent-up tidal wave of investment'. Now, I know that yourself and Deputy Mayor for Business [Rajesh] Agrawal have worked very hard alongside London businesses and also making some contacts more internationally. Are there any signs of this 'pent-up tidal wave of investment' arriving yet, now that we definitely know what is happening with Brexit?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): We are trying hard and we are working with the Government on this sort of stuff. It is in all of our interests to get this investment in London and the country, indeed. I have seen no evidence of 'pent-up'. What I have seen is some decisions being delayed or deferred. The good news is a lot of that has not gone elsewhere.

Léonie Cooper AM: It has not gone elsewhere?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Some has.

Léonie Cooper AM: I think that has been a concern. That people have held back is one thing but the idea that the investment has actually gone to Paris, Frankfurt or Dublin is a worry.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): It is a worry but actually our concern should be less that this may go to other parts of the EU. Our real competition is global cities like New York, but also Singapore and Hong Kong. That is what we are compared to and should compare ourselves to.

A small sum has gone, in relative terms, to other European cities, but no other European city can offer what we can offer, which is the full package. That is why one of the things I am doing is to speak up about our city to make sure people realise around the world that the underlying strengths of London will still be there, not just our time zone and our language but the unique ecosystem: finance, legal, accountancy, life sciences, universities, tech, creative, our diversity. We will carry on talking that up to make sure we can compete and get in this investment, pent-up or not.

Léonie Cooper AM: Thank you very much, Mr Mayor. Thank you.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): Assembly Member Dismore.

Andrew Dismore AM: What is your message to EU citizens living in London who are concerned about their future post-Brexit? Is it not the case that the Government intends to introduce a points-based immigration system primarily based on high rates of pay, and what impact do you think this will have on services and industries in London that rely on hard-working EU citizens, for example the National Health Service (NHS), which is under tremendous strain? University College London Hospital (UCLH) has 15% of its staff coming from other EU citizens, Royal Free Hospital 14% and Camden and Islington 13%. As we all know, accident and emergency (A&E) waiting times are going through the roof. The four-hour target time was met in only 77% of cases at UCLH last month and 80% at Royal Free, yet we have seen the staffing shortages getting worse as people from the NHS either go home or do not arrive in the first place.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): You know this as well as I do because of your conversation with your constituents and others. Even though we have not yet left the EU, we have already seen in the last two and a half to three years some of the consequences of the referendum vote. It is the case that we have record numbers of vacancies in the NHS and social services. I have talked about the social care issue with care workers. Also, you will know how reliant we are in construction and hospitality on EU citizens.

A crude point system does not recognise the needs of our city. For example, how many points would somebody working in restaurants and hotels receive, or social care, or some jobs in the NHS? A significant part of London's economy is the lower-skilled workers as well. I am going to carry on talking to the Government to persuade them. The good news is that this Prime Minister is far less anti-immigration than the last Prime Minister was. She was clearly anti any form of immigration and recognising the benefits to our country. This Prime Minister, when he was Mayor of London, talked about an amnesty, and so he understands the contribution made economically, socially and culturally. My job is to persuade him to make sure any new system does not detriment our city.

Andrew Dismore AM: Would you also agree that Brexit has created potential for an ever-deeper crisis if the 260,000 European national children and 96,000 European national young people living in the capital are not supported in applying to the EU Settlement Scheme or for citizenship? It is the case, is it not, that the Conservative Government has not learned the lessons of the Windrush scandal that has caused such distress, loss, hardship or worse for those who came as children to the UK in the 1950s and 1960s? Are they not creating the same conditions for EU child migrants of today?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Absolutely. I raised this point last week when the research was done by the University of Wolverhampton about the numbers of Londoners who are undocumented and have not had their status regularised. They are entitled, many of them, to apply for nationality, but it costs more than £1,000. You will be aware of how much that deters people from applying.

You saw what happened with the Windrush generation and their children. At the moment, before the secured status kicks in at the end of December [2020] in relation to us properly leaving the EU and the end of transition, we have north of 500,000 Londoners who are not properly documented. More than 100,000 are children. They often only come across this when these children, who are born here, apply to university and discover that they are not home students.

I am really concerned about the number of those who are undocumented and how that impacts them, but also, going forward, even if 10% do not their status sorted out that is more than 100,000 in London, many of them children. I worry about the ability of the Home Office and the UK Border Agency (UKBA) to deal with that, which is why I am lobbying the Government to make it far easier and far cheaper, but also to give advisers legal aid to give advice to these people who clearly need some assistance to regularise their status.

Andrew Dismore AM: Thank you.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): Thank you. Next question. We wish Assembly Member Copley a speedy recovery and the question is going to be taken by Assembly Member Duvall in his absence.

2020/0206 – Empty Homes in London

[Len Duvall AM \(on behalf of Tom Copley AM\)](#)

Recent data from councils shows that the number of long-term vacant homes in London has risen by nearly 25% in the last three years, and is at its highest level since 2011. What is driving this, and what steps can you take to bring homes back into use?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Given the capital's chronic housing shortage it is concerning to see an increase in the number of empty homes in London and while I do not have specific powers to bring empty homes back into use many councils are working hard to do just this. Unfortunately, the tools available to them are limited.

Councils can use Empty Dwelling Management Orders, known as EDMOs, to take over management of unoccupied homes and bring them into use as rental properties. My London Plan and London Housing Strategy outline my support for local authorities that wish to use these powers. Since 2012, the Government has restricted the circumstances in which EDMOs can be used. A home now has to be empty for two years rather than six months before an EDMO can be issued and an owner has to have three months' notice. This has significantly reduced the effectiveness of EDMOs.

Councils can also levy a council tax premium on empty homes. The Government has increased this premium last year. However, it still does not go nearly far enough to disincentivise owners from leaving properties empty. Given the low levels of council tax as relative to property values, the premium is rarely high enough to have an impact. Band A, B and E properties in Westminster which have been empty for two years would need to pay only £529 extra even if the property is worth millions. That is why I have called on the Government to give councils themselves the powers to set the premium level.

We know there are different reasons for homes being empty. I have asked my team to commission research into definitions and data on empty homes to better understand this issue and ensure any future policy interventions are underpinned by strong evidence. In the meantime, I will continue to do all I can to support councils to tackle this issue and the wider housing crisis.

Len Duvall AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. One of my own local authorities in my constituency, Greenwich Council, is now consulting about introducing a 200% council tax for homes that have been vacant more than five years. Clearly Government wants to do something about this but this problem is increasing, as the original question said. Is there a case for even further action? Both the previous Mayor's Finance Commission and your Finance Commission highlighted this as a problem.

Is there an issue about definition and the self-reporting here between empty homes and derelict homes? Different strategies are required for both. Is there something further that we should be considering around that? Is there something jointly we can say to Government and say, "Is there a new initiative?" One of the arguments I am unclear on, but, should we ask for further devolution around the council tax and do a London-wide issue with much greater, concerted action with the range of tools that we have to try to break this issue down further?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Absolutely. You referred to, rightly so, the previous Mayor's London Finance Commission report, and I commissioned another London Finance Commission report with the same team that Boris Johnson [MP] used. We need far more devolution, fiscal devolution as well, but also I trust councils - you mentioned your council - who know their communities far better. Definitions aside, councils often are not investing the staff, for good reasons, in trying to find empty properties because even with a 200% premium that is not a lot where you bear in mind the equity value and how much it affects a property owner, particularly an absentee landlord who lives overseas. It is a conversation we will have with this Prime Minister in relation to the London Finance Commission. Also, I am not asking for powers for myself and City Hall; I am saying, "Give councils this power to take action".

Len Duvall AM: Thank you.

2020/0108 – Borough Needs

[Steve O'Connell AM](#)

What steps have you taken to ensure you've always been fair in how you've treated the different needs and demands of London's boroughs?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): When I was elected I said I would be a Mayor for all Londoners and that is what I am doing. My team and I work closely with London boroughs, all of them, at subregional partnerships and London Councils, as important partners in making London a better place to live, work, visit and do business with. I engage extensively with all boroughs through key strategic forums such as London Councils and the London Culture Forum, advisory groups and established partners networks.

When it comes to delivering for boroughs, teams from City Hall provide technical and capacity-building support in the context of substantial and ongoing Government cuts to their budgets. I have awarded over £1 billion to all 27 councils which bid for money through the Building Council Homes for Londoners. On skills and employment, I have allocated over £62 million for the Adult Education Budget to 31 London boroughs, including the City of London. On transport, TfL works with boroughs at all levels with dedicated area-based

teams who build in-depth local knowledge, and since 2017 my Greener City Fund has supported projects to plant trees and improve green spaces in all 32 London boroughs.

My bid-based strategic programmes across a number of policy areas are competitive and open to all boroughs. When allocating funds, I am always mindful of the need to ensure investment reaches across London's boroughs. For example, whilst bids to my Good Growth Fund are open to partners across London, in each round the assessment process uses the most up-to-date national data sets in order to match the spread and impact of investment across London according to need. We consider current and future housing requirements, capacity for new homes, the requirement of different subgroups of the population and where the strongest cases for investment are made. Through my £70 million Good Growth Fund regeneration programme I have so far awarded £51 million to projects across London, including £30 million directly to London boroughs, with successful bids to the third and final round to be announced in March [2020].

Steve O'Connell AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. I think that is well put, although your response was a strategic response across all of London. The exchange I want to have with you is around, under your mayoralty, a neglect for my part of London. I refer particularly to the recent independent Assembly report *Mapping the Mayor's Strategies*, which ranked Croydon 24th and Sutton at the bottom, 32nd, mapping out your investments and the GLA Family's investments. Remember those residents pay the same tax. I would be interested, Mr Mayor, in your thoughts around that.

The first question: I was also a critic of the previous Mayor regarding dealing with outer London but under your mayoralty you have scrapped the Outer London Commission and you scrapped the Outer London Fund. Why did you do that?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): What we have done is, as a new administration, look at new ways of getting monies to those parts of London that need it the most. The report you referred to, by the way, was a poor report. It may be independent but it is still poor. It did not fully reflect all the investment given to all parts of London, revenue as well as capital, but also failed to recognise the benefits other parts of London receive from an investment in one part of London. For example, a Crossrail station in one borough does not just benefit the residents of that borough. Nor does a cultural investment like the East Bank benefit just Newham. We are looking to invest in all parts of London, including Croydon and Sutton as well.

Steve O'Connell AM: I would contend that yes, if a Sutton resident commutes, that person will use the Underground and get the benefit of that, but there are many thousands of residents in outer south London who are dependent on the services within their boroughs and are not availing themselves of facilities in other boroughs. You have scrapped the Outer London Fund, scrapped the Outer London Commission. Let us turn to more specifics. I did mention Sutton. Again, they are paying the same council tax and contributions to your precept as other Londoners. They have the lowest mayoral funding. They also have no Tube stations, tram stops, London Overground, Crossrail or Crossrail 2, etc. You are letting down the residents of Sutton under your mayoralty, Mr Mayor. It is patently obvious.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): First, I do not accept your figure in relation to Sutton receiving the least amount from City Hall. You will be aware of, for example, the conversations we have had with the London Borough of Sutton in relation to the tram extension, and the key decision for Sutton and Merton is in relation to how they can work with us. I have been optimistic with the conversations we have had with both Leaders and their teams. Most recently we went up to Nottingham to see how the tram is benefitting Nottingham and how they could pay for the tram. You will be aware, for example, of the fantastic work done in Sutton by the London Cancer Hub. We recognise that and want to help that as well.

But it is not, surely, you are saying, the responsibility of this Mayor that 150 years ago, the Victorians did not build a Tube station in Sutton or Croydon. You will be aware that what we have is a legacy where there are more Tube stations north of the river than south of the river. That is one of the reasons why we have increased bus services in outer London, including south London, because we recognise that there needs to be increased bus services.

That is investing more bus mileages and more bus services in outer London to recognise the lack of Tube facilities in Croydon. You will also be aware of my lobbying for us to take over commuter trains so that the residents of Sutton and Croydon could benefit from TfL running those lines rather than privatised train operating companies.

Steve O'Connell AM: Let us get back to buses. Thank you for reminding me on that. I have for a long time, with other colleagues, been talking about trying to rebalance the numbers of buses from central London to outer London. People in outer London are far more reliant. That has failed, I think, under your mayoralty. Indeed, in Croydon town centre you have cut buses. I would suggest, Mr Mayor, that you have not put extra bus services in outer London. There are later questions around that. Why have you failed in that aspiration, Mr Mayor?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Firstly, we have not. The bus mileage or kilometre mileage in outer London is going upwards because we are reconfiguring. By the way, the question later on is an example of criticism from your side about us trying to have more buses in outer London --

Steve O'Connell AM: Answer that later. Speak to my question.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): -- so it would be nice if the Conservative Group could reach agreement amongst themselves on what they want me to do. I agree with you on this one, not other members of the Conservative Group, that we should be increasing bus services in outer London. That is what our plans are shown as doing and we will carry on doing that over the next few years. One of the things your residents benefit from is the unlimited Hopper, arguably more than those in other parts of the city, and I am really pleased that a significant number of those people who use the unlimited Hopper are in Croydon and Sutton.

Steve O'Connell AM: Mr Mayor, the last couple of pieces from me. I think it is fair to say that residents in outer south London particularly feel that the mayoralty and the GLA bodies are institutionally biased in favour of zones 1, 2 and 3. My last point really is you scrapped the Outer London Fund and replaced it with the Good Growth Fund, I think you said earlier, and have invested across London as opposed to specifically in outer London.

I thank you for the funding in South Norwood. You have invested there, and South Norwood residents appreciate that. By happy coincidence, I think there is a fresh application coming to you also from outer south London I hope you can support.

I would say finally, Mr Mayor, that at the end of your four years, I think your mayoralty has not served outer south London well and I would like you to reflect on that.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Is that a question, Chair?

Steve O'Connell AM: It is a question. How you respond to that?

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): Yes, I think you have a number of things to answer there.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Yes, quite. Firstly --

Steve O'Connell AM: I am not asking any more. I just want the answer, briefly, sir.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): As is often the case, Assembly Member O'Connell has been quite fair in relation to recognising in his question the - as he called it - institutional biases of City Hall in relation to outer London. I infer from 'institutional bias' it also refers to previous Mayors and previous administrations. I think that is a recognition in the question and the questioner of the institutional bias in City Hall.

Steve O'Connell AM: No Mayors are blameless in this, Mr Mayor. No Mayors are blameless in this, but I am speaking to your mayoralty.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): No, get an answer.

Steve O'Connell AM: An answer, briefly.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): That is one of the reasons why I thought he would welcome me changing the policies of the previous Mayors, because on the one hand he is saying they have been biased against outer London and the other hand he is criticising me for changing their policies that have led to the bias.

Steve O'Connell AM: Thank you for your time.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Here is the good news. I have a full list that is two pages long, which I am happy to read through --

Steve O'Connell AM: You can write to me.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): -- of all the investment we have been giving since I became Mayor in housing, in environment, in transport, in the Young Londoners Fund, in policing and crime, in culture, in infrastructure, and in skills and employment to both Croydon and Sutton. With your permission, Chair, I will read through these two pages of notes which demonstrate the huge investment that Croydon and Sutton receive because I am the Mayor of London.

Steve O'Connell AM: I shall look forward to you writing to me, Mr Mayor. Thank you.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): I am so tempted to use Chair's prerogative because sometimes it reminds Members that they open up a line of attack from you which you should not be given, but no, you cannot read it. Send it to the Member and copy everybody else in.

Let us move on to the next question. You did indicate. Assembly Member Duvall.

Len Duvall AM: Thank you very much. A very quick intervention requiring a very quick answer, Mr Mayor. I was going to say, "Is there an election this year in London?" but the question that I need to put to you: in that report that was earlier indicated by the Assembly Member, that was only a very small proportion of resources allocated by the GLA under your mayoralty to outer London. Is that right? Is it about a third of the spending?

I might have that wrong but in my mind I think it is there. There is two-thirds still to be allocated that I think the Member was not generous enough to concede was being spent in outer London, in terms of people getting their fair share in the resources.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Assembly Member O'Connell is usually incredibly fair but one can tell that there is an election coming because even he has cherry-picked figures from a report that was not checked with relevant officers who have pointed out the various problems with the report. He is a good guy. He is a Conservative, though, so you can forgive him for cherry-picking part of a report just over 100 days before an election.

Len Duvall AM: Thank you.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): OK. Nothing else on this? Let us move on then to the next question.

2020/2019 – London Safety

[Tony Arbour AM](#)

Do you honestly think Londoners should trust you to keep our city safe?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Yes, the safety of Londoners is and always will be my first priority. I have been trying to persuade the Government to be tough on crime and tough on the causes of crime over the last three and a half years. We have had a decade of catastrophic cuts to the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS). Crime has increased across the country. Officers in London have fallen to levels not seen since 2003, vital preventative services like youth clubs and sports facilities have been lost and victim support organisations have been forced to close their doors.

In contrast, I have worked tirelessly with the police, partner agencies and communities to keep Londoners safe in the face of these challenges created by the Government. We have ensured that City Hall provides more funding for police and community safety than ever before. Police numbers, after years of decline due to Government cuts, are starting to increase, and there is now a dedicated Violent Crime Task Force working day and night in the areas worst affected. However, we know that enforcement is only one element of the fight against crime and that is why I have also made unprecedented investment in prevention. This includes creating a £45 million Young Londoners Fund to keep young people on a positive path and the establishment of London's first ever Violence Reduction Unit (VRU), bringing together partner agencies and communities to address the underlying causes of violence over the long term.

As Mayor, I can only plug some of the gap. We need the Government to provide more funding for our police service as well as vital preventative services. The Prime Minister has this week said he is going to chair a new law and order taskforce. I am glad the Government has finally woken up and the Prime Minister is taking this seriously. I have been calling for Government leadership on this issue for years. I wrote to the previous Prime Minister asking for this action in early 2018 and convened a summit at City Hall with the Home Secretary and Commissioner [of Police of the Metropolis]. As the Chair of the National Police Chiefs' Council has said, policing is only one part of the picture. We must remain focused on making London a safer city for us all.

Tony Arbour AM: Thank you very much, Mr Mayor. You have confirmed what you have said three times in the past six months, that London is safer because of you. You have listed just now all the good things that you have done. Would it be fair to say that anything which is good in relation to policing is down to you and anything which is bad is somebody else's fault?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I think it is a partnership between City Hall, the Government, the MPS, councils, probation, education providers, faith leaders and families. I am a firm believer in the African proverb, "It takes a village to raise a child". There have been challenges caused by massive cuts from central Government which even you would have to have to accept because now your candidate is talking about them, with an election approaching around the corner. Cuts have consequences. I tried to make this point to the previous two Prime Ministers, who failed to accept this. This Prime Minister appears to have accepted this.

Tony Arbour AM: You would be saying, would you, to those people who are related to the record number of people who have been murdered in this city, to the people who have been affected by the record level of knife crime, that it has nothing to do with you?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I often meet bereaved families affected by knife crime and I do not want to play political football with the families. What I do when I meet with them is obviously give my condolences and find out more about their loved one to see if any interventions could have been made earlier. When I am asked, I explain some of the things we are doing. The families that I have met understand the complexities of the causes of violent crime but also understand some of the challenges that we have.

Tony Arbour AM: But none of it is your responsibility? It is somebody else's fault? "It is not me, gov".

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am the Mayor of London. The buck stops with me as the Mayor of London.

Tony Arbour AM: Indeed it does.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am the Police and Crime Commissioner. One of the jobs I have to do as the Mayor of London is to explain some of the consequences of the cuts but also to lobby the Government. Had I not been talking about the consequences of cuts we would have not been successful in persuading this Prime Minister to reverse some of the cuts. I have been criticised by Conservative Members of this Assembly for talking about cuts over the last three and a half years. Now that the Prime Minister has recognised this, there is no recognition from your side that some of that lobbying and talking about it has made a difference.

Tony Arbour AM: Of course, Mr Mayor, this side has said that there are certain areas where you have increased expenditure unnecessarily, i.e. in the bureaucracy in this place, money which you could have spent on policing.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Let us talk about money spent on policing.

Tony Arbour AM: However, something which is directly your responsibility in relation to policing is the operation of the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC). Do you read the MOPAC reports?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Most of them, yes.

Tony Arbour AM: Did you read the last annual report, the last monthly report?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am not sure.

Tony Arbour AM: Let me tell you one thing that, if you had read it, I am quite sure you would have taken notice of. Did you see in the MOPAC report that there is the lowest level of public satisfaction in policing in London since records began? That is entirely on your watch. Did you notice that?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Let us deal with the issues raised.

Tony Arbour AM: No, no, please. Did you know that currently there is the lowest level of satisfaction with the MPS since records began?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Let us deal with that. You have mentioned expenditure, you have mentioned spending and you have mentioned bureaucracy in your question, which I am sure the Chair will allow me to respond to.

City Hall has been investing, since I became Mayor, far more in policing from City Hall than the previous Mayor over the eight years, even though he knew in 2010, because of the advice from advisers in No. 10, there were massive cuts in MPS funding. In my first year as Mayor we invested £27 million in the MPS. In my second year we invested an additional £110 million in police and services. In my third year, £235 million in policing across London. What it does not do is fill the massive hole left by Government cuts which now approach almost £900 million.

We are filling the massive hole left by Government but it is hardly surprising that many Londoners who often do not see a police officer, many Londoners who remember the huge numbers of officers there used to be under a previous Government and do not see police officers now, are dissatisfied with the service received from our under-resourced and overstretched police. That is one of the reasons why, in addition to spending more in policing, we have been lobbying the Government to get more resources in policing as well. There is no surprise there that Londoners are dissatisfied by cuts made by Government over the last eight or nine years.

Tony Arbour AM: No, Mr Mayor. Firstly, you did not answer my question. Were you aware, because it is in your MOPAC report, that public satisfaction with policing in London is lower than it has ever been before?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am aware of the levels of satisfaction with the police amongst Londoners. One of the issues we raised at the London Crime Prevention Board this week is how we can give Londoners more confidence to, for example, report crime, to be witnesses, to come forward and also to join the police service. The good news is that with the increase in recruitment of police in London because of City Hall investment we are now starting to see more police joining the police service. That will lead to, I am sure, Londoners being more satisfied with the police because of this investment.

Tony Arbour AM: You say that, Mr Mayor. You are simply repeating the trope which we always get here that if it is good, you are responsible. If it is bad, someone else is responsible. In effect, you are saying to us that the only reason that public satisfaction in policing is low is because, according to you, there is a lack of Government expenditure on policing. I would say to you that the real reason for public dissatisfaction in policing is the very high level of homicide rate in London, which those people who live in outer London - probably not directly affected - are very worried by, are very concerned by. They see it going up and up and up. The same applies to knife crime. It cannot be said that those two things are due simply to lack of Government expenditure on policing, which is your claim. It is manifestly wrong, and I would say to you this, that Londoners, the average Londoner, knows that to be true and that is why public satisfaction is so low.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chair, is that a question or is that a speech?

Tony Arbour AM: It was a speech.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): I think there are a number of questions around that you will be able to come in and respond to.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thanks, Chair.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): I recognise Assembly Member Hall for a follow-up question.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chair, sorry, can I not respond to the last speech?

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): No, that was him just speechifying.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): OK, fine.

Susan Hall AM: Mr Mayor, coming in on the back of my colleague, who is completely right, staffing costs at City Hall are going up to £65 million. That is double what it was in Boris Johnson's [MP] last year, double, and quite frankly people out there are far more interested in being kept safe. It is down to you to make sure that the MPS can keep them safe and looking at the figures, they are not being kept safe. You should be looking at where you are spending your money because I would say to you people do not want people in this building, they want police officers out there keeping them safe. Thank you, Madame Chairman.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chair, is that a second speech? Have we changed the rules of MQT?

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): No. Again, that was a Member going off speechifying but if you, Mr Mayor, want to make a comment on what you have just heard from the two Members I am happy to give you the floor.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chair, I make two short points in response to two long speeches. The first short point is that we have invested from City Hall record sums in the MPS but the context is huge cuts from central Government, and if the Conservatives did not accept that cuts have consequences, if the Conservatives did not accept that they made a huge error in making these cuts to the police service in 2010 which were repeated for the last nine years, why are they now doing a partial U-turn? It is because they recognise the consequences of their cuts.

The second point I would make in relation to City Hall during my mayoralty versus the previous Mayor and the one before him is that we are doing far more now than any previous administration has done. For example, we now have a deal done with the Government in housing, £4.82 billion to spend building affordable homes in London. That requires staff to administer that fund to make sure the homes are being built because if they were not being properly checked and there was not the due diligence I would be criticised for not doing that due diligence.

I will give you another example of the additional powers we have since I became Mayor.

Tony Devenish AM: Chair, we are talking about crime.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): We are now responsible for adult education. This is a budget north of £300 million. If I was not, in City Hall, having staff to administer this budget and make sure it is spent properly, I would be criticised by Members of the Conservative Assembly for not making sure we get value for money.

I will give you another example --

Tony Arbour AM (Deputy Chairman): No.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): -- of some of the big changes made since I became Mayor.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The previous Mayor buried away reports on the consequences of our poor-quality air in London. That included --

Tony Devenish AM: Chair, we are talking about crime.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Well, it is a --

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): No, can I just finish with the Mayor? It is all the mutterings around I am not listening to. Mr Mayor, can you make a final comment, please?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I only got through the second of the points that they have made, but, on air quality, the previous Mayor buried away a report --

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): No. You go too far. Let us move on. What was the point of order, Assembly Member Duvall?

Len Duvall AM: The point of order is that Assembly Member Hall introduced the wider topic, which the Mayor was responding to and right to respond to --

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): I have dealt with that.

Len Duvall AM: -- Quite frankly, he had a legitimate right to respond to the Conservatives. It is no good muttering and saying we started off with crime. Actually, Assembly Member Hall introduced the wider issues about staffing issues and value for money and about what we were providing here. Chair, if I could ask - and I know it is very difficult in the chair - maybe if you could intervene to say that it was not appropriate to raise that topic? Maybe we need to discipline ourselves around those issues if we do not feel comfortable with the way the Mayor is answering it.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): Thank you for that. What I am showing is that I believe people are in here and are watching and are wanting a mayoral response to questions. They are also wanting to hear a mayoral response to comments made about mayoral actions. I shall chair the meeting accordingly. Thank you.

Members just need to maybe go back to their training notes about how to put a question and then wait for an answer and then maybe put a follow-up question. That would be unique, would it not, and really interesting? I say no more.

Let us move on because we now have a fabulous questioner. This is a question in the name of Assembly Member Pidgeon, who is one of the most expert questioners we have around the table, and it is on electric charging points. Just show us how to do this, Assembly Member Pidgeon.

2020/0001 - Electric charging points

[Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM](#)

What provision of electric charging points do you expect in London by 2024?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thousands of Londoners die early each year because of toxic air pollution and we are facing a climate emergency that threatens the long-term security and wellbeing of every Londoner. I am taking action by rolling out the world's first ULEZ and encouraging more Londoners to use public transport by freezing fares and introducing the Hopper fare, and I am helping people switch to electric vehicles where they are needed.

The progress we have made is clear. When I became Mayor in 2016, there were no electric taxis licensed. We have over 3,000. We now have the largest electric bus fleet in Europe and last year [2019] I established a ground-breaking Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Taskforce. The Taskforce is made up of industry experts who together with my team engaged over 140 organisations and published a robust charging infrastructure delivery plan for the capital. Whilst the plan looks out to 2025, the Taskforce was very clear that setting a specific target for provision of charge points year-on-year is not practical. Instead, they identified the necessary enabling work to continue our record delivery and to review progress against potential scenarios, especially given the pace at which vehicle technology is developing and charging requirements are changing.

London begins this decade in a strong position and the Government acknowledges that London leads the electric vehicle infrastructure revolution. Due to our work over the last three years, we have a quarter of all charging points in the UK and over 300 rapid charging points, more than New York or Amsterdam, of which 226 have been delivered by TfL. I am delighted London's first rapid charging hub was launched in Stratford in December [2019]. This has contributed to my target of 300 rapid chargers in place by the end of 2020. Thanks to the joint GLA/London Councils/TfL Go Ultra Low City Scheme, over 1,700 charge points have been installed near homes, many retrofitted in lamp columns, and a further £4 million has been allocated to deliver 1,000 more this year across 29 boroughs.

However, our record delivery in London will be worthless unless the Government acts now to make its climate change commitments and Road to Zero ambition a reality.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Thank you very much. You reference your own London Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which was published six months ago, and said you are going to need between 2,300 and 4,100 rapid charge points. This was based on modelling of year-on-year sales growth of 35%, but last year we saw a rise in sales of electric vehicles in the UK of 144%. I am just wondering how you think you are going to meet this demand if sales in electric vehicles continue in this way?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thanks for your question and, by the way, thanks for your interest and your work on this over the last few years.

What we are doing is making sure we work with the private sector but also the Government to try to make sure we can have the infrastructure there that is required. You will have heard my answer in relation to the rapid charging hub. One of the reasons why we looked at the hub was because we could see patterns of travel

changing. At the moment, there is still a huge amount of capacity in both the rapid charging points and the charging points we have. You will have seen the media coverage about the grid and whether it is ready to deal with this. What we are doing is talking to those who provide the energy as well to make sure that those people talk to each other.

You will also be aware, by the way, because of your expertise of the rapid change of technology, that whereas you will have seen almost fridge-like rapid charging points even 12 months ago, we are now told we can do them much smaller, which means councils are more willing to give permission. We are spending a lot of time talking to key experts and the innovation will drive rapid change.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Lovely. Thank you for that. I accept there is a range of partners who are involved here in the work that is going on, but can I look at a couple of examples of TfL's role? It contributed to funding rapid charging points in the carpark that serves the Aquatic Centre and the Copper Box Arena. Yet in order to use these chargers, drivers have to pay parking charges and those parking charges are £45.

Will you ensure that in future any rapid charging points that TfL contributes to are fully accessible and not subject to these extortionate additional charges?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): What we have to do is to make sure we have something available to everyone. Some people will be using the facilities anyway and they will have a rapid charging point available for them as well as charging points. We have to make it accessible to everyone.

One of the things we are doing is making sure we can get the best deal from the private sector possible in relation to the work they need to do. You are right to highlight that we have to make sure it is accessible and that means affordable as well. It is not one size fits all. I would be disappointed if it was the case that all of our schemes are charging. They are not. Many of them are free at point of delivery. Some, by the way, are reserved for taxis, which I know you support.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: Yes, quite right. Perhaps you might want to look at that example because that does feel extortionate.

There is also a real issue with the cost of electricity at some rapid charging points. Heathrow received a £165,000 grant from TfL to support the installation of rapid charges in the taxi feeder park. That is really important for tourists to London. Yet now that taxi feeder park is charging so much for electricity that it costs more for it to charge their electric taxis than to fill up with diesel.

What are you going to do to sort this out so that the chargers that you fund, TfL funds and the public funds are fully accessible and also charge a fair price for electricity?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): This is a really important point, which is that in our keenness to get the rapid charging points up and running, the deals done with the private sector need to be sustainable in the long term. We think the Government has a really useful role to play with its economies of scale and buying power and convening power. We are talking to the DfT and the Government about how they can help us in relation to getting a good deal.

However, you are right to remind me to make sure that the deals TfL do are good in the long term. For example, it is possible we do a good deal with a private sector that in the first three years or the first six years is

great, but what happens after that initial setup of the rapid charging points? We will continue to pursue this and also make sure we can get the help of the Government to get better deals all round.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM: I hope you could perhaps go and look at this issue at Heathrow because we need taxis to be electric there. Thank you very much.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you very much.

2020/0286 - Winter pressures or year-round crisis in the NHS?

[Dr Onkar Sahota AM](#)

What more needs to be done to alleviate pressures on the NHS in London this winter and all year round?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): After 10 years of austerity, it is no surprise that the NHS is under severe pressure. With the growing and ageing population comes increased and more complex needs. These inevitably cost more to treat. In addition, pressures usually only seen in winter are beginning earlier and lasting longer. In October [2019] not one London NHS trust met the Government's own four-hour waiting target and that was before winter had begun. That, alongside the unacceptable delays in getting a GP appointment, was a problem.

I want to thank and pay tribute to all our hardworking NHS staff who are doing their best under difficult circumstances. There is a staffing crisis with over 9,500 nursing vacancies in London alone, limiting trusts' ability to open extra beds needed for winter, and crumbling hospitals must be dealt with.

London needs long-term sustainable funding to address these challenges. Whilst I welcome the Government's recent commitment to increasing NHS funding, I will continue to lobby for the resources London needs. I will also lobby for proper funding for services like social care and public health, which prevent ill-health and keep people out of hospital. Swingeing cuts to these services have a serious knock-on effect on the NHS.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: Mr Mayor, thank you for that answer. You know we have had the worst figures for A&E waiting times in history on record. The Government of course has a new philosophy now: if you do not like the figures, just get rid of the target. The Secretary of State for Health yesterday said that he is minded to not have any more A&E targets, which actually gives you a temperature of the NHS. What do you think about that?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): You will be aware that in the 1990s, before there were targets, we had examples of people waiting for many hours, often on trollies in corridors, waiting to be seen by experts in A&E. What the targets, introduced by the Labour Government, did is they drove action in the hospital in relation to making the target, which led to a reduction in waiting times, which led to treatment earlier, which led to better results. What we see - lo and behold - is a Conservative Government talking about removing the targets because it realises the performance is bad.

I worry about the consequences of removing the A&E target, which will simply cover up how bad things are and will, most importantly, lead to bad quality service received by patients who desperately need medical attention sooner rather than later.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: I agree with you, Mr Mayor, of course. The A&E waiting times just give, as I said, the temperature. They do not tell you exactly what is wrong.

You can look at other figures also. The number of ambulances that are having to wait for more than one hour to drop their patients at the hospital has gone up from 489 to 2,000 last month. That is 2,000 ambulances waiting for more than an hour in a month. The occupancy rate in the hospitals was at 93% when the safe level is 85%. We have the lowest level of hospital beds per population in Europe and, of course, the vacancy rate in the NHS is very high. We need to recruit about 30,000 more nurses and 6,000 more GPs in the country.

These are all markers and why we say that the NHS has been starved of over 10 years of Government funding. Do you think the Government should take responsibility for the chronic underfunding and strangulation of the NHS over the last 10 years?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): After the questions from Assembly Member Arbour, I am surprised you are not blaming me for the problems in the NHS. This is a good example of what we have seen with the consequences of Government cuts, whether it is the NHS or, in the previous example, policing and crime. They have consequences.

What your question illustrates is the consequences throughout the system. Even though ambulances work incredibly hard to get to a patient who needs to be hospitalised, that ambulance is waiting in a queue to get into a hospital because of a further delay caused by cuts in A&E. That leads to people who can be transferred to a ward being delayed the transfer because of the occupancy levels you have referred to because of cuts made by the Government. Often you have patients who can leave the hospital and return to the community but, because of cuts in social care, they cannot be released from hospital safely to go back into the community.

These guys will probably just blame me, but as an expert working in the NHS you know that these are the consequences of cuts over the last nine years. That is why the Government has to reverse the cuts and recognise that NHS inflation means that it has to invest more in real terms - but also with inflation - to give the NHS the resources it so desperately needs.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: Of course London needs more funding. The funding the Government is now promising is really a catch-up. It has starved the NHS for 10 years. What they are putting back now is not going to compensate for what has been taken out of the system already. London needs more investment and any further attempts to cut hospital beds in London would be a matter of concern for you and for me. How would you want to deal with any plans coming forward for cutting any hospital beds in London?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): You led a campaign to stop closures in your constituency in relation to beds and hospitals from the Government at a time when our population is rising and clinical needs are rising.

That is one of the reasons why I commissioned the King's Fund to do a piece of work. They set out six assurances I now require if a Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) comes forward with plans in relation to hospitals and bed reductions. Those six assurances are what they need to look at before they make any decision about reducing beds, let alone closing down wards or closing hospitals.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor.

2020/0265 - Stand together on Holocaust Memorial Day

[Nicky Gavron AM](#)

This month we will mark Holocaust Memorial Day. In light of the recent cases in London of an attack on a rabbi and anti-Jewish graffiti smeared across synagogues, will you join me in condemning those responsible and calling on all Londoners to stand in solidarity against racist and anti-Semitic abuse?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The recent spate of anti-Semitic crimes we have seen in London, New York and elsewhere have made me sick to my stomach and I condemn them in the strongest possible terms. Anti-Semitism or hate crime of any kind has absolutely no place whatsoever in our city. I have been clear throughout my administration that we take a zero-tolerance approach to anti-Semitism and other hate crimes in London. I encourage those who witness or suffer hate crimes to report it immediately.

History warns us of the dangers of allowing anti-Semitism to fester and it is clear that right now we need to be urgently redoubling our efforts to root it out of our society, no matter where it rears its ugly head. While the solidarity shown by London's many communities in condemning the attacks on our Jewish neighbours is welcome, it is also incumbent on us to do everything we can to prevent those who wish to divide us from succeeding.

Earlier this week at Google's London offices, I launched the Shared Endeavour Fund, which will provide grants for local projects designed to strengthen communities and encourage Londoners to stand up to hate, intolerance and extremism. I will continue to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the Jewish community, which makes an invaluable contribution to London. Indeed, I was proud to stand with Jewish Londoners including Assembly Member Gavron to celebrate Hanukkah in the Square last month and I look forward to welcoming survivors and community members to the Holocaust commemoration at City Hall next week.

We must never forget the horrors of the past and, as we see anti-Semitism and far-right extremism on the rise again, it is more important than ever that we stand together against this hatred, uphold our values and celebrate our diversity. That is why yesterday I pledged £300,000 to the Auschwitz-Birkenau Foundation in Poland to help preserve this hugely important site and I announced my attendance at the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau later this month.

Nicky Gavron AM: Thank you so much, Mr Mayor, for that answer. It has great personal resonance for me. I know from my own personal family history how important it is to stand up against prejudice and persecution. Some of my family were rounded up and deported, first to the Łódź ghetto and then to Auschwitz. Not all survived. My grandparents, who were schoolteachers in Berlin when the roundups came, were tipped off by former pupils every time and went into hiding.

Now, we learn from the past how important it is to speak out and to be in solidarity with fellow citizens, but for those who witness on the streets or on their commutes racial abuse and anti-Semitic abuse, it is not easy to intervene. It is important, but it is hard. I was very encouraged by the report in November [2019] of the very brave Muslim woman, Asma Shuweikh, who intervened on the Tube to challenge when racist abuse was being hurled at a Jewish family.

You have said some of this, but how are we going to help Londoners to know not just when they should intervene and that they should, but how they should intervene?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Firstly, thank you for sharing just a part of your family's story, I know how difficult it is. I personally have learned so much and grown so much from talking to Holocaust survivors and their families. We can learn from the past. You mentioned examples of the solidarity shown by your

grandparents' pupils in relation to what happened in the 1930s. There were also many people, by the way, who stood by and did nothing. Some actively supported the actions of the Nazis and other extremists.

There are lessons to be learned today. There are some who are brave, like the woman you referred to. She is a Londoner. She is a Muslim, yes, and she is a Londoner who stood up to the anti-Semite who was so abusive to those Jewish people on the Tube train, and who is also a Londoner, by the way, as well.

We also know that there are Londoners who stand in silence or actively support or encourage or condone or mainstream the actions of far-right groups as well. We have to learn the lessons from the past and that is why it is really important to show solidarity with minorities. By the way, the Jewish community is a minority. We need to show solidarity with them.

My advice would be, obviously, not to put yourself in harm's way, but we should show solidarity when we can, whether it is standing up to a bully, a racist, an anti-Semite or an extremist.

One of things we have tried to do with this Shared Endeavour Fund is to realise that the communities know best sometimes what to do in relation to spotting a vulnerable person and giving them the resilience and support they need to divert them away from the wrong path, but also to give people the confidence and the tools to challenge some of these messages as well. That is why we have done this with the Shared Endeavour Fund. By the way, this is as a result of lots of research we did listening to and speaking to experts, both experts from the so-called far right and also experts from the so-called Islamist fanatics as well. It is really important that we learn lessons from the past and it is at our peril if we do not.

Nicky Gavron AM: I want to say that your efforts and your initiatives this week, particularly that you have just announced to combat prejudice in society, are really welcome. The contribution to the Auschwitz-Birkenau fund and also the fact that you are you are going there for the 75th anniversary of the liberation is very symbolic.

As for Shared Endeavour - and I noticed that Google has also contributed to Shared Endeavour, which is good news - when we think about it, those tech companies like Google, Facebook and Twitter all are implicated in spreading extremism online. Are you going to go on challenging them to take responsibility for the content they host?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): This is a 21st-century challenge. When you talk about your grandparents' experience, ask yourself how the messages of hate were spread and what the mediums were. Unmesh Desai [AM] sitting next to you fought against the National Front (NF) with many others in the 1970s and 1980s and then the British National Party (BNP). How were the messages of hate from those far-right groups spread?

It is a million miles away from what can happen now. You can, in your bedroom, by typing some buttons, spread a message of hate that is seen around the world. Also, you have seen in real time terrorists filming some of their actions, which are shown in real time and terrorise the rest of us around the world across oceans and thousands of miles away.

Social media platforms have a massive responsibility. They can and should be doing much more. I have talked about how they need to be doing more. I have challenged them. I have criticised them. I even went to South by Southwest (SXSW) to speak to the giants in relation to the responsibilities they have. I gave credit, by the way, to the current Chancellor [of the Exchequer] when he was Home Secretary, [The Rt. Hon] Sajid Javid [MP], for the work he has done in this area as well. They can and should be doing more.

Google deserves credit. Google has stepped up to help us in relation to the issue of violent crime and how sometimes gangs can use social media to spread hate, provoke and retaliate, but also in relation to hate crime, whether it is investing in artificial intelligence (AI), algorithms or hiring staff. They have match-funded us in relation to the work we are doing. I support that.

We are speaking to other businesses about what more they can do, not just the tech giants, to take down the hateful messages. Also, the private sector should be contributing towards the fight against extremism, intolerance and prejudice as well.

Nicky Gavron AM: Thank you.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): Thank you very much. Assembly Member Gavron, we are humbled by the contribution that you have made here this morning. Thank you so much for the dignity that you displayed in raising a question that is so close and dear to you and for reminding us again about the challenges that our Londoners face every day. On Monday, as Members will know, but I just want to make that announcement, the Assembly and the Mayor will show our solidarity at our annual Holocaust service. I am sure it will be the usual very moving event here on Monday morning. Thank you so much for that.

I have a supplementary from Assembly Member Bailey.

Shaun Bailey AM: Firstly, thank you, Assembly Member Gavron, for your contribution. It was very moving and it reminds me of my time at Yad Vashem and hearing those very personal stories of how families were destroyed and then relating it to the situation we have here in London as well, speaking to some of my friends in the Jewish community.

I just have a quick, short question for the Mayor. The funding is welcome. Are you going to try to repeat the fund and keep it going or is it a one-off?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thanks for your question. We have funding for £800,000 now for the next year. We want the money to be out the door over the next year. What we are doing is assessing the funding. There are three streams: up to £10,000, up to £25,000 and up to £50,000. We will be assessing the success and then seeing what we can do going forward, but £800,000 is to be spent in one year. That is the idea.

2020/0081 - Woolwich Ferry

[Keith Prince AM](#)

Are you happy with the recent performance of the Woolwich Ferry?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): No. I apologise for the level of service that communities who depend on the ferry have had to put up with over the last year. It is not acceptable.

The Woolwich Ferry is an important part of London's transport network and TfL and I take its operations very seriously. That is why TfL has invested in new vessels with much cleaner environmental standards and increased capacity. The new ferries have low-emission or hybrid engines that are quieter and emit 90% less particulate matter and 70% less NOx than the legal standards. They also provide 40% more space than the old vessels, can carry 150 passengers and have more space for dedicated cyclist spaces.

These new low-emission boats are at the cutting edge of the ferry industry and, as with any pioneering technology, there are implementation challenges that need to be overcome. The new ferries have auto-mooring, which uses magnetic technology. This reduces emissions further and improves the ease of boarding and alighting, but this has led to some technical difficulties. TfL requested an urgent action plan from all parties involved and a taskforce with engineers has been created to fix these issues. I am pleased to say there have been significant improvements in the technical reliability of the vessels since the summer, but further improvement is still needed.

Despite the improved trend in reliability, there have been a number of closures recently. Some of these have been caused by staff shortages and industrial action. Talks are taking place between union reps and the ferry operators, Briggs Marine Ltd. However, I am disappointed with the time taken to resolve the outstanding issues. I support TfL in urging all parties to reach agreement as quickly as possible in order to avoid further disruption for commuters who rely on this service.

Keith Prince AM: OK, Mr Mayor. I appreciate your answer. We are short on time. I want to work with you on this. Can we have your assurance that you will work with the unions? I know that there has been a number of strikes. You did promise you would roll up your sleeves and so let us see if we can work with them.

There was something that came to me. I did speak with one of the union members, actually, and I am afraid I cannot confirm it, but I think we are both in the same place. You and I both believe that everybody should get, at minimum, the London Living Wage. I was told by this union member that they do not. Are you aware of that?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): There were two points. In relation to the dispute between the trade union and the private company, I would urge both sides to sort this out. You are right. They should roll their sleeves up, get around the table and resolve this.

Secondly, in relation to the Living Wage, I did receive a report in relation to an allegation that some staff were not receiving the Living Wage. I checked it out and they all are receiving the London Living Wage. However, if offline you would let me know any other specifics, I am really happy to chase that up.

Keith Prince AM: Yes, I cannot confirm, but I was surprised, and I know that we both share that view that people should be paid that. I can have your assurance that all the staff are now receiving the London Living Wage?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Just to reassure you, we received a similar complaint to the one you received that some staff were not receiving the London Living Wage. We checked it out. We have been reassured they are. If there are other things that come to light, please let us know and we will act on it straight away.

Keith Prince AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor.

2020/0325 - Impact of the Government's Budget on London

[Fiona Twycross AM](#)

What will you be lobbying the Government to include in its upcoming budget?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The Prime Minister should know from his time as Mayor that a successful London means success for the UK as a whole. I am, however, concerned by the increase in anti-London rhetoric from the Government and Parliament over the past year. I hope this sentiment will change, not least because we have a Member of Parliament (MP) amongst us who knows the great work London does and the Assembly does as well. I will be working hard to make the case for Government investment in London.

Crucial to London's success is the Government properly funding the police, working with me to tackle measures to improve London's toxic air, and further upgrades and expansion to London's transport network, helping to support thousands of new homes. The economic benefits of London's status as a global city are not guaranteed. We are in strong competition with other global capitals and rising powerhouse city economies in China and South America.

London continues to face major challenges that require Government investment and decisive policy intervention if we are to stay ahead of our global rivals. The distribution of wealth and income across London is more unequal than anywhere else in the UK. Median household incomes are no higher than in the rest of the UK once housing costs are taken into account and no other UK region has more households with children living in relative poverty.

Part of the solution is freeing up cities to take more responsibility on policy and investment decisions. That is why I welcome the Chancellor's announcement of the English Devolution White Paper and I have urged the Chancellor to commit to working closely with me and the other English Mayors to deliver an ambitious new devolution settlement. As the Prime Minister will know, none of this is possible without stronger financial commitments from the Government.

Fiona Twycross AM: Thank you. I welcome your work and your commitment to persuading the Government that while it is important to take into account the need to level up different part of the country, it needs to not come at the expense of London, which, as you know, is vital to the economy of the whole UK.

During the election, there were quite a lot of commitments by the incoming Government, including on additional police officers. I wondered if you could comment on how you are lobbying the Chancellor and the Policing Minister to ensure London gets the long-term funding we need for an additional 6,000 police officers.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thanks for your question. The Government announced 20,000 additional officers over the next three years in England and Wales. It is worth reminding ourselves, that it promised 40,000 over three years and has cut 22,000 over the last nine years across the country. We think a fair proportion of the 20,000 is 6,000, which means that in the first year we should have received 2,000. The Government has given us only 1,369, which leaves a balance of, roughly speaking, 4,600, which we need in year two and year three. We have still not been told the monies we will receive for the 1,369. It has to be in proportionate terms more than what you would get for an officer in the rest of the country because it is more expensive in London.

The Commissioner [of Police of the Metropolis] and I are lobbying the Government. The Deputy Mayor [for Policing and Crime] has met with the Policing Minister, Kit Malthouse [MP]. I spoke to him last year as well. We will carry on lobbying the Government, both the Home Secretary and the Police Minister but also others in Government as well, so that they understand the importance of us getting a fair share.

The good news is we have two Members of the Assembly who are now MPs, Gareth Bacon and Florence Eshalomi. I am sure they will help us lobby the Government. I know both of these MPs/Assembly

Members were at the relaunch this week of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on London. That is a cross-party group that works really closely with City Hall. We will need to work cross-party to persuade the Government to give us our fair share.

Fiona Twycross AM: Thank you. Do you share my concerns that the Office for Budget Responsibility's economic forecast will outline the force of the economic hit likely to be caused by leaving the EU and that this could potentially result in less funding for vital projects across London?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): It could do and that is one of the reasons why we have to make sure that the Government gets the point that it is in all of our interests for us to do well. We are leaving the EU. We are going to leave the EU at the end of January [2020]. The transition phase will end at the end of December [2020].

My message to Brexiteers is, if you want Brexit to be a success, it is important that you help us after we have left the EU. That means not just getting a good deal with the EU but also the investment we need. I will carry on making the case to the Government, hopefully on a cross-party basis, why we should do this.

2020/0209 - Detective Shortage

[Unmesh Desai AM](#)

The latest HMICFRS report stated that the Met should 'continue to seek to increase the capacity and capability of qualified detectives and senior investigating officers to improve the quality of its investigations'. What impact has the shortage of detectives had on the force, and how are you and the Met working to resolve this?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you for raising this important subject. Investigating and solving crimes is vital to bringing perpetrators to justice and keeping the public safe. Police numbers and, inevitably by extension, Detectives, have been under tremendous pressure in recent years due to Government cuts. It is of course much harder to solve crimes with fewer officers in place and it is only now, thanks to our investment from City Hall, that officer numbers are recovering and bringing much-needed relief to Detectives and officers in general. It is important to be clear that a shortage of investigative capacity and Detectives is a national issue that all forces are struggling to address.

The MPS has been working extremely hard to increase its investigative capacity. In 2018, the MPS established the ground-breaking direct entry pathway for Detectives. This enables members of the public to apply directly to be a Detective without being a regular Police Constable first, broadening the appeal of this specialised role and improving diversity. In May 2016, the vacancy rate for Detectives was 11.5%. As of the end of last year, there were 6,811 Detectives and the vacancy rate has now fallen to 3.4%.

Unmesh Desai AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. With the announcement of extra officers for the force, surely this is now the chance to upskill existing police officers into Detective-level posts to deal with some of the gaps in investigative capacity that have been highlighted by the Inspector's report and by the MPS itself. Of course, we welcome the new officers, but we have existing officers who surely can be upskilled.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): That is a really important point. Thanks for raising that point.

Yes, there are two points there. One is that we are getting new officers joining, junior officers, and they need proper supervision. We cannot have a police service that is just made up of new and inexperienced officers.

Secondly, it gives a chance for those officers who are doing the jobs that these new officers will do to then be skilled up to do more investigations and become Detectives. That is what the MPS is endeavouring to do and is giving them the support to do just that.

Unmesh Desai AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor, but what worries me is that we can have this upskilling of officers and also the new officers, but we cannot buy experience, which takes time. The police watchdog, amongst others, has commented upon the lack of experience and quality in the MPS's investigative teams. How does the MPS ensure that its Detective-level officers have the necessary skillsets to undertake complex investigations?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Yes. Thanks for raising this point. This is one of concerns that the Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner have. One of the challenges we have is that officers, when they have done a certain number of years' service, retire even though they could carry on working because of how the pension arrangements work. It is a real loss to the MPS.

What we have tried to do is to bring them back as civilian staff. They still have lots of experience as former officers, but they are civilians and they are helping officers do the investigation work. Also, we are making sure that police officers are upskilled in relation to the skills they have in relation to responding to complaints of crime.

We are using all the tools in the toolkit, but I am always happy to hear any ideas people have to make sure we get more experience in the MPS. It was a point raised by Assembly Member Hall in the Budget and Performance Committee. It is a real live issue and we have to think outside the box about how to keep the experience in the MPS.

Unmesh Desai AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. Thank you for keeping an open mind. Also, I welcome, and all Londoners of goodwill will welcome, your trip to Auschwitz. Can I commend you for all the work you are doing to combat the scourge of anti-Semitism in our capital? Thank you.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you.

2020/0146 - Increase in Number of Police Officers

[Peter Whittle AM](#)

In the 2019 Spending Round, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced funding for an additional 20,000 police officers across England and Wales. Has the Home Secretary yet notified you how many of that number will be recruited to the Metropolitan Police?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The Prime Minister fought a leadership campaign and then a general election campaign on a promise to increase police officer numbers. So far, the Government has not followed through on this promise by either giving police forces the extra money they need or even telling forces how much money they will have to pay for these officers.

The Government has announced recruitment targets for police forces for 6,000 new officers by 2020/21. They were allocated according to each force's proportion of central Government's core grant, with the MPS being given a target 1,369 officers, which is about two-thirds of the 2,000 officers from the first tranche that the Commissioner and I argued for. These additional 1,369 officers will be on top of the 1,300 officers we are paying for from City Hall. The 2020/21 funding allocation to pay for this recruitment has still not been

announced by the Government. This creates significant uncertainty as forces plan their budgets. We have also not been given the timescales for the allocation of the remaining 14,000 of the 20,000 officers, which means it is really challenging.

We will carry on lobbying the Government and working with them to get the right number of officers we need. In the first instance, we need to know the amount of money we are going to get for the 1,369 officers and then to make progress in years two and three as well going forward.

Peter Whittle AM: I see. When this finally happens, Mr Mayor, you are talking about, what, 37,000 police officers?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): In an ideal scenario - and do not forget that there are lots of ifs and buts before we get there - if everything was to pan out as we would hope, that is the figure we are talking about. It is some years off, but that is the figure we are talking about.

Peter Whittle AM: The reason I ask is that obviously that is great, but it seems to me that one of the reasons that there is, as Assembly Members have already pointed out, such a lack of confidence at the moment in the police is their total lack of visibility to most people. In the last mayoral campaign in 2016, I am sure you said - along with everyone else, maybe with the exception of the Greens - that, basically, we need what used to be called bobbies on the beat and we need neighbourhood policing. This has actually been the case going back over lots of elections. It was not just your one.

It never seems to happen, Mr Mayor. It never seems to happen. They are just simply invisible. I wonder whether you would comment on this, but I do not think that that is just because of a lack of numbers. It seems to be that the ethos has changed from being protective to being reactive. Do you recognise that picture?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I do. Can I address very briefly your points? Last year, to give the police their dues, they had fewer than 30,000 officers. They had 29,000-odd officers. New York, with a smaller population than London, has more than 37,000 officers. It is hardly surprising that in some parts of London people do not see a police officer.

You were right to raise the second point in your question, which is that even if we get the officers, we want most of them to be on the streets making us feel safer as well as being safer. In the past there has been a criticism that police officers are driving around not being seen. That is unfair with the police officers we have now but there are just so few of them. They are under-resourced and overstretched. They do try to get about in the communities. We have doubled the amount of Dedicated Ward Officers from one to two. It is still not enough. You will remember there used to be six per ward, one Sergeant, two officers and three Community Support Officers (CSOs). We are trying to increase that with more officers. We can increase more bobbies on the beat.

Peter Whittle AM: This was a decision that was made possibly a couple of decades ago, this whole idea of taking them off the streets. Any Mayor of London is in a perfect position to maybe say, "Wait a minute. We have to reverse this policy generally".

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): To be fair, the first Mayor of London did do that with Commissioner Ian Blair. We have to remember the history accurately. There were massively increased police officer numbers during the Labour Government and Ken Livingstone's first term as Mayor.

It is a fact that the neighbourhood ward officers were an innovation of the first Mayor. That was reduced at the end of the last mayoralty to just one officer and one CSO. I promised to double the amount of Dedicated Ward Officers. We have done that. I did that at the end of my first year.

The problem is that there are so few officers and that leads to increased extractions from wards as well and so we need to get more officers into London.

Peter Whittle AM: It is a matter of actually the approach more than maybe the numbers, Mr Mayor, but thank you.

2020/0148 - Reducing school exclusions through the Violence Reduction Unit

Jennette Arnold OBE AM

In November, you announced that the Violence Reduction Unit would invest £4.7m to cut school exclusions. How is this vital workstream progressing?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): School exclusions have steadily increased over the last five years across the UK. Nearly 1,000 children were excluded from secondary schools in 2017/18 and a further 24,000 secondary pupils had more than one fixed period of exclusion. The correlation between school exclusions and serious violence affecting young people, including the county lines phenomenon, is increasingly clear.

That is why I am investing, through the London VRU, £4.7 million to support the difficult transition from primary to secondary school and to encourage inclusive and nurturing education. Starting this month, schools in 16 priority London boroughs will participate in the Supporting Inclusive Schools Programme, which consists of three individual projects, all tried and tested. Nurturing London will be delivered by Nurture UK, which has 50 years' experience of proven results and an approach that led to an 81% drop in exclusions and a subsequent 48% reduction in violence across Glasgow. The Stepping Stones project will support vulnerable children to successfully transition from primary to secondary school. The whole-school approach to healthy relationships delivered by arts charity Tender will help to tackle gender-based sexual violence. We are also investing in five projects launching this month, which will work in a trauma-informed way to improve young people's life chances. We know violent incidents involving young people aged 10 to 16 are more likely to happen at the end of the school day and so I am also providing more after-school support for young people.

However, a culture shift is needed. We need urgent action from the Government and greater powers and responsibilities over all schools' exclusions for local authorities. Schools and teachers must be better supported. The practice of offloading must be outlawed and the funding pressures on our schools must be urgently addressed with Government cuts to school budgets and after-school clubs immediately reversed as a matter of priority.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor, for that answer. Earlier you reminded us of the African proverb, "It takes a village to raise a child", and from what you have said, you are playing your part.

Is the wider London community doing enough to care and nurture its most vulnerable children? Are they aware enough about the sorts of system-wide drivers that seem to be making inclusion just harder and harder?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): That is a really good question. By themselves, they probably think they are, but it has been too fragmented. There has been no joining of the dots. We have Council Leaders who have no idea of the number of children excluded in their boroughs. They have no idea. They know about

them because they see them in their shopping centres or on street corners or getting up to 'mischief', in inverted commas.

What the VRU has been doing - and Lib [Peck] has done a great job as the Director - is bringing groups together, sharing information, sharing data. Often, they are the same children that social services know, schools know, Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) know, the police know and the council know, but they are not talking to each other. We have started to make some progress and there is a real appetite to work together. That is why I genuinely welcomed the Prime Minister's announcement this week to chair himself this taskforce because we need to make sure all levels of government are joined up as well.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: From our experience of the [former] Mayor, we spend a lot of time focusing on his many faults, but we do know that one aspect of his persona is his care for children. I do hope that you will be able to work with him on this important area.

Do you share my despair at the findings from the recent *Evening Standard* campaign that identified a rise in school exclusions linked to the soaring numbers of young vulnerable children being recruited by criminals and being used as part of their 'county lines' drug trafficking system?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Absolutely. I have been talking about this for some time now. I was criticised for talking about exclusions. There is a clear link between the amounts of serious youth violence and excluded children. I meet ex-offenders and ask how many were excluded from school. Nearly all the hands go up.

What is really important is that we support schools in relation to keeping children within schools. Often, teachers are at the end of their tether. A child will come to school and will play up and will act in a way that is unacceptable and will cause disruption and, often, the teacher has no choice but to remove the child from the classroom and to exclude the child because there is not the time, effort and resources to ask why that child is playing up. Has that child been affected by trauma the night before? Has that child seen mum being the victim of domestic abuse or big brother being stabbed and they are playing up at school because there is something else going on?

Good schools with the right resources are keeping children in the schools, which is leading to real benefits all round. We are supporting projects to keep children who may be at risk of exclusion in schools. We are supporting those children at year 7 who make the transition from primary to secondary school who could fall into a path that we do not like. Also, we are providing facilities in school and outside of school to give these children an alternative to the life of crime we are talking about and also to the chaos that can come with joining a criminal gang. It is really important that we work with the schools.

I make this point, though. It is really difficult when some schools are under local management. Some are academies. Some are free schools. Some are faith schools. I am not criticising any of them but --

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: It is the complexity.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): -- this is why we need this teamwork and for us to work together to address this issue.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM: Thank you. It is such a complex issue and thank you for all that you are doing. I do not have time but I would want to touch on the shameful situation regarding our young vulnerable children

with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), who, in terms of the exclusion rate, are disproportionately represented. I cannot get my head around how you can exclude a child in primary school. I just do not understand that. There is so much work to be done and I do hope that you will keep this workstream going. Thank you.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I intend to. Thank you, Chair.

2020/0103 - Hate Crime Hub

[Shaun Bailey AM](#)

What lessons have been learned from the Hate Crime Hub's record of delivering charges?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): We are taking a zero-tolerance approach to hate crime in London and the pioneering and innovative Hate Crime Hub is supporting victims and helping us to respond to the growing threat that London's diverse and minority communities are facing both on and offline. The Hate Crime Hub, which has the full support of community groups such as the Community Security Trust (CST) and Tell MAMA, has already dealt with 2,242 online cases, as well as providing wider support to boroughs on other hate crime incidents, and has helped us to build strong partnerships between the MPS, voluntary sector organisations and social media companies to identify online hate, get it removed and, where appropriate, ensure users are blocked.

The police have my full support in enforcing the law against anybody who commits a hate crime. I am concerned that the level of successful prosecutions has been relatively low. I am told this is because it can be difficult for investigators to obtain information from social media companies and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) has a high threshold for online hate.

Ultimately, the priority when dealing with hate crimes must be the victims. It is critical that we ensure everyone who experiences a traumatic incident receives the support they need. During the pilot stage alone, which ran up until May 2019, the team provided support and advice in 711 cases. In some situations, victims do not wish to see a prosecution because they want to move on from the traumatic experience. The preferred outcome can be to ensure that hateful content is removed and support provided. This must be respected, but my view is that the whole of the justice system must get better at giving victims the support they need to ensure offences are prosecuted wherever possible. In London, we have recently doubled the funding for advocacy services, enabling support for around 900 victims through the criminal justice system.

I will never apologise, Chair, for making tackling hate crime a priority or for investing in innovative ways to tackle it and support victims. This is a growing challenge in our society and I will continue to do what I can to address it.

Shaun Bailey AM: Thank you for your answer, Mr Mayor. I think we can all agree it is a growing challenge.

I just want to focus on the amount of convictions. Given that there has been fewer than 1% of referrals resulting in any kind of charge, what work can be done to lift up that end of the work? Clearly, that sends a message to the street that it will not be tolerated by the legal system as well, which is also a big deterrent.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Absolutely. You are right to raise the issue of deterrence and there is a role in relation to prosecutions for deterrence. The MPS are talking to the CPS in relation to the threshold, as I mentioned in my answer. The chances of success and a conviction are in the public interest and there is a

concern about whether the CPS is applying the test properly. I do not mean that in a critical way but genuinely because it is a new area of crime being pursued by the police and the CPS.

The second issue is that often victims do not bring a prosecution. Can they be explained the importance of the deterrence of a prosecution? If a victim says, "Look, I just want it removed", can a conversation be had saying, "Look, that is fine. We will do that, but if we bring a prosecution, it could lead to that person being punished and also deter others from doing the same". Those conversations are quite important.

The third point is: can a prosecution be brought even if the victim does not want to bring one? You will be aware of the innovations in other areas of criminality, domestic abuse being the best example. Even though a victim for good reasons does not want to pursue one after domestic abuse, a prosecution can still be brought with other forms of evidence, whether it is body-worn videos or whether it is a statement from the complainant/victim. Those things are being looked at.

I will just make this one final point. This is a new developing area and so I am not for one second complacent, but we are doing new things that the rest of the country is not seeing and that is why I suspect we will see some issues going forward. However, I am hoping to see more prosecutions if there continues to be an increase in hate crime.

Shaun Bailey AM: That leads on to my second point, which is about physical attacks on people from the lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) community. We have had a 51% rise in the last two years since you have been Mayor and there is clearly a link here. I accept that the first part is new and you are doing some work that will help, but what can be done to really focus on that? It is causing a serious amount of terror. I have spoken to a lot of people who are now talking about repeat attacks and being attacked by the same person more than once or suffering twice with different people involved. Where are the police and your office on helping the situation with being harassed?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Sure. Chair, I am sure it was just an error in the question because the questioner just referred to my time as Mayor in relation to the increase in homophobic attacks. I am sure he meant to say that the increase has been happening since 2012 and it was just an error on his part because the figures we have --

Shaun Bailey AM: No, the figures I have are different. It is not an error on my part.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): One of us wants to make a party-political point. The other one wants to deal with the issue of hate crime. The figures I have show, that homophobic hate crime offences have been going up since 2012. In fact, the huge increase happened in 2014 and 2015 and it is still continuing to go up.

There is a number of things we are doing to deal with the issue of hate crime. Firstly, we have to deal with it at an early age. I support, for example, teaching in schools about relationships. It is really important that children are told that families come in different shapes and sizes. That also means calling out politicians when they use homophobic language. It really important to do so whether they are a party leader or anybody else as well because that normalises homophobic language and can often confirm a caricature and a prejudice in the mind of a homophobe, which is really important to deal with.

The third key issue is to make sure we deal with the issue of online hate crime, which can often be people having the confidence to say things online they would never dream of saying face-to-face. That can lead to, in the spectrum, the increase in visible violence that we see. That is one of the reasons why I have supported the

issue of tackling online crime but also making sure that I have said that there will be zero tolerance of hate crime whilst I am the Mayor.

That leads to the final part of the jigsaw, which is giving the police the resources they need and lobbying the Government to make sure legislation can be changed and also the CPS and the courts getting the support they need to bring prosecutions as well.

Shaun Bailey AM: Thank you. To be clear, I am not making a party-political point, but it is a fact that we have had a steep rise since you have been Mayor. Yes, you are right. Even if a leader speaks in a very sharp racist tone, it needs to be addressed as well, including things like anti-Semitism and racism.

I bring the point because I have been speaking to a lot of people from the LGBT community and the black community as well who feel that London is unsafe. It is your job - according to you, your number one job - to look after London's safety. That has not been happening and that is why I asked the question.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chair, can I respond to that three-minute question?

Shaun Bailey AM: Yes, you can.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chair, I have the figures for hate crime offences, anti-Semitic offences, disability hate crime offences, faith hate crime offences, homophobic hate crime offences, Islamophobic offences, racist and religious hate crime offences and transgender hate crime offences. My figures do not just go back to May 2016 but for some reason I cannot understand the Assembly Member seems to be going back to just that date. My figures go back to 2012, which is the first time these figures were properly collated in the form we have. My figures show, Chair, that in this great city of ours over the last eight years we have seen an increase in all these areas of crime.

I am disappointed that on a matter as important as this, the Assembly Member wants to make a party-political point out of this. It is far more important than that and that is why it is really important we work together to tackle this issue. As long as I am the Mayor, I will continue to tackle it.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): Thank you for that information, Mayor. I definitely heard the Member say he was not making a party-political comment. I heard him say that.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chair, that is like saying, with respect, and not being disrespectful --

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): Mayor, I can only say what I heard. Assembly Member Bailey, you were not named and so --

Shaun Bailey AM: Let me just make a point. We are --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Sorry, was that a question, Chair?

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): No --

Shaun Bailey AM: I was giving a piece of information. I would just like to provide some background. That is all.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): Just give me a question to the stats that you have just heard.

Shaun Bailey AM: I will ask the question, then. Are we in MQT with you talking about your mayoralty, yes or no? We are.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): You have answered your question as well.

Shaun Bailey AM: That is why I asked the questions. I was not making a party-political point. We are talking about you and your mayoralty and your record of delivering or not, nobody else's.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): OK. We were doing so well.

Shaun Bailey AM: Thank you very much, Chair.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): You have put your question and answered it and so that is fine.

Shaun Bailey AM: Thank you very much, Chair.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chair, I am sure it looked better when he practiced in the mirror this morning. Let us deal with the next question.

2020/0277 - "Dismal" Office to Residential Conversions

[Joanne McCartney AM](#)

Should the government, if it will not scrap Permitted Development Rights legislation, give local authorities in London increased powers to stop schemes which can be described as 'rabbit-hutch' homes?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Yes, Chair, I have been clear that these permitted development (PD) rights should either be devolved to London or be scrapped. Creating substandard housing is not the answer to the housing crisis.

If the Government refuses to see sense and these PD rights are to continue, London needs to be able to ensure that the homes they deliver meet the housing standards in my London Plan. Not having enough living space has a negative impact on people's health and quality of life and our children's social and emotional development. Minimum space standards are critical to improving Londoners' health and wellbeing, but they also provide other advantages such as making homes easier to adapt to changing needs over time. These space standards which are set out in the London Plan are not required under PD rights and, because these developments are not subject to planning policy requirements, schemes coming through this route are not required to deliver affordable housing or other requirements crucial to good growth such as outdoor space and children's play space.

Office-to-residential PD rights have not only led to extremely poor-quality housing but also eroded the stock of viable occupied offices in the capital. It is a lose-lose situation. The Government's own planning inspectors have grappled with this issue, having to allow schemes that do not offer a positive living environment because the way these rights work means that fundamental considerations such as whether homes have windows and ventilation or meet minimum space standards cannot be taken into account.

Joanne McCartney AM: Thank you for that answer and you have been firm on that throughout the time you have been Mayor.

This was thrown into stark relief for me recently when an application in Wood Green to convert an old office building, Alexandra House, was made by a private developer. It was to be turned into 219 'rabbit hutch' homes that your own planning adviser called 'dismal'. Some of these appear to be no more than 30-foot-by-30-foot rooms which are meant to deal with bathing, cooking, living and sleeping. Following this application through its prior approval, it appeared that while the local authority could have some say, for example, if it would be affected by traffic outside or noise from nearby commercial buildings, it would have no say on the quality, affordability or size of these accommodations.

If the Government is not going to repeal this legislation, would you argue for at least some minimum standards?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Absolutely. You have highlighted this one example in your constituency and there are numerous examples around London of the consequences of PD of office blocks. As I said, we are losing office spaces and the quality of homes often is not very good.

By the way, I understand the intention of the Minister was not to create poor quality housing. He did not get out of bed and say, "You know what? Let us create awful housing and lose office space". I suspect their intention was to make it easier for the transition from office to residential. What I am trying to say to them in a respectful, courteous, non-partisan manner is that it has not worked in relation to what we are seeing and so I want them to give councils more power and to devolve more power to councils to decide this issue.

One of the things that the Government could do very easily is to make it easier for local authorities to introduce article 4 directions [under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995], which would make a big difference to remove these PD rights in order to keep what they have, but also to have the sort of minimum standards that they need. Then the councils can make sure that appropriate schemes could go ahead and those that are not either do not go ahead or need to be amended.

Joanne McCartney AM: Thank you. In fact, Haringey Council, when this legislation came in, did apply for an exemption for the Wood Green area because it was worried about this exact issue and it is also against the local plan that has been agreed by councillors. You said earlier that you want these powers devolved to you. Does the Government seem as if it is going to be moving on that? This application is over the threshold. If it was a normal building, it would be referable to you.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): One of the frustrations is that it is not referable to me. As you know, schemes that are above 150 units or over a certain height do come to me. What the Government has done, either intentionally or unintentionally, is to create a loophole and so we will be lobbying the Government to try to close this loophole.

I question if that was their intention. I am hoping it was not because what it has led to is substandard housing and I cannot imagine any Government Minister wanting to create substandard housing.

Joanne McCartney AM: Thank you.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): Thank you very much. We have had two questions withdrawn, Assembly Member Copley's question and Assembly Member Boff's question.

2020/0172 - Responsibility for Child Poverty

Léonie Cooper AM

How will you be working with the new Government to tackle child poverty in London?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): There is no excuse for child poverty in a city as prosperous as London. It is scandalous that four in 10 children are growing up in poverty, that 400,000 cannot access an affordable healthy diet and that tens of thousands of parents are forced to rely on foodbanks. I am determined to do everything in my power to tackle child poverty in London but the levers to truly address it lie in the hands of the Government.

The United Nations (UN) Special Rapporteur was clear in his report last year [2019] that austerity was a political choice that has increased poverty in the UK. The research we published last year supported this assessment. It showed an additional 75,000 London children will be pushed into poverty by 2022 as a result of the tax and welfare reforms of the past decade. We are using this research to urge the Government to change its policies and will continue to do so.

In particular, we are calling on them to use the upcoming Budget to reverse the damage in welfare reforms like the two-child limit and the freeze to Local Housing Allowance rates, which currently fall well short of average rents. We are also using research and other arguments to persuade the Government to give us our fair share in the next Spending Review.

I will continue to bear down on the costs for low-income families, for example, by pressing ahead with building a record number of genuinely affordable homes, keeping transport costs down with initiatives like the Hopper, and helping families access good quality, affordable childcare. Over the next few months, I will be exploring options for expanding our successful project with the Child Poverty Action Group, which has raised thousands of pounds of additional income for hard-pressed families by delivering welfare advice directly to parents in schools.

Léonie Cooper AM: Given what you have just said, Mr Mayor, I assume that you were surprised if not shocked to hear Home Secretary [The Rt Hon] Priti Patel [MP] in November 2019 saying that Government policies are nothing to do with child poverty and it is just the responsibility of local authorities and a long list of other individuals and authorities.

Given that of the top 20 UK authorities that have the highest rates of child poverty, 10 are in London, do you not agree that this washing of hands by a member of the Government is really quite offensive?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): There are two big points here. Firstly, the fact that poverty levels in London are so stark is an argument to make sure we get the resources we need in both the Budget and the Spending Review. There is a perception in the Government and around the country that London is very wealthy. Parts are but, as you have said in your question, parts are not and people are not.

The second part is that the Trussell Trust has looked at the people it helps at its foodbanks and that research has shown that the drivers are a number of things, from very low incomes to the benefit changes, but sometimes there are delays in receiving the benefit. The Government has to recognise the responsibility for both the benefit changes and the delays, but also sometimes low incomes, are to do with Government policy and legislation. They need to recognise that and try to address that.

Léonie Cooper AM: The Government does bear some responsibility, but with 25% of London's children projected to be hungry during the school holidays and 60,000 children receiving emergency food parcels in 2019, it is really important that London itself is doing as much as it can.

You referred to some of the things that you have done. What more can you be doing? You have just launched London Power, for example, to try to help families reduce their energy costs, but what else are you able to do to help families who are in these desperate circumstances?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): A lot of the things that we are doing are outside our statutory powers and we are doing them because they are the right things to do. Some of the Assembly, as you heard in answer to a previous question, criticised me and my administration for doing that. They said it is not what we should be doing. It is what we should be doing. Our core business must be to help Londoners and give them a helping hand.

One of the things that we did very recently was to host - and my Deputy Mayor [for Social Integration, Social Mobility and Community Engagement] Dr Debbie Weekes-Bernard did this - a children's food insecurity summit, bringing together experts from the third sector, community groups, charities and the private sector to see what we can do working together, pooling our ideas and resources to take some steps going forward.

Another thing we are doing is working with a number of boroughs to develop a Food Poverty Action Plan in those parts of London that have the poorest children and the highest levels of food poverty going forward.

There are a number of reasons we have for freezing fares. One of them is to help these sorts of families use public transport. You will have seen the Hopper. Actually, the poorest Londoners tend to use buses rather than the Underground, which is why the Hopper is a gamechanger for many of them, particularly in outer London.

There is the Living Wage. One of the reasons why I am really proud we have more than doubled the amount of Living Wage employers since I have been Mayor from the previous Mayor is because it means that decent Londoners who do a hard day's work can get a decent day's pay. There are other examples of things we are doing using the Good Work Standard, using procurement and using our convening power.

However, the key thing is that whatever we are doing is a fraction of addressing the issues that really the Government can and should be doing because a lot of these problems are caused by Government policy.

Léonie Cooper AM: I for one am not going to be criticising you for tackling the scourge of hungry children across our city. Thank you very much, Mr Mayor. Thank you, Chair.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you very much.

2020/0109 - Protecting police officers

[Susan Hall AM](#)

What progress has been made on protecting police officers?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Assaults against police officers as well as all emergency service workers are appalling and absolutely unacceptable.

Our under-resourced and overstretched police officers in London are the best in the world, professional, skilled and dedicated to keeping us safe. In 2010 there were 33,000 police officers and last year there were 31,000 and they went below 30,000 for the first time in months. That means that where we used to have just over four police officers per 1,000 people, there are now just over three. This reduction in officers when the population is rising means it is more difficult to protect the public but it is also more difficult to protect police officers themselves.

I am taking advice on how best to protect police officers from the Commissioner [of Police of the Metropolis] and her senior team and I support her operational decision-making to ensure officers have the tools they need to keep themselves and the public safe. Following a successful trial in custody suites, the Commissioner provided spit and bite guards to all frontline officers. Other safety equipment being provided to officers includes new more reliable batons and pelargonic acid vanillylamide (PAVA) incapacitant spray, which is safer to use.

The Commissioner also asked for funding to increase the provision of Tasers and we have provided this, investing an additional £1 million. There are now more than 2,000 additional officers trained in how to use Taser since I became Mayor. When I became Mayor, there were 4,100 officers armed with Tasers and now that stands at 6,467, rising to 6,800 in the next few weeks. The Commissioner has said that she would expect there to be about 10,000 in the next couple of years trained in Taser.

We have also overseen the biggest ever rollout of body-worn video, ensuring that when officers are attacked evidence is captured to help bring those criminals to justice.

I can assure Londoners that I will continue to work very closely with the Commissioner and her team to ensure officers have all the tools they need to keep themselves and the public safe whilst balancing this with proper transparency and accountability.

Susan Hall AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. I appreciate that. I know I bang on about police officer safety, but it really does matter so much. At that point I would like to say thank goodness [Police Constable] Stuart Outten is OK. What an incredible officer. It came on the news yesterday. Thank goodness he had a Taser because he was able to keep himself safe. I am sure all my colleagues would say very well done to him.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Hear, hear.

Susan Hall AM: Mr Mayor, on Monday the Government opened bidding for Police and Crime Commissioners to get funding for more Tasers. Are you going to bid for that?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Yes. What I referred to in my answer in relation to the Tasers, was funding from City Hall, but we are talking to the Home Office about additional funding for Tasers because the Government has announced this scheme for all 43 forces. We have to make sure we get sufficient monies for Tasers for London as well.

Susan Hall AM: Good. One of my concerns - and I have brought it up at other committees - is that if we have, please God, lots more police officers around and there are more of them with Tasers, where are we going to keep those Tasers? We are selling an awful lot of the police stations or the police homes, as it were, and you cannot just leave Tasers hanging around.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I do not wish to be patronising, but we had a really good quality debate at the Budget and Performance Committee on these sorts of issues and, for those watching and thinking it is always knockabout, it is not. We have proper discussions and debates and ideas on these issues. At that Committee, you and others raised a serious issue about the support officers' need for them to be functioning. Of course, we welcome 20,000 officers over the next three years and we hope we get 6,000 in London, but that means additional support that they will need on a variety of issues.

What we have done is to pause all sales of any estate the MPS has, to consider what needs we have. Our slight difficulty is that we are not sure how many officers we will receive after three years and so the sooner we know the sooner we can plan. They range from small issues like, in terms of space, where Tasers are stored, to things like where officers can have a break and refresh, to things like lockers, and where computers are stored.

These are some of the things that the MPS estate is looking at, working with MOPAC on but also in consultation with the Government. The sooner we get certainty from the Government, the sooner we can make these plans, but I can assure you that the MPS and MOPAC are working closely together to make sure we do not inadvertently have a situation where we have additional police officers but not the support they need to be properly functioning.

Susan Hall AM: Very quickly, if I may, we do not always agree and we did have quite a battle on the spit guards, but I am glad to see that eventually it was agreed. It was agreed about a year ago. I have stopped police officers in the street that I know, and some that I do not, and I have asked them about spit guards. So many of them do not have them. Can you give me a date by which time all frontline officers will have spit guards in order to protect themselves?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I can, Chair, but I am just smiling because I can imagine the Assembly Member stopping police officers and asking them if they have spit guards.

Susan Hall AM: I do. I actually do.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am sure you do. I am just trying to imagine the conversation. I am just picturing it. That is all.

I have that answer. Over 12,000 officers are trained in the use of spit and bite guards so far. The intention is for all officers to be trained by April 2020 and for officers to be given those. They are quite small and they are quite easy to handle.

Susan Hall AM: Yes. Thank you very much. Thank you, Chair.

2020/0124 - London's Bus Network

[Tony Devenish AM](#)

Are you satisfied with the changes made to London's bus network under your Mayoralty?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Yes, I am. Londoners expect buses to run on time, to run safely, cleanly and efficiently, and to remain affordable. I have started a long overdue modernisation of the entire bus network to achieve this.

Last year I introduced six new bus routes in outer London, the largest increase for years. Just last month I introduced a package of enhancements and new routes in west London. These changes are part of a plan to grow outer London services by 5 million kilometres over the next five years, making it easier for people to travel sustainably.

Changes to the way Londoners are living and travelling and investments in other forms of transport such as London Overground and the Tube, as well as the increased levels of cycling, have meant that fewer people want to travel by bus in central London and so, in some cases, to put it simply, there were too many buses on the road. Every penny spent on buses running half empty could be better spent on improving services in the parts of London where demand is growing. In London's bus network, the changes reflect new patterns of travel. They provide links to new housing developments in outer London, reduce bus congestion in central London, and improve reliability. Reliability is now at its best since records began some 40 years ago.

I have also made transport more affordable for Londoners. I have frozen fares and maintained bus fares at £1.50. In 2016 I also introduced the Hopper fare, allowing unlimited changes within an hour of first touching in. It has been used in nearly 450 million journeys so far with an estimated 450,000 hops made day.

I have a longer answer but I want to give the Assembly Member a chance to ask supplementary questions.

Tony Devenish AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. I wanted to particularly focus on our senior citizens and the disabled. I am indebted to my constituent, Mrs Sue Kaye, who writes to me literally every month on this and really passionately cares.

Do you recognise that when you have made the changes to the bus network, you have made it more difficult for people like Sue to get buses? They cannot use the Tube. They have issues with going down large escalators. They have to use buses. If you are cutting the frequency of a number of routes, it gives real concern. Do you believe that when TfL look at these changes, they are always looking at the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) implications?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Which bus does she use?

Tony Devenish AM: She uses a number of buses from Westminster North down to the West End.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chair, I am really happy to look offline at the particular buses that she uses, but can I just reassure you? Before any bus service changes are made, they are subject to an equality impact assessment and that looks at some of the issues that your constituent would deal with. You can reassure her that those assessments do take place. I am more than happy, if the case is raised with either the Deputy Mayor for Transport or me, to look into the particular circumstances.

Tony Devenish AM: Thank you very much. We will definitely do that.

2020/0222 - Grenfell-style aluminium composite material cladding

[Andrew Dismore AM](#)

How many Londoners are living in buildings with Grenfell-style aluminium composite material cladding that still needs remediating?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Since the tragedy at Grenfell, I have repeatedly called on the Government to fund cladding remediation. It took nearly a year for them to commit to providing funding for councils and housing associations and private sector leaseholders had to wait yet another year. These delays have placed Londoners at risk.

Of the 66 social sector blocks eligible for funding, five have claimed their completion payment. These five buildings include roughly 500 homes. A further 31 blocks with just over 2,000 homes are projected to complete by the end of June this year [2020]. Even in the social sector, where landlords have been proactive, remediation takes time.

Shamefully, though, private building owners have failed to act with this same urgency. The vast majority of the 58 London buildings eligible under the private sector fund are still yet to start remediation and only one has completed. Contained within these 57 buildings are approximately 4,000 individual homes.

The pace of remediation is dictated by the building owner, but my GLA Building Safety Team is working hard to try to speed up the process, including putting pressure on applicants and proposing to the Government ways to streamline the funding process. Whilst it is unacceptable that Londoners are still living in buildings with unsafe aluminium composite material (ACM) cladding, every building under the fund has interim safety measures in place. The bad news is that leaseholders are footing the bill for these interim safety measures because the fund does not cover them.

What is more, there are an unknown number of London tower blocks with other types of unsafe cladding. These blocks have no route to remediation and the recent fire in Bolton should be a stark warning to the Government. That is why just before Christmas the Homes for Londoners Board, which I chair, wrote to the Secretary of State [for Homes, Communities and Local Government] to urge him to widen the scope of the fund to include interim measures and other types of unsafe cladding.

Chair, I should say this. I want to thank Assembly Member Dismore for his continued scrutiny of building safety in London. Along with others across the sector, I will continue to call on the Government to wake up to the scale of this crisis.

Andrew Dismore AM: Thank you for that. If the rate of remediation over the last six months continues, from figures published today it will take five years just for the social housing to be completed and nine years for the private sector tall buildings to be made safe.

What else could be done to speed this up? As you mentioned, what will be the consequences when testing confirms other types of cladding or installation apart from ACM are dangerous and that other less tall blocks of flats are shown to be at risk, bearing in mind the recent fires in low-rise buildings both in London and elsewhere?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): That is a really important question. All we are talking about is ACM cladding. There are other forms of cladding that we know are combustible and are not being dealt with and we have not tested other forms of cladding on other buildings that could also have combustible materials in them. You are right to talk about the potential delay in these buildings being remediated.

There is a number of things we are doing. How can we make sure that the supply chain issues are dealt with? The Government has been told about these challenges: the complexity of designing the remediation works, the complexity of completing the remediation works, the difficulties in getting the right teams available to deal

with these issues. We are talking with the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) about streamlining the process. Also, the big challenge we have is to identify other types of unsafe cladding as well. That is one of the reasons why Homes for Londoners wrote to the Government just before Christmas to make sure it was aware of our concerns, by the way, which are replicated around the country as well.

Andrew Dismore AM: The Government is refusing to provide detailed figures about buildings with cladding on the grounds that they claim that what they perceive as a 'safety risk' is not a real safety risk that people may unknowingly be living in unsafe homes

Should residents in potentially dangerous homes know about the risks rather than being kept in the dark by a Conservative Government that has dragged its feet, has failed to meet its own remediation targets and promises and thus has allowed the cladding scandal to drag on for two and a half years so far, leaving an unknown number of flat dwellers living in danger for years ahead? Do you think the Government's concern over safety rings rather hollow in the light of this lack of transparency?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I am really concerned about the delay from the Government and the lacklustre response from the Government to this really important issue. One of the reasons why you now have teams who go to fires from the London Fire Brigade (LFB), who are not just dealing with putting the fire out but also evacuation, is the concern about whether a building is safe and whether the stay-put advice can be used.

I do have some sympathy with the Government's approach though because what they do not want to do is to spread panic and alarm and what they do not want to do is to cause a situation where people have behavioural changes that could put their lives at risk and also others in their buildings. I understand their concerns. I am hoping it has been done for the right reasons rather than the reasons you are alluding to.

We will continue to talk to the Government see if we can provide more information so that there is more knowledge. The reassurance that we know exists is that there are interim measures in place in some of these buildings to make sure that they are as safe as they can be in the absence of remediation of the ACM cladding.

Andrew Dismore AM: The GLA now states that it cannot provide me with updates on the cladding remediation fund, which is administered by City Hall on behalf of the Government, because of a memorandum of understanding between the GLA and MHCLG. This means we cannot know which building owners are in receipt of public money and how much is being paid out.

Do you think this is Government secrecy being obstructive, unnecessary and unfair to both the taxpayer and to residents potentially at risk?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): One of the things that we can explore is, notwithstanding the conditions upon which the Government made the agreement with us to administer the fund for it, whether there is some way of Assembly Members being made aware, subject to some suitable undertakings. What I suggest we do is carry on talking about whether we can persuade the Government to do that.

I say this, giving the Government the benefit of the doubt. I understand its nervousness about making public this information. We are going to carry on talking to the Government and talking to you about how we can let at least Assembly Members know whether there are issues that affect their constituents. We will carry on talking to the Government to see if we can persuade it to do that.

Andrew Dismore AM: Thank you.

2020/0309 - Transport for London Business Plan

[Navin Shah AM](#)

How will your latest Transport for London Business Plan improve transport in the capital?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): TfL published its updated business plan in December [2019]. The business plan sets out how transport will support sustainable growth and make the city a safer, greener and better place to live, work and visit. Over the course of the next five years, capacity on the District, Circle, Hammersmith & City and Metropolitan lines will increase by 33% after completion of a major signalling upgrade programme and new state-of-the-art trains will be introduced on the Piccadilly line. New walkthrough trains will be introduced on the Docklands Light Railway (DLR) and the introduction of services on both the Northern line extension and the London Overground Barking Riverside extension will improve connectivity for Londoners in all parts of the city.

TfL will continue to invest in making London's transport offer greener and our city healthier. We already have the largest fleet of electric buses in Europe and by the end of 2024/25 there will be more than 2,000 zero-emission buses in the fleet. The tightening of the Low Emission Zone later this year and the expansion of the ULEZ next year are key to tackling London's toxic air crisis. Significant Healthy Street investments will ensure that the amount of protected cycle space will have trebled since I became Mayor and 41 of London's most dangerous junctions will have been made safer by May [2020].

All London buses apart from the Heritage Routemasters are fully accessible, as are 95% of bus stops. Step-free access will open at Mill Hill East station this month, the next in a programme of station accessibility improvements, bringing the total number of step-free stations in the Underground to 79.

However, for London to continue to grow and for transport infrastructure to meet the capital's future needs, we support certainty of long-term funding from central Government. TfL's funding, as you are aware, from central Government has been reduced by an average of £700 million a year. It is only through steady and sustained investment that we can plan for a productive, dynamic and more prosperous future.

Navin Shah AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. Between 2017/18 and 2018/19, from the figures we have, we have seen the cost of 60-plus Oyster photocard go up by £31 million. Can you explain the reason for this 45% increase?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The short reason is because the Freedom Pass does not just apply to those who receive the state pension because the state pension eligibility has been going up year-on-year whereas the Freedom Pass applies to those who are 60-plus. We fund the difference, if you like, and each year that gap becomes bigger.

One of the options is to say that we will only pay the Freedom Pass to those who get the state pension. I am not willing to do that. I will continue to pay the Freedom Pass and will make sure that with council support we pay the Freedom Pass to all those who are 60-plus.

That is the explanation. Each year, I am afraid it is going to go upwards as there is a bigger gap between those who get the state pension and those who are 60-plus.

Navin Shah AM: Thank you. Looking at the 2018 business plan, it showed 2,034 million bus passengers, whilst the 2019 business plan shows 2,184 million bus passengers. Can you explain how TfL has managed to increase bus patronage by 150 million?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): We are making our buses more reliable. One of the things that we have done is we realised that there are a number of reasons in central London why people are not using buses and bus patronage has gone down. By the way, it has gone down far more rapidly around the country and one of the reasons why it is less so in London is because of my policy to freeze fares and the Hopper as well. There are other choices in central London. In outer London, there are fewer choices and so we are moving more buses to outer London as well.

Also, one of the reasons why people do not use a bus is because it is not reliable. From simple things like making sure utility companies are not digging up roads to providing better information so that buses are more punctual and speeding up reliability, that is leading to more confidence. Over the next five years, as I explained in my answer to a previous question, there will be increasing buses in outer London and, hopefully, that will lead to the dip being reversed in relation to passenger numbers going down.

However, I suspect people's working habits have now changed and people's leisure activities have now changed and so we cannot assume that bus patronage will go back up again.

Navin Shah AM: I note your response about outer London in this instance and also your reply to Assembly Member Devenish's question on outer London buses as well. I know that a lot of review is taking place on a borough-by-borough basis in outer London, but is there any chance that you will have a more comprehensive review of all outer London bus services like what was done for inner London? Is that in the long term possible or practical?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Yes, it is. One of things that you will know, bearing in mind the constituency you represent, is that often bus journeys in outer London are from town centre to town centre or home to hospital or new housing developments to leisure. They do not even come into central London. We are looking at the journeys there are that people make. You will be aware that we, for example, have also piloted some new modes of bus usage using an app in west London and south London as well. We are being innovative in relation to services going forward but we are being conscious of the fact that bus passenger usage and patterns are different in outer London than they have traditionally been in central London. People do not just go from outer to inner; they go within different parts of outer London. We are looking at that.

Navin Shah AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): Assembly Member Boff?

Andrew Boff AM: Mr Mayor, you have postponed signalling on the Piccadilly line, you have screwed up Crossrail and Londoners are yet to be persuaded there any of the changes you have done on the bus network have benefited them. Every other project you appear to have inherited from your predecessor and, basically, you are not getting the kind of progress that is required.

Londoners want to know what on earth you have done over the past three and a half years. What have you done, Mr Mayor?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): In relation to transport, there are a number of things that we have done. The most important thing that Londoners appreciate is us freezing TfL fares. The average household in London will benefit to the tune of £200 because of the TfL fares freeze. Linked with that, of course, is the fact that we have introduced the unlimited Hopper bus fare, which means that Londoners can travel on a bus within an hour and change as many times as they like for the same price of £1.50. In outer London, that has been a real gamechanger, particularly for the poorest Londoners.

The other big thing of course we have done since I became Mayor is invest record sums in walking and cycling. The ambition it is to have 80% of Londoners walking, cycling and using public transport. The good news is that in my first three years as Mayor, not only have I increased the amount of segregated cycle lanes in London, but I have more than doubled it. In three and a half years, I have achieved more segregated cycle lanes than the previous Mayor did in eight years.

We also inherited a situation where there were so many dangerous junctions in London. We have made more and more safe. By the end of my first term as Mayor, 41 of the junctions identified as dangerous will have been made safer.

The other big thing we are doing in London because of my transport policies is addressing the air quality issue in London. The previous Mayor - whom you are a big fan of, I know - had a situation where he buried away reports in relation to the poor-quality air in London that showed that the poorest Londoners lived in the parts of London with the worst air, including schools. I published that report but also I am planning to address that.

King's College London did a report that said that under the policies of the previous Mayor it would have taken 193 years to bring the air within legal limits. Using my policies it will take six years. One of those policies is bringing in the ULEZ last year, which was opposed by the Conservatives but I did it in the face of their opposition. The evidence shows that because of the ULEZ being brought in in 2019 the amount of NOx has been reduced by a third and the amount of particulate matter by 13%, which is why I am rolling it out to the rest of London this year for bigger vehicles and going up until 2021 for other vehicles up to the North Circular and South Circular. The evidence is that will lead to massive changes and an improvement in the quality of air, but transport is only responsible for half of the dangerous air in London. Housing, construction and the River Thames are responsible for the other half, so we need to take action there.

The other big thing I have done since I became Mayor is in relation to taxis. The previous Mayor was giving licences to diesel taxis, which were responsible for a large amount of the bad-quality air in London. There were zero electric taxis when I became Mayor and more than 3,000 since I have been Mayor, but also we have changed the policy of the previous Mayor who did not give enough support to taxi drivers moving away, either decommissioning or moving to electric.

The other big thing we have done --

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): No, I am going to stop you there.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I can go on about our policies.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): The Conservative Group are out of time.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): That is a shame.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): Can I ask the Assembly to agree to suspend Standing Order 2.9B in order to get the last two questions in and for some important statutory stuff that we have to do?

All: Agreed.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): Thank you. Let us have the question from Assembly Member Cooper.

2020/0171 – ULEZ success

[Léonie Cooper AM](#)

What would have been the impact on Londoners' health if the ULEZ was brought in as originally planned in 2020?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chair, can I say that this is a really important question. Had we taken the advice of the Conservatives, the ULEZ would not have been introduced in April 2019 and the huge progress we have made would not have been seen. We have seen, since the ULEZ has been introduced, a reduction of the nitrogen dioxide and NOx by a third. We have seen a reduction of particulate matters by 13%. We have also seen huge progress made cleaning the air across our city.

It is worth reminding ourselves why it is so important. The bad-quality air in London is responsible for thousands of premature deaths. It is responsible for children having stunted lungs, permanently stunted, but also for adults suffering from a whole host of health issues, from asthma to dementia to cancer. Because of our bold policies, action has been taken to address that. We have also taken policies to clean up the taxi fleet and the bus fleet as well. Had we accepted the Conservative plans for the budget we would not have been able to do so. We have made huge progress in relation to that, but the big gamechanger is also going to come when we roll these out to the North Circular and South Circular from next year and this year for other vehicles like coaches and buses in the rest of London, which will see big progress being made.

It is really important that Londoners appreciate that now, when you look at the Royal Society of Public Health, when they talk about the biggest achievements of the 21st century, the ULEZ is ranked seventh. That demonstrates the difference a Labour Mayor can make and yet another reason why you must not vote for the Conservatives on 7 May this year.

Léonie Cooper AM: As you know, Mr Mayor, I pressed you to bring it even further forward to January 2019 so I was a very strong supporter of the initiative to move it forward, but obviously, as you have said, we sat in this very Chamber and listened to the Conservative Group pressing very hard for it to only be implemented in October 2020, as was originally announced in 2015. I just want to be absolutely crystal clear there is no chance at all that you are going to listen to those people who say that expanding the ULEZ should not occur. You are definitely going ahead with expanding ULEZ in October 2020?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The problem is that I was handed a blank sheet of paper. There were no details, no planned workings. No calculations were made, no work done. We started from scratch, basically. That is why it is quite remarkable that we have gone from a standing still position to what we achieved in April 2019 and the progress we have made.

I have asked the question, "Can we go even faster?" and the answer is no. It is a very complex scheme. It is the world's first. There are multiple delivery strands, including changes to back-end systems and new infrastructure, working with the boroughs. There is a consultation we have undertaken. Also, we have to be

reasonable, especially to low-income families, to charities, small businesses and those who have to change their fleet, for them to be ready as well. We simply cannot do it any faster. You will see over the next 100 days some people claiming it can be faster. It cannot be. The only way it can be done for 2020 for bigger vehicles and for other vehicles in October 2021 is by voting Labour on 7 May this year. It is a two-horse race between me and the Conservatives who are against us. That is why it is important to vote Labour on 7 May.

Léonie Cooper AM: Mr Mayor, I am sure you are regularly pressed, as I am, by groups who would like it to be expanded more quickly, and I understand the points that you are making about the need to implement in a thorough way.

Andrew Boff AM: On a Standing Order, Chair.

Léonie Cooper AM: As part of the --

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): Can she finish, out of respect for your colleague, or not?

Léonie Cooper AM: As part of the implementation of the ULEZ you also introduced the ULEZ Support Scheme, which set aside £23 million to be accessed by mainly small businesses but also some charities. Now, there has been much spoken. In fact, Assembly Member [David] Kurten at the very beginning of today was talking about the devastating impact on businesses. I am slightly disappointed that so far, so little of that £23 million has been accessed by those small businesses and charities. What more can we do to make sure that they are accessing it when they need it?

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): OK. Before you answer, Mr Mayor, there is a point of order. Will the Member rise and tell me which bit of the Standing Order he wants to raise?

Andrew Boff AM: I have not a clue, Chair, but what I do know is that one of the principles of this Chamber is we do not use it for blatant electioneering. If you are not going to challenge the Mayor on his encouragement of people to vote for a particular party then you can be absolutely assured that we will spend our time on the Assembly between now and May saying, "Vote Conservative".

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Which candidate are you backing on 7 May?

Tony Arbour AM (Deputy Chairman): Get Brexit done.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I bet some of you are voting for me as well.

Andrew Boff AM: It is up to you, Chair, how you want to carry on this Assembly business.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): Thank you. It is up to me. The Standing Order, which was incomplete, has been noted. Can I have an answer to the question that has just been put to the Mayor from Assembly Member Cooper?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chair, one of the things that we have been doing is to engage with businesses --

Andrew Boff AM: On a point of order, Chair, I did not want it to be noted, I wanted it to be responded to, and that means either challenge the Mayor for what he has said now or write to me with what your decision is going to be. I do not just want it noted.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): I will write to you that I have noted your Standing Order.

Andrew Boff AM: In which case that is not acceptable, Chair. In which case this Group can feel it is perfectly free to go electioneering through the processes of this Assembly. On every Committee meeting, on every scrutiny meeting, we can tell everyone to vote Conservative without any degree of challenge whatsoever from yourselves. Thank you for your support in telling us to go and tell people to vote Conservative.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): Excuse me, can I just finish with this Member? I can only say again to you, Assembly Member Boff, I am happy to put in writing my response to your incomplete point of order and you will get that in writing. Is this a point of order from you, Assembly Member Kurten?

David Kurten AM: Chair, I just wondered if you could bring to a close this 'Sadiq Khan/vote Conservative' conversation because you never know, there might be other people in the Assembly who have not declared yet.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): Sorry, I did not hear what you said. Can you stand up again?

David Kurten AM: There may be other people in the Assembly who have not declared themselves yet, who may be affected by this 'vote Labour/vote Conservative' conversation. I think we should draw that to a close.

Tony Devenish AM: You could join us, David.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): Excuse me, Members. What I can tell Members is I raised this question with officers yesterday and the Assembly and the GLA have not been notified of any candidates for a forthcoming election. Until that happens --

Andrew Boff AM: I think there is going to be a Conservative candidate.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): Until that happens, let us get on with our business. Can I have an answer, in the remaining minute, to the Labour question in front of you, Mr Mayor?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chair, just as in --

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): And please, no more electioneering.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Just as in May 2016, there will be Conservatives voting for me --

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): I am not interested. We do not care. We do not care. You have just stepped over the line, have you not?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I have been trying my best for the last five minutes, to be fair.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): You have just stepped over the line and wasted the Labour Member's time because it is clear you do not have an answer to the question.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): We still have a minute, Chair. We still have one minute and 11 seconds to answer the Labour question, and the answer is that we have shown over the last few years that we are an administration that is pro-business, which means we engage with businesses and listen to their concerns. Assembly Member Cooper is somebody who has been a passionate advocate for fixing the air in London and also speaks to businesses, and one of the things about businesses is they often suffer the consequences of the poor-quality air, their drivers suffering the consequences, but also their families who live in London as well.

One of the things that we have done is to engage with not just the Federation of Small Businesses but the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Confederation of Business Industry (CBI) and London First to understand their concerns. That is one of the reasons why we are now looking into how the scrappage scheme could help not just the businesses but also low-income families as well. We will be announcing some changes in due course because we understand that it is important that this support reaches those who need it the most.

What I would do is ask colleagues in this Chamber to please lobby the Government - it is a Conservative Government - who have failed to give any support to our ULEZ, have refused to invest in a national diesel scrappage scheme and who are in breach of legislation to deal with the poor quality air, another reason, Chair, to vote for Sadiq Khan, the Labour candidate, on 7 May.

Susan Hall AM: Vote for Shaun Bailey [AM] from the Conservatives.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): OK. We have one Member who has waited for her question to be put and it is in the name of Assembly Member Berry, on behalf of Assembly Member Russell.

2020/0041 – London's waste mountain

[Siân Berry AM \(on behalf of Caroline Russell AM\)](#)

How will you reduce the amount of waste London generates?

Siân Berry AM: Chair, I do not know if this will come off my time or not but I just wanted to say that I think it has been very inappropriate, the amount of comments there have been. We are all trying to put across our platforms but to use the word 'vote' --

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): No, Assembly Member Berry --

Siân Berry AM: Will we get some guidance on that sent to us?

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): Please listen to the answer to your question and then do a follow-up. Can I have an answer to this question?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Thank you. My Environment Strategy clearly states our ambition to make London a zero waste city with no biodegradable or recyclable waste being sent to landfill by 2026, which has been recognised by C40 [Cities Climate Leadership Group] as being at the forefront of megacities. In London, responsibility for waste management lies with boroughs, so last year I required every borough to produce a reduction and recycling plan. We have received drafts from all boroughs and officers have been working to ensure they are more ambitious in looking at how to help Londoners only use what they need and reuse where they can.

Food waste and single-use packaging like coffee cups and plastic bottles make up 30% of London's municipal waste. Since March 2018 I have been working to reduce single-use plastic waste by installing drinking water fountains across London and promoting the Refill London programme. We have already installed 28 drinking fountains in partnership with the Zoological Society of London (ZSL) and I am now working with Thames Water to install over 100 more by April 2020. Thirty-one of these are already available for use. The number of refill points across London has increased from 200 to over 3,500, where cafes, restaurants, etc. have signed up to offer free water refills to members of the public to encourage them to reduce their waste.

For new developments, my Draft London Plan sets a requirement for all referable planning applications to include a circular economy statement to demonstrate how they will reduce construction waste and boost recycling. We are working, through the London Waste and Recycling Board, to promote waste reduction. This includes their Advance London programme, which has supported 150 small business to adopt circular economy business models to help cut waste. So far, this has resulted in 27 new products delivered to market and 40 new jobs created.

However, waste reduction across all sectors will require action from Government to create a robust policy framework to design out waste and boost resource efficiency. I have lobbied for Government to take a more circular economy approach and supported the banning of single-use plastic such as drinking straws, as well as the proposed introduction of enhanced producer responsibility and deposit return schemes. I will continue to engage with Government through lobbying and responding to consultations to ensure that London's waste can be reduced as much as possible.

Siân Berry AM: Thank you, Mr Mayor. I do not think you have mentioned it in your answer there but I wanted to point out that London's recycling rates are creeping up at a very, very low rate, only 0.3% up last year, and at 33.4% we are miles off your 50% target.

My colleague Caroline Russell [AM], who is not here today, recently asked all councils if they could recycle seven common household items including black plastic food containers, Tetra Paks, aluminium foil, crisp packets, old pens, bike tyres and plastic buckets, and the responses varied hugely from councils who could not recycle any of these to those who could recycle three or four at most. No wonder we have a problem when it is so inconsistent and you cannot recycle basic, everyday products. When will you be demanding more powers from the new Government to take control of London's waste so this can be sorted out?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): We have been demanding powers from the Government for a while, including most recently with the re-election of the Conservative Government, and we will carry on doing so.

Siân Berry AM: It has been quite a while since your Environment Strategy came out. The Government's strategy came out now over a year ago. They indicate they are going to bring forward some new work. Have you done any work to influence that?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): You will be aware of the new Environment Bill the Government has talked about. We will continue to lobby the Government to make sure we get more powers and more resources to address this really important issue.

Siân Berry AM: OK. I want to move on because not only are we bad at recycling and not meeting our targets there, we are also burning almost 60% of the waste we produce. I have looked into this and I think there is a fundamental problem with the policy targets that we have. The flaw is that we have a percentage target for recycling and a goal to not send anything to landfill to 2026, but we have no clear target to reduce the

fundamental source - the arisings, it is called - of the waste we produce. In fact, the London Plan envisages those going up over the next years, right up to 2041. Mr Mayor, it is true, is it not, we do not have an actual London-wide waste reduction target? Why do we not have one?

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): What is true is that we have nowhere near the powers and resources we need. What is needed is more support to councils to address the fact that so little of their waste is recycled but also to give us more powers to work with councils. One of the big issues is obviously manufacturers. One of the big issues is the way packaging works. One of the big issues is the amount of residual waste that goes to incinerators. I do not think there is a need in London for more incinerators. We have more than enough. What we need is to make sure the Government works with us to address the issue of the production of some of this waste. That is why it is really important that it is at all levels.

Siân Berry AM: Yes.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): The Environment Bill provides an opportunity to change legislation. Outside the EU there are even fewer teeth that we have to hold the Government to account, hold manufacturers to account and hold the private sector to account.

Siân Berry AM: Potentially, yes.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): That is why it is really important that we have a sea change of attitude from the Government, including the resources from Government that we need. We can produce policy and targets all day long. Without support from Government and without the resources and levers, it will not make a difference on the ground.

Siân Berry AM: I think a target is needed to underpin a lot of things we can influence at our London level. For example, things like repair cafes, support for repair businesses and support for reuse policies that might reduce demolition in building, for example, are all kind of 'nice to have' without the waste reduction target or reduction of waste production target to underpin them. We could set our own target if we wanted to.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): What I was getting to, before you asked your further question, was that what is key is to make sure there are the means to the end. The target is the end but we have no powers and resources for the means. That is why it is really important to recognise where support is needed. Some of the councils we speak to want to do the right thing. I will give you some examples. Many of them --

Siân Berry AM: I am specifically asking about whether or not you should set a target, not what you can do to achieve it --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): What I am responding to is --

Siân Berry AM: -- because I think it is important to have that target. Otherwise we are setting ourselves effectively a target to burn, not to reduce waste.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Let me give you an example, a practical example of the problems of not having the means to bring about change, or the resources. We have a recycling target of 50%. We want to reduce waste as much as we can from previous levels. The target is there. We are nowhere near meeting the recycling targets. You mentioned the 0.3% increase in London. There is a target for recycling.

Siân Berry AM: See, I am trying to keep you on the topic of my question because I am trying to get to a very fundamental point here and you seem to be just giving -- "Let me give you an example" is not a good way to answer a question that is really about the fundamentals --

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): I was giving an example --

Siân Berry AM: -- of how we create targets for London and achieve things that are very important. At the moment, we seem to be working against reduction and leading towards more incineration given that we are not improving our recycling rates.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chair, it is very difficult with an election so near --

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): No, the Greens are out of time.

Siân Berry AM: He is definitely not answering the question I asked.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): Assembly Member Whittle, you have 48 seconds to ask a quick question and get a quick answer.

Peter Whittle AM: I am very pleased to hear about your efforts to reduce waste and rubbish in London. Can you add to it, please, that EU flag that is still flying outside? You have two weeks to do it in. Come on. Get it down. Put it in the dustbin.

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London): Chair, one man's waste is another man's very proud EU flag.

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair): Thank you. That is the end of this question and answer session with you, Mr Mayor. Thank you very much for your answers.