

MAYOR OF LONDON

Andrew Boff AM

Chair of the London Assembly
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Our ref: MGLA270122-2527

Date: 15 February 2022

Dear Andrew,

Please find below my response to the motions passed by the London Assembly at its meeting on 26 January 2022.

Silvertown Tunnel

As I explained recently at Mayor's Question Time, it is not possible to provide an estimate for the costs of cancelling the Silvertown Tunnel. These costs are not fixed and are commercially sensitive as they would have to be negotiated with Riverlinx should a termination be discussed, or decided by the courts by way of compensation payable for breach of contract.

Nevertheless, I can guide the Assembly that the sum required is expected to be significantly in excess of the total non-police precept allocated to the Greater London Authority and London Fire Commissioner. This means that the Assembly would need to agree a council tax rise in breach of the government's excessiveness principles and therefore requiring a referendum were it to wish to provide for this cost.

While the Assembly is free to allocate more council tax income to Transport for London (TfL), subject to the applicable legislation, I will not consider cancelling the project, as doing so would represent an appalling use of public funds and would result in the loss of the significant reliability, air quality and public transport connectivity benefits that the project stands to deliver for east London.

Public realm

In my manifesto, I committed to building new signalised pedestrian crossings at those junctions currently lacking them. I have asked TfL to conduct a review identifying those junctions currently without a pedestrian crossing and to consider where new ones could be introduced. Once this review is complete, TfL will then look at how any changes can be funded. Assembly Members will be aware of the extreme financial strain the pandemic has placed on TfL, and the ongoing failure of the government to provide the support London needs. The 'managed decline' scenario TfL is still facing has significant implications for the delivery of projects like this in the next financial year. A proper, long-term funding deal with the government, including additional capital funding, is needed to avoid these damaging cuts and to enable TfL to re-start its programme of upgrades to the public realm, including new pedestrian crossings.

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Public toilets

My recent response of 17 January to Caroline Russell AM, Chair of the Health Committee, makes clear that public toilets are a vital facility for everyone, giving Londoners and visitors to our city the confidence to move around and spend time in public spaces. The response (attached) further outlines the steps TfL is already taking to improve access to public toilets. I would note that further Growth Fund investment is dependent on government support, and that TfL resources must be focussed first on keeping vital public transport services running in the face of a 'managed decline' scenario, caused by the government's failure to provide a long term, sustainable funding deal for London following the pandemic.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sadiq Khan', with a small '2' written below the name.

Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London

Att.