



**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM**  
**Chair of the Transport Committee**

Sadiq Khan  
Mayor of London

cc Andy Byford, Lili Matson, Will Norman

(Sent by email)

6 May 2022

Dear Sadiq,

## **Vision Zero investigation**

The London Assembly's Transport Committee recently carried out an investigation into Vision Zero, including Committee meetings in December 2021 and January 2022. The first meeting was attended by passenger groups Action Vision Zero, London Living Streets, London Cycling Campaign and Motorcycle Action Group, along with representatives from Lime, Unite and a retired London bus driver. The second meeting was attended by Lilli Matson and Will Norman from Transport for London (TfL), Simon Ovens from the Metropolitan Police and Shravan Joshi MBE from City of London Corporation.

This letter summarises our investigation and recommendations.

## **Progress overall**

The Committee's investigation heard that progress on Vision Zero has been good in some areas, with London seen as one of the leading cities in this space. However, we believe there is room for improvement by TfL towards achieving its interim and overall targets.

London boroughs are responsible for 95 per cent of London's road network and more work needs to be done in partnership with the boroughs on ensuring a consistent approach. The Committee notes that the Vision Zero Action Plan is delivered through partnership with boroughs and the Met; although TfL has had some success in delivering actions within the Plan, including its aim of reducing speed limits in many areas across inner London, progress has been inconsistent amongst outer boroughs.

The Committee noted that a difference in procurement procedures may also have an impact. TfL's standard procurement terms include measures like the Construction Logistics and Community Safety (CLOCS) standard, the Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme (FORS) standard, Safer Urban Driving, and the Direct Vision Standard (DVS) for lorries. However, although these are standard in TfL procurement, they are not standard for London boroughs. The Committee believes there are opportunities for additional partnership working to be explored, including increased co-ordination to remove through traffic on neighbourhood streets and increased alignment of procurement standards. The majority of the Committee supports the roll out of 20mph speed limits across the Boroughs.

**Recommendation 1:**

TfL should continue to work in partnership with boroughs and the Met to deliver on the Vision Zero Action Plan, with a particular focus on addressing inconsistent application of measures across different boroughs, such as procurement standards.

We note that TfL has exceeded its interim target for 2022 to reduce the number of people who are killed or seriously injured in, or by, London buses by 70 per cent against 2005-09 levels. However, we note that TfL is likely to miss its 2022 target to reduce the number of people who are killed or seriously injured on roads by 65 per cent against 2005-09 levels.

The Department for Transport currently uses a baseline of 2005-2009 to measure progress on reducing KSIs and this baseline is used by TfL and other highway authorities across the UK. This committee believes the time is right for a new baseline period to be adopted and calls on the Government to work towards this as part of preparing the third road investment strategy. In the meantime, and to allow Londoners to measure the success of Vision Zero, we believe TfL should create a baseline that covers the period directly before Vision Zero was first adopted. This will allow us to better measure the effects of the Vision Zero strategy in London.

We heard that 2021 saw the lowest ever level of fatalities on London's roads. The Committee was encouraged to understand that TfL has already exceeded a 65 per cent reduction against the baseline in the number of young people being injured, and that there has been a 70 per cent reduction against the baseline in people being injured on or by a bus.

However, we also heard that children living in deprived areas are two to three times more likely to be injured in a collision; people with disabilities are around four times more likely to be injured; and people of different ethnicities have different road safety experiences. Londoners have also been concerned to see recent deaths at Holborn, which your Walking and Cycling

Commissioner described as “well known as a dangerous junction”. Alongside this there are still issues with freight safety, the next iteration of strengthening the Direct Vision Standard and the rolling out of the Bus Safety Standard.

TfL highlighted a number of areas within the Vision Zero Action Plan progress update that may require attention. These include pedestrian crossings, space for cycling and complementary action on speed and training. The Committee believes that such measures need to be put in place to ensure vulnerable road users are properly protected and that further attention is given to addressing issues of inequality in relation to road safety.

Whilst it was encouraging to see a significant reduction in motorcycle deaths in 2021, the Committee heard from the Motorcycle Action Group that the loss of road space for motorcycle users presented a real risk to motorcyclist safety.<sup>1</sup>

#### **Recommendation 2:**

Sustained measures should be put in place to ensure that vulnerable road users, such as pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists, are properly protected and further attention should be given to addressing issues of inequality in relation to road safety, with a clear programme of future work to address danger.

#### **Finances**

The Committee notes that there has been a reduction in money available under TfL’s Local Implementation Plan, with direct funding of boroughs and wider investment programmes like Healthy Streets having been cut back. The lack of long-term sustainable funding for TfL is having a significant impact on boroughs and could be one of the reasons for inconsistency across different initiatives. We also heard evidence that it is important for boroughs to have support if they want to move to 20 mph speed limits, support cycle training and take forward new technologies.

We note that a long-term funding agreement will be essential for TfL’s ability to achieve its Vision Zero goals. TfL’s ability to plan and allocate funding is also important for the funding of boroughs, and is the means by which the Mayor’s Transport Strategy, including Vision Zero, is primarily delivered by boroughs. Should there not be long-term funding available, a new approach would need to be set out that would deliver the goals of the strategy and Vision Zero.

TfL stated that by 2030 it could avert around 3,500 serious injuries and around 117 deaths, if it received the required funding to deliver the Vision Zero Action Plan. The Committee would like to understand what the funding gap currently is. Without appropriate funding, it is unlikely that sufficient work will be able to go ahead on safer junctions, rolling out 20 mph speed limits and intelligent speed adaptation for buses or the building of more safe cycle networks. The Committee recognises that Vision Zero is a partnership between TfL, Met Police and the boroughs, and that TfL provides a significant amount of funding for boroughs through the Local

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<sup>1</sup> London Assembly Transport Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 5 – Vision Zero](#), 14 Dec 2021

Implementation Plans. The lack of a long-term deal will therefore have significant, wide-ranging impacts for the Vision Zero initiative.

**Recommendation 3:**

The Committee acknowledges TfL's position that funding from government impacts on their ability to deliver elements of the Vision Zero Action Plan and also hopes that this is recognised in funding negotiations with Government going forward. The Committee would therefore like to understand what alternative options have been explored by TfL if a long-term funding agreement is not reached, in order to work towards the targets set out in the Action Plan.

**Compliance and enforcement**

Alongside physical measures to stop cars travelling at higher speeds, the Committee has noted that there is more work to do on compliance with the law. There is a worry that any reduction in funding to the police would have an impact on enforcement. The Committee heard evidence that 20 mph speed limits, when poorly enforced, could have knock-on effects such as increasing the number of vehicles overtaking those keeping to the speed limits, which ultimately increases road danger.

The Committee believes that achieving improvements between enforcement and compliance is an important step for London to take, in order to move towards the Vision Zero targets. It was also noted that the pandemic has allowed the Met more time and resources to focus on enforcement, which has enabled them to make significant progress towards the Vision Zero action plan progress report target of 1 million prosecutions a year for speeding. The Committee believes the use of enforcement to support Vision Zero should be accompanied by regular and suitably detailed data on enforcement. Current data is only published annually and several months after the end of a year, e.g. 2020/21 data was published in December 2021.

Dr Will Norman (Mayor of London's Walking and Cycling Commissioner) commented: "Just to confirm, we have to tackle the culture on London's roads. We have done an awful lot of marketing around the behaviour on London's roads in terms of the speeding, the drink driving, all of those things, and they are effective, but all the research shows that 90 per cent of people still consider it inevitable that people will get killed and seriously injured on our roads. There is a deep-rooted culture. All the research shows that there is a culture of everyone in it for themselves on London's roads."

**Recommendation 4:**

The Committee recommends that TfL develops an approach that tackles lack of compliance with speed limits, to stop cars travelling at high speeds and to help move towards the Vision Zero targets. The Committee also recommends that a full dashboard including enforcement is produced by the Met Police, to allow for ongoing monitoring.

## Technology

The Committee heard evidence that emerging technology such as Autonomous Emergency Braking (AEB) could help reduce speeds to 20 mph if introduced on HGVs and buses within TfL's fleet and contractors, and may mean that any traffic collisions would be of lower severity. Intelligent Speed Assistance (ISA) could be required on new motor vehicles in regulations that replace existing European legislation. This would provide a system that at least provides an audible warning, but could be used to make it easier for drivers to stay within speed limits.

### **Recommendation 5:**

TfL should continue to consider quantifying the potential impact of technologies such as Autonomous Emergency Braking (AEB) and Intelligent Speed Assistance (ISA) in London, to reduce the severity of traffic collisions and to support progress to Vision Zero.

## Training

The Committee believes that training for road users is an extremely important element of reducing road danger. It heard evidence of some inconsistencies, such as the Safer Urban Driving programme (which gives drivers practical experience of cycling and an understanding of how cyclists move) being available for HGVs but not for bus drivers.

We heard that cuts to training budgets may have an impact on the training available, including for those learning to ride a bike. However, the aims of Vision Zero, alongside the recent changes to the Highway Code, suggest that the need for road safety training, particularly for drivers of larger vehicles, should remain a high priority for TfL and should be funded accordingly.

### **Recommendation 6:**

The Committee recommends that easily available training continues to be a priority for TfL and is funded accordingly, with particular focus on training provision for drivers of larger vehicles. TfL should also continue discussions with DfT on how they can work in partnership with central government to make training more widely available for all road users in London.

## Bus drivers and reducing danger

The Committee heard evidence from a retired bus driver that the Vision Zero message is getting lost at operational level, and most bus drivers do not know what Vision Zero means or how they are supposed to be trying to achieve it. Alongside this, bus driver fatigue was identified as one of the biggest concerns for bus drivers, as it has such a significant potential impact on safety.

Driver fatigue has previously been identified as a safety issue by the Transport Committee. In our 2017 report *Driven to Distraction – Making London's Buses Safer*, we recommended that TfL commissions a comprehensive and independent piece of research into bus drivers' working conditions, to determine the scale of the problem. We think TfL's approach to communicating the aims and objectives of Vision Zero should be reviewed.

**Recommendation 7:**

TfL should focus on leading the implementation of a positive safety culture across the bus industry in London and should ensure bus operator contracts facilitate safety being paramount. TfL should also ensure that bus driver fatigue is considered as an important feature in reducing road danger.

**E-scooters**

The Committee heard evidence from one of the three e-scooter companies involved in the London e-scooter trial, which suggested that the trial has been successful in terms of the number of trips undertaken and the low numbers of injuries. However, the Committee notes that, outside of the trial, all e-scooter collisions are currently recorded as involving a classification of 'other vehicle', which means that it is hard to get meaningful data on e-scooter safety outside of trials. We understand that TfL has been tracking the numbers killed or seriously injured and there have been 15 serious injuries reported during the trial, with no fatalities. We would appreciate an update on this matter.

**Recommendation 8:**

TfL should provide an update on the progress of the e-scooter trial, including: the numbers of rides and injuries that have occurred during the trial; whether this was in line with TfL's estimates and projections; and how the lessons learned will inform policy development.

**Culture of road users**

TfL quoted its recent research with the public which indicated that 90 per cent of people still consider it inevitable that people will get killed and seriously injured on our roads. The Committee would like to understand how TfL intends to address the cultural shift that is required to ensure that road users are more considerate towards others.

**Recommendation 9:**

The Committee recommends that TfL takes further steps to change the culture of road users in a positive way and asks TfL to share with this Committee details of these steps. This should build on Action 30 in the progress report, with more detail on how this will be achieved.

We trust you will consider our recommendations as part of your work on Vision Zero and we look forward to your response. Please copy your correspondence to Steve Osmani-Edwards, Senior Policy Adviser for Transport at [steve.osmani-edwards@london.gov.uk](mailto:steve.osmani-edwards@london.gov.uk) by 1 June 2022.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Caroline Pidgeon', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM  
**Chair of the Transport Committee**