

# London Councils' Transport & Environment Committee

## Chair's Report

Item no: 6

**Report by:** Katharina Winbeck      **Job title:** Head of Transport and Environment  
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**Contact Officer:** Katharina Winbeck  
**Telephone:** 020 7934 9945      **Email:** Katharina.winbeck@londoncouncils.gov.uk

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**Summary**      This report updates Members on transport and environment policy since the last TEC meeting on 15 October 2015 and provides a forward look until the next TEC meeting on 17 March 2016.

**Recommendations**      Members to note this report.

### Updates included in this report:

- Annual meeting with Chair of London Councils
- Six-monthly meeting with CELC leads
- CSR Announcements

### Transport

- Round table with Transport Minister (20 October)
- TEC Executive
- Response to TfL's Private Hire Regulations Review
- Meeting between TEC Chair, vice-chairs and TfL Commissioner (3 December)
- Highways Obstructions
- OLEV bid update
- London Councils event on Planning for Opportunity Areas
- Freedom Pass Re-Issue

### Environment

- Launch of the draft London Sustainable Drainage Action Plan

- Meeting with Murad Qureshi, Assembly Member
- Thames Regional Flood and Coastal Committee - levy setting and officer capacity
- Launch of Recycle for London
- Response to Defra's air quality consultation
- London Waterways Commission report on flood gates along the River Thames
- Penalty Charge Notice levels – Secretary of State confirmation of levels
- Green Infrastructure Taskforce update

### **Forward Look**

- Forthcoming meetings and consultations

### **Introduction**

1. This report updates Members on London Councils' work on transport and environment policy since the last TEC meeting on 15 October 2015 and provides a forward look until 17 March 2016.

### **Annual Meeting with Chair of London Councils**

2. I had my annual Portfolio Holder meeting with Jules Pipe, Chair of London Councils on 17 November. We discussed progress achieved over the past year and agreed on our priorities for the next year. The priorities remain grouped around encouraging further collaboration to enable boroughs to continue to ensure the effective and efficient delivery of vital services that residents use and value. London Councils will priorities the following;
  - Ensuring borough views are reflected in the relevant regional strategies, particularly the London Plan, Mayor's Transport Strategy and Mayor's Environmental Strategy, including a waste strategy
  - Revisit and build on the research London Councils has undertaken with regards to challenges around waste management to prepare London's answer to Defra's harmonisation agenda and improve the efficiency of current arrangements
  - Lobby Government and the new Mayor to bring forward compliance in London with EU limit values for air quality, including work on the ULEZ, the Renewable Heat Incentive, decentralised energy, cleaning up the taxi and bus fleets, encourage take up of ultra-low-emission vehicles, reduce congestion on London's road and explore further the role of car clubs.
  - Explore London Councils role in procuring air quality monitoring stations across London
  - Continue the good working relationship between TEC and the Thames Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (Thames RFCC)
  - Improve the knowledge and understanding of flooding, the role of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) and other green infrastructure amongst London Members and officers
  - Continue to represent the interests of boroughs on the RE:NEW Sponsors Board and any subsequent boards that may be set up by a new Mayor
  - Ensure borough views are integral to the new Local Implementation Plan (LIP) arrangements

- Making the case for boroughs to have greater say in the rail franchises that are awarded in their areas and ensuring that devolution of rail services to TfL does not result in significant increases in Freedom Pass costs
- Continue to explore funding sources for maintaining London's assets and services to an excellent standard

### **Six-monthly meeting with CELC leads**

3. I met with the CELC (Chief Executive) leads for Transport and Environment at London Councils on 5 November. We discussed the work of both the Policy and Services directorates of London Councils. On the transport side we discussed Freedom Pass, car clubs, Taxi card, parking penalties, the capitalisation of LIPs, freight and Crossrail 2. On the environment we discussed the new Mayor's Environment Strategy, flooding, Recycle for London, the Recycling Guarantee, the RE:NEW programme, the Comprehensive Spending Review and devolution, and the Green Infrastructure Taskforce.

### **Comprehensive Spending Review**

4. The government is providing £11 billion of support for transport infrastructure in London, helping to deliver Crossrail 2, new trains on the London Underground, station upgrades, new buses, and a network of Cycle Superhighways. Construction will begin on HS2 during the Parliament, and the Spending Review confirms a funding envelope of £55.7 billion in 2015 prices, which will deliver HS2 from London to Birmingham by 2026.
5. There is support for key regeneration schemes in London, including:
  - delivery of the new Olympicopolis cultural and university quarter in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park
  - £97 million to fund a new Thameslink station at Brent Cross
  - £55 million to extend the London Overground from Barking to Barking Riverside
  - bringing together the publicly owned land around the Old Oak Common HS2 station into single control
6. The cuts in department budgets for DfT, DECC and Defra were 37%, 22% and 15% respectively. In addition, funding was announced for energy research in nuclear, shale and low carbon energy, £2.3bn to protect 300,000 homes from flooding and £3bn for the protection of national parks and forests.
7. The capital funding for the DfT will increase by 50% to £61bn. This will enable construction to start on HS2, spending of £13.4bn on the Roads Investment Strategy and over £5bn on roads maintenance, £300m for cycling and a £300m infrastructure development pot from which Crossrail 2 can apply for funding. The government is retaining the diesel supplement in company car tax until 2021, in anticipation of EU-wide testing procedures which will ensure new diesel cars meet air quality standards.
8. The government will increase funding for the Renewable Heat Incentive to £1.15 billion in 2021 while reforming the scheme to improve value for money, aiming to deliver savings of almost £700 million by 2020-21.
9. The government will spend more than £600 million between 2015-16 and 2020-21 to support uptake and manufacturing of ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs) in the UK; keeping the UK on track for all new cars to be effectively zero emission by 2040. This investment will save 65 million tonnes of carbon and help deliver the answer on urban air quality.

## **Transport**

### **Round table with Lord Ahmad, Transport Minister with responsibility for Transport in London (20 October)**

10. Lord Ahmad invited stakeholders from London Councils, TfL, London industry and commerce and Crossrail to a breakfast roundtable discussion on;
  - Aviation
  - Crossrail / Crossrail 2
  - Tube and Rail expansion
  - Transport challenges faced in London Councils
11. I confirmed our support for both Crossrail and Crossrail 2, highlighting the significant amount of stamp duty Treasury would receive once these schemes have gone live; pressed the necessity of further investment in London's transport infrastructure to support current estimated population growth and highlighted the need for further incentives for an ultra-low vehicle revolution.

## **TEC Executive**

12. The Executive has met once since the last TEC Main meeting, in November.
13. The Executive received an updated on the London Sustainable Drainage Action Plan that is currently out for consultation. Given London Councils involvement at officer level in drafting the current Plan, London Councils will not issue a response to the draft but encourages all individual boroughs to submit their individual responses. An e-mail to this effect has been sent to all TEC members.
14. The Executive also received a draft consultation response to TfL's Private Hire Regulations Review; more details on this can be found below.

## **Response to TfL's Private Hire Regulations Review**

15. London Councils will respond to this consultation from TfL on the private hire industry. It was discussed at TEC Executive where the Executive decided it did not support TfL's proposals regarding a 5 minute wait between having a booking accepted and the vehicle accepting a passenger or not allowing operators to show vehicles as available for immediate hire. TEC Executive also decided it wanted to see the licensing of in-venue operators retained, though subject to greater enforcement from TfL and more effort to raise public awareness of the need to pre-book a vehicle. TEC Executive supported a longer pre-booking period of 14 days that operators should provide to passengers wanting to book a vehicle in advance.
16. These will be reflected in the consultation response, which will be signed off by the Chair and Vice-Chairs of TEC prior to the consultation deadline.

## **Meeting between TEC Chair and Vice-Chairs and TfL Commissioner**

17. The Vice Chairs and I are scheduled to meet with Mike Brown on 3 December, after this report is published. Agenda items include discussing the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review and its implications for TfL's (and therefore borough) funding; an update on the freight work; the Social Needs Transport Review; an update on the Staffing and Skills Initiative which London Councils is working on with TfL; and an update on Freedom Pass costs.

## **Highways Obstructions**

18. London Councils issued a member briefing on tackling highways obstructions on 21 October. This will have been received by any members who have indicated an interest in transport or environment.
19. The Officer Advisory Panel on Transport (OAPT) had a presentation from TfL regarding Operation Clearway. TfL are extending their zero tolerance approach beyond the 20 areas they had previously targeted, and will be looking to work with boroughs on this.

## **OLEV bid update**

20. OLEV is still hoping to make a decision on bids received this side of Christmas, however it may slip further into early 2016.

## **London Councils event – Planning for Opportunity Areas**

21. This event was held on 3 November and well attended by members and senior officers. The half day event focused on different types of infrastructure needed in developments – including digital, education and green infrastructure; and speakers came from a range of organisations, including boroughs, TfL, the NHS, Old Oak and Royal Park Development Corporation and the GLA. The event was chaired and opened by Cllr Clare Kober, London Councils' Deputy Chair and Lead for Infrastructure. I spoke at the event about one of Ealing's opportunity areas, Southall.

## **Freedom Pass 2016 Re-issue**

22. Members are asked to note in respect of the 2016 Freedom Pass re-issue that:
  - Reminder letters will be despatched over 3 days from 6 January 2016.
  - As in 2015, older person pass holders can renew on-line or by post.
  - New passes will be issued as soon as pass holders have responded.
  - Boroughs are reminded that they must complete eligibility assessments of disabled person pass holders by 31 January 2016.

## **Environment**

### **Launch of the draft London Sustainable Drainage Action Plan**

23. On 29 October I attended the launch of the draft London Sustainable Drainage Action Plan, which has been developed by Drain London, of which London Councils is a member. The Action Plan sets out the key sectors that can be influenced to increase the take-up of sustainable drainage across the capital.
24. The event was held at the Derbyshire Street Pocket Park in Tower Hamlets which incorporates sustainable drainage into the design.
25. The launch was covered by ITV News and the press article, including my quote, can be read here: <http://www.itv.com/news/london/2015-10-29/flooding-heat-map-shows-areas-at-risk-by-2050/>

### **Meeting with Murad Qureshi, Assembly Member**

26. I met with Murad Qureshi, London Assembly Member on 10 November to discuss air quality and respective environmental priorities. We discussed ULEZ expansion, the Green Infrastructure Taskforce, electric vehicles and flooding.

## **Thames Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (Thames RFCC)**

### **Levy setting**

27. At its meeting on 25 November 2015 the Thames RFCC voted to increase the flooding levy that all Lead Local Flood Authorities pay by 1.99%. Boroughs will need to ensure this is reflective in their budget planning for 2016/17.

### **Officer capacity**

28. As highlighted previously, the Thames RFCC has been considering over the last few months how to boost capacity in Lead Local Flood Authorities in terms of developing projects for the capital programme.
29. It has decided to recruit up to 12 officers to work across the Thames catchment area (which is all of London as well as Surrey, Hertfordshire, Oxfordshire, parts of Essex and the Midlands) and the intention is to begin recruitment in January 2016. Cllr Nick Draper (LB Merton, representing the South West partnership) is a London member on the Project Board, as is the Senior Flood and Water Management Officer from Kensington and Chelsea. London Councils, the GLA, Thames Water and the Environment Agency, together with a member and an officer representative from a unitary and county authority are also on the Project Board.

### **Launch of Recycle for London**

30. Resource London has launched a rebranded Recycle for London campaign, which encourages Londoners to recycle 'Just one more thing'. Boroughs have access to a series of artwork which they can use, and the Recycle for London website includes a search function which enables people to identify where they can recycle items, as well as web links to their council's recycling pages so they can find out about the service their borough offers. Resource London secured good press coverage of a survey of Londoners' recycling habits. The Recycle for London website can be viewed at: <http://www.recycleforlondon.com/>.

### **Response to Defra's air quality consultation**

31. London Councils submitted a response to Defra's consultation on draft plans to improve air quality on 6 November. This is in response to the recent UK Supreme Court ruling that the UK government needs to deliver a new plan on how to tackle breaches of EU air quality standards. Our main points to the consultation were;
- The proposals do not strike an appropriate balance between national and local action. The Government should give more consideration to what can be achieved through national policy, legislation and financial instruments.
  - Government should undertake a full review, across departments, of the ways in which it is able to drive improvements in air quality. We suggest that action should be considered in the areas of transport, planning and energy efficiency.
  - The Government must work with other EU Member States to ensure that Euro 6 vehicles are meeting the required emissions reductions in real world driving conditions.
  - A strategic approach to the identification of Clean Air Zones is required.
  - The Government should provide support to reduce emissions related to the existing operations of nationally important infrastructure that is located in London, such as Heathrow Airport.

32. The full response can be found on our website - <http://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/our-key-themes/environment/air-quality>

### **London Waterways Commission report on flood gates along the River Thames**

33. I have received a letter from the Chair of the London Waterways Commission highlighting the Commission's concern about the condition of gates, steps and landing places along the River Thames. In 2010 the London Waterways Commission commissioned a survey of the gates and steps along the 15 riparian authorities in London and the five outside London, along the River Thames. The report is attached at Appendix A of this report for the authorities concerned to review.
34. London Councils officers are liaising with colleagues at the Environment Agency to ensure a co-ordinated response.

### **Penalty Charge Notice levels – Secretary of State confirmation of levels**

35. At its last meeting TEC set penalty levels for builders' skips penalty charge notices under the London Local Authorities Act 2007 and 2013.
36. As required by law, we wrote to the Secretary of State who had one month to register an objection with the penalties set. As this time period has now passed with no correspondence from the Secretary of State, London's highways authorities are now able to adopt the powers if they choose to do so.

### **Green Infrastructure Taskforce update**

1. On 9 December at the London Infrastructure Conference, the Green Infrastructure Taskforce will launch its report, "Natural Capital".
2. It sets out a Vision for green infrastructure by 2050 and explores the range of benefits that green infrastructure can provide for the city. It gives a series of recommendations, including the appointment of a Green Infrastructure Commissioner, investigating funding opportunities for green infrastructure, and updating the All London Green Grid.
3. We will discuss the report in more detail at our next TEC meeting in March 2016.

## **Forward Look**

### **December 2015**

- 9 – Infrastructure 2050 event at the GLA, including launch of Green Infrastructure Report
- 23 – TfL's Private Hire Regulations Review consultation closes
- 25 December – 3 January London Councils' offices closed

### **January 2016**

- 8 – Crossrail 2 consultation closes
- 8 – National Infrastructure Commission Call for Evidence closes

### **February 2016**

- 11 – TEC Executive
- 25 – TEC Chair and Vice-Chairs meeting with TfL Commissioner

### **March 2016**

- 17 – TEC Meeting