



Leaders' Committee

Pledges to Londoners - Update on Progress in Transport and Environment

Item no: 7a

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Summary: This paper provides an update on the transport and environment pledges agreed by Leaders' Committee as part of its wider Pledges to Londoners.

Recommendations: Leaders' Committee is asked to note and comment on this report.

Pledges to Londoners – Update on transport and environment

Introduction

1. Leaders transport and environment pledges to Londoners states that infrastructure investment is critical to ensure good growth without environmental damage or harm to health. The pledges cover improving air quality, working with TfL and transport infrastructure delivery and devolution of finances and powers.
2. Since the Pledges were agreed, the Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant, detrimental impact on London's economy, Londoners livelihoods, and has changed the way of life for people globally. This has led to a re-think of transport infrastructure – Londoners took to active travel modes during first lockdown for exercise and some essential journeys and nationally there has been an increase in cycling of 300 per cent in places compared to previous years. London's boroughs and TfL have responded to this trend and the social distancing requirements by implementing additional space for walking and cycling, particularly along local highstreets.
3. The following Pledges were adopted by Leaders in transport and environment:
 - Support the promotion of a new Clean Air Act and the introduction of ULEZ across much of London to protect Londoners from harmful polluted air.
 - Deliver at least 2500 charging points for electric vehicles by 2022, including the option for 20 rapid charge points in each borough.
 - Work towards including a target of one tree for every Londoner in our local plans.
 - Hold TfL to account for improving the bus route network in every London borough.
 - Lobby for improved certainty and levels of local road funding through TfL's LIP process.
 - Press for London borough representation on the TfL Board.
 - Create, cost and lobby for a programme of local transport infrastructure delivery; addressing enhanced connectivity, platform extensions and related responses to growing demand.

- Lobby for the delivery of major transport investment including CR2, HS2, Euston redevelopment, Bakerloo Line extension, West London Orbital and Tram network.
 - Work to agree new forms of London borough influence on the specification, management and award of rail franchises so that the borough voice is at the heart of commissioning; and argue for further devolution to London.
 - Lobby for fiscal devolution of transport taxes including a proportion of VED to help fund highway maintenance, and new fiscal levers to unlock home building.
4. Most of the Pledges are still relevant, although over the past 18 months boroughs and London Councils have had an increasing focus on climate change and since Covid-19 a green recovery. Given that we are expecting a significant global economic downturn, and with public finances under considerable strain, large infrastructure investment discussions have been put on hold and this will affect the delivery of the pledges.
 5. London Councils' business plan has been updated to reflect the impact of Covid-19 and the economic recovery work we will undertake but as much as possible, officers will continue to deliver the Pledges as well, where it is still prudent to do so.
 6. The delivery of these Pledges is overseen by the Executive member for Transport and Environment. They reflect shared pan-London priorities for Leaders, but the list does not reflect the entirety of London Councils work around the transport and environment policy area for this period. This report provides an update on progress since the last report to Leaders' Committee on work around the Pledges in May 2019.

Progress Update

Air quality

- i. Support the promotion of a new Clean Air Act and the introduction of ULEZ across much of London to protect Londoners from harmful polluted air.
- ii. Deliver at least 2500 charging points for electric vehicles by 2022, including the option for 20 rapid charge points in each borough.
- iii. Work towards including a target of one tree for every Londoner in our local plans.

7. The results from the annual public polling on Londoners attitudes to air quality, which were again launched as part of Clean Air Day this year, show that this remains a significant issue of concern to residents. 78 per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that tackling air pollution is a priority for London. A significant shift from previous polling was that the majority of participants felt that air quality had improved over the past year and this was mainly due to reductions of car, van, bus and lorry journeys on the roads.
8. It has become clear, however that government is not considering a new Clean Air Act but is looking to improve air quality provision through its Environment Bill, which has recently resumed its journey through both houses. London Council officers have therefore focused on strengthening the air quality provisions within that bill, with collaboration from the boroughs through the air quality clusters and the GLA. We most recently submitted evidence to the Public Bill Committee and expect to see the Committee's final report in early December 2020. London Councils will continue to work with MPs and Peers to raise awareness of our position and during the following stages of the Bill.
9. London Councils also continues to work with the City of London Corporation on the Emission Reduction Bill, which was introduced by Lord Tope as a private members bill in early 2020 and asks for the powers that local authorities need to enforce more effectively against gas boilers for example.
10. Engagement with TfL on the introduction of the ULEZ will now be increased again after a pause due to the Covid-19 pandemic. We are also working with TfL colleagues to ascertain how the ULEZ and other schemes, such as the congestion charge zone, will assist TfL in getting to a more sustainable funding position.
11. London Councils has been working in partnership with TfL and the GLA to oversee the Go Ultra Low Cities Scheme (GULCS). The scheme was granted £13.2m funding to drive the uptake of ultra low emission vehicles, and this funding allocated to TfL and 28 London boroughs to deliver on-street residential charge points, car club charge points, rapid charge points, community charging hubs and neighbourhoods of the future programmes. To date, London boroughs have delivered 2,054 on-street residential charge points through the programme and are forecast to deliver an additional 1,500 charge points by spring 2021.

12. GULCS provided a contribution of £2.6m funding to TfL for the delivery of the rapid charge point programme. This programme has delivered 285 rapid charge points on both TfL and borough roads to date and is forecast to deliver a total of 300 charge points by early 2021.
13. In August 2020 London Councils coordinated a pan-London bid to OLEV requesting £2.1 million funding for the delivery of on-street residential chargepoints. £1.96m has been allocated for 11 boroughs to deliver more than 800 charge points by April 2021.
14. London Councils, the GLA and TfL have been working with The International Council on Clean Transportation (ICCT) on analysis of the EV charging infrastructure needed to fulfil London's electrification goals up until 2035. It builds on the work undertaken for the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Delivery Plan (published in 2019) by looking at London's infrastructure needs at an individual borough level, broken down by charge point type, until 2035. The final report was published in November 2020 and will be a useful tool for planning future delivery and lobbying for further funding.
15. The government announced its Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution for 250,000 jobs in November 2020. This included a commitment to £1.3bn funding to accelerate the rollout of chargepoints for electric vehicles in homes, streets and on motorways across England. London Councils asked central government for more funding towards charge point infrastructure in London, through a bid to the Treasury's 2020 Comprehensive Spending Review and await further detail on the funding available.
16. Following the release of the Green Spaces Commission report in August 2020, London Councils, the GLA, and Parks for London have established a partnership to implement the two recommendations of the report: (i) creating a Centre for Excellence for London's Parks and Green Spaces, and (ii) develop a future green skills programme. In addition the Resilient and Green London programme has been established as one of the seven climate change programmes set up following the Joint Statement by LEDNet and TEC in November 2019. These two workstreams provide an excellent opportunity to not only further the ambition of one tree per Londoner, but also create a broader scheme of funded work regarding

the improvement of public space in London that can boost local jobs, health, and wellbeing.

Working with TfL

- iv. Hold TfL to account for improving the bus route network in every London borough.
 - v. Lobby for improved certainty and levels of local road funding through TfL's LIP process.
 - vi. Press for London borough representation on the TfL Board.
17. Buses remain a significant form of transport for many Londoners to get around the city efficiently and cost effectively. Buses also play a significant role in reducing the temptation of a car-based recovery from the pandemic, so it has been very important that TfL kept its bus routes running at comparative pre-Covid levels. Prior to Covid-19, London Councils engaged extensively with TfL on its bus reviews and asked for a more strategic analysis and approach for this. This stopped during the height of the pandemic and instead we focused on ensuring that borough voices were heard when looking at bus service provision during the lockdown as well as when school services were introduced in September. This has anecdotally resulted in an increase of bilateral discussions between borough officers, members and TfL officers.
18. One of the significant impacts of the pandemic on transport policy has been the devastation of TfL's funding base. The sustained reduction of passenger numbers, supported by government policy around essential travel and social distancing, has meant that TfL required significant government grant to keep up its level of service. Although passenger numbers are slowly increasing, it is still less than half that of pre-pandemic levels and the resulting loss of income revenue requires a complete re-think of TfL finances.
19. London Councils has strong structures for engagement with TfL in place and officers and members have used these to ensure that borough funding features in any deal reached with government. This has been successful, and boroughs have recently received a letter stating their allocation for the second half of the government bail out deal. These are still unprecedented times and unfortunately due to the short-term nature of the first and second funding agreement, getting

greater certainty for boroughs has been very difficult. TfL, however, is now increasingly aware of the requirement of funding certainty and attempted in its 2019 business plan to give boroughs a five year certainty of funding, which was as a direct result of London Councils interventions.

20. Gaining a place for a London local authority representative on TfL's board has been a priority for London Councils' Transport and Environment Committee (TEC) for several years and in the summer of 2019, following the lobbying by officers and lead Members, the GLA agreed to consider this matter as part of their external review of TfL's Board effectiveness. The proposal to create a new board position for a London Councils candidate was subsequently agreed by the TfL Board at its meeting on 20th November 2019. The TfL Board agreed that the appointment would initially be until September 2022.
21. After cross party discussions and agreement to a London Councils' candidate selection process, it was agreed that Councillor Julian Bell, Leader of London Borough of Ealing, would be proposed by London Councils for appointment by the Mayor to the TfL Board. Cllr Bell was duly appointed by the Mayor to the TfL Board in February 2020.

Transport infrastructure delivery and devolution

- vii. Create, cost and lobby for a programme of local transport infrastructure delivery; addressing enhanced connectivity, platform extensions and related responses to growing demand.
 - viii. Lobby for the delivery of major transport investment including CR2, HS2, Euston redevelopment, Bakerloo Line extension, West London Orbital and Tram network.
 - ix. Work to agree new forms of London borough influence on the specification, management and award of rail franchises so that the borough voice is at the heart of commissioning; and argue for further devolution to London.
 - x. Lobby for fiscal devolution of transport taxes including a proportion of VED to help fund highway maintenance, and new fiscal levers to unlock home building.
22. During the emergency COVID-19 period, London Councils has been facilitating the delivery of TfL's London Streetspace programme, as well as low traffic

neighbourhoods, school streets and additional cycle lanes. As London moves forward into recovery, this work will be integrated into the work of the climate change programmes, specifically low-carbon development and halving petrol and diesel road journeys as achieving the aims of those programmes will require support for sustainable transport alternatives.

23. Advocacy efforts have been on hold during this emergency period, with efforts being focused on immediate support. Following the agreement of a £1.8bn bailout package for TfL, the future of transportation in London remains very uncertain. As part of the agreement any further work on Crossrail 2 has been shelved, and it is unclear what further support maybe needed at the end of this new six month period, and what conditions maybe attached to any further injection of funds by the government.
24. With the long-term impact of passenger demand due to changes in modes of working caused by COVID-19 still being uncertain, London's long-term transport infrastructure needs may change during the coming years. As the UK moves into recovery, we will continue to advocate for investment in sustainable transport for Londoners, but will monitor the situation and advise on changing transportation needs.
25. The forthcoming White Paper on managing the railways, based on the Williams review carried out in 2018/19 will present a useful opportunity to influence government on the issue of railway services and how they are run. The timing of this is not yet clear, but it is London Councils intention to engage in this process from the start and influence the outcome. London Councils has supported further calls for rail devolution to the Mayor in 2019.
26. London Councils' officers continue to lobby the government for fiscal devolution to fund highway maintenance works in the capital. We have worked with boroughs and the London Technical Advisers Group (LoTAG) in developing a joint lobbying campaign to increase highways funding for London boroughs. We also plan to support LoTAG in publishing the fourth annual State of the City Report in 2021 highlighting the deteriorating state of London's highway assets due to the reduction of funding available for this area of spend and the impact of Covid-19.

Next Steps

27. London Councils officers and Executive members will continue to work on supporting the implementation of the pledges as outlined in this report and will keep Leaders updated on a regular basis.

Recommendations: Leaders' Committee is asked to note and comment on this report

Financial implications for London Councils

None

Legal implications for London Councils

None

Equalities implications for London Councils

None