

Update from the Mayor of London on COVID-19 – 30 June

- The Mayor has today said that the Government has fundamentally failed to grasp the scale of the economic challenge ahead and the unprecedented threat to millions of jobs in London and across the UK. The Government was too slow to act on the health crisis - now they are being too slow to act on the economic crisis that could mean millions could lose their jobs.
- The Government has a generational responsibility to ensure that nobody is left permanently unemployed, homeless or pushed into poverty as a result of this virus – and to rebuild a better, fairer and greener country. The Mayor will continue to put pressure on the Government to come forward with proposals for an unprecedented economic stimulus package that truly matches the scale of the challenge to jobs and growth.
- In a major speech for the Centre for London on 29 June, Sadiq said that a strong, quick recovery and a ‘green recovery’ are not mutually exclusive - they are one and the same. He said we must continue to make the case that not only would a green recovery help to tackle the climate emergency, but it would boost our economy, tackle inequality and, crucially, create the green-collar jobs our communities need.
- Thanks to the monumental efforts of Londoners, the infection rate has continued to fall and, from Saturday, Londoners will once again be able to visit many of their favourite cafes, pubs and cultural venues – providing a huge boost to businesses in hospitality whose income may have dried up completely during this crisis.
- The Mayor has said that as the lockdown eases further, it is even more important that Londoners act to protect the health of others and he’s urging people to act sensibly and respectfully, ensuring all the rules are followed.
- The news that Leicester has had to go back into lockdown is deeply concerning. Sadiq has written to the Health Secretary to ask for more information about the Government’s plans for mobilising and delivering the response to local outbreaks, should others occur. This includes clarity on the devolved powers needed to enforce local measures, additional resources that would be made available to regional and local government, if how the furlough and job support schemes will be flexible enough to support local responses.
- Sadiq continues to be in regular contact with key London stakeholders, including business leaders, trade unions, the voluntary sector, faith groups and others, to develop our understanding of what additional support Londoners need through this crisis.

Topical issues

Responding the Prime Minister’s speech on the economic recovery on 30 June, Sadiq said:

“This announcement shows the Government has fundamentally failed to grasp the scale of the economic challenge ahead and the unprecedented threat to millions of

jobs in London and across the UK.

“This funding is just a tiny fraction of the economic stimulus packages announced weeks ago by other major economies such as Germany and the US. As well as being money that was previously announced, this is another example of central government deciding what is best for local areas and cities, instead of meaningful devolution to those closest to the issues.

“The proposed changes to the planning system will mean that developers build more luxury penthouses and small cramped homes unfit for families, rather than the council homes and genuinely affordable homes we desperately need. This is exactly the legacy that the Prime Minister left when he was Mayor of London – with just 3 social rented homes started during his last year in City Hall – and will make the housing crisis worse rather than better.

“Our Government was too slow to act on the health crisis caused by Covid-19 and thousands more people died as a result - now they are being too slow to act on the economic crisis that could mean millions could lose their jobs.

“The Government has a generational responsibility to ensure that nobody is left permanently unemployed, homeless or pushed into poverty as a result of this virus – and to rebuild a better, fairer and greener country. Right now Ministers are failing that test.

“We urgently need the Government to come forward with proposals for an unprecedented economic stimulus package that truly matches the scale of the challenge to jobs and growth.”

Creating Green jobs

In his speech to the Centre for London, the Mayor said:

“If the right choices are made to kick-start and support our economic recovery – with a major stimulus programme and high levels of public investment – then we have a real opportunity to accelerate our society’s transition to a new, low-carbon model.

“To do this, however, we need to make clear that a strong, quick recovery and a ‘green recovery’ are not mutually exclusive, but one and the same. This is because a green recovery would enable us to enact the policies – and make the investments – that are not only necessary to protect our environment, but to create the jobs and prosperity our country needs.”

Mayor sets out plan to deliver £500m savings

Last week, the Mayor pledged to do everything possible to protect frontline emergency services as he set out how the GLA plans to make savings of up to £500m. The savings will be needed if Ministers fail to urgently support local and regional authorities across England in the aftermath of Covid-19.

The Government has repeatedly promised that there will be no new era of austerity in the wake of Covid-19, however Ministers have so far refused to provide additional funding to local and regional authorities across the UK to compensate for lost funding.

The Mayor has published Budget Guidance, which provides a breakdown of the savings that will be required across the GLA Group over the next two years if the Government fails to act. The Mayor's first priority is to protect frontline emergency services, which is why he is looking at how reserves that he has prudently built-up could be used.

To help protect front-line services, he has also announced a consultation on moving City Hall in order to save £55 million over five years. For the full details on the proposed City Hall move see [here](#), and for more information on the savings being proposed in the Mayor's Budget Guidance, see [here](#).

The Government should seek an extension to post-Brexit trade negotiations while we are dealing with Covid-19

Last week, the Mayor wrote an article in The Independent arguing that the last thing we need now is more chaos, uncertainty and a no-deal Brexit. Londoners need the Government to focus on investing in our economy, skills and jobs, rather than the distraction ongoing negotiations will cause within the heart of Government at such a critical time.

That's why the Mayor has been urging the Government to put political ideology aside, listen to our expert business leaders and seek an extension to post-Brexit trade negotiations so that we can focus on protecting jobs and livelihoods. This is not about whether people supported remaining in the EU or leaving. That debate is over. We have left the EU. It's about doing the right thing for the country at a moment of national crisis. You can read the full piece [here](#).

City Hall Action

Transition and Recovery

The London Transition Board – The London Transition Board, set up to co-ordinate London's transition from lockdown to recovery from Covid-19, will provide strategic direction for the next phase of the response to Covid-19 as London begins to reopen its economy. The board, made up of senior leaders from across London and jointly chaired by the Mayor and Robert Jenrick, the Secretary of State for MHCLG.

The board will focus on the safe reopening of businesses, transport and the use of public space, and the challenges faced in health and social care.

The board agreed to the set-up of a new London Transition Management Group, which will report directly to the London Transition Board and co-ordinate and provide updates on the work being done by different agencies and sub-groups. It will respond to any subsequent waves of infections, should they arise, and incorporates

the Strategic Co-ordination Group emergency planning arrangements set up in March. The Transition Management Group is expected to be formally stood up in the coming weeks when the SCG chair is satisfied that the lockdown easing measures being implemented by the Government are well-established.

The London Recovery Board - The London Recovery Board, which will co-ordinate the planning for London's future post-Covid-19, is co-chaired by the Mayor, and the Chair of London Councils, Cllr Peter John. It is supported by a recovery taskforce which is working in partnership with local authorities, health and care bodies, business groups, trade unions, the voluntary sector, academia, the national Government and other bodies.

It will oversee London's wider economic and social long-term recovery, developing a strategy and plan of action, which focusses on leading to a greener, more equal and better future. Read more [here](#).

Transport

Responding to the Mayor publishing the GLA's Budget Guidance and plan to deliver £500 million of savings a TfL Spokesperson said - "As has been widely reported, the pandemic has had a severe impact on our finances and we will be working with the Mayor and the Government on the financial support that will be needed beyond the current period. We are currently working on a revised budget, to be published later this summer, which will help inform these discussions."

Deferral of bonuses for senior TfL management - TfL's finances were in good shape before the pandemic, but with the collapse in fares income, and given London has been the only city in Western Europe to get no direct operating subsidy from Central Government for its transport network, TfL is now facing acute financial challenges. It is right therefore that TfL's Remuneration Committee has taken the decision to defer bonuses for its senior staff for 2019/20 and to not pay any bonuses for this group of staff in the current financial year.

In the short-term, the recent funding deal with the Government will keep TfL services running in the capital, but this is merely a sticking plaster. The Mayor will continue to urge the Government to either provide sustainable long-term funding or devolve taxation powers so TfL and the Mayor can raise the funds.

Mandatory face-coverings on public transport – Those who are able to must wear face coverings when travelling on public transport. This is making our network safer for everybody – particularly when maintaining social distancing is more difficult.

A small number of passengers are not required by law to wear a face covering. This includes children under the age of 11 and people who cannot put on, wear, or remove a face covering because of a physical or mental illness, impairment or disability. TfL has designed a face covering exemption card, available [here](#) for people to print and carry, wear or show on a smartphone.

One metre rule - Following the announcement that a social distance of one metre (plus) is safe with certain mitigations from 4 July, TfL is working through the implications of this change and updated guidance, alongside trade union colleagues. For now, people should continue to maintain a two-metre social distance and wear face coverings if they must use public transport or when working in public facing areas on the transport network, unless they are exempt.

Service levels - As restrictions continue to be eased and more Londoners return to their workplaces, we can expect an increase in footfall across the transport network. To meet this additional demand, TfL has been working extremely hard to build services back up to normal levels.

Last week, more than 90 per cent of scheduled weekday services were operating in the peak and this will continue to increase as more staff return from illness or self-isolation. Passengers may need to allow extra time for their journeys as TfL is implementing a queuing system at the busiest stations to help manage social distancing safely.

StreetSpace update - StreetSpace London is up and running. It is already supporting 28 completed schemes with 12,856 metres squared extra walking space and 5.3 km extra cycling space. To find out more, see [here](#).

Health

Test and Trace – The Mayor remains incredibly concerned about the effectiveness of the Government’s Test and Trace Service, especially ahead of the further measures to ease the lockdown.

In the first three weeks, a quarter of cases passed to the national contact tracing system were still not reached, and 11 per cent of the contacts who were identified were not reached – that’s thousands of people at risk of Covid-19 not being contacted.

The Mayor urges all Londoners who are contacted by the tracing system to work with them so that we can stop the further spread of the virus.

He is also concerned that the Government has said that the app is no longer a priority. Rapid and accessible testing and comprehensive contact tracing has been proven as an effective strategy to control the virus in countries like Germany, Australia, New Zealand, South Korea and Singapore.

Business & employment

Venues and businesses re-opening - The opening of venues across London from early July will be welcome news for thousands of businesses in hospitality and culture who have seen their income dry up completely during this crisis. Londoners will once again be able to enjoy visiting London’s pubs, cafés and museums.

As the lockdown eases further, it is even more important that we all act to protect the people around us. The experience of going out will still be very different to what it was before.

It is important that businesses get the support they need to implement the guidance on maintaining social distancing, whether around queuing, safe seating areas, or wider health and hygiene protections. This may include councils, police and trading standards taking action around street safety and anti-social behaviour.

Working with councils across London, the Mayor has already done a huge amount of work to create more safe space for walking and cycling – and widening streets, pavements and public spaces for those on foot will remain a key part of re-opening our economy safely.

The Met Police & LFB

Illegal gatherings – In response to reports of large gatherings and parties being planned, the Mayor warned Londoners last week that this will remain illegal and that the police will take action to prevent and disperse large gatherings. There will always be zero-tolerance towards any violence against police officers.

The Government's webpage that reminds people of the legal restrictions can be accessed [here](#).

London Fire Brigade - The London Fire Brigade is now winding down its PPE distribution network, having delivered over 10 million items of PPE to 33 local authority centres and London partners, including police services and Transport for London. The NHS supply chain is now able to take over LFB operations, with the final handover expected to take place this week.

Housing - support for renters and rough sleepers

Protection for renters –The Mayor is calling for 'triple lock' protection for private renters to stop them being evicted as a result of Covid-19. This includes:

- increasing welfare benefits so that they can cover any shortfalls in the rents of private tenants unable to pay them due to Covid-19 – including refugees, asylum seekers and those with no recourse to public funds;
- changing to eviction proceedings to prevent landlords evicting tenants for arrears accrued as a result of Covid-19 when the suspension on eviction proceedings is lifted; and
- scrapping Section 21, preventing landlords using this 'no-fault' route to evict tenants.

Support for Rough Sleepers - As of the night of 26 June, 1,217 rough sleepers were safely accommodated by the GLA in hotels to enable them to follow self-isolation guidance. Along with rough sleepers accommodated in self-contained units, 1,255 rough sleepers were accommodated by Mayoral services that night.

As the lockdown eases, charities and outreach workers will be implementing the Mayor's 'In For Good' principle wherever possible - providing an offer of support to everyone in the hotels with the aim that no-one needs to return to rough sleeping when they leave.

However, many of those accommodated risk being forced back on the streets because of lack of support from central government, including immigration policies which mean many who have been helped have no recourse to public funds, or are EEA nationals without residency rights. Ministers must act and not blow this opportunity to reduce rough sleeping in London got good.

This could be done by suspending both the No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) condition and the Habitual Residence Test, so that European Economic Area citizens do not need to prove their "right to reside" in order to access benefits, which will help them to cover basic living and housing costs.

Additional help should also be provided so that non-UK nationals are able to easily access specialist independent immigration advice. This would maximise the chances of those in emergency accommodation resolving their immigration status and improving their longer-term housing options.

Government funding for rough sleepers in hotel accommodation response

Responding to the announcement last week that the Government is giving councils an extra £85m to help rough sleepers who are currently sheltering from COVID-19 in hotel accommodation, Tom Copley, Deputy Mayor for Housing and Residential Development, welcomed the fact that the GLA can now review the timescale for hotel closures, with a view to extending some hotels or acquiring other interim accommodation. But he also warned that the Government needs to do much more to stop people being forced to return to the streets, including closing the huge gap in support for non-UK nationals with no recourse to public funds.

Communities, support for vulnerable Londoners, the Voluntary and Community Sector and charities

Thanks to the Sikh and Hindu communities – Following a meeting with the London Gurdwaras Network and the Hindu Forum of Britain (HFB) last week, Deputy Mayor for Social Integration, Social Mobility and Community Engagement, Debbie Weekes-Bernard, thanked Sikh and Hindu communities, who have been key to supporting Londoners during Covid-19, from food provision to supporting the elderly. The Mayor will continue to speak with representatives from London's diverse communities to establish how we can best work together as part of the social and economic recovery.

Culture and Creative Industries

London's culture and creative industries are predicted to lose almost 110,000 jobs in 2020 (the most of any region). This would be one in six jobs in the culture sector and a GVA shortfall of £14.6bn in 2020 as a result of the impact of Covid-19. The Society

of London Theatre, for example, has predicted that 70 per cent of theatres or production companies will go out of business by the end of the year.

The Mayor has called on the Government to do much more to provide the support the culture and the creative industries need to protect their future, including extending job retention schemes for the sector. Bridge funding from the Government is urgently needed for the parts of the creative economy not able to open safely with social distancing to ensure their survival.

The Mayor also recently launched a £2.3 million Culture at Risk Business Support Fund and 15 independent cinemas have already received funding.

Environment

The Mayor is helping to get London moving sustainably by:

- Making central London the world's largest car-free zone of any capital in the world
- Widening pavements and trebling cycle lanes
- Opening up our world-famous bridges and streets
- Expanding the Santander Cycles hire scheme
- And keeping our commitment to improve air quality.

Air quality update - Following the decision to go into lockdown, traffic levels on TfL roads fell by as much as 60 per cent and harmful nitrogen dioxide dropped by around 50 per cent on some of London's busiest roads. But as the capital starts to get moving, traffic and pollution are now starting to rise.

Last week, the Mayor triggered a 'high' air pollution alert as air pollutants reacted with strong sunshine. He warned that people with heart and lung problems, and particularly those displaying Covid-19 symptoms, should avoid physical exercise outside. This was the 15th time the air quality alert system has been used since Sadiq Khan became Mayor: one time for 'Very High' and 14 for 'High', including last week's alert.

The Mayor's air quality programme, including the introduction of the ULEZ, had already contributed to a reduction of 44 per cent in roadside nitrogen dioxide in central London. It has been reintroduced to reduce congestion and pollution and help tackle the climate emergency.

London Climate Action Week - To mark the start of London Climate Action Week, the Mayor has given a keynote speech to the Centre for London about how we can't risk losing momentum on climate change as the COP26 summit is delayed due to Covid-19.

He used his speech to say that a green recovery from Covid-19 has the potential to not only combat the climate emergency, but to boost our economy, create jobs and tackle inequality. With green investments – in jobs, skills, technology, infrastructure and industry – we can create millions of new jobs and unleash the inclusive and sustainable growth that's required to get us out of this crisis. Find out more [here](#).

You can read an article by Shirley Rodrigues, London's Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, on 'Our vision for a rapid, green economic recovery in London' [here](#).

Resilient Recovery Taskforce - The Mayor has joined 23 other mayors and local leaders, representing 25 million people across the UK, to establish a new Resilient Recovery Taskforce. They are calling on the Chancellor to commit to a 'New Deal for Green Skills and Growth' alongside a major push on infrastructure investment, public transport and retrofitting homes. More information [here](#).

Skills and Education

Education – Schools across every borough in the capital are now teaching more children and many nurseries are reopening. It is critical to have young people in school because each day away widens existing inequalities, but it's got to be safe to do so. Schools and nurseries across London are doing all they can to make their environments safe, and the Mayor wants to salute our incredible teachers and early years practitioners who have been working hard to support children throughout the Covid-19 crisis.

The Mayor continues to raise his concerns over the limitations of the Government's offer of devices and support for those children who are not in school. In London, we need the digital access scheme to be rolled out across secondary schools and beyond so that children can access the tools they need to continue their education.

Many boroughs are reporting that the number of devices allocated to them is not meeting the demand. Further issues have arisen relating to deployment and IT support, with other significant concerns around the length of licensing and data.

In response to Covid-19, the London Grid for Learning, which was set up by local authorities in 2001, has tendered for up to 2m devices nationally to save schools money and ensure continuity of education provision. This process has secured device prices from the tech sector that represent a significant saving over current market prices, with entry level laptops available with significant savings. More information can be found [here](#).

International Cooperation

Sadiq congratulated Anne Hidalgo on her re-election as Mayor of Paris on Monday. The two cities will continue to work together on our shared vision for a greener and more sustainable future as we recover from Covid-19.

On 18 June, at the invitation of the French Ambassador, Sadiq attended the official commemoration of the 80th anniversary of General Charles de Gaulle's 'appeal' to the French people, which was broadcast from London on BBC radio. During the ceremony, President Macron awarded London with the Légion d'honneur - France's highest military and civilian award – in gratitude for London's solidarity with France and for hosting the French government-in-exile during WWII. The Mayor joined the President, Prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall to acknowledge London's proud history of fighting the tyranny of fascism.

Media, social media

- Pride celebrations this year are being shaped by a global pandemic and by the Black Lives Matter movement that is rightly campaigning against discrimination and injustice. You can watch the Mayor's Pride message to Londoners [here](#).
- ITV London covered the Mayor's plans to make savings following the impact of Covid-19 on London's finances. You can watch the interview [here](#).
- Sadiq wrote an op-ed about how the last thing we need as we recover from Covid-19 is more chaos, uncertainty and a no-deal Brexit. You can read the piece in the Independent [here](#).

What you can do to help

City Hall is working hard to develop and establish new structures to support Londoners and to improve the city's resilience at this difficult time. You can help by promoting these services:

- **Mental health** – Mental health experts have helped us collate advice on the GLA website to help those who may be feeling down or anxious. The tips can be accessed [here](#). It also includes information on how to access services if Londoners need support with their mental health. Help with how to cope with bereavement and grief during the coronavirus outbreak can be found [here](#).
- **Pay it Forward - Business** owners should visit www.london.gov.uk/payitforward and see how Pay it Forward could help them make their way through the challenges we now face as a city.
- **London Learning at Home** - The Mayor has launched London Learning at Home, which brings together the city's free learning and cultural resources that children can access from home. It can be accessed [here](#).
- **Guidance and support for renters and landlords** - The GLA has collated advice for renters and landlords on their rights during the coronavirus crisis. Please help share the page, which can be accessed [here](#).
- **Volunteering** - [The GLA Coronavirus Volunteering Portal](#) remains live with updated opportunities for Londoners to safely volunteer.
- **Employment Rights Hub** - Many people are concerned about the financial impact of self-isolating or taking time off work. The Mayor's Employment Rights Hub has the latest information about what people are entitled to, including the Government's Self-Employment Income Support Scheme, which is now open for applications. **You can access, and point those who may be concerned, to the Hub [here](#).**
- **Information on COVID-19 for non-UK nationals** - City Hall's EU Londoners Hub has specific information for non-UK nationals on how they can access to healthcare, visas, the EU settlement scheme and employment rights and how they are affected by the crisis. **The Information on COVID-19 for non-UK nationals page can be accessed [here](#).**