

TfL UNCLASSIFIED

Dear Meg

Thank you for your letter of 28 September addressed to the Commissioner concerning the reduction of bus services in Hackney. I have been asked to respond on his behalf.

The way people travel around London is constantly changing. We need to have a public transport system that adapts to varying demand, while supporting economic growth and allowing Londoners to live, work and enjoy life in the Capital. As such, we continuously review London's bus network to ensure services reflect changing demand and deliver value for money.

Prior to the coronavirus pandemic, demand on many central and inner London bus routes began to decline in boroughs such as Hackney. Current figures show ridership is 73 per cent of pre-pandemic demand across the network and whilst the long-term impacts on demand are currently unclear, it is important to reflect the current and projected use of our bus services. This will help reduce our operating costs while still offering a regular and reliable service to bus users.

One condition of the government's funding deal was for TfL to look at reducing bus frequency by 4 per cent across the entire bus network. We have chosen to focus these savings on inner London because not only do we expect the rate of recovery to be slower here, but also because other public transport options are more readily available and active travel is more viable and attractive.

Whilst the 4 per cent reduction in frequency is to be reached by the end of the financial year 2024/25, the reduction is phased over that period in our budget. The changes for routes 55 and 56 were timed to coincide with the new contract in February 2022 but, the commercial process having concluded, there was no case for running at capacity in excess of that required for longer than necessary.

Our investment in walking and cycling infrastructure and improvements to the Overground and Tube network, has changed how our customers use the bus network. Our customers are now finding that they have a number of new travel options that are quicker, easier and more accessible when compared to their existing bus journeys. For example, the increased off-peak services on the London Overground Richmond/Clapham Junction – Stratford branch from May 2019 from six to ten trains per hour has led to a significant increase in trips.

London's Night Time Economy contributed £26.3 billion to the economy every year before the pandemic and we understand the importance safe, frequent and reliable transport services will play in its recovery. You and your constituents will also be pleased to know we have announced the Night Tube will be returning in time for the busy Christmas period after being suspended

since March 2020 due to the pandemic. Services on the Central and Victoria lines will run throughout the night on Fridays and Saturdays from Saturday 27 November, providing more options for customers who need to travel at night either for leisure or for work, while also making journey times shorter and offering safer routes home for all Londoners. TfL continues to run as many services as possible whilst seeking to secure the long-term, sustainable Government funding needed to go on supporting London's recovery.

Though the pandemic has significantly impacted our finances, we recognise that investment in our services and sustainable travel, are vital to improve connectivity and help drive a strong and resilient future for London and the wider UK economy. Within Hackney, we have set out the next steps for a new Cycleway cycle route between Lea Bridge and Dalston, which will play a vital role in enabling thousands of people in the area each week to cycle more easily and safely. We are also progressing the Barking Riverside extension on the London Overground, which will add 4.5km on the Gospel Oak to Barking line, with trains due to come into service in Autumn 2022.

I hope this information has been helpful.

Kind Regards

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