

## London Chamber of Commerce and Industry's response to the London Assembly Transport Committee's Investigation: 'London's transport, now and in the future'.

October 2019

### INTRODUCTION

1. London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) is the most representative capital-focused business advocacy organisation. LCCI represents the interests of small and medium-sized enterprises through to large, multi-national corporates. Our member companies operate within a wide range of sectors, including transport and logistics, property and construction, health, education, manufacturing and retail, across all 33 London local authority areas – genuinely reflecting the broad spectrum of London business opinion.
2. As the voice of London business, we seek to promote and enhance the interests of the capital's business community through representations to central government, the Mayor and London Assembly, Parliament and media, as well as international audiences. Through member surveys and commissioned research, LCCI seeks to inform and shape debate on key business issues.
3. LCCI continues to be a vocal campaigner across a broad range of issues that impact our members and the wider business community throughout the capital. For the past 140 years, LCCI has supported establishing Heathrow and Gatwick airports, Canary Wharf's Docklands Light Railway (DLR), Crossrail and London City Airport. More recently, LCCI has and continues to campaign for increased aviation capacity in the South East, East London river crossings and Crossrail 2.
4. The capital's population is expected to reach 'megacity' status by 2030 with a population over ten million people<sup>1</sup>. This rapid population growth will place London's infrastructure, particularly its transport networks, under considerable pressure. Therefore, LCCI welcomes the opportunity to respond to the London Assembly Transport Committee's investigation: 'London's transport, now and in the future'.
5. Transport in London is about more than just moving people around. Efficient networks maintain economic growth, support jobs and unlock housing development. In short, they create opportunities for people and for businesses. Sustained investment in infrastructure and a long-term outlook on future need is critical to ensuring that the capital can continue to function, grow and thrive.

#### LCCI key proposals:

- While the decision to give the green light to Silvertown Tunnel is a step in the right direction, and must be delivered, additional plans for **fixed river crossings** at Gallions and at Belvedere should be urgently looked at to maximise growth potential in East London.
- Boosting aviation capacity in the South East is critical to future-proofing the UK's economy. LCCI believes that **airport expansion** is vital to sustaining London's status as a world-class city in which to do business.
- With the London Underground network facing overcrowding and congestion, it is critical that **Crossrail 2** is delivered. Crossrail 2 will provide a much-needed increase in capacity and unlock housing development along its route.
- LCCI believes that a **Freight Commissioner** would help deliver a long-term holistic strategy for freight, which the capital needs in order to accommodate a sustained increase in demand.

<sup>1</sup> ONS (2016) Subnational population projections for England: 2014 based projections

6. The question numbers in each section below directly correlate to the question numbers on the London Assembly Transport Committee's page: 'London's transport, now and in future'.

**Q1) HOW WILL THE TRANSPORT SYSTEM NEED TO DEVELOP TO KEEP PACE WITH LONDON'S GROWING POPULATION?**

7. With the capital's population expected to reach a population of 10 million by 2030, London's transport system will continue to face increased overcrowding and congestion. This will impact on commuters, tourists and Londoners alike. Therefore, it is critical that there is sustained and targeted investment in the capital's transport network.
8. LCCI believes that new East London river crossings have a vital role to play in securing the capital's competitive future and has been focussing on this issue for a number of years through our Bridge East London campaign<sup>2</sup>.
9. With the Blackwall Tunnel continuing to suffer from severe congestion and poor reliability, a network of road river crossings in East London can provide more reliable journeys for buses and freight via joint bus and HGV lanes.
10. East London's transformation over the past few decades has been aided by crucial transport investments like the construction of the DLR, the Jubilee Line Extension and London City Airport. However, parts of east and south-east London are still isolated and underdeveloped. Despite the fact that half of London's population lives east of Tower Bridge, there are just two road crossings. Without further, significant investment in transport infrastructure, the East London success story will be at risk.
11. We have previously highlighted the essential economic role of being able to move goods and services easily around the capital. To future proof the East London economy fixed road crossings at Gallions and Belvedere should be made a priority.
12. Freight plays a vital, but not always appreciated, role in our everyday lives – from the stocking of shelves and delivering raw materials to construction sites, to supporting industries such as housebuilding. As London's population continues to grow, demands on the capital's transport network, and of its residents and businesses for services and supplies, have never been greater. LCCI therefore argues that freight should be given greater prominence in London's strategic plans going forward.
13. Consequently, following the publication of the Mayor's Freight Action Plan earlier this year, LCCI, the Federation of Small Businesses and the Freight Transport Association called for the Mayor to appoint a freight commissioner. In our collective view, this would help deliver a long-term holistic strategy for freight, which the capital needs in order to accommodate a sustained increase in demand<sup>3</sup>.
14. With 90% of all freight in the capital already moved by road<sup>4</sup>, alternative modes of transport need to be considered in order to move goods around the capital. The Thames is an underutilised superhighway, which flows through the heart of the capital and more must be done to maximise its potential.

**Q2) DOES LONDON'S TRANSPORT OFFER NEED TO CHANGE TO REFLECT CHANGING WORK AND LEISURE PATTERNS? IF SO, HOW?**

15. Any future infrastructure plans aimed at boosting walking and cycling should be undertaken holistically in line with investment in public transport, especially in outer London. Plans must ensure that freight capacity is not negatively impacted, particularly on the major roads, and enable kerbside access for deliveries where there is no off-road servicing alternative.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.londonchamber.co.uk/news/press-releases/bridge-east-london-campaign-launches-to-push-for-n/>

<sup>3</sup> Business organisations call for freight commissioner: <https://fta.co.uk/media/press-releases/2019/march/business-organisations-call-for-london-freight-com>

<sup>4</sup> <https://tfl.gov.uk/info-for/deliveries-in-london/delivering-efficiently/retiming-deliveries>

16. With people increasingly encouraged to live car-free or to rely less on private cars, reliance on personal deliveries will also increase. As part of a holistic strategy, delivery and servicing needs must be taken into consideration to ensure sufficient capacity for freight on the road.

### **Q3) WHAT WOULD MOST IMPROVE PEOPLE'S EXPERIENCE OF MOVING AROUND THE CAPITAL?**

17. Last year, LCCI were critical of Westminster Council's decision to take plans to pedestrianise Oxford Street "off the table for good", as short sighted<sup>5</sup>. The area is already considerably congested and given rapid population expansion and the anticipated arrival of the Elizabeth Line, innovative ways must be considered to address this congestion and transform Oxford Street into a world-class place to live, work and visit.
18. Most local businesses across London support the pedestrianisation of Oxford Street, but measures must be put in place to support local firms that might be adversely affected. LCCI argues that the area is vital to London's economy, as is the safety, comfort and ease of travel for tourists, shoppers, and workers. Therefore, this proposal should be revisited.
19. LCCI supports improving road transport infrastructure for motorists and cyclists alike. Encouraging a modal shift from car use will contribute to the Mayor's aim of 80<sup>6</sup> per cent of all journeys being undertaken by public transport, walking or cycling.
20. However, LCCI believes that cycle superhighways have had a mixed impact on London's roads. London is constrained by a finite amount of road space, and fully segregated cycle superhighways – particularly while construction work is being undertaken - can place unreasonable pressure on an already congested road network by reducing capacity and increasing travel times in central London.
21. LCCI would like to see an evaluation of cycle superhighways and an exploration of whether new cycle lanes could be 'semi-segregated' during peak hours, rather than remaining part of permanent infrastructure. There must be a full analysis of the current use of cycle superhighways, both in terms of usage and impact on travel times. Further consideration should be given to better incentivising use of the segregated lanes provided.
22. Increasing numbers of Londoners have chosen to commute to and from their place of work using a powered two-wheeler (PTW) - whether motorcycle, scooter or moped. This is beneficial to London in a number of ways, most notably by taking commuters off overcrowded Underground and Bus services. With most PWT compliant to at least EURO 3 emissions standards, their impact on air quality is minimal compared to other road vehicles in London – and accordingly PTW commuting should be encouraged and supported.
23. To ensure that PWT users experience convenient, safe and secure commuting, there are issues that the need addressing. PWT permitted use of Bus lanes has been beneficial in easing congestion and enabling swifter journeys. However, there is inconsistency on permitted lane usage between TfL and Borough controlled roads. This should be ended. At the same time, with more cyclists now sharing the lanes with PWTs and Buses, safety concerns obviously arise.
24. The growth of PTW commuting has not been followed by an increase in the provision of parking spaces. Central London has inadequate provision of dedicated parking bays for motorcycles and scooters. The Mayor should liaise with central London local authorities to explore how to deliver additional dedicated parking bays.
25. Improving the service on the London Underground by regulating strikes on the network would improve people's ability to move around the capital. Strikes on the London Underground adversely

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<sup>5</sup> London Chamber hits out at decision to halt plans to pedestrianise Oxford Street:

<https://www.londonchamber.co.uk/news/press-releases/london-chamber-hits-out-at-decision-to-halt-plans/>

<sup>6</sup> Mayor's Transport Strategy pp. 9 <https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/mayors-transport-strategy-2018.pdf>

impact on the capital's economy, businesses and commuters, and the right to strike must be better balanced against their transport needs. Recent polling by LCCI and ComRes highlighted business support for mitigating the impact of strikes, a minimum service guarantee during times of strike, with 65% of businesses supporting a ban on peak-time strikes on the London Underground<sup>7</sup>.

**Q5) WHAT ARE THE KEY PROJECTS WHICH SHOULD BE PRIORITISED TO ENSURE LONDON'S TRANSPORT SYSTEM DELIVERS FOR LONDON, IS RESILIENT TO FUTURE CONSTRAINTS, AND PLAYS A ROLE IN ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES FACING THE CAPITAL?**

26. LCCI remains concerned that there is no official date for opening of the full Crossrail line<sup>8</sup>, with only a revised date for the opening of the central section confirmed. It is vital that this project is delivered, in full, as soon as possible.
27. The case must continue to be made to Government for Crossrail's extension to Ebbsfleet from Abbey Wood, creating a new station at London City Airport. This would complement the existing DLR line, while boosting access to the airport by public transport.
28. Momentum for Crossrail 2 appears to have waned in light of ongoing concerns with Crossrail. We would strongly urge the London Assembly to step up its lobby for this critical transport infrastructure project. Crossrail 2 will help to alleviate chronic overcrowding and congestion of London's existing transport network, while at the same time tackling the housing crisis, unlocking development of up to 200,000 homes along the route<sup>9</sup>.
29. Improving service access to Heathrow Airport by delivering signalling upgrades to the Piccadilly Line is essential. This would boost the number of people getting to and from the airport by public transport, reducing reliance on cars. In addition to benefiting everyday commuters, signalling upgrades will also improve services for tourist, as a large number of key visitor attractions are situated along the line.
30. LCCI continues to support the Bakerloo Line Extension (BLE)<sup>10</sup>. Targeted investment is crucial to ensuring that London remains an attractive place to do business and for potential investors. It is essential that this extension goes ahead to reduce congestion on the tube and roads. The BLE will also deliver thousands of new homes and jobs, while bringing huge benefits to residents and businesses alike<sup>11</sup>.
31. Finally, with increasing demand for electric vehicles, adequate charging infrastructure is urgently needed across the capital to accommodate ever larger fleets of electric vans and cars, with van fleets needing sufficient grid capacity for simultaneous charging at depots.

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LCCI would be happy to clarify or provide further comment on any matter raised within this response.

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<sup>7</sup> 65% of businesses support banning peak-time strikes on the London Underground:

<https://www.londonchamber.co.uk/news/press-releases/65-of-businesses-support-banning-peak-time-strikes/>

<sup>8</sup> LCCI react to the part opening of Crossrail: <https://www.londonchamber.co.uk/news/press-releases/lcci-react-to-a-part-opening-of-crossrail/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://crossrail2.co.uk/discover/new-homes/>

<sup>10</sup> LCCI welcomes announcement that the extension of the Bakerloo Line was moving forward:

<https://www.londonchamber.co.uk/news/press-releases/lcci-welcomes-announcement-that-extension-of-the-b/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.backthebakerloo.org.uk>