

London Labour

Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP
HM Treasury
1 Horseguards Parade
London
SW1A 2HQ

13th March 2023

Dear Chancellor,

Decarbonising transport in London

We are writing to you, as the lead members for transport from twenty-two London Boroughs, in advance of the Government's Budget on 15 March. We write to request consideration of three simple and straightforward policies that will help decarbonise transport in London, prevent further biodiversity loss, contribute towards reductions in incidences of further surface water flooding and address an inequality, as well as help speed up improvements to London's air quality, thereby reducing the impact on London's NHS. These policies will also help us address the cost of living crisis in relation to transport.

Firstly, the vast majority of London households do not have access to private parking spaces where they could charge an electric vehicle. For biodiversity and surface water flooding reasons we do not want those who could, to be incentivised to pave over their front gardens. We know as we assume you do, the number one reason for those who need to drive and own a car to switch to an electric one is the cheaper cost of running an electric vehicle (EV).

However, right now, especially in London and other urban localities, fuelling via the growing public network of EV Charging Points can be more expensive than fuelling a motor vehicle fuelled by the internal combustion engine, as those paying through the public network pay 20% VAT compared to just 5% VAT for those charging at home.

This means those living in terraced housing, flats, apartment blocks and those doing the right thing in supporting biodiversity and reducing surface water flooding risk are disadvantaged as they face an extra tax for switching to an EV and charging via a public charging point.

In the Budget on 15 March we urge you to help speed up the decarbonisation of transport and equalise at 5% the VAT charged for the growing public EV Charging Point network.

Secondly, as London builds towards the further expansion of the ULEZ to its outer London boundaries, a scheme that will improve the air that Londoners breathe and reduce the demands on the NHS, we request that you announce in your Budget this week that the estimated £400m that Treasury receives through the annual Vehicle Emission Duty (VED) from London registered vehicles will be returned to London to help bolster the currently available £110m TfL scrappage scheme and create a level playing field in transport funding. As we know, the Government has funded and contributed towards the scrappage schemes of other cities in the UK including Birmingham, Bristol and Portsmouth, but so far there has been nothing for the capital, so such an initiative would not be inconsistent.

Finally, we urge you to restore and increase funding to Transport for London and Active Travel England to help continue to build the dedicated infrastructure and environments which encourages and enables more people to cycle and walk their short local journeys. We know investment in active travel is good for the health and wellbeing of local communities, is good for their local economies, the quality of the air they breathe, helps reduce congestion and builds more exercise into people's everyday lives. All of this reduces demands on our hard-pressed health services and helps further decarbonise our transport activity.

We hope you will give time and consideration to these three simple asks that together are good steps for the health of our nation and that of our planet.

Yours sincerely,

Philip Glanville, Mayor of the London Borough of Hackney

Cllr Deirdre Costigan, Cabinet Member for Climate Action & Deputy Leader of the London Borough of Ealing

Cllr Rezina Chowdhury, Cabinet Member for Sustainable Lambeth & Clean Air, London Borough of Lambeth

Cllr Averil Lekau, Cabinet Member for Climate Change & Deputy Leader of the London Borough of Greenwich

Cllr Katherine Dunne, Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Climate, Environment & Transport Strategy, London Borough of Hounslow

Cllr Krupa Sheth, Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure & Climate Action, London Borough of Brent

Cllr Clyde Loakes, Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Climate and Air Quality, London Borough of Waltham Forest

Cllr Jo Blackman, Cabinet Member for Environment & Civic Pride, London Borough of Redbridge

Cllr Louise Krupski, Cabinet Member for Environment & Climate Action, London Borough of Lewisham

Cllr Catherine Rose, Cabinet Member for Leisure, Parks, Streets & Clean Air, London Borough of Southwark

Cllr Adam Harrison, Cabinet Member for Sustainable Camden, London Borough of Camden

Cllr Mika Hakata, Deputy Leader, London Borough of Haringey

Cllr Mete Coban, Cabinet Member for Environment & Climate, London Borough of Hackney

Cllr Geof Cooke, Vice Chair Environment Committee, London Borough of Barnet

Cllr Rick Jewell, Cabinet Member for Environment, London Borough of Enfield

Cllr James Asser, Deputy Mayor & Cabinet member for Environment and Sustainable Transport, London Borough of Newham

Cllr Syed Ghani, Cabinet Member for Enforcement & Community Safety, London Borough of Barking & Dagenham

Cllr Rowena Champion, Cabinet Member for Environment, Air Quality & Transport, London Borough of Islington

Cllr Stephen Alambritis MBE, Cabinet Member for Transport, London Borough of Merton

Cllr Sharon Holder, Cabinet Member for Public Realm, London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

Cllr Paul Dimoldenberg, Cabinet Member for City Management & Air Quality, London Borough of Westminster

Cllr Clare Fraser, Cabinet Member for Transport, London Borough of Wandsworth

Cllr Keith Darvill Cabinet Member for Climate Agenda, London Borough of Havering