London Assembly
15 November 2006

Sixty-Sixth Mayor's Report to the Assembly
Author: The Mayor

This is my sixty-sixth report to the Assembly, fulfilling my duty under Section 45 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999. It covers the period from 5 October – 1 November 2006

Transport

London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games Travel Plan

On 30 October, I joined with Sebastian Coe, Chair of the London Organising Committee and Tessa Jowell MP, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport to launch the London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games Travel Plan.

At the heart of the Olympic Transport Plan is the goal of encouraging all spectators to travel to the Games by public transport, walking and cycling. The Plan is now going out to consultation.

The Plan outlines that:

- One train every 15 seconds will serve the Park, with the rail system carrying 240,000 people per hour an increase of 100,000 on the usual daily rate;
- The Javelin rail service, the bullet train at the heart of the rail plans, will speed spectators from Central London to Stratford International Station in the Olympic Park in just 7 minutes;
- London will use an Olympic Route Network of major roads to transport the athletes and other members of the 'Olympic Family' to ensure that they get to their venues on time;
- Transport plans will be sustainable, minimising environmental impacts wherever possible. The on-going renewal of the bus, train and taxi fleets will ensure that London's transport is at the forefront of low emissions technology and walking and cycling will be encouraged - with new cycle lanes and walking routes connecting the Park into the wider London networks.

The Olympic Transport Plan is central to the success of the 2012 Games, and shows our commitment to making them the most sustainable Games ever. With more than £17 billion being spent on improving London's transport system over the next five years, the 2012 Games is set to deliver a lasting legacy for all Londoners and improve the quality of life in some of the most deprived areas of the city.

Tour de France

On 26 October, Peter Hendy, the Commissioner of Transport for London and I visited Paris for the official presentation of the 2007 Tour de France. The presentation saw the formal unveiling of the route for next year's race. When the Tour comes to London in 2007 it is estimated that London and Kent will see an estimated £115 million boost in tourism revenue.

The Grand Depart will be the biggest sporting event to be held in the Capital ahead of the Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2012 and will give Londoners a taste of what is to come in 2012.

An estimated two million visitors from across the world are expected to visit London and Kent during the three days the Tour will spend in the UK from 6-8 July 2007. As well as huge numbers of tourists lining the route, the race will showcase London and Kent to millions of television spectators around the world.

Docklands Light Railway extension to Stratford International

The Department for Transport recently gave planning approval for the six kilometre extension of the Docklands Light Railway to Stratford International station and the heart of the Olympic Park, which will deliver a vital rail link which is central to London's preparations for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

It will mean that visitors from all over the world will be able to access the Olympic Park quickly and easily and will provide a lasting legacy for London, bringing much-needed regeneration to the areas along the route.

The Stratford International Extension is due to open in 2010 and is funded by TfL's £10 billion Investment Programme and a contribution from the Olympic Delivery Authority. It involves the conversion of part of the North London Line to Docklands Light Railway operation between Royal Victoria and Stratford and the construction of a further link to the new Channel Tunnel Rail Link station at Stratford International.

Illegal driving campaign

Three London boroughs with a high rate of drivers who fail to stop after a collision will be the focus of a new joint campaign between TfL and the Metropolitan Police.

The boroughs of Hackney, Newham and Haringey, have a high rate of motorists who fail to stop after being involved in a collision. In Hackney 25 per cent of people involved in a crash fail to stop, in Haringey the rate is 23 per cent and in Newham it is 22 per cent. According to recent research there is a strong link between uninsured drivers and serious motoring offences.

To tackle the problem and remove illegal vehicles from the road TfL and the Metropolitan Police will be carrying out a five-week awareness and enforcement campaign. The campaign begins on 23 October with an advertising campaign in Hackney, Newham, Haringey, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest. On 30 October Metropolitan Police Officers will begin a four-week enforcement and education campaign in the Hackney, Newham and Haringey.

East London Line

A new railway line for East London has come a step closer with the award by TfL of a £363 million 'main works' contract to a consortium comprising Balfour Beatty and Carillion. This investment is one of the cornerstones of TfL's £10 billion Investment Programme and will deliver a key Olympic transport commitment - the construction of a new railway line between West Croydon, Crystal Palace and Dalston Junction, incorporating the existing East London Line.

When the railway is completed it will join up with the existing North London Railway via a link at Dalston Junction, and become part of TfL's new London Overground network. This will be

the first significant move towards an orbital rail network for London, as it connects twenty London boroughs and brings huge regeneration opportunities to some of the most deprived areas of the Capital.

Connect system

London Underground's new £2 billion digital radio Connect system is now being rolled-out across the Tube with 40 per cent of the network now primed to operate with the new communications equipment. This is a vital step in the modernisation of London's transport network and will deliver real benefits for Londoners.

Connect is now live on the East London Line and roll-out is well underway on the District line.

Connect will deliver major communication improvements across the Tube network. It is already operational on the East London Line, with advanced trial operations now underway on the District line. Stations on the east end of the line from Tower Hill to Upminster are already using the new Connect system, with full implementation over the coming weeks.

Hybrid bus fleet

On 31 October I announced plans for a hybrid bus fleet for London, as I unveiled the first hybrid double-decker bus in the world. Hybrid buses, which use a combination of diesel and electric power, are central to TfL's plans for a cleaner, greener fleet, and will contribute to cutting the capital's Carbon Dioxide (CO2) emissions. These hybrid buses are an important step towards my long-term goal of a low carbon hydrogen based transport system.

Hybrid vehicles can make a real contribution to a cleaner, greener public transport network for the capital. Bus manufacturers and operators now need to rise to this challenge to make this economically and financially feasible.

Creating a low-carbon bus fleet is an important part of our work to cut the emissions which are causing climate change. It is an important step towards my vision that London becomes one of the world's most sustainable cities.

The adoption of hybrid buses is a key part of a range of measures being developed to meet London's contribution to tackling climate change.

The measures include:

- Continuing modal shift from private car usage to public transport, cycling and walking;
- Greater energy efficiency across all Transport for London businesses and modes of transport;
- The adoption of more energy from renewable sources and innovative technology to recycle energy;
- Support for the continued research and development of low carbon fuels;
- Strategies and support for organisations and individuals to travel in more environmentally friendly ways through Travel Demand Management schemes, including in the London Borough of Sutton the largest of its kind in the UK;
- A new £25 million climate change fund, to mitigate transport related emissions.

TfL currently has six single-deck hybrid buses operating on route 360 in London, from Elephant and Castle to Kensington and is actively pursuing the development and increased

deployment of hybrid buses on London's bus network. Transport for London is currently discussing how to achieve this with both bus manufacturers and London bus operators.

As part of this commitment, on 5 October London joined with five other world cities to back hydrogen fuel cell buses as the future for clean, green bus fleets.

The buses, which only emit water vapour, not harmful emissions, have been successfully tested as part of the EU-assisted Clean Urban Transport for Europe (CUTE) project. The cities of Amsterdam, Barcelona, Berlin, Hamburg and London and Canadian Province of British Columbia signed a Memorandum of Understanding at the European Commission in Brussels to work together to develop and procure hydrogen fuel cell buses and make the technology commercially viable.

West End traffic free shopping day

On 20 October I announced that London's West End shopping district would stage its largest ever traffic free day on 2 December. For the first time ever the whole Oxford Street and Regent Street will be closed to traffic for a day of entertainment and shopping. The day will be entitled VIP - Very Important Pedestrians. The street closures will be organised by Transport for London and the events will be staged by the New West End Company and retailers.

London needs the West End as the world's greatest shopping destination – it is a magnet for visitors from outside the capital and abroad. London's biggest ever traffic free event will follow the huge success of last year's smaller event on Oxford Street, when over half a million people enjoyed a great day out.

The event sits alongside the on-going improvement of London's most famous shopping streets by the New West End Company, landowners, and retailers. It is a recognition that the West End is, more than ever before, promoting London on both a national and a world scale – from last year's successful Christmas Treat, January's Chinese lanterns on Oxford Circus, to September's Spanish themed Regent Street Festival.

Congestion Charge Western Extension

I have authorised TfL to carry out certain functions in relation to the implementation of the western extension of the Congestion Charging Scheme. This delegation allows TfL to issue directions to London Borough Councils in relation to highway works on roads for which they are the local authority in order to enable the western extension of the scheme to commence in February 2007.

Plaque for bus staff

On 12 October, TfL's Commissioner, Peter Hendy and I unveiled a plaque recognising the outstanding dedication to duty of bus staff in response to the London terror attacks. The plaque was presented to the staff at Stratford Depot to commemorate their extraordinary professionalism in the face of the terror attacks of 7 and 21 July 2005.

Bus staff showed incredible bravery in the hours, days and weeks after the terror attacks. The courage of drivers getting back into their buses after the terrible events on 7 and 21 July and was absolutely crucial in ensuring that London could keep moving. This plaque is one small way to show London's appreciation to the staff at Stratford depot for the tremendous effort they put into their work.

Although the efforts of certain individuals on 7 July last year have been recognised, it is important to remember that no one individual alone could have achieved what the staff at this depot did on that terrible day. The entire team pulled together and made sure Londoners had a way to get home.

Recommendations of the Budget Committee – Tube and Bus Fares: Section 60 request

The London Assembly under Section 60 of the GLA Act 1999, agreed at the meeting of 11 October, to request my response under Section 45(2)(c) to the formal proposals concerning Recommendations of the Budget Tourism Committee's report on Tube and Bus Fares.

The recommendations in the report relate to two separate issues, the first concerns the take-up of Oyster amongst low-income groups, and the second relates to consultation on fares changes. I will address each in turn. However, before doing so I would like to recap the main achievements of my fares policy.

When I was first elected in 2000 I pledged that I would freeze bus fares and cap underground fares in real terms for a period of three years, which I did. This policy, in conjunction with significant improvements in the frequency, quality and reliability of bus services, has had the most dramatic effect on encouraging a shift from car to public transport. The most recent figures indicate that between 1999 and 2005 public transport trips increased by 23 per cent (bus up by 40 per cent, underground up by 7 per cent), whilst car use declined by 1 per cent. This has led to an increase in the mode share by public transport by 4 per cent and a decline in the mode share by car by 4 per cent.

As the Assembly will be aware there is an urgent need to reverse the decades of under-investment in London's transport network and to meet the needs of a growing London. The Government agreed to grant TfL the right to borrow in order to fund the biggest investment programme in London since the war. In order deliver these investment priorities it was necessary to raise fares to help meet the costs of servicing the additional debt. I therefore announced that Tube fares would rise by RPI+1 per cent and bus fares by RPI+10 per cent for the years 2005, 2006 and 2007. You will of course be aware that this year I announced that the increase for 2007 would be reduced from 10 per cent to just 3.8 per cent above inflation. This was possible because better management and efficiency savings, including new advertising contracts have boosted TfL's finances.

Despite these increases, in real terms the average bus fare paid per passenger journey today is still lower than it was when I first came to Office. After adjusting for inflation and excluding the Freedom Pass, the average bus fare paid per passenger journey was 58 pence in 1999/2000 but 51 pence in 2006/07. The equivalent Tube average fares were £1.32 and £1.36 respectively. This should also be considered against the change in fares in major cities outside London, where bus fare per ride increased from 70 pence in 1999/2000 to 81 pence in 2005/06.

With a third of London's children in poverty I have made it a priority to implement fares policies to assist with the cost of travel for families living in London. I extended the age limit for free travel on buses and trams from 5 to 11 in 2004. This was further extended to 16 years of age in September 2005, and in the following year to all 16 and 17 year olds in full time education who are now eligible for free travel on buses and trams. Free travel on the Tube at off-peak times was granted to all under 11's in April 2006 accompanied by adult fare payers. TfL have

also undertaken initiatives to encourage job seekers back to work with discounted tickets and I will continue to look at other options to assist socially excluded groups.

Concerning Oyster, the Budget Committee's report on the low take-up of Oyster amongst low-income groups misses the point as this only considers pay-as-you-go sales. For example, between December 2005 and March 2006 people from socio-economic groups D and E comprised 30 per cent of total bus trips, but only 26 per cent of those paying cash. Furthermore, people within this socio-economic group that need to travel regularly, for example to work, are much more likely to purchase period bus passes, which offer the best value for money for the regular traveller. Taking this into account, I consider it unreasonable to suggest that people from lower socio-economic groups do not understand nor have the acumen to take up the best value travel options. The evidence is clear that people from these socio-economic groups are much more likely to take up the best value option.

I would also like to point out my disappointment that the Committee's report does not highlight the biggest problem for Oyster, which is the reluctance of the Train Companies to implement this technology for the benefit of its passengers.

Turning to your specific request, I will answer each of your recommendations in turn:

Recommendation 1: That the Mayor and TfL undertake more research into the take up of Oyster cards and pay-as-you go Oyster cards amongst Londoners to identify fully any barriers to take up including social grouping, ethnic grouping, geographical location, age and gender.

TfL is undertaking extensive research work in order to understand why and where people still use cash and not Oyster. This includes:

- continuous surveys to track the demographic profile of bus and Tube passengers by ticket type;
- research into cash and Oyster use on "high cash" bus routes;
- research before and after this summer's Oyster marketing campaign to understand barriers to using Oyster; and
- surveys of passengers queuing at Kings Cross London Underground Ticket Office to find out reasons for queuing.

TfL will continue to carry out this sort of research in the future. I would be happy to update the Assembly on this and future research work as and when it is completed.

Recommendation 2: That the Mayor and TfL actively seek to increase the take up of Oyster amongst groups of Londoners with low take up and report to the TfL Board and the London Assembly through the regular budget and performance monitoring reports on the steps being taken.

Where barriers to take up are identified TfL is working to overcome them, including rolling out special publicity and communication campaigns. Some examples are given below.

- TfL is carrying out a proactive editorial and marketing campaign with Newsquest newspapers to promote the benefits of Oyster. Newsquest's local newspapers have the best reach of all the media across the socio-economic groups.

- The Bangladeshi community press has being particularly targeted in promoting the 16-17 Oyster card, following research which identified Tower Hamlets and Newham as the Boroughs with the lowest take-up of the under-16s card.

- On the 100 bus routes where cash use is highest, marketing activity targeting cash users took place between February and April, focused on the individual routes and the town centre hubs they serve. Roadside posters, bus sides, bus ticket back advertising and the local press were all used to put across the price benefit of using Oyster over cash.

- In September 2006, a wider set of 300 routes with high cash use were targeted in the same way.

Further campaigns will be mounted in the future, if required.

Recommendation 3: That the Mayor and TfL explore the following as means of increasing take up of Oyster amongst Londoners on low incomes where evidence shows this is below expected levels of take up:

a) Removing the Oyster card deposit – possibly as a one-off promotion for a limited period to encourage further take up of Oyster;
b) Expanding the number and range of places where Oyster cards can be purchased and validated;
c) Providing free Oyster cards for socially excluded groups;
d) Developing use of Oyster for other transactions e.g. for library services;
e) Simplifying Oyster e.g. by making Oyster prices a direct percentage of cash fare prices and enabling transfers to be made on buses and Tube within one hour of starting a journey for the price of a single trip. Although TfL has indicated that the financial cost of such measures may be prohibitive, in order to justify this and be transparent, a full cost/benefit analysis for each measure should be published;
f) Providing different ticket products via Oyster e.g. a 'throw-away' carnet of Oyster tickets?
g) That the Mayor and TfL explain the proposals for further roll-out of Oyster cards including how these proposals will address areas and groups of Londoners where there is low take up of Oyster cards

a) TfLs assessment is that the deposit is not a significant barrier as the use of Oyster PAYG is continuing to grow strongly. Nevertheless, TfL is considering the case for removing the deposit, possibly just for specific parts of the market, if it is shown to be worthwhile. However, it is imperative that measures are in place to discourage people from merely discarding the cards when the balance reaches zero.

b) There are currently around 2,200 Oyster ticket stops throughout the London area and 300 Underground stations where Oystercards can be bought or topped up. In addition, some national rail stations that accept Oyster PAYG also have facilities for retailing and topping up Oyster cards. TfL is continuing to discuss with the Train Operating Companies the extension of Oystercards including pay as you go fares to all national rail services in the London area, which is expected in 2008.

c) As indicated above in a) TfL is considering the scope and need for this, although this may have associated contractual change costs. For example, under the current Prestige contract TfL is required to provide an incentive for card retention for any cards that are issued without a 7-day or longer ticket product on them.

d) TfL has worked with the London Borough of Newham to provide Oyster to Borough residents as one application on its multi-application "Connects" card. About 20,000 cards were issued but arrangements for activating the Oyster functionality have not yet

been agreed with the London Borough of Newham and so these cards are not yet currently used for travel.

A similar application has been agreed with the "SEaLeGS" consortium (South East London e-Government Services), comprising the Boroughs of Croydon, Greenwich and Lewisham. About 10,000 cards have been issued with Oyster software activated, but usage of the Oyster application by card-holders is low. Only about 13 per cent of the issued cards had been used for travel in February/March 2006. The TfL Oyster team remains in touch with London Boroughs and with London Connects on this subject, and remains ready to work with Boroughs to support any proposed future schemes.

e) If bus and tube transfers within one hour were made free, the cost of a basic ride would need to rise significantly to maintain revenue. Around 38 per cent of bus boardings are by passengers making a multi-bus journey and 12 per cent of Tube passengers are transferring to or from bus. At the present time, TfL does not consider that this proposal should be a priority given the other developments such as pay as you go on National Rail currently underway. TfL is, however, continuing to evaluate its likely costs and operational implications and will provide the Assembly with the outcome of this when it is available.

f) TfL is actively investigating the scope for cards targeted at visitors and tourists. TfL recently launched new partnership working with Visit Britain to enable Visit Britain to sell Oyster cards, pre-loaded with value for use on pay as you go fares, through their on-line shops (http://www.visitbritaindirect.com/) and walk in centres in a variety of countries around the world. The process is being rolled out and should be in all Visit Britain overseas markets by the end of March 2007. Pay as you go offers the flexibility of a reusable carnet ticket, valid on all public transport operated by TfL. Even though it has just been launched this is the most popular product sold on the website.

TfL already sells paper tickets abroad via its Ticket-on-line service. These will in due course be transferred to Oyster sales. TfL is also discussing with ATOC the promotion of pre-purchased travel by visitors to London from the rest of the UK, which can at present be via paper tickets.

Finally, TfL is in discussion with a range of third parties who can promote the key Oyster and London ticketing messages to the visitor market. This includes Yell Group and the major tourist publishers.

The objective of Oyster PAYG is to provide a ticket that can store value to enable a range of different trips to be made, and allow the ticket to be "topped up" again when required. This gives a much greater flexibility than a simple "carnet" ticket and, as it can be topped-up, removes the need for the ticket to be thrown away when the journey is complete.

Recommendation 4: That the Mayor and TfL explain the proposals for further roll-out of Oyster cards including how these proposals will address areas and groups of Londoners where there is low take up of Oyster cards.

The use of Oyster pay as you go by all groups of Londoners is increasing rapidly. For example, the number of bus passengers using pay as you go is now nearly five times the level of a year ago. As a result of the initiatives mentioned above, PAYG take-up has shown strong and sustained growth throughout 2006. TfL is working hard to enable the remaining 5 per cent or so of cash customers to switch into Oyster. All potential measures will be considered to

maintain this momentum into 2007, including the level of the Oyster deposit, the case for additional of top-up facilities and measures targeting specific groups and areas.

Your report also makes a number of recommendations about fares consultation:

Recommendation 5: That the Mayor undertakes each year a formal consultation on his proposed fare changes, which includes providing details of any separate fare initiatives and the forecast impact of proposed fare changes.

Recommendation 6: That the Mayor reports the responses to his annual fares consultation to the TfL Board and the London Assembly and explains how he has taken into account these responses before announcing any fare changes.

Recommendation 7: That the TfL Board holds at least one public meeting a year where fares policy is discussed and where stakeholders are invited to give their views.

Recommendation 8: That the Mayor publishes details of his fares strategy for the next five years to set out clearly the context for future annual fare changes.

Under the GLA Act 1999, the setting of fares and fare policy is my responsibility and not that for the TfL Board. My manifestos in 2000 and 2004 and my Transport Strategy set out the key fare policy commitments for the subsequent years. Where circumstances have changed, for example, when I put forward proposals to increased fares to pay for my investment plan, comprehensive consultation with stakeholders has been carried out.

In addition, I can be called to account by London Assembly Members at Mayor's Question Time and through other means, and both my officers and TfL can be questioned by the Assembly in relevant scrutinies, such as that of the Budget Committee. I hold continuing conversations regarding my transport policy both with stakeholder organisations and with Londoners as a whole. In the light of this, I do not consider that the recommendations proposed by the Committee regarding fares consultation are appropriate.

Events

Eid in the Square

Twenty thousand people attended the Eid in the Square celebrations on Saturday 28 October, organised by the Muslim Council of Britain and supported by my Office. Artists from various Muslim regions performed Nasheeds - Islamic religious songs and I addressed the festival alongside Dr Abdul Bari, Secretary General of the Muslim Council of Britain, Mike O'Brien MP, Lord Sheik and Simon Hughes MP. Media Partners were Islam Channel, who screened the event live. BBC Online also screened the event live on their website. The event was sponsored by Islamic Relief. My intention is for the festival to become an annual event.

Eid ul-fitr is the most auspicious day of the Muslim calendar and is a day of great joy and serves as a reminder to people of all faiths of the importance of peace, compassion, unity and charity.

Diwali

On 15 October, Londoners enjoyed a dazzling programme of cultural evening entertainment for the 'festival of light' celebrations, Diwali on Trafalgar Square. The celebrations saw the

Square transformed by magical light displays, and floating lanterns in the fountains. The event was organised by my Office in association with the Diwali in London Team.

I sent my best wishes to all those celebrating the joyous festival of Diwali, a festival which is celebrated by Hindus, Sikhs and Jains throughout the world. With its universal theme, symbolising the power of good to triumph over evil, it has significance and meaning for all of London's communities. Diwali on the Square is now well established as an eagerly anticipated annual event in the capital. Guest speakers at the festival included Murad Qureshi AM, who represented me at the event.

Contemporary, traditional and Bollywood themed drama and dance performers in vibrant costumes filled the stage in the Square and crowds were entertained by live music performances including Hunterz, chart topping pop star Raghav and classical musicians Kalakaar. The evening also saw a variety of performances by talented Asian community dance groups including young people from Saraswati Dance Academy, the Shamaa Dance group, Sai School of Harrow and the Bombay Dance Club, BAPS Swaminarayan School, ISCKON Mandir and Brahma Kumaris.

Black History Season

A number of events and initiatives have been taking place across London as part of this year's Black History season. Amongst those which have been organised by the GLA are the launch of the GLA's activities on Thursday 5 October and in Their Footsteps: the London Black Heritage Walking and River Tours throughout October and to a series of exhibitions at City Hall.

I also agreed to the continuation of my Black History Scholarship Programme, which includes the grant of £15,000 funding to 3Ci Ltd to develop and co-ordinate the programme and school road shows.

The season also includes the delivery of the 2006 Kulture2Couture: Black Fashion Designers Weekend on 17-19 November at the V&A, which I have approved at a cost of no more than £90,000, the hosting of a reggae debate at City Hall on Wednesday 25 October at a cost of £8,000, a book review on Wednesday 11 October at a cost of no more than £1,000 and an introduction to Black History course commencing on 24 October for 5 weeks at a cost of no more than £1,500.

I also approved the grant of £10,000 funding to Nubian Jak to support the production, erection and unveiling of a Blue Plaque in memory of Bob Marley in London.

I agreed the establishment of an overall programme budget of £257,000 to cover the management, administration, contingencies, production and marketing costs of these events and initiatives and agreed the allocation of £57,000 from the 2006/07 Culture initiatives budget towards the overall programme cost.

Capitalwoman conference

I have approved expenditure on the seventh capitalwoman conference and supporting conference publications on 3 March 2007. I have agreed to waive the GLAs contracts code of practise to enable the conference to be held at the QEII Conference Centre and Central Hall, Westminster.

Events agreement

I have agreed that the GLA work with the LDA to develop an annual programme of events to be jointly agreed and funded by the LDA and GLA. I have agreed to delegate authority to the post of the GLA's Manager of Events for London to agree a Memorandum of Understanding with the LDA with respect to the programme and funding for the events for London programme 2006/07.

Culture

London Film Festival

I once again supported the BFI and London Film Festival. My Office worked closely with the organisers to produce London's premier film festival, which this year celebrated its 50th anniversary with the world's largest ever film programme across fifty different venues in London from 18 October-2 November 2006. I was joined at my press conference by Anthony Minghella to launch the Festival.

My office commisioned the spectacular event in Trafalgar Square - A Portrait of London by internationally renowned director, Mike Figgis which featured a live mix of moving images and 'digital postcards' of reflections on the city for thousands of people. This was in addition to working closely with the key film and media agencies across the capital to ensure the best film programme and promotions for London.

Gain programme

The second phase of the Gain programme was launched on 6 October. The Gain project encourages diversity in the boards of arts and sporting organisations in London by attracting Black, Asian and other minority ethnic individuals and placing them as prospective trustees on London's arts and sports organisations. Gain was developed by Arts Council England in partnership with my office, Arts & Business and Sporting Equals.

Our capital is the most ethnically diverse city in Europe, with 300 languages spoken and over 14 faiths practiced. However, like many other institutions, the capital's arts organisations do not fully reflect this diversity, especially at a board level. There has been continuing progress in this area but creating a mechanism to bring talented and committed Black and Asian Londoners to the attention of those who appoint board members can be a real contribution to speeding this up.

I am strongly committed to working towards a city that is a truly inclusive and an equal home for everyone from every community. Gain successfully matched twenty-four trustees during the pilot scheme and I hope more Londoners are encouraged to join this year so that the capitals arts organisations can further reflect London's rich diversity.

Gain trustees bring a wide range of skills and experiences as well as a fresh perspective to boards. Many individuals from the first phase explained that the Gain programme had helped them realise they had a real contribution to make to dynamic and growing arts and sports organisations. They also said that it helped to boost confidence and provided unrivalled networking opportunities.

Last year's programme was hugely successful in attracting skills and talents of individuals and matching them with a number of arts organisations. Participating organisations, too, found the development programme useful in taking them forward on diversity issues and felt that their organisations had changed during their participation in the Gain programme.

Recommendations of the Economic Development, Culture, Sport and Tourism Committee - London Cultural Consortium: Section 60 request

The London Assembly under Section 60 of the GLA Act 1999, agreed at the meeting of 11 October, to request my response under Section 45(2)(c) to the formal proposals concerning Recommendations of the Economic Development, Culture, Sport and Tourism Committee's scrutiny report of the London Cultural Consortium. I offer the following comments in response to the report's recommendations.

Recommendation 1: The London Cultural Consortium should have dedicated staff reporting to the Chair of the consortium, ensuring a clear distinction from the Mayor's office.

The most effective way to ensure a strategic impact of the LCC on London is for close integration with the culture, tourism, creative industry and related strategies of my Office and agencies such as the LDA and Visit London.

While I am in favour of the London Cultural Consortium having dedicated staff reporting to the Chair, the aim of this is not a distinction from my Office but a greater capacity of the LCC to ensure integration of strategies related to these areas on a pan-London basis hand in hand with my Office.

Recommendation 2: The London Cultural Consortium should formally review the Mayor's Culture Strategy. It should draw up an annual work programme to cover the various aspects of the strategy, producing an annual report on progress.

The London Cultural Consortium determines its own specific priorities within the framework of my Culture Strategy. In producing my Culture Strategy, an extensive consultation process was undertaken encompassing all aspects of the cultural sector and as a result a high degree of ownership exists across its stakeholder groups. The aim of the London Cultural Consortium is to work within the framework of the document and to be forward looking and responsive to changing issues and needs within the culture sector. The LCC will monitor and review my Cultural strategy as part of its work, but will determine for itself whether or not this should take the form of an annual progress report, or its current approach, which is to consider themes and issues both from the point of view of the Strategy and in response to emerging priorities and issues.

The London Cultural Consortium looks to set priorities for its work and generate synergies and active interventions through its capacity to bring together the cultural sector, rather than perform a scrutiny function, as this would duplicate the role of the London Assembly.

Recommendation 3:The Department for Culture, Media and Sport should fund the London Cultural Consortium in a comparable way and with a comparable amount to other regions.

I agree that the Department for Culture, Media and Sport should fund the London Cultural Consortium in a comparable way and with a comparable amount to other regions. Work has been developed to move this forward and £50,000 per year for the next two years has now been offered by the DCMS and this has been matched by contributions from the agencies represented on the London Cultural Consortium.

The London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games

Employment and Skills Taskforce

On 17 October I joined the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown and senior government ministers to launch two groundbreaking initiatives from the London Employment and Skills Taskforce for 2012 (LEST) action plan. The launch took place at a reception hosted by the Chancellor for the London Child Poverty Commission.

The LEST was established in January 2006 with the objective of maximising the employment and skills opportunities arising from London hosting the 2012 Games.

Two specific initiatives were launched at the event. Firstly, the 'Employer Accord' whereby businesses will commit to make available more entry-level opportunities in return for a commitment from the public sector to provide a supply of trained job ready candidates. In addition, the PreVolunteering Programme was also announced, which uses the prospect of working as a London 2012 Volunteer in the aim of encouraging workless and socially excluded individuals to complete training in areas such as basic health and safety, customer care and service, so that they can be guaranteed an interview as a London 2012 standard volunteer as well as for other events. More importantly those who complete their training will have a good chance of obtaining permanent employment in many industries before the Games open in 2012.

The Taskforce estimates that by 2012 the impact of preparing for and hosting the London Games will, through these and other initiatives, have provided 75,000 jobs to Londoners who are currently not working.

London Development Agency

EU Structural Funds for 2007-13

On 23 October the Government announced the regional allocations of EU Structural Funds for 2007-2013 in which London received £108 million from the European Regional Development Fund and £292 million from the European Social Fund. These allocations represent a slightly increased percentage share of the English allocation from Brussels.

With ten new member states from poorer regions in Eastern Europe joining the European Union in 2004 there were many predictions that London would receive nothing from the new round of Structural Funds. Thanks to positive engagement with the European Union, my Office, working closely with London Councils, the London Development Agency and the voluntary sector, have helped to secure this £400 million in funding for the next seven years by ensuring urban areas were given a clear priority in the Community Strategic Guidelines. This EU funding will provide skills training for thousands of Londoners and will help business development and innovation, all helping to strengthen London's economy.

Bioscience Education Centre

On 12 October, I visited the new Bioscience Education Centre at Queen Mary's University in Whitechapel. The Bioscience Education Centre aims to engage young Londoners and schools in science. I was accompanied by local Assembly Member, John Biggs and we met staff and took questions from students during the visit. The LDA contributed £497,000 to the Centre of

the Cell, Bioscience Education Centre, which will make a real difference to the opportunities available to young people in Whitechapel and beyond.

The Bioscience Education Centre is a groundbreaking project, which will open up the world of science to thousands of young Londoners and will be an inspirational environment in which to learn and work. Encouraging more young people to take up science in school and university will build the highly skilled workforce that is so crucial to strengthening London's economy and regenerating areas like Whitechapel where the extremes of poverty and wealth are so evident, particularly as the demand for highly skilled workers in London is set to rise by 8 per cent by 2010 from 38 per cent to 46 per cent.

The new powers on Learning and Skills which are due to be devolved from Government to my office will mean London will be well placed to meet the challenge of building a highly skilled workforce. I will use these new devolved powers to champion new projects, such as Queen Mary's Bioscience Education Centre, to inspire young people to take up new subjects and learn the skills that are so vital to the future of London.

The London Development Agency is also funding £5 million of a new £28 million Innovation Centre at its Whitechapel Campus, which is due to open in 2008.

Workplace Nurseries Capital initiative

On 26 October the LDA announced that it would manage a £16.8 million programme for the creation of workplace nurseries on behalf of the Department of Education and Skills. The programme builds on the success of the Childcare Affordability Programme (CAP) which currently supports an additional 6,000 affordable childcare places across London.

The Workplace Nurseries Capital initiative will help small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) employing 250 people or less to provide childcare facilities for their employees.

The grant could fund the creation of up to 20 new workplace nurseries from scratch or up to 30 through conversion or expansion of existing premises. In some areas, SMEs may wish to work with large employers on expansion of existing workplace nurseries to cater for SME employees.

The LDA is the lead Regional Development Agency on childcare and family friendly policies and the LDA will work with other RDAs, local authorities and employers to identify areas where new workplace nursery provision is most likely to be sustainable and beneficial for employers and working parents. Workplace nurseries are expected to be located in areas of economic growth and regeneration.

The initiative will be integrated with local strategies for developing the childcare market through the childcare sufficiency duties in the Childcare Act.

Business Support

On 26 October Serco signed a 3-year agreement with the LDA to take over the running of London's premier business support service from April next year. The company was selected for the three-year Business Link operator grant in April. It will enhance the existing free services by providing a new customer-driven Information, Diagnostic and Brokerage service to around 100,000 businesses a year. Another 5,000 are expected to receive in-depth assistance.

All of London's small and medium-sized enterprises are able to use the Business Link service to receive in-depth business support via the telephone, internet or face to face meetings. Businesses also receive a brokerage service to the support providers in either the private or public sectors that best meet their needs.

Serco has proven experience in meeting complex customer needs and has delivered contracts in the public and private sectors. It currently operates the national business link website on behalf of the DTI and its Small Business Service. It will increase its interaction with London's diverse community by working in partnership with key organisations to provide better accessibility.

The LDA is overseeing a transitional programme where Serco is currently working alongside existing provider Business Link for London to ensure continued high quality customer service during the changeover.

Environment

Radioactive waste report

London will face an 'increased risk' from radioactive waste if a new generation of nuclear power plants are commissioned, according to a which was report was published this month.

The report by John Large of Large and Associates is the first to consider the impact of the government's Energy Review and assesses the changes that may arise in the transportation of spent nuclear fuel and other radioactive materials from new and existing power plants. It finds that the possible future movement of waste will impose a level of additional radiation exposure and, in the event of a radioactive release, 'present an additional risk of intolerable levels of health injury' to members of the public who live and/or work alongside the roads or rail track.

The report's other key findings are:

- Of the predicted new-build nuclear power plants, at least two could be built in the south east of England. The existing plants at Bradwell and Dungeness are prime sites to be upgraded – increasing levels of radioactive material from these sites would be transported in and around London
- New generation nuclear power plants are suited to the use of a more highly radioactive fuel than existing plants, which requires special controls for security and containment to prevent a radioactive release with 'potentially severe radiological consequences' – this could start to be transported through London in around 2013-2018
- Even without any new-build nuclear power plants in the south east of England, the decommissioning of existing sites will result in the transportation of 'very large volumes of radioactive waste' starting from 2021 though to 2040
- The exact location of the proposed national nuclear waste repository site is yet to be determined by the Government but will have implications for the amount of nuclear waste transported through the capital

This report shows that a new generation of nuclear power plants could result in a significant increase of radioactive waste being transported through London, the most densely populated area of the UK. These findings confirm my belief that more nuclear power is unsafe and expensive which will also lead to additional associated risks, not least the disposal of radioactive waste.

There is a widespread opposition amongst Londoners to nuclear power and the movement of waste around the capital. There is no need for nuclear if we simply wasted less of the current energy we generate. This report demonstrates that these concerns are justified, underpinning the case against a new generation of nuclear power plants. Nuclear power will not provide the solution to climate change.

Waste to Hydrogen report

A new study by the London Hydrogen Partnership was launched by Nicky Gavron, my Deputy Mayor, which looks at how London's rubbish can be used to produce hydrogen. The Waste to Hydrogen study shows that there is real potential to produce hydrogen from waste within London, which could be used as a vehicle fuel. The hydrogen is created through the processes of gasification and anaerobic digestion, which extract energy from waste to create renewable hydrogen. The study also pinpoints several potential locations in London where gasification facilities could possibly be located near to bus depots and where hydrogen could be distributed by short pipelines.

In London we cannot continue to throw our rubbish into vast landfill sites, which are responsible for 20 per cent of the UK's emissions of the harmful greenhouse gas - methane. In London we have a growing amount of waste and if we can produce renewable hydrogen from this, it will play a large part in cutting harmful emissions and managing our rubbish in a sustainable way.

Nicky also addressed the Friends of the Earth's National Incineration Summit on 28 October. The Summit heard from local authorities who are planning to tackle waste without more mass burn incineration. Nicky talked about the importance of looking at waste in the context of climate change and the new technologies for taking renewable gas from waste as an alternative to incineration.

Biodiversity Strategy Progress Report

I have approved the progress report for my Biodiversity Strategy, which will be published on the GLA website. I have agreed the updating of certain targets from the Biodiversity Strategy Implementation Plan, which are set out in the report. The strategy will continue to be kept under review.

My Biodiversity Strategy was published in July 2002 and Progress Report of the Biodiversity Strategy provides information on what the GLA has done to implement the strategy between the start of 2005 and the end of June 2006.

I have also agreed the GLA input into the work of the London Biodiversity Partnership and that the GLA will continue to be an active member of the London Biodiversity Partnership. The GLA will continue to be represented on the Partnerships's Project Board and three working groups and also continue to chair the Habitat, Species and Data Working Group. The Authority will continue to lead the action plans for woodlands, parks and green spaces and churchyards and cemeteries and will undertake the actions agreed in those action plans. The GLA will also continue to contribute to other habitat species and generic action plans where this will further my objectives for biodiversity in London. As the Partnership revises its action plans, any new actions or other commitments proposed for the GLA will be agreed by the Head of Environment in consultation with the Director for Environment.

Ambient Noise Strategy progress report

I have approved the progress report for my Ambient Noise Strategy, which will shortly be published on the GLA website. I have agreed to keep the strategy under review and agreed that there is no need to begin work on the production of a revised ambient noise strategy in 2007/08.

My Ambient Noise Strategy was published in March 2004. The focus, as required by the GLA Act, was on environmental noise, mainly from transport; neighbour noise was covered as far as necessary in terms of policy overlap and the Progress Report of the Ambient Noise Strategy provides information on what the GLA and TfL have done to implement the strategy between 1 February 2005 and 31 July 2006

Air Quality Strategy Progress report

I have approved the Air Quality Progress report, which will shortly be published on the GLA website.

My Air Quality Strategy, *Cleaning London's Air*, was published in September 2002, following widespread consultation. It includes policies and proposals aimed at meeting the air quality objectives laid down in European and national regulations, and incorporated into the Strategy. The document reports progress made in the 12 months to March 2006 to implement the Air Quality Strategy and follows on from previously published progress reports. This Progress Report summarises the trends in air pollutants up to the end of 2005 – the latest date for which there is ratified data. It also explains the modelled air pollutant concentrations for nitrogen dioxide and fine particles for 2010. These are the two pollutants which exceed the Government's air quality guidelines and which are hazardous to health.

The Progress Report goes on to summarise the work that has been done to improve London's air quality and so help improve London's sustainability. It includes policies implemented by the core GLA, functional bodies and London boroughs. It also includes the work that has been completed by partnerships within which the GLA is working.

Water: Conservation and Re-Use

My Deputy Mayor gave the keynote address at the "Water: Conservation and Re-Use For Engineers" event, organised by CIBSE, for engineers, designers, planners and architects at City Hall on 20 October where she outlined the forthcoming Water Action Framework for London and stressed the links between water, energy and land use.

Climate Change

Response to the Stern Review

On 30 October I gave my response to the Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change in which may be the most important report on climate change yet. For too long necessary action to prevent catastrophic climate change has been delayed by fears that this would damage economic growth. Stern's report nails this myth - it is failure to take action on climate change that would be the real threat to future economic prosperity. I welcome Nicholas Stern's call for an international carbon market and I look forward to working with him, Gordon Brown and indeed Al Gore on how London - a world centre for financial markets, energy companies and high tech industries - can play a leading role in this and the other measures he proposes.

Climate Change Bill campaign

On 31 October I joined with Friends of the Earth to support their 'The Big Ask' climate change campaign and its call for a Climate Change Bill requiring annual cuts in UK carbon dioxide emissions.

In London we are already developing a climate change action plan which will set targets and sector by sector measures aimed at cutting the capital's emissions every year. We will concentrate on the areas where we can have the biggest and quickest impact. As a major world city we can set an example that others follow so that we cut global carbon emissions to levels that avert catastrophic climate change.

The campaign focuses on the solutions to climate change and is also calling people to encourage their MP to back the introduction of a climate change law that would commit the UK to making annual reductions on its carbon emissions. The Big Ask was launched by Thom Yorke, lead singer of Radiohead, in May 2005 and already has the backing of over half of UK MPs. Almost 93,000 members of the public have written to their MPs asking them to support the introduction of a Climate Change law.

Urban Heat Island

Plans to tackle the 'urban heat island' phenomenon, which sees London's temperatures soaring compared to neighbouring areas, are explored in a new study, which I launched on 10 October. More trees, 'green roofs' and 'cool pavements' are all on the agenda for the capital as this new report draws attention to the higher temperatures in London compared to the surrounding counties.

London can be up to nine degrees Celsius hotter than the green belt around it, particularly at night. Climate change means that temperatures are now reaching levels that could have serious health impacts and this summer was one of the warmest on record.

London has experienced two heat waves in the past three years and, as this report shows, it is clear that such events will become the norm rather than the exception that they are today. London is noticeably hotter than the surrounding counties and we need to act now to address this phenomenon, which will have growing implications.

We need a greener city and we have to adapt the design of our buildings to cope better with summer heat, but in a way that does not contribute further to global warming. We also have to be prepared to protect the most vulnerable Londoners, such as older people.

Climate change is already happening and while large energy using cities like London, have a responsibility to try and prevent catastrophic climate change, we also have to adapt to those changes that are now inevitable.

The 'Urban Heat Island Effect' describes the phenomenon that buildings and man-made surfaces absorb more energy from the sun than green spaces. As the sun's energy fades at dusk and air temperatures begin to drop, these surfaces release their stored energy, preventing the city from cooling and denying Londoners respite at night from summer heat waves.

Climate change is increasing average temperatures and the frequency of extreme hot weather events, such as heat waves. In 2003 there were more than 600 excess deaths during the August heatwave. It is possible that the higher night temperatures caused by the urban heat island effect contributed to the number of deaths.

The most important factor in creating an urban heat island effect is a lack of green space in built up areas, but human activity in response to hot weather - such as the use of air conditioning, which pumps hot air out into the atmosphere -can exacerbate the process. The study examines a series of recommendations to help prevent higher temperatures affecting health and quality of life. These include protecting and enhancing green space, designing buildings to stay cool without using energy intensive air conditioning, promoting 'green roofs' and 'cool roofs', plus making preparations to safeguard vulnerable Londoners such as older people.

Building the Low Carbon Energy Economy

My Deputy Mayor addressed the UK Business Council for Sustainable Energy (UKBCSE) National Conference "Building The Low Carbon Energy Economy" at the Institute of Directors on the 17 October and highlighted the importance of decentralized energy. The event was also addressed by the Minister for Climate Change and brought together the Chief Executives of the UK's major energy utilities to discuss the Government's agenda for sustainable energy. The Conference highlighted the important city leadership role being played by the GLA in tackling climate change.

London Climate Change Agency Founders' Forum

I launched the London Climate Change Agency (LCCA) Founders' Forum with my Deputy Mayor, Nicky Gavron and Sir David Attenborough in London's Living Room on 23 October.

The Forum also heard a presentation from Allan Jones, Chief Executive of the LCCA and Vincent De Rivaz, Chief Executive, EDF Energy about progress with the work of the LCCA and the establishment of the London Energy Services Company (ESCO).

They outlined that the initial tranche of projects being developed by the London ESCO has the potential to reduce CO_2 emissions by 310,000 tonnes per year. Sir David praised the remarkable work being done by LCCA on innovative projects to tackle climate change in London.

The LCCA has been established as a wholly owned company of the London Development Agency. LCCA Founders include BP, Lafarge, HSBC, Sir Robert Macalpine, Legal & General, and Johnson Matthey. The LCCA has also been supported by KPMG, Carbon Trust, Energy Saving Trust and the Rockerfeller Brothers Fund.

Sustainable Development

Sustainable Development Partnership and Innovation Fund

I have approved the GLA receipt of a grant from DEFRA's Sustainable Development Partnership and Innovation Fund for a 2 year programme of regional activity to help boost delivery of sustainable development to be spent on projects proposed and agreed by DEFRA and regional partners. I have approved of London proposing a "low carbon London" as the regional challenge for the purposes of this grant process, to provide an opportunity to bring together or join up existing work by stakeholders.

Equalities

Muslims in London report

On 24 October, Dr Muhammad Abdul Bari, Secretary General of the Muslim Council of Britain and I launched a new report, 'Muslims in London'. The report draws on a range of data to illustrate the diversity of London's Muslim communities and barriers faced by Muslims in everyday life.

London's future success and prosperity as a global city depends on our ability to welcome and respect people from all over the world. One in twelve Londoners is Muslim and the London's Muslim communities, in all their diversity, must play an essential part in the life of our city. However Muslims in London face serious discrimination and prejudice. London's Muslims have the lowest rates of employment of all the faith groups. Muslims are disproportionately victims of religiously aggravated crime, more so than any other faith.

The report makes a number of recommendations for work by my Office, Government, Boroughs and public bodies including the MPS and LDA to; improve monitoring and research, investigate direct and indirect discrimination and improve the representation of Muslims in local, regional and national government.

The launch of 'Muslims in London' is timely given the recent debate about Islam and Muslims, particularly in the media. I hope this report will increase understanding between communities and combat some of the ignorance, prejudice and Islamophobia stirred up by some sections of the media.

The report was launched ahead of the first ever Eid Festival in Trafalgar Square organised by the Muslim Council of Britain and my office.

Community Safety

Safer London: Youth Justice Conference

On 9 October the GLA hosted the 'Safer London: Safer Youth Justice' conference at City Hall, which brought together youth justice practitioners and policy makers to look at ways of improving the effectiveness of the youth justice system in the capital.

The conference, which was organised in conjunction with NACRO and the Youth Justice Board, followed a successful GLA roundtable with these same partner agencies in June 2005, which had looked at ways to reduce the numbers of children and young people in custody.

My Deputy Mayor, Nicky Gavron, who was representing me at the conference, gave the keynote address, alongside Rod Morgan, Chair of the Youth Justice Board and Lord Alex Carlile QC, who chaired the day.

Ensuring that London has an effective youth justice system is an essential part of achieving my vision of ensuring London is one of the world's safest cities. Amongst the main issues covered at the conference were the need to focus on crime prevention, the case for reducing the high levels of child custody in London and the importance of tackling the disproportionate representation of young people from London's Black and Minority Ethnic communities, in the youth justice system and particularly in custody.

The issues of youth crime and of youth justice are at the heart of safeguarding the welfare of children, just as they are central to making London safe. Although I shall not waiver from my commitment of supporting efforts to clamp down on crime and anti-social behaviour in a constructive way that protects communities and also enables less serious offenders to get their lives back on track, we simply cannot continue to lock up record numbers of young people in an overcrowded prison system. The evidence shows that a very high number of those sent to prison re-offend and many leave prison with a wide range of social and health needs still unmet and still unresolved.

Older Londoners

Older People's Resource Facility

On 23 October, I officially re-launched the London Older Peoples Resource Facility at a reception attended by representatives of the London Older People's Strategies Group and over 50 voluntary groups across London.

Older people's organisations play a vital role in keeping the concerns of older people in front of policy-makers and decision-makers. Yet to do that effectively, they need access to the most up-to-date information and resources, and that can be a difficult task. This resource facility aims to provide older people's organisations with the practical support they need, ensuring that their needs and aspirations are integral to the planning and delivery of services across the city.

Older people contribute enormously to London's economics, culture and history and it is time to challenge stereotypical negative perceptions and make sure older Londoners are properly valued. I want to see increased services that support older people and allow them to retain their independence and maintain choice and control over their lives.

The facility originally opened in 2004 but has relocated to new, more accessible premises at 1 London Bridge. The resource supports older people's organisations by offering access to computers, internet training, skills sharing sessions and providing key information on services for older Londoners and trained staff are available to help with enquiries.

Children and Young People

Third European Child in the City Conference

This year's European Child in the City Conference took place in the city of Stuttgart, Germany, between 16-18 October.

Members of the Children and Young People's Unit presented papers in relation to key areas of my Children and Young People's Strategy – specifically, on the publication of the draft Supplementary Planning Guidance on play and informal recreation and the free bus and tram fares policy for under-16s and under-18s in full-time education.

There was a very positive response and interest by European and international delegates attending from government, academia, and the voluntary and private sectors. Arising from the conference, the GLA representative on the Board of the European Network of Child-Friendly Cities has been invited to attend a meeting with the EC Coordinator on the Rights of the Child, to discuss linkages and work on urban policy at a European level.

I hosted the last Child in the City conference in 2004 at City Hall when both I and my Deputy Mayor, Nicky Gavron gave keynote speeches on the preparatory stages of these initiatives to make London a truly child-friendly city.

London Adventure Playground Awards

My Deputy Mayor presented the London Adventure Playground Awards 2006 and gave a speech at the Unicorn Children's Theatre on 5 October. The Awards recognise the vital contribution made by the remaining 80 adventure playgrounds in London and were organised by London Play, supported by a grant from Capital Radio's Help a London Child and Eibe play. Children from the previous award winning playgrounds participated in the panel judging the short-listed playgrounds and selected the winner and runners up.

International issues

Moscow Consultancy contract

I have approved an amendment to the contract for a consultant to provide services in Moscow to the International Affairs team, which I approved and reported in July 2004, to pay for additional services to be provided with immediate effect and have approved an exemption to the contracts code of practice. This amounts to £5,000 additional payment.

GLA Organisation

First Quarter Monitoring Report 2006/07

I have agreed the Quarter 1 2006/07 monitoring report for submission to the London Assembly's Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee meeting on 12 October.

Economics consultancy

I have agreed to waive the contracts code to award a contract to University College London to provide consultancy services, notably providing a post-doctoral researcher to carry out specialist work on spatial economics.

Budget and Equalities Report 2006/07

I have noted the Budget and Equalities report 2006/07 and agreed the Executive Director of Finance and Performance publish the report subject to final approval by the Director of Equalities and Policing. The report outlines progress across the GLA group in recognising, improving and developing equalities practice.

Sexual Orientation Equality Scheme

I have agreed the final draft and publication of the GLA Sexual Orientation Equality Scheme. The Scheme highlights the GLA's commitment to ensure that London is a beacon of good practice around sexual orientation equality, which recognises and combats compounded discrimination and supports a cultural shift towards full social integration for lesbian, gay and bisexual people.

Annual Report 2006/07 and Equalities Report 2006/07

I have agreed the overall approach to the production of my Annual Report 2006/07 and my Equalities report 2006/07, including the outline timetable for the production of both reports. I have agreed the project team works with the Director of Business Planning and Regeneration and the Director of Equalities and Policing to develop and approve the themes and content of the Annual Report and the Equalities Report respectively.

As the production of both of these reports crosses the end of the financial year, I have agreed that given the uncertainty on the phasing of expenditure, any underspent budget at the end of the year will be carried forward to 2007/ 08.

E-Government

GLA and Pan London E-services

I have approved the GLA IT strategy for 2007/2010 and the GLA approach to addressing the Transformational Government agenda and noted the work being done to prepare a business case for a pan-London programme office.

Housing

Estate/ Area Renewal Targeted Funding

I have made recommendations to the Minister for Housing and Planning, Yvette Cooper MP for the distribution of the Estate/ Area Renewal Targeted Funding element of the London Regional Housing Pot for 2006/08 in terms of the maximum cash allocation of £51,446,601 across nine schemes and that the remaining amount of £8,553,399 from the £60 million earmarked for this Targeted Funding be reallocated as Social Housing Grant to the Housing Corporation for the provision of new homes in 2007/08.

This is the first of three reports on funding streams for which I will make recommendations to the Minister, the others being Tackling Overcrowding £21million and Temporary to Permanent Initiatives £30 million, which are currently at earlier stages of the bidding process.

London Plan

Supplementary Planning Guidance: Providing children and young people's play and informal recreation

On 25 October, I published guidance for local boroughs, planners and developers, which, for the first time, sets out benchmark standards for play and informal recreation space in housing developments. The guidance, which was launched for consultation, fleshes out new policy contained in the Further Alterations to the London Plan.

Focusing on quantity, quality and accessibility of play and informal recreation space, the guidance aims to improve the health and wellbeing of young Londoners. I have worked closely with Government as it prepares to launch national planning proposals for housing, which are expected to place more emphasis on the needs of families, children and young people. London is growing fast and we need to build at least 30,500 new homes each year. Our guidance sends a clear message to developers that building homes with no play or recreation space for children and young people is simply not an option.

The draft guidance focuses on play and leisure provision for children and young people up to the age of 18. It recommends a new minimum standard of 10 square metres per child and provides guidance on developing more 'playable' doorstep, neighbourhood and youth spaces. In a densely developed, highly urbanised city like London, safe and stimulating play facilities and informal recreation are essential for a child and young people's welfare and future development. However, play and recreation spaces and opportunities have diminished and many young Londoners do not have adequate access to existing provision.

This draft Supplementary Planning Guidance, led by my Deputy Mayor, aims to help those involved in planning local neighbourhoods to engage with young Londoners to deliver real improvements in the quality of play spaces.

I want to see a child-friendly London with inclusive, accessible, and safe play spaces that allow all young Londoners to engage in fun, positive, and healthy play and recreation in their own communities and throughout London.

I published the document in October for public consultation and comments are invited up to the deadline of 28 February 2007.

Sustainability Appraisal

I have agreed to commission additional work as part of the Sustainability Appraisal, including the requirements for Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Further Alterations to the London Plan.

The original approval for the Sustainability Appraisal work was made via a Directorate approval at a total cost was £48,825. The cost of this additional commission is £6,000 and will be met by the 2006/07 London Plan Programme Budget through the provision of the Planning Delivery Grant. As the aggregation of cost will be over £50,000, I agreed a waiver from the contracts code so the existing consultants may be commissioned for this work.

Planning and Development Control

Planning decisions (Stage II referrals)

I have sent letters in response to the following statutory referrals:

Novera Energy, Ford Motor site
I have written to London Thames Gateway Development Corporation stating that I have decided not to direct refusal of this application.

249-251 Merton Road
I have written to Wandsworth Council stating that I have decided not to direct refusal of this application.

Hatton Cross Centre, Heathrow
I have written to Hillingdon Council stating that I have decided not to direct refusal of this application.

Orient Way former gas works
I have written to Waltham Forest Council stating that I have decided not to direct refusal of this application.

Park House, 451-478 Oxford Street
I have written to Westminster City Council stating that I have decided not to direct refusal of this application.

120 Chrisp Street
I have written to Tower Hamlets Council stating that I have decided not to direct refusal of this application.

Hornsey Water Treatment Works
I have written to Haringey Council stating that I have decided not to direct refusal of this application.

397-411 Westferry Road
I have written to Tower Hamlets Council stating that I have decided not to direct refusal of this application.

Hayes Sports Stadium
I have written to Hillingdon Council stating that I have decided not to direct refusal of this application.

Aldgate Union, plots 3 & 4
I have written to Tower Hamlets Council stating that I have decided not to direct refusal of this application.

20 Fenchurch Street
I have written to the Corporation of London stating that I have decided not to direct refusal of this application.

Rodwell House, Middlesex Street, Spitalfields
I have written to Tower Hamlets Council stating that I have decided not to direct refusal of this application.

Stockley Park Data Centre
I have written to Hillingdon Council stating that I have decided not to direct refusal of this application.

Canada Water Sites A & B
I have written to Southwark Council stating that I have decided not to direct refusal of this application.

Planning Decisions (Stage I applications)

I have asked officers to send letters giving my comments about the following stage one referrals:

- Barking Riverside, LB Barking and Dagenham
- Buckston Browne Farm, LB Bromley
- Greenwich High Road, LB Greenwich
- Trad Wharf, LB Newham
- Fassnidge Memorial Hall & The Cedars, LB Hillingdon
- Lewisham Gateway, LB Lewisham

- Westfield House Depot, LB Wandsworth
- Alberta House, LB Tower Hamlets
- King's Cross Station, LB Camden
- Bankside 4, LB Southwark

Informal planning application referrals

I have asked my officers to send letters giving my comments about the following referral:

- Former aerodrome, Upper Colne Valley, Hertfordshire, St Albans District Council

Local Development Plans

I have asked my officers to send letters giving my comments about the following Local Development Plan representations:

- Romford Area Action Plan, LB Havering
- UDP Proposed Modifications, LB Southwark

Decisions taken delegation of Authority

The following decisions have been made under delegated authority to the Head of the Planning Decisions Unit:

- Chesterfield House, 9 Park Lane, LB Brent
- 1-10 Blackfriars, LB Southwark

The following decisions have been made under delegated authority to the Executive Director of Policy and Partnerships:

- Dalston Lane South, LB Hackney

Delegation of Authority

Olympic Park
I have authorised the Chief Executive, who may be so authorised as an officer of the Authority under section 38 (2) (b) of the GLA Act 1999, to exercise my functions under the Town and Country Planning (Mayor of London) Order 2000 in relation to the delivery of the Olympic Park and associated planning applications.

I have authorised him to exercise my functions under Section 247 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and Schedule 22 of the GLA Act 1999 in relation to stopping up orders relating to the delivery of the Olympics Park.

These proposed delegations shall be effective for a period of one year and thereafter the delegation shall be reviewed.

St Katherine Dock
I have also agreed to delegate authority to the Executive Director of Policy and Partnerships, who may be so authorised as an officer of the Authority under section 38(2)(b) of the GLA Act 1999, to exercise my functions under the Town and Country Planning (Mayor of London)

Order 2000 in relation to the planning application for the redevelopment of St Katherine Dock, West Side.

Copies of my planning decisions and background reports are available on the GLA website.

Key Engagements

Among my additional engagements since my last report were the following:

- Conference of ILO/ UN Global Cities for Equal Opportunities conference on 6 October
- Meeting with Chris Banks, Chair of the Learning and Skills Council and Ian Barlow, Chair of the London Business Board on 9 October
- Meeting of my Management Board on 9 October
- Meeting with senior TfL management on 9 October
- London Retail Summit on 10 October
- Meeting with Richard Edelman, President and Chief Executive Officer of Edelman on 10 October
- Meeting with Len Duvall AM on 10 October
- Meeting with Stephen Nelson, Chief Executive of British Airports Authority on 10 October
- Dinner with James Murdoch, Chief Executive Office of BskyB and others on 10 October
- Meeting with Bridget Prentice MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department of Constitutional Affairs on 11 October
- Meeting with Crystal Palace working group on 11 October
- Unveiling of UCATT statue of 11 October
- Diwali reception and dinner at the Mansion House on 11 October
- Regional visit to Stratford on 12 October
- Meeting with Emma Thompson on 12 October
- Meeting with Yvette Cooper MP, Minister for Housing and Planning and the Thames Gateway Group on 12 October
- Meeting with John Reid MP, Home Secretary, Tessa Jowell MP, Secretary of State for Culture, Sport and Tourism and Sir Ian Blair, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police on 16 October
- Lunch with Kevin Spacey, Artistic Director of the Old Vic Theatre on 16 October
- Meeting with senior TfLmanagement on 16 October
- Sunshine Garden reception at London Zoo on 16 October
- Conference of UK Money Transmitter Association on 17 October
- Planning decisions meeting on 17 October
- Reception for London Child Poverty Commission on 17 October
- Dinner with Kenneth Clarke MP on 17 October
- Meeting of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's High Level Group on Financial Services on 18 October
- Mayor's Question Time on 18 October
- Meeting with Rodrigo Chaves, Venezuelan Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs on 18 October
- Olympic Board meeting on 18 October
- Meeting with London Regional Arts Board on 18 October
- Meeting with Sir Ian Blair, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police on 19 October

- Forum of Mayors at 10 Downing Street on 19 October
- Lunch with Mayor Daley of Chicago on 19 October
- Meeting with SERTUC on 19 October
- Meeting with Nick Hardwick, Independent Police Complaints Commission on 19 October
- London Film Festival reception and premier of Venus on 19 October
- Education and Skills Select Committee on 23 October
- Dinner with David Attenborough on 23 October
- Visit to Earl's Court Underground station with Tim O'Toole and Angie Bray AM on 24 October
- Lunch with Tim O'Toole and Angie Bray AM on 24 October
- Meeting with Baroness Andrews, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Communities and Local Government and David Lammy MP, Minister for Culture on 24 October
- Meeting with senior TfL management on 24 October
- TfL Remuneration Committee meeting on 25 October
- TfL Board on 25 October
- Dinner with Mayor Delanoe of Paris on 25 October
- Venezuela and Democracy conference on 28 October
- Meeting with Douglas Alexander MP, Secretary of State for Transport on 30 October
- Meeting of my Management Board on 30 October
- Meeting with TfL senior management on 30 October
- Meeting with Sir Michael Lyons on 30 October
- Meeting with Steve Bullock, Mayor of Lewisham on 31 October
- Meeting with delegation of Venezuelan MPs on 31 October
- Meeting with Keith Norman, General Secretary of ASLEF on 31 October
- Meeting of London Criminal Justice Service Ministerial Steering Group on 31 October
- Meeting with Cllr Merrick Cockell, Chair of London Councils on 31 October
- Meeting of English Regions Network on 1 November
- Meeting with Lord Rogers on 1 November
- Planning decisions meeting on 1 November
- Meeting with senior TfL management on 1 November
- LFEPA Budget Steering Group Meeting on 1 November

Ken Livingstone
Mayor of London
1 November 2006

Background Documents: Mayoral Decision List
Director Decision List