

# UNITE BRIEF: FAIR FUNDING FOR TFL NOW



**TfL workers and bus drivers should not have to pay for the coronavirus crisis.**

**Government needs to step in with a funding support package to keep London moving and save jobs.**

**Stop attacking the mayor.**

The Covid-19 pandemic has caused massive financial challenges for Transport for London. The slump in passenger numbers and suspension of bus fares during the height of the lockdown (to protect drivers) has sucked £600m a month from its finances, which pushed it to the brink of collapse.

But unlike Network Rail which was effectively given a 'no strings' bailout, with all revenue and cost risks transferred to the government. TFL, hours away from running out of money, had to go begging cap in hand to ministers for a humiliating handout. It's come with punitive conditions attached, forcing the Mayor to raise fares and scrap concessions.

Unite, the union, which represents TFL workers from bus drivers to control centre workers, is warning of widespread job losses and cuts to services which will be deeply damaging to London and Londoners as the capital takes its first tentative steps to re-opening post lockdown, if a long term funding package is withheld.

Passenger numbers are not expected to return to pre-Covid levels for some time, but cutting services now would be dangerous; piling the pressure on already exhausted bus drivers, lead to severe overcrowding, thereby risking a second coronavirus outbreak and impact the environment as more people take to their cars.

## GOVERNMENT MUST ACT

**Now is not the time for political point scoring – people's lives are at risk.**

Government ministers must stop using the coronavirus emergency to attack London's Labour mayor. It is because of the Tories that TFL is in this mess. It was the Tories that made the network self-funding. It makes no sense to force the public infrastructure that underpins London's economy to 'balance the books' as if it were a private company looking to make a profit.

**Unite is calling on the government to step up and protect London's world class transport network which is one of the largest in the world, incorporating bus, train and river services and spanning 32 boroughs, as follows:**

- **Government must adequately fund TFL to ensure that it can safely serve Londoners and visitors to the capital through the pandemic and beyond.**
- **Government must stop its political attack on London Labour mayor, Sadiq Khan.**
- **Government to stop its attempts to control TFL and force its privatisation model on a public service.**



# TOP TEN FACTS



- 1** TFL lost £700m a year in central government funding when former Tory chancellor George Osborne and then mayor Boris Johnson struck a deal to make the network self-funding in 2015.
- 2** TFL is the only transport system in western Europe and one of only a few in the world that gets no government grant.
- 3** TFL earned £4.9bn from fares in 2019-20, making up 47% of the transport authority's income.
- 4** TFL had reduced its operating deficit from £1.5bn to £200m and was on track to turn this into a surplus pre-coronavirus.
- 5** TFL suffered a sudden collapse in fares' revenue, down £600m a month, due to the pandemic and the fall in passenger numbers.
- 6** TFL's £1.6bn emergency bailout in grants and loans comes with punitive conditions attached, including fare increases, congestion charge increase, cuts to free travel for children and over 60s, and two government officials on the TFL oversight board. The restructuring wing of KMPG – one of the big four accountancy firms has been appointed to scrutinise TFL's finances.
- 7** Tory government is using the coronavirus emergency to push its own pro-privatisation agenda and its political narrative that 'Labour can't be trusted with money', ahead of next year's London mayoral elections.
- 8** Bus drivers have been among the worst hit by Covid deaths – 29 bus workers have lost their lives.
- 9** Government needs to start seeing transport for London as an essential public service and fund it accordingly.
- 10** The current situation is not sustainable. The bailout won't see TFL through the summer.

## TAKE ACTION

### MPs must act

Please support our campaign to secure the funding our capital's transport network needs to keep London moving and our people safe.

**Write to your MP today.** Ask them to back Unite three key demands and provide adequate funding for TFL by writing to the treasury and department for transport

Use some of the facts in this document to help draft your letter. Keep it short. Make it personal.

**We Londoners standing together for a publicly owned and publicly funded transport service.**

