

The Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP
Secretary of State for Transport shapps@parliament.uk

Sent by email

16 December 2021

Dear Mr. Shapps

Richmond Council is incredibly concerned about the negotiations between your Department and Transport for London (TfL) and the delay in reaching a long-term sustainable funding settlement. As the Lead Member for Transport and Air Quality in Richmond upon Thames, I am writing to you on behalf of my residents to urge you to reach an agreement this week to continue funding beyond the 17 December, if a long-term settlement cannot immediately be negotiated.

It was extremely disappointing that an agreement was not reached last weekend and we are concerned that you will force us to move into the new year with no certainty about the delivery of key highways projects in the next 12 months, let alone in the next few years. Many of those that are under threat are programmes that support safer and healthier streets, such as infrastructure like cycle lanes, carriageway and pavement repairs and corridor improvements.

It is essential that we see interim funding extend beyond 17 December, while negotiations continue. It is then critical that we urgently see a fair and sustainable funding package put in place that allows us to continue delivering the greener, safer, healthier streets and proactively tackle the climate emergency – all things that are part of the Government's vision for transport in the UK.

London boroughs are on the front line of delivering the sustainable travel agenda in recent years, and being caught up in this wider funding negotiation with TfL is holding us back unnecessarily and preventing us from delivering our targets to cut carbon emissions and improve air quality.

We are supporting calls from across London for the funding for Healthy Streets projects and similar schemes to be separated from the wider funding negotiation and for London's highway authorities to be eligible to bid for other pots of funding from your Department, notably those that relate to the second Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Strategy (CWIS).

Our residents pay their taxes and deserve streets that are safe, well maintained and offer sustainable transport options. Our officers, partners and communities work incredibly hard to design programmes that will deliver on these priorities for our residents – the opportunity to put these in place and deliver real change *cannot* be inextricably reliant on TfL's income recovery plans.

The clock is ticking so we look forward to a speedy response offering reassurance that we will not move into the new year with the level of uncertainty we face right now and that you and your Department understand the serious implications further delays will have for many years to come.

Yours sincerely



Councillor Alexander Ehmann, Deputy Leader and Chair of the Transport and Air Quality Committee, Richmond Council

cc

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