

Appendix 1

From: Nicholas Bennett <nicholas@nicholasbennett.org.uk>
Sent: 16 February 2024 20:03
To: Jamie Milne <JamieMilne@tfl.gov.uk>
Cc: kieron.williams@southwark.gov.uk; Peter Fortune <Peter.Fortune@london.gov.uk>; colin.smith@bromley.gov.uk
Subject: RE: Letter from Seb Dance

Dear Seb

Thank you for attending the TEC Executive last week which was much appreciated.

Thank you also for response on the **358 bus route**, unfortunately you do not explain why the introduction of the new buses is a year overdue as a result of TfL not realising that there was a sub-lessee on the land at Orpington Bus Station. I also asked you the following questions about the new Irizar bus.

- i. How many of the vehicles have been constructed;
- ii. Where are they stored, at what cost;
- iii. What is the depreciation incurred?

I promised to write to you about the other issues which I raised with you at the TEC Executive last Thursday.

Lack of funding for Primary Road Network

I and members from other London Boroughs across the political spectrum are concerned that we have had no funding from TfL since 2018 for PRN. Until then we received an average of £2m a year for the network. The only allocation has been £200k for the Crofton Road, Orpington and £80 k for Main Road, Biggin Hill. The council has had to divert funds from other roads to prevent serious deterioration of the PRN.

Bus Lanes

Until recently TfL bus lanes were for specific hours, either 7 am to 7 pm or rush hour only. Recently they have moved to 24 hours. Frequently these are on roads where there are no night services (for instance Bromley Common). One size does not fit all and causes frustration to motorists for no reason.

SL 4

The proposed routing of SL 4 is from Canary Wharf to Grove Park to start, once the Silvertown Town open, is of concern. Bromley Council and, I understand, Lewisham Council believe that for the route to benefit the large number of employees who work in Canary Wharf and live in Bromley that the route should continue for two miles from Gove Park to Bromley North via Burnt Ash Lane. We propose two intermediate stops at Plaistow Green and Burnt Ash Road Library and shops. TfL indicated that the reason for not extending the route is traffic congestion, but this is not a problem on this road. We pressed for SL 5 to be routed via West Wickham, Addington and Combe

Lane to provide a new transport corridor to Croydon but instead the route has by passed West Wickham entirely and goes via Shirley which already has three routes to Croydon. As my colleague, Cllr James Asser, from Newham remarked at the TEC executive it is almost impossible to get the bus division of TfL to accept the local expertise of individual boroughs.

I look forward to your reply.

Copies go to the Chairman of the TEC, Cllr Kieron Williams, Peter Fortune AM, and Cllr Colin Smith, Leader of Bromley Council.

Best wishes

Nicholas

Cllr Nicholas Bennett JP
Executive Member for Transport, Highways and Road Safety

London Borough of Bromley

Our ref:

Date: 04 June 2024

Cllr Nicholas Bennett

By email

Dear Cllr Bennett,

Thank you for your email of 16 February and my apologies for the delay in responding to you, which was caused by the pre-election period before the election on May 2nd.

The Mayor and I remain committed to the expansion of low and zero emission buses across London, with the aim of the entire network being zero emission by 2030. The Mayor, Transport for London (TfL) and I are excited by the addition of the Irizar ie. Tram buses to the 358 route in LB Bromley, which will help meet this target and trial new technologies on our roads. The introduction of the buses to the network has been dependent on the installation and connection of pantograph charging points at Crystal Palace and Orpington, the two termini of the route.

The programme to rollout the buses to the route has been affected by delays in securing land agreement with third parties to connect power at the Orpington termini. I understand that consequently, the construction work was further delayed and, owing to Section 50 criteria, TfL has been restricted to undertaking key works around the school term, which means that the works have needed to be spread out to avoid causing impact to residents and drivers in the Orpington area.

The buses are owned by the Operator Go-Ahead and the cost detail associated to storage and depreciation is embedded within the route contact tender. Of the 20

buses required for the trial, 13 have been delivered. The remaining 7 will be delivered between now and service launch.

As we look to the future, it's never been more important to support London's transition to a greener, more inclusive road network while taking steps to reach our net zero targets by 2030 which will only be achieved by ensuring our public transport remains a reliable and efficient option for bus users, while moving towards the Mayor's strategic objective to reduce the number of car vehicle kilometres by 27% by 2030.

The A21 Bromley Common is a key corridor for bus services between Catford, Crystal Palace, Lewisham and Bromley Town Centre with five daytime and one nightbus (N199) operating along this road. Its revision of restrictions to the lane to 24/7 has provided TfL with both resilience to the network and continuity to road users while also ensuring a safer environment for cyclists who wish to cycle beyond at time of the day.

Currently, there is little supporting evidence to suggest that current restrictions have negatively impacted the Transport for London Road Network (TLRN) in this area and considering the benefits to cyclists in particular, TfL would be hesitant to return to the previous restriction.

TfL has provided London Boroughs with circa £4.6m of funding for renewals on the Borough Principal Road Network (BPRN) in 2023/24. This comprises around £2.5m for structures maintenance and renewals and £2.1m for carriageway maintenance and renewals. The latter includes the road condition surveys of the BPRN which TfL undertakes and provides data to the Boroughs.

TfL has engaged with the Boroughs, through the London Bridge Engineers Group (LoBEG) and the London Highways Engineers Group (LoHEG) to identify the most urgent priorities for both the structures and carriageways funding respectively. A similar level of funding will be made available for renewals on the BPRN in 24/25. TfL continues to work with the London Boroughs through the London Technical Advisory Group (LoTAG) Asset Management Forum, to produce of the State of the City Report and make the case for improved funding from Department for Transport (DfT) for London's highways.

The introduction of the Superloop service (SL5) has been transformative to its bus services in Bromley and has quickly become a popular service for commuters travelling between Bromley and Croydon town centres. You will recall that in the planning stage, TfL considered West Wickham as a part of the route, however owing to width restrictions along the proposed corridor; it was decided that running via Eden Park would provide the quick connectivity.

Adding the SL4 service to the network will complete the delivery of the current Superloop programme. TfL undertakes extensive planning before introducing a new service to the network and it was considered that extending the SL4 route beyond Grove Park onto Bromley North would present a significant cost implication which currently offers little value for money. I am assured by TfL however, that once the new service is introduced in 2025, the route would be kept under continued review.

Yours sincerely,

Seb Dance

Deputy Mayor for Transport

Dear Seb

Thank you for your letter of June 4th reply to my email of February 16th 2024.

Unfortunately, your reply contains several factual inaccuracies.

There are no night bus routes along the bus lane on Bromley Common. The N199 turns left at The Toby Carvery and is routed along Southborough Lane.

Our proposal for routing the SL5 did not involve a width restriction. We suggested that the route should follow along the line of the 194 route to continue along South Eden Park Road and Beckenham Road to the traffic lights at the Swan PH and turn left along the High Street rejoining the existing route at the junction of Monks Orchard Road and Shirley Road roads. This would greatly increase the patronage and profitability of the service by giving access to a densely populated area and one of the Borough's major town centres.

It is difficult to understand how the extension of the SL4 from Grove Park to Bromley North (where it would connect with the SL3 and SL5), less than two miles, would not be cost effective. The population of the central Bromley wards, many of whom work in Canary Wharf, is more than 35,000.

Bromley residents find it difficult understand how TfL, having been granted planning permission for the pantograph at Orpington more than three years ago in June 2021 and more than a year after the first buses arrived from Spain, the route remains diesel operated.

Best wishes

Nicholas

Cllr Nicholas Bennett JP

Executive Member for Transport, Highways and Road Safety