

EDITED TRANSPORT FOR LONDON PRESS RELEASES

STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO GOVERNMENT FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENT

18 December 2023

TfL reached an agreement with the Government that will see £250m in capital investment funding provided to TfL over the next year. Andy Lord, London's Transport Commissioner, said: "Through a huge effort to reduce costs and rebuild our ridership and revenue following the pandemic, TfL is now on track to be financially sustainable in terms of its day-to-day operations. We are also able to cover the cost of the majority of our capital investment. We, alongside London's business stakeholders and others, have consistently made the case that additional Government support for capital investment in transport is needed if we are to be able to continue to deliver vital improvements to London's transport network, unlock new homes and support growth across London and the UK.

"It is good news that we have now reached an agreement with the Government on the capital support that they will provide over the next year, and we are grateful for the support. However, we will now need to reassess our recent draft business plan and address the impact of the continuing shortfall in funding. That work is underway so that we can confirm as soon as possible what we will deliver for London".

The last two sentences say it all – Ed.

Meanwhile, from the Evening Standard ...

Sadiq Khan's transport plans face rethink after Government approves only half of mayor's £500m 'wish list'.

A one-year deal safeguards Piccadilly Line upgrade but raises questions about the Bakerloo Line. Sadiq Khan is expected to have to abandon some transport projects after receiving only half the investment funding he requested from the Government. TfL had wanted £500m a year over the next four or five years – with the mayor last week warning of the risk of "managed decline" of the capital's public transport system if all the money was not forthcoming. However, the cash should be sufficient to safeguard the £2-billion Piccadilly Line upgrade, which will see a fleet of new trains enter service from 2025. But the lack of a multi-year deal raises questions about hopes of upgrading the Bakerloo Line, which currently has the oldest trains in the country, with Underground bosses increasingly concerned about reliability and delays. Longer-term ambitions of extending the DLR over the Thames to Thamesmead may also be kicked further into the long grass.

The funding letter from the DfT to the mayor also makes clear that "TfL should plan prudently for 2025/26 and beyond, noting the fiscal constraints (the Government) is operating within". Last week, the TfL board was unable to approve its draft business plan because of the uncertainty over which projects it could fund. The fact that it has received only a one-year deal – with another single-year deal likely next year – probably highlights the uncertain political climate and looming General Election as much as the need for belt-tightening in Whitehall.

TfL no longer gets any annual Government subsidy to help it run the Underground and bus network but instead benefits from about £2bn a year in retained business rates paid by the capital's firms. TfL expects to make an "operating surplus" of almost £500m a year by 2026/27 due to higher fares revenue, property income and cost savings, according to its draft business plan. TfL's fares income is expected to increase by 11 per cent in 2024/24 to £5.6bn, driven by a six per cent increase in demand and a five per cent rise in the amount paid by passengers, including a crackdown on fare evasion.

As part of the £250m funding deal, TfL is required to set out in July its "plan to maintain and strengthen its finances going forward, while continuing work to reform its pension scheme and seeking efficiencies in its investment programme".

FIRST ELIZABETH LINE STATIONS TO GET HIGH-SPEED MOBILE COVERAGE

20 December 2023

Four central London Elizabeth Line stations have received mobile coverage for the first time. The four stations – Bond Street, Tottenham Court Road, Farringdon and Liverpool Street –all now have mobile coverage in the ticket halls, connecting corridors and platforms for the Elizabeth Line. The introduction at Tottenham Court Road also means that the whole station now has mobile coverage, with work to expand coverage to the Central Line, and then onto the Jubilee Line at Bond Street, taking place throughout 2024.

All four mobile network operators – Three UK, EE, Vodafone, and Virgin Media O2 (VMO2) – are taking part in the rollout, which has already delivered 4G on sections of the Jubilee, Northern and Central lines. TfL and Boldyn Networks (*on 28 June 2023, BAI Communications rebranded as Boldyn Networks*) will be working throughout Christmas and the early New Year to expand the coverage to further stations on the Elizabeth Line, as well as to the tunnelled sections. By the end of spring 2024, the whole of the 73 miles of the Elizabeth Line from Reading and Heathrow to Shenfield and Abbey Wood via the West End, will have mobile coverage.

In recent months, further sections of the Underground have also been provided with 4G and 5G coverage, which is now available between Holland Park and Queensway as well as between Bond Street and Chancery Lane on the Central Line and also between Belsize Park, Archway and Tottenham Court Road on the Northern Line.

Boldyn Networks is also progressing work to bring mobile coverage to the southern end of the Northern Line, with the first sections going live during summer 2024, and more widely across Central London, with a significant proportion of the entire Underground network (around 80 per cent of stations across the network) and the Elizabeth Line, having mobile coverage by the end of 2024.

While work remains on track for a significant proportion of the entire Underground network to have 4G and 5G mobile coverage by the end of 2024, there may be some sections of the Underground where work will continue throughout 2025/26 to fully introduce coverage within stations and tunnels. This will be primarily be on some sections outside of Central London, sections of the Circle and District lines, where a number of stations already have limited mobile coverage due to being closer to the surface, as well as where smaller tunnelled sections need to be treated individually.

The latest Underground stations where mobile coverage is now available are:

- **Central Line** – Holland Park, Notting Hill Gate, Queensway, Oxford Circus (Central Line only), Tottenham Court Road and Holborn (Central Line only).
- **Northern Line** – Belsize Park, Chalk Farm, Archway, Tufnell Park, Kentish Town (station closed from 26 June 2023 because of escalator replacement work, but 4G will still be provided to platforms for passing trains), Camden Town, Mornington Crescent, Euston (Charing Cross branch), Warren Street, Gode Street and Tottenham Court Road
- **Jubilee Line** – Westminster, Waterloo (Jubilee Line only) Southwark, London Bridge (Jubilee Line only), Bermondsey, Canada Water, Canary Wharf and North Greenwich.