

FROM THE PAPERS

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21.12.15 METRO – TfL will begin technical work in 2016 to build a case for extending the Bakerloo Line from Elephant & Castle to Lewisham via Old Kent Road. TfL will seek permission from Government to start building the extension by 2020. If it is given the green light, construction is expected to start in 2024 and the link could be opened by 2030. Passengers travelling to central London from Lewisham, New Cross and Old Kent Road would benefit from more frequent and faster journey times with the Bakerloo Line extension, delivering capacity for 65,000 new trips in each direction.

04.01.16 CITY AM – A TfL boss has expressed confidence that an ongoing disagreement with drivers could finally be resolved, leading to the long-delayed *Night Tube* finally launching in 2016. Talks between TfL and the unions and drivers’ unions have so far failed. The latest negotiations crumbled before Christmas after unions rejected proposals by TfL, to hire part-time drivers to operate the weekend 24-hour services, and a year extension to the 3-year pay deal already on the table. Drivers have argued that the shifts would disrupt their work-life balance. The launch was pushed back from September 2015 until March 2016.

04.01.16 EVENING STANDARD – *By Sadiq Khan* – “Commuting for Londoners is now more expensive than in any other city in the World. For eight Januaries in a row, the cost of your ticket has gone up – hurting Londoners and our city’s economy. As Mayor, I’ll make London’s public transport more affordable. Since 2008 fare hikes have cost Londoners thousands of pounds. These huge increases have hurt Londoners of all incomes. Taken with the high cost of housing, our city has become an increasingly difficult place to live. Higher fares are contributing to the spiralling cost of doing business in London, reducing our global competitiveness. But it needn’t be like this. As Mayor, I’ll make fares more affordable while modernising our public transport system. There will be cash freeze across all TfL fares for the full four years of my mayoral term of office. You won’t pay a penny more in 2020 than you do now. London can afford to freeze fares for four years. It’s about priorities. What we can’t afford is a public transport system that prices more and more Londoners off the Underground and buses. So I’ll make some difficult decisions to fund the freeze. I’m confident I have the experience and ideas required to be able to keep fares down. In government I was the Transport Minister with responsibility for London’s transport network, including huge projects such as Crossrail. One way I’ll do this is by ending Boris Johnson’s habit of using Londoners’ money to fund expensive vanity projects, such as the Emirates Air Line and more new Routemaster buses. I’ll take immediate action to crack down on the fare evasion that cost Londoners £61M last year. At many stations, ticket barriers are left open way too often. I’ll make major efficiency savings within TfL, including reducing overuse of consultants and agency staff, where TfL spent £383M last year. State-owned European companies run train and bus services across the UK. They reinvest the profits to keep fares down in their own countries. I’ll capitalise on TfL’s global reputation as one of the world’s finest transport authorities by setting up a bidding team in TfL so Londoners can get the same benefits. We should be running buses and trains across the UK and the rest of the world – selling expertise and skills like engineering to the public and private sector, and seeing other cities’ buses and trains branded with London’s famous roundel”.

05.01.16 METRO – Travel from seven LU stations became cheaper yesterday as fares rose 1%. Stratford, Stratford International, Stratford High Street, Abbey Road, Canning Town, Star Lane and West Ham moved from Zone 3 to the Zone 2/3 boundary – reducing commuting costs to and from central London. Sir Robin White, Mayor of Newham, said the move was recognition by TfL that “the capital is moving eastwards”.

05.01.16 EVENING STANDARD – Green mayoral candidate Sian Berry has unveiled radical plans to scrap London’s travel zones and eventually bring in a single flat fare across the capital. The City Hall hopeful also proposed introducing a *one-hour ticket* that could be used across buses, the Underground and trains – included between nearby stations. In addition there would be a daily Oyster cap for part-time workers that matched the much lower rates paid by monthly season ticket holders. The far-reaching measures would be paid for by raising cash from motorists, including increasing the Congestion Charge from £11.50 to £20.00 a day.

07.01.16 THE TIMES – Workers on the capital’s transport network could strike before the end of the month over plans to run a 24-hour service on the Underground. Union leaders will meet next week for talks over the proposed *Night Tube* service. One warned that “more strike action seems the only option left to us” if bosses failed to agree to demands over pay and working conditions.

11.01.16 THE TIMES – Underground drivers are set to strike again as the long-running dispute over plans for the all-night service continues. ASLEF union will decide today whether to call 24-hour strikes on 27 January and 15 and 17 February. LU has offered a four-year pay deal and said it would hire part time drivers for the night service at weekends, but unions remain concerned about members’ “work-life balance”.

11.01.16 EVENING STANDARD – A devastating wave of new Underground strikes set off a major row after Zac Goldsmith warned Londoners could expect years of “games and gridlock” if Sadiq Khan wins City Hall. The Tory mayoral candidate accused ASLEF union of striking for “political purposes” and suggest his Labour rival’s “union paymasters” would get their own way if he was elected. Mayor Boris Johnson backed LU chiefs to take on the unions as they called new strikes in a dramatic escalation of the pay and *Night Tube* dispute. Mr. Khan denies his support for underground unions, who have funded his campaign, would strengthen their hand in strike talks if he was in charge. But Mr. Goldsmith said: “It’s now clearer than ever that we need a mayor independent of the trade unions to deliver the *Night Tube*”.

12.01.16 EVENING STANDARD – The Tories put Sadiq Khan under pressure today to spell out what he would negotiate with the unions to reduce the number of strikes crippling the Underground. The Labour mayoral candidate has criticised Boris Johnson for refusing to negotiate personally with the unions and has claimed he would be better placed to stop strikes. The call came as unions announced three 24-hour strikes amid a row over the introduction of the *Night Tube*. TfL said it made an “extremely fair” pay offer, and the Tories claimed satisfying all union demands would cost TfL an extra £1.4B and require a 6.5% fare rise. One Tory MP said: “Sadiq Khan is sending his clearest signal yet to the unions that their demands are back on the table. The question is which will he cave into?”

13.01.16 EVENING STANDARD – Labour shadow minister, Lord Mendelsohn, came under fire for suggesting thousands of passengers could benefit from the Underground strikes threatening to bring chaos to the capital. He said a study recent concluded an LU strike was “economically efficient” because some travellers would discover better ways into work. The study, published in 2015, examined the Oyster journeys of Londoners during the 48-hour stoppage in February 2014 that forced many passengers to try alternative routes. After the strike was over, 5% stuck with their new routes, shaving an average 40 seconds off their time underground. It concluded that some people benefit from being shaken out of their familiar routine by the strike.

13.01.16 EVENING STANDARD – *Letter by Caroline Pidgeon* – “The Mayor and TfL have ruined negotiations on the introduction of the Night Tube by setting an artificial deadline, allowing the unions to hold them to ransom. But given that deadline passed last September, it is now clear the unions are playing the games rather than working to secure an agreement. Both sides need to get together urgently because London simply cannot afford an Underground strike”.

14.01.16 EVENING STANDARD – *Letter by Ray Ward* – “LU drivers are again threatening to cause enormous inconvenience to residents, workers and visitors, and embarrass one of the great cities of the world by refusing to agree to the *Night Tube*, which would be of enormous benefit. This really is about wanting more money and adding to already generous privileges, including a 4-day working week. It’s time to stop this small group holding London to ransom. Those who refuse to do the job they are paid to do should be reminded that it wouldn’t take long to train new employees to replace them”.

14.01.16 EVENING STANDARD – *Post by Cuthbert Braithwaite* – “Zac Goldsmith claims “we need a Mayor independent of the trade unions to deliver the *Night Tube*. So what has Boris Johnson been doing since September?””.

15.01.16 EVENING STANDARD – Opponents of a plan to build a Crossrail 2 station in Chelsea claimed a public consultation shows Londoners overwhelmingly reject it. *No Crossrail in Chelsea* said over half of responses were opposed to the idea of building a station in King’s Road. TfL says the consultation on the proposed north-south route via central London has attracted 19,000 responses and initial results will be published in spring. Campaigners say they have seen thousands of responses rejecting the Chelsea site.

17.01.16 EVENING STANDARD (OnLine) – This lists London’s top ten most crime-ridden stations of 2015, being (1) King’s Cross: 457, (2) Oxford Circus: 344, (3) Stratford: 344, (4) Victoria: 308, (5) Liverpool Street: 235, (6) Bank: 228, (7) Green Park: 193, (8) Holborn: 193, (9) Leicester Square: 190 and (10) London Bridge: 184. At the bottom of the list was North Wembley with two recorded crimes.

18.01.16 EVENING STANDARD – One of the unions involved in the *Night Tube* dispute has suspended planned strikes. UNITE, which represents 600 engineers and maintenance staff on LU, was due to join three 24-hour walkouts but cancelled to “allow further talks” this week. ASLEF and RMT union members are still expected to stage walkouts next week and the middle of next month.

18.01.16 EVENING STANDARD – Thirty Piccadilly Line drivers staged a walkout over safety concerns after a train door opened between stations. The incident, at 05.30 on 16 January as the train approached Heathrow T4, caused delays and cancellations on the line all weekend. Trains were taken out of service to be inspected, and the situation escalated when drivers walked out. There was no service yesterday over a large part of the Piccadilly Line, including both Heathrow stations, and LU urges passengers to use other means of transport. Piccadilly Line services returned to normal today. LU said the door was “an isolated incident” but has ordered regular safety checks.

19.01.16 EVENING STANDARD – LU’s second largest union has announced it is backing three days of strikes in the dispute over *Night Tube* and pay. TSSA union joins ASLEF and RMT unions which have already announced their intentions to strike and confirms that the entire Underground network – used by 4M people a day – will be brought to a standstill on strike days. LU bosses and union chiefs resumed talks last week at ACAS to try to resolve the dispute. The leader of TSSA said changes planned by LU would mean lower safety standards for staff and passengers.

19.01.16 EVENING STANDARD – TfL has withdrawn a plan to close Caledonian Road station for eight months to replace its two lifts. Islington council had threatened legal action against the proposal, claiming it had not taken into account the “severe impact” on passengers.

19.01.16 EVENING STANDARD – *Letter by Jos Bell* – “I am certain that I am not alone on wondering how on Saturday evening the whole of north-west London was left without an Underground service? Planned engineering work, have rendered most of the Metropolitan and Jubilee closed for the weekend, leaving only the Piccadilly Line operational – or so we thought. It seems that TfL miscalculated the necessary number of drivers to run the latter service, meaning passengers who thought themselves to be en route to Rayners Lane, were tipped out at Acton Town late on a freezing Saturday night. Platform staff and drivers were unsure of the destination of the remaining trains or where to instruct stranded passengers to find bus stops. Even the audio system broke down – it was total chaos. Is this the sign of the Underground of the future? This should sound alarm bells with regards to the new powers TfL seeks within the revived Transport for London Bill. It can hardly manage to run a train service. What an embarrassment for a global city – we need a Mayor that can do better”.

19.01.16 EVENING STANDARD – *Letter by M. Hannan* – “If we are concerned about Underground delays at the moment, imagine what we will feel like when the *Night Tube* finally arrives. Most maintenance work on the network is done in the early hours of the morning, during weekdays and throughout the day on selected weekends, but with less time to undertake this work the disruption is likely to increase. People often take their frustration out on drivers and other LU staff for these delays, but these staff members are taking the flak for their bosses’ failings. They are the ones who should face the music over our failing transport system”.

20.01.16 METRO – Londoners in need of some help in keeping up their New Year’s resolutions can enjoy an inspirational visit to Old Street Underground station, where the latest pop-up shops are transforming the station into a hub of healthy living this month. The new *Health & Wellbeing* festival, created by *Appear Here*, kicks off the latest series of pop-ups at Old Street and includes some of the best brands of sport, design, art, fashion, technology, film and music. Among the options on offer through January are fitness classes as well as healthy eating stalls. Pop-up retailers have been a peculiar addition to Old Street station since April 2014. They are part of TfL’s plans to offer customers more services alongside the long-standing options traditionally found at the station. Since the launch, more than 200 retailers have taken up residency at Old Street including, *American Eagle*, *Microsoft*, *Jamie Oliver* and innovative independents, such as *Sourced Market*, *Propercorn* and *Press London*.

20.01.16 METRO – Pranksters on an Underground train who were dressed as police officers and a suicide bomber have been branded “insensitive and crass”. Three people were dressed as police and one in camouflage with a fake bomb strapped to his chest on a District Line train on Monday. Police,

who were not told of the incident, called it insensitive and crass behaviour in light of recent terrorist attacks across the world”.

20.01.16 EVENING STANDARD – TfL is celebrating 30 years of *Poems on the Underground* by bringing back the original verses used to begin the popular project in 1986. Since then more than 500 poems have been featured. The five poems, by writers including Seamus Healey and Robert Burns, will be seen by millions of commuters on trains until the end of the month. The project, which has inspired similar schemes in cities including Paris, St. Petersburg and Shanghai, was the idea of novelist Judith Chernaik. She said: “It’s hard to believe that an idea which started as a pleasant way of providing reading matter on Underground journeys has reached its 30th year. The programme continues to thrive because LU’s support and an amazing public response – and above all because the poets past and present who have enriched our lives in so many ways. It all started when I was part of a play reading group and we were reading *As You Like It*, and in the play Orlando sticks these dreadful love sonnets on the trees in the Forest of Arden. At that time I was getting the Underground a lot and noticed there were a lot of spaces where the adverts were and I just thought we could put poems in the empty spaces. I’m a New Yorker originally and didn’t know anything about the Underground or how it worked, but I wrote a note to LU’s MD and they replied very quickly and said they liked the idea”. Ms Chernaik still helps to choose the poems that go up in the trains. Underground staff are expected to mark the anniversary by writing her favourite verses on station whiteboards, and a leaflet with 30 poems in will be handed out free at central London stations. Mayor Boris Johnson said: “This simple idea of bringing poetry to the public is a prime example of why our great city is a world leader in culture”.

20.01.16 EVENING STANDARD – TfL’s proposals to demolish a former Underground depot and turn it into flats have been met with fury by the businesses using the space. TfL is looking to maximise returns on prime land it owns as part of a £3.5B income drive, after its government grant was cut. Over the next decade it plans to work with developers to build 10,000 homes at 75 sites, including projects at Nine Elms, Northwood and Parsons Green. The planning applications for Parsons Green depot proposes demolition and replacement with 119 homes – of which about 40% would be classed as affordable – 4,000m³ of retail, office and restaurant space. In the documents submitted, TfL said some businesses housed at the depot could return when work is finished, while others could be relocated “with industrial centres in west London”. However, the businesses are urging planners to reject the proposals. The campaigners say older buildings provide “affordable space to numerous enterprises that could not exist in modern developments, due to the excessive rents charged or the unsuitable nature of modern office blocks”. The application is expected to be decided this spring with construction, if approved, beginning next year and taking two years to complete.

21.01.16 CITY AM – Tory mayoral candidate Zac Goldsmith revealed that he has secured tighter rules to limit future Underground strikes. He said that under new strike laws, all TfL services will be considered “essential” and therefore require the support of 40% of all eligible voters in a strike ballot. Goldsmith wrote to Business Secretary Sajid Javid last year, for all TfL services to be subject to the new higher threshold. He said: “It must be right that TfL services are classed as essential because that’s what they are to the millions of people who live and work in Greater London. Unions shouldn’t be able to call a strike on spurious grounds, with little real support”. Meanwhile, his Labour opponent Sadiq Khan said that business leaders should help to shape policy decisions in City Hall, as he revealed his plans to appoint a Business Advisory Group.

21.01.16 EVENING STANDARD – Underground staff have been offered a four-year pay deal, lump sum payments of £500 each and the prospect of a 36-hour four-day week to call off the strikes starting next week and get the Night Tube up and running. The three main unions – ASLEF, RMT and TSSA – are all holding crisis meetings today and are set to accept the ground-breaking deal. LU would not confirm the offer but this newspaper understands it consists of: (a) 2015 – 1% pay rise backdated to April 2015 plus £500 consolidated on all salaries, giving an average 2% pay rise, (b) 2016 and 2017 – RPI or 1%, whichever is the greater, (c) 2018 – RPI plus 0.25% or 1% whichever is greater, (d) an extra £500 non-consolidated, to all staff who deliver the *Night Tube* at its launch, (e) station staff also to receive a one-off £500 non-consolidated payment on implementation of the *Fit for the Future* stations programme, which include major changes and axing of ticket offices. There will be further discussions on the implementation of a 36-hour 4-day week initially involving “trials” on the Jubilee Line. ASLEF claimed they dragged Underground bosses “kicking and screaming into the 21st century with an agreement to deliver modern, flexible working practices for our members and an above inflation pay rise”. Unions warned that the walkouts have only been “suspended” and would be reinstated if future

talks fail. It will be some time, however, before the *Night Tube* is up and running as there is no new start date. LU is hiring hundreds of part-time staff, including drivers, both to run the *Night Tube* and break the stranglehold of the unions.

21.01.16 EVENING STANDARD – *Post by Matt Day* – “Jos Bell’s letter (see 19.01.16 above) makes a point that the Underground disruption on the Piccadilly Line was caused by a shortage of drivers. Perhaps they should back the current Mayor’s plans to invest in driverless trains and remove this issue?”. (*There was no “shortage of drivers” in this particular scenario – Ed.*).

21.01.16 EVENING STANDARD – *Post by Sarina* – “I am appalled by the way the evacuation of King’s Cross station was handled on Saturday. My family and I were returning from Oxford Circus after seeing the *Lumiere* light festival and when we got off at King’s Cross we noticed all the walkways underground were very busy. They continued to fill up and there was no communication from LU to state why this was happening. An alarm then went off and we were told to leave the station immediately, which inevitably sent panic through the station. Thus could have led to crushing and even fatalities – I just hope it never happens again”.

22.01.16 WATFORD OBSERVER – Plans to create step-free access to Croxley station were drawn up almost three years ago but went nowhere, documents have revealed. Six options were drawn up in April 2013. The report went as far as suggesting a ramp could be built between the car park and the southbound platform, and a lift could be installed for the northbound platform. But TfL has not confirmed when a step-free access will be installed at the station despite more than 700 people calling for it. A shaft for the lift was built in the station but a lift was never installed, and the report suggests this is the best way of providing access to that platform. In its conclusion the report said step-free access could be created in 6-9 months and would have “minimal impact” on trains. Disabled and elderly people, and parents with young children all complain about getting up and down the 40 stairs. Campaigners had hoped the work could be part of the Metropolitan Line Extension project.