

COUNCILLOR STEPHEN ALAMBRITIS
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL
(Labour, Ravensbury Ward)



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Date: 22 July 2019

Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London
City Hall
Queen's Walk
SE1 2AA

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dear Sadiq,".

Re: Air Quality

As Leader of Merton Council, I, along with my Cabinet, have prioritised improving the poor air quality across the borough in recent years. We adopted our ambitious Air Quality Action Plan in 2018, and its 70 actions are all now being delivered. This includes action to tackle motorists who idle their car engines, implementing car free streets in close proximity to schools, investing in electric vehicle charging across the borough and promoting car sharing clubs. For your information, I have appended our Air Quality Action Plan.

In addition, we are currently in the process of introducing a new approach to car parking and resident permit charges, designed to encourage motorists to travel more sustainably more actively, improving both air quality and promoting more active and healthier lifestyles. The new charging approach follows on from the introduction of a diesel levy in 2017, which we are in the process of reviewing to assess its effectiveness.

During consultation on the new charges we received a significant amount of feedback from both residents and businesses who wanted to see London's bus fleet cleaned up far more quickly than the 2041 date currently proposed in your Transport Strategy. Residents cited the positive example of TfL's approach to Putney High Street and the impact the removal of diesel buses has had on the environment there as evidence of what could be achieved in Merton.

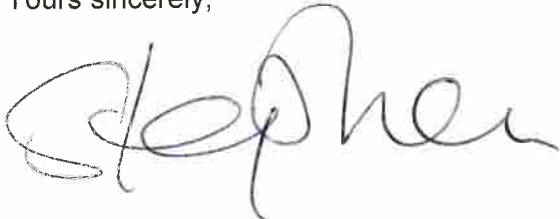
I know that my officers have raised this on several occasions with TfL but I would like to express my strong desire that the process of cleaning up of the bus fleet is accelerated right across Merton, but particularly in town centres and known Air Quality Focus Areas. With the introduction of the ULEZ there is a real concern that more polluting private vehicles and the older TfL bus fleet are now more likely to travel in outer London.

In addition, whilst we are encouraging residents to give up their cars we need to be more confident that there will be safe and accessible public transport options available. The lack of step free access at some of our busy train stations, particularly Raynes Park and Motspur Park, is a cause for concern, and any action you could take to expedite step action here would be appreciated.

TfL supported us in our unsuccessful bid earlier this year to the Department for Transport for Access for all monies and I would like to seek your support for future bids or alternate funds that we can sue to provide step free access to all public transport across the borough.

I look forward to hearing from you

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen', written in a cursive style.

Councillor Stephen Alambritis
Leader of the Council