

Full Council: 31st October 2017

Administration Motion: Councillor David Longstaff

Is Mayor Khan an enemy of the people of Barnet?

Council is growing increasingly concerned that Mayor Khan is making life harder for the people of Barnet for the sake of political point-scoring.

In the last six weeks alone Mayor Khan has made several rulings attacking the borough's already strained transport infrastructure. Most recently the Aslef union revealed he had scrapped plans laid by his predecessor, Boris Johnson, to add 17 much-needed trains to the Northern line and increase services to 30 an hour. The explosion in demand projected for this vital but overcrowded service will now have to be met by current stock — and borne by residents.

At the beginning of this month he also overruled Barnet's democratically elected Planning Committee in order to force a deeply unpopular development of 460 flats on the people of Mill Hill. Adding insult to injury, he removed 78 parking spaces from the original plans, meaning residents will have to fight for spaces on neighbouring residential streets. This is despite visiting the site himself by car rather than brave the Northern line.

Before clogging up the borough's roads and scuppering improvements to its Underground service, however, Mayor Khan decided to make private hire vehicles more expensive and less available for residents of outer London boroughs like Barnet. His decision against renewing Uber's private hire licence not only risks putting 1,789 Barnet-based Uber drivers out of work; it will increase the costs for residents using black cabs.

Council agrees that any concerns about Uber's safeguarding procedures must be addressed. However, Council is baffled as to why data revealed under the Freedom of Information Act showed TfL inspectors had given Uber a clean bill of health on no less than 10 occasions in the last four years (the last after an annual compliance audit in April this year) and why Mayor Khan failed to meet with Uber representatives to discuss concerns. In revoking Uber's licence, Khan's message is that London is closed to innovation and business.

Council is also deeply concerned by Mayor Khan's intervention on the Grahame Park development. In making public an error-riddled letter from GLA planners he ensured the retraction, which Barnet was on the cusp of negotiating, would not happen. The planning application now risks being refused or amended by the Mayor.

Council calls on the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Opposition to write to the Mayor to address these concerns and request he rectify them for the benefit of the people of Barnet over party political gain.

Under Full Council Procedure Rule 23.5: if my item is not dealt with by the end of the meeting I ask that it be voted upon at the Council meeting.