

MAYOR OF LONDON

Sarah Olney MP

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Our ref: MGLA150223-0236

Date: 16 March 2023

Dear Sarah,

Thank you for your letter regarding the 213 and 57 bus routes.

Buses play a crucial role in making London a more prosperous and connected city and I have done everything within my power to protect services across the capital. But the government needs to realise that cuts have consequences: not only did the government decide to scrap its £700m operating grant to Transport for London (TfL) in 2015, but it was a condition of the government's recent short-term funding deal that millions of miles of bus routes were proposed to be cut in last year's Central London Bus Review.

Despite the actions of ministers, I stepped in and provided an additional £25m each year to save the majority of bus routes that were proposed to be cut in central and inner London, and adding more than one million kilometres to the bus network in outer London.

When I made the decision to tackle the toxic air that causes around 4,000 premature deaths every year by expanding the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ), I promised more than one million extra kilometres would be added to outer London's bus network. On 6 March, TfL launched the first consultations on these enhancements and changes, which will help encourage more people to use public transport. These proposals, which will be followed by more enhancements across London, would improve TfL's already extensive and attractive bus network in outer London.

Alongside these area-wide proposals to enhance buses in outer London, TfL will always need to make changes to the frequencies of London's existing bus network to respond to changing travel patterns and to ensure bus capacity matches demand and to ensure good value for money. The bus is London's most flexible mode of public transport, meaning it can respond to changes in demand or travel patterns relatively quickly.

With regard to route 213, TfL's data shows that previously it needed to run six buses per hour (bph) during the peak period to meet peak demand and now it can match capacity to demand by providing five bph, while still continuing to run a high frequency route on each day of the week, along with two bph every night of the week. Route 57 has similarly been reduced from six bph to five bph, with an additional bus running at peak times to provide sufficient capacity at the busiest times.

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As I set out above, TfL keeps the bus network under constant review and will continue monitoring the 213 and 57 routes to ensure that capacity continues to match demand.

TfL is also continuing to develop packages of proposals to enhance outer London's bus network further. Details will be published and consulted upon in due course.

Thank you again for your letter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sadiq Khan', with a small '2' written below the 'h'.

Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London