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2021**

Mayoral Candidate Pledges To Cancel The Roll Out Of LTNs And Deliver An Integrated Traffic Management Strategy For London

Mayoral candidate pledges to cancel the roll out of LTNs and deliver an integrated traffic management strategy for London

London Mayoral candidate, Ms Farah London, pledges to overhaul and reset City Hall's brazen and non-consultative approach to closing roads and forcibly implementing Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) across London. The expanded pedestrian zones and pop-up cycle lanes which have sprung up across London in recent months, claiming to facilitate social distancing and increase the appeal of walking and cycling, have caused significant disruption to London residents. They have prevented critical access by emergency service vehicles and have compounded congestion problems, intensifying the already chronic, slow moving and toxic traffic bottlenecks.

Ms London said "I'm all for creating quieter streets, encouraging people to walk and cycle and providing more space for families to enjoy their neighbourhoods. It is something all Londoners want. More importantly, I am passionate about social justice and listening to the community. What we have currently is an agenda to improve the environment in the leafy areas of London by sending traffic to neighbourhoods where residents are less able to protect their rights. The absence of a democratic and transparent consultation process, with projects rushed through under the cover of the COVID pandemic, should concern everyone. Especially when it has the imprimatur of the current Mayor."

Currently councils can introduce the traffic schemes for a trial period under an Experimental Traffic Order without first conducting a full public consultation. Under the order the consultation is to occur for six months during the trial period, followed by another consultation if the scheme is to be introduced permanently. Currently there are 114 LTNs being introduced separately across London, with bollards and planters to filter traffic and traffic cameras that identify numberplates to alert drivers without access that they are banned.

BRING LONDON BACK

W: votefarah.london **E:** info@votefarah.london **T:** +44 20 3916 5008

Promoted by E. Panagia on behalf of Farah London International House 1 St Katharine's Way, St Katharine's Dock London E1W 1UN

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The opposition to these orders is gathering momentum across London. Wandsworth Council has already removed its LTNs. Ealing residents has delivered a petition with thousands of signatures claiming that the LTN plans are not fit for purpose. A similar residents petition has been delivered in Hounslow. The controversy around the failings of the Lee Green LTN and the resulting surge in traffic and threatening pollution levels in surrounding areas have added to more general concerns. This being the same neighbourhood where environmentalist, Rosamund Kissi-Debrah's nine year old daughter Ella, died from an asthma related seizure linked to high levels of air pollution in 2013.

As the future Mayor, Ms London has today made a pledge to pull the plug on the current confusing, disjointed and haphazard process - cancelling the roll out of the LTNs. Instead, she proposes to establish a traffic management taskforce in City Hall, bringing together resident's groups, representatives of each of the boroughs, and planning and traffic experts. The taskforce will deliver a long-term, traffic management strategy for the benefit of all Londoners. Ensuring that initiatives are not simply moving the problem from one neighbourhood to another. Importantly, the strategy will be an integral part of Ms London's proposed reforms to the London transport system, her broader environmental and climate change policies as well as her economic development and COVID recovery initiatives.

Ms London stated that "Not only do we need to consult with residents to deliver real improvements, we need City Hall to provide leadership in bringing all of the elements together, build consensus and develop policies with a helicopter view of London's entire physical and social landscape. We need clean air for all, easy access for emergency services, cheaper more accessible public transport, more greenspaces, more people walking and enjoying their neighbourhoods. The fragmented approach we are seeing at the moment is just adding to the anxieties of our community at a time when governments should be supporting them. In my first 100 days as Mayor I will set the terms of reference for the taskforce, invite the participants and put everyone on notice that we need a fair and democratic process that delivers urgent and practical solutions for our city."

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