

Industry voices discuss new TfL deal

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Industry voices have had their say on the new £3.6 billion deal for Transport for London (TfL).

In the wake of the announcement, some of these industry figures have stepped forward with reservations about the deal – which TfL acknowledged yesterday is not without issue for them but will help them weather any forthcoming economic storm.

Labour’s London Assembly transport spokesperson, Elly Baker AM, said: “The Government’s punitive deal with TfL comes too late and adds insult to injury for Londoners living through an unprecedented cost of living crisis who did the right thing by staying away from public transport during the pandemic.

“While it takes away the danger of the most drastic service cuts, there are still far too many unnecessary and damaging conditions attached and passengers will bear the brunt of the considerable funding gap.

“With money ring-fenced by the Government for walking and cycling I remain concerned about public transport. TfL will face tough choices over service cuts and fare rises in the future if they are to balance the books. This deal has left them with no choice.

“Conditions imposed around staff pensions and pay rises are stoking the fires of industrial action –

Ministers must take responsibility for this, especially when transport workers' pay packets are being stretched more and more.

"The Government hasn't played fair during this two-and-a-half-year process. There is no UK recovery without a London recovery, and that requires a properly funded transport network.

"This is not the deal Londoners deserved. I will continue to scrutinise it as the impact becomes clearer."

RMT says that the funding deal struck by TfL and ministers will attack tube workers' pay and pensions and will lead to further strike action.

They described the talks leading up to the deal being agreed as "behind closed doors between Mayor Sadiq Khan and the government".

In a statement, the Union adds "the deal appears conditional on attacks on workers' pensions, potential job losses and a push for pay restraint in the future despite the astronomical rise in inflation and an escalating cost of living crisis."

It also says Shapps has pushed for driverless trains as part of proposed reforms.

Responding to the funding deal, RMT general secretary Mick Lynch said: "This deal negotiated in secret by TfL and government ministers will likely see our members pensions attacked and further pay restraint in the future, coupled with driverless trains.

"Grant Shapps' attack on tube workers would be unacceptable at any time but in an escalating cost of living crisis it is shameful and will be resisted through further strike action.

"TfL need to stand up to Grant Shapps and demand a deal that serves all the people of London and addresses the real concerns of London transport workers who keep the capital running."

Darren Caplan, chief executive of the Railway Industry Association (RIA), said: "After several short extensions in recent years it is welcome news that the Government and TfL have agreed a longer 20-month settlement, until March 2024. For the railway industry, greater certainty in funding enables rail businesses to plan ahead and deliver better value for money, not only for London and its transport network, but also in helping to drive wider economic growth across the UK.

"However, after years of uncertainty rail businesses which renew, enhance and build rail in the capital – whether infrastructure or rolling stock – continue to urge both Government and TfL to agree multi-annual deals that last beyond 20 months, more like the five-year Control Periods on the national rail network. This is the only way to get the best possible value, to the benefit of both fare and tax payers, and to ensure the potential of one of the cleanest forms of public transport really is fully realised in the months and years ahead. "Whilst this latest announcement is a clear step in the right direction, as passenger numbers continue to grow and existing capacity fills up, national and London policy-makers must set the right level of ambition now and invest longer-term in the future of the capital's transport network."