

**Chelgate Briefing Paper on the London Mayoral and
Assembly Elections 2008**

“The Battle for City Hall”

18 April 2008



“This election is about ensuring that every Londoner shares in this city’s continuing success” **Ken Livingstone, Labour Mayor of London**

“Ken Livingstone cannot be trusted to deliver on his promises” **Boris Johnson MP, Conservative Candidate**

“London needs a Mayor with the experience to tackle crime head on” **Brian Paddick, Liberal Democrat Candidate**

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Introduction

On the 1st May 2008, Londoners will vote to elect their Mayor and the members of the London Assembly. The Mayoral race looks to be the tightest since the post was first created in 2000 with the current incumbent, Ken Livingstone, facing a strong challenge from the Conservative candidate, Boris Johnson. The Liberal Democrats have also secured themselves a high-profile candidate in the form of Britain's most senior openly gay police officer, Brian Paddick.

With a reported budget of £11 million and wide ranging responsibilities covering transport, planning, economic development, cultural strategy and the emergency services, the decisions of the Mayor have a very tangible impact on the lives of Londoners. Few Londoners, for example, will have been unaffected by the implementation of the Congestion Charging Zone and the introduction of the infamous "bendy buses". In addition, the 2012 Olympics are approaching, with the incoming Mayor being responsible for guiding the capital towards the Games.

Much of the poll data for the Mayoral election has been somewhat contradictory. The most recent poll, carried out by YouGov and published in the Evening Standard on the 14th April, shows Johnson six points ahead with a projected 45% of the vote compared to 39% for Livingstone and 12% for Paddick. This poll shows a closing of the gap between the two leading candidates when compared with a YouGov survey carried out in the last week of March, which gave Johnson a seemingly unassailable thirteen-point lead. The YouGov results can be contrasted still further with an ICM poll for the Guardian, published on the 3rd April, which gave Johnson a tiny one point lead with a predicted 42% of first choice votes compared to 41% for Livingstone, and just 10% for Brian Paddick. Once second choice preferences are taken into account the poll predicted an overall victory for Johnson over Livingstone of 51% to 49%.

Although some of this discrepancy between the YouGov and ICM polls can be explained by varying survey methods, the general trend appears to be that the gap in support between Johnson and Livingstone is narrowing.

Livingstone's resurgence in the polls can be contrasted with the national trend, with David Cameron's Conservatives continuing to enjoy a six-point lead over Gordon Brown's seemingly embattled Labour Government, and many have pointed out that Livingstone's success in closing the gap is down to his personal popularity among many Londoners. However, Brown can draw some solace from the erosion of Johnson's lead as it shows the vulnerability of Conservative poll supremacy when subjected to the pressure and volatility of an electoral campaign. In addition to this Brown will also obviously be keen for Livingstone to remain in office as, despite his differences with the current London Mayor, he will not want to work with a Johnson led Conservative administration.

There will be a number of key political battlegrounds in the 2008 mayoral elections; perhaps the most prominent of these will be the issue of transport. Many of the most visible changes since the introduction of the Mayoral position in 2000 have been made to transport policy in the capital. The Congestion Charging Zone, and its subsequent western extension, has been the subject of much debate in recent years and features in the campaigns of all three major candidates. Both Johnson and Paddick have promised sweeping changes to the regime with Paddick pledging to scrap the western extension of the zone and introduce a £10 daily charge for non-Londoners. Crime also looks to be a key issue in the campaign with both Johnson and Paddick pledging to cut crime if they are elected, Livingstone on the other hand, has attempted to emphasise his success in lowering crime levels. Overall the 2008 London elections are perhaps the most important since the inception of the Assembly and the Mayor in 2000, and will certainly be the most closely contested.

Mayoral Election

The voting system

If there are only two candidates for the Mayor of London, the election will be conducted using the traditional First Past the Post system whereby the candidate with the most votes wins. However if there are three or more candidates, the Supplementary Vote system is used. The Supplementary Vote system is designed to ensure that the winning candidate is the one that received the broadest amount of support from across the London electorate. The system works by allocating each voter a first and second choice vote.

If a candidate receives more than half of the first choice votes they are elected. However if this does not happen, the top two candidates with the most first choice votes go through to the second round. All other candidates are eliminated from the election at this point, but if the second choice vote on any of their ballot papers is for either of the top two candidates, these votes are added to their total from the first round. The candidate with the largest total of first second choice votes is the winner.

In 2004, for example, Ken Livingstone, the Labour Party Candidate received 685,541 first choice votes compared to the Conservative candidate, Steve Norris who received 542,423. Livingstone received a further 142,839 second choice votes and thus a total vote count of 828, 380. Norris received 124,755 second choice votes and a total of 667,178.

The candidates

Labour: Ken Livingstone



Introduction

Livingstone became London's first elected Mayor in 2000 after running as an independent, having been expelled from the Labour Party. He was readmitted to the Party in 2004 shortly before the second Mayoral elections and will again run as the Labour Party candidate this time around. In his time as Mayor, Livingstone has maintained a high profile and his administration has not been without controversy. He was highly criticised for accusing a Jewish Evening Standard Reporter, Oliver Finegold, of being "like a concentration camp guard", and has courted controversy by signing a deal with left-wing Venezuelan President, Hugo Chávez, to provide cheap oil for London buses. Perhaps the most obvious changes to London under Livingstone have centred around transport, with the introduction of bendy buses, Oyster cards, the Congestion Charging Zone and now the Low Emission Zone.

Previous experience

Livingstone was a Labour member of Lambeth Council between 1971 and 1978, serving as Vice Chair of the Housing Committee from 1971 to 1973. From 1978 to 1982 he was a member of Camden Council, where he was Chair of the Housing Committee from 1978 to 1980. In 1973 he was elected as a Labour Member of the Greater London Council and in 1981 he became Leader, a position he held until Margaret Thatcher abolished the GLC in 1986. Between 1987 and 2001 Livingstone served as Labour Member of Parliament for Brent East. During the 1980s Livingstone was a fierce critic of Thatcher and many in the press considered him to have strong left-wing views, he thus earned the nickname "Red Ken", which some journalists use to refer to him to this day.

Campaign

Livingstone is expected to base his campaign around what he has delivered during his eight years in office as London Mayor. He will emphasise his environmental record, having recently issued a joint statement with the Green Party candidate for mayor, Siân Berry, in which he claimed that Boris Johnson "supported George Bush in opposing the Kyoto Treaty."

Livingstone has introduced the Congestion Charge and the Low Emission zone, and he will doubtless try to highlight any positive effects they have had on congestion and emissions. He will also defend his record on transport and crime, arguing he has had a positive effect on them as Mayor. Livingstone's campaign will attempt to characterise Johnson as unreliable, chaotic and out of touch with the concerns of real Londoners.

Key policies

If re-elected Livingstone has promised to:

- Continue to invest in London's transport infrastructure, while holding down fares.
- Maintain the level of crime reduction at 6% each year by adding a further 1,000 police officers to London's police force.
- Introduce a £25 a day charge for high carbon-emitting vehicles that enter central London and the London-wide Low Emissions Zone to "keep the worst polluting lorries out of London."
- Ensure that 50% of new homes are affordable to buy and rent and build a minimum of fifty thousand new affordable homes in the next three years.
- Put in place a £78m programme to set up youth centres and improve youth services throughout London.

Impact on business

Ken's proposals to hit "gas guzzlers" with a £25 a day Congestion Charge is unlikely to prove popular with small and medium sized businesses who use trucks and small lorries on a regular basis as it could significantly raise their overheads. The London-wide Low Emissions Zone may also prove unpopular with business as it means lorries are charged £200 a day to enter London, while heavy van owners must pay £100 for every trip.

Conservative: Boris Johnson MP



Introduction

As a graduate of Eton and Oxford, where he read Classics, and a former Editor of *The Spectator* Magazine, Johnson strikes a very different figure to the present Mayor. However, he more than matches Livingstone in terms of public profile and controversy. In October 2004, Johnson was responsible for the publication in *The Spectator* of an editorial, which used British hostage, Kenneth Bigley, as an example of Bigley's home city of Liverpool wallowing in "vicarious victimhood." Johnson has also been criticised over remarks he made in an article in 2002 in which he referred to inhabitants of developing nations as "flag-waving piccaninnies." Johnson is currently the Member of Parliament for Henley and has served as Shadow Minister for Higher Education. He was named as the Conservative Party candidate for Mayor on the 27th September 2007, although he did not appear to be the first choice of the Party hierarchy, who had allegedly approached Greg Dyke before Johnson's nomination.

Previous experience

After standing unsuccessfully for the constituency of Clwyd South in 1997, Johnson was elected Member of Parliament for Henley, in Oxfordshire, in 2001. Since then he has served as Shadow Minister for the Arts and Shadow Minister for Higher Education. He is a close friend of the current Conservative Leader, David Cameron.

Campaign

Johnson's Mayoral election campaign focuses around the theme of a "fresh start for London." On the key issue of transport he has promised to phase out bendy buses, reform the Congestion Charge and put more police on buses and stations. He has also promised a push to cut crime in the capital, proposing measures to support local community projects in order to cut gang violence and has said he will lessen the burden of police bureaucracy. On housing Johnson has pledged to work with local councils to increase the number of affordable homes; and on the Olympics he has vowed to ensure a positive legacy for Londoners. Johnson has also been keen to emphasise his green credentials, describing himself as a "keen cyclist" and

promising to support the Low Emission Zone and clean up London's streets. He has also promised to make London's government at City Hall more accountable and transparent.

Key policies

Johnson has promised to:

- Tackle knife and gun crime and make public transport safer by chairing the Metropolitan Police Authority and "taking responsibility" for cutting crime.
- Work in partnership with councils to increase the number of affordable homes in every borough.
- Reform that Congestion Charge as "congestion has now risen above pre-congestion charge levels."
- Ban bendy buses.
- Support the Low Emission Zone while working to deliver "cleaner streets".

Impact on business

Johnson has been critical of the Government, and of Livingstone's Mayoralty on economic issues, claiming that Londoners are being ripped off despite the capital being the "motor of the British economy." He has called on Alistair Darling to cut taxes for small companies and has claimed the Government's proposals on non-domiciled residents are "driving highly skilled individuals and investors out of the capital." Johnson has vowed to cut City Hall spending and clear bureaucratic red tape.

Liberal Democrat: Brian Paddick



Introduction

Paddick, who was reportedly approached by the Conservatives to be their candidate for Mayor, confirmed he would be running as a Liberal Democrat in November 2007. As a former Deputy Assistant Commissioner in the Metropolitan Police and Britain's most senior openly gay police officer, Paddick has been one of the most high profile members of the constabulary in recent years. In 2003 he attracted controversy when, as Police Commander for the London Borough of Lambeth he instructed police officers not to arrest or charge people found in possession of cannabis so that they could focus on more serious crimes. During the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) investigation onto the shooting of John Charles de Menezes

Paddick stated that a member of Sir Ian Blair's staff had believed the wrong man had been shot only six hours after the incident, a claim contradicted by New Scotland Yard.

Previous experience

Paddick first joined the Metropolitan Police Service in 1976. In 1981 he was a Sergeant on the front line in the Brixton riot and in 1982 he was appointed an Inspector in Fulham and then Chief Inspector of the Personnel Department of New Scotland Yard in 1986. In 1993 he became Chief Inspector in Brixton before returning to New Scotland Yard first as Superintendent of the Personnel Department in 1996 and then Chief Superintendent in 1997. In 2000 Paddick was appointed Police Commander for the London Borough of Lambeth where he worked until 2002 when he was appointed Head of Policing in Brixton. In 2003 Paddick was promoted to Deputy Assistant Commissioner at the Met, a post he held until he left the force in 2007.

Campaign

Perhaps unsurprisingly for a former police officer, Paddick will base his campaign for Mayor around a pledge to cut crime and "the fear of crime." He has promised to use his experience in the force to cut crime by 5% every year during his first term and attacked Livingstone over his failure to significantly reduce crime. On transport he has pledged to recognise the importance of black taxis by giving cabbies a seat on the board of Transport for London and has also vowed to make sweeping changes to the Congestion Charge by scrapping the

Western Extension Zone and the Low Emission Zone and introducing a 24/7 £10 greater London congestion zone for non-Londoners. In addition to this he has promised to increase the level of affordable housing and cut red tape at City Hall in order to get better value for money for tax payers.

Key policies

Paddick has vowed to:

- “Cut crime and the fear of crime” and has pledged to slash crime levels in London by 5% every year during his first term if elected.
- Increase the reliability of tube and bus services.
- Increase the amount of social housing available to Londoners by using money that is currently spent on temporary accommodation to build permanent social housing.
- “Cut waste” at City Hall in order to reduce the Mayor’s contribution to council tax and offer “better value for taxpayers’ money.
- Reform the Congestion Charge by scrapping the Western Extension Zone and the £25 charge for high polluting cars, and looking to the possibility of replacing them with a £10 charge for non-Londoners driving into the capital.

Impact on business

Paddick’s promise to scrap the £25 charge for larger vehicles such as lorries and trucks, and the Low Emissions Zone, will doubtless appeal to small and medium sized businesses that rely on the use of these vehicles to survive. His pledge to try and cut council tax bills is also likely to appeal to small businesses.

Other candidates

There are a number of other candidates for London Mayor, these include:

- Siân Berry (Green Party)
- Damian Hockney (One London Party)
- Gerald Batten (UK Independence Party)
- Matt O’Connor (English Democrats)
- Alan Craig (Christian Peoples Alliance and Christian Party)
- Lindsey German (Left List)
- Winston McKenzie (Independent)
- Richard Barnbrook (British National Party)

Opinion polls: will national trends be reflected in London?

A YouGov poll for the Evening Standard published on the 14th April showed Livingstone closing the gap on Johnson when compared with a survey for the same paper at the end of March. The poll gives Johnson a six point lead with 45% of the vote compared to 39% for Livingstone and 12% for Brian Paddick, this lead is less than half that indicated by the earlier YouGov survey which gave Johnson a huge 13 point lead over his Labour rival. An ICM poll for the Guardian on the 3rd April had suggested that the race was even closer, with only one point separating the leading candidates.

This closing of the gap between the candidates can be contrasted with the national trend. A YouGov poll for the Sunday times published on the 13th April showed a widening gap between Labour and the Conservatives, putting the Tories on 44%, 16 points ahead of Labour on 28% and the Liberal Democrats on 17%.

With polling day fast approaching the closeness in the polls appears to be causing some alarm among the Labour Party hierarchy. On the 23rd March the *Sunday Times* reported that Gordon Brown had drafted in Tessa Jowell MP, Minister for London and for the Olympics, in attempt to help Livingstone claw back some of the ground he had lost to Johnson, having seen a 4 point poll lead in January swept away in the last two months. The Conservatives, on the other hand, appear to be similarly alarmed by the possibility of a Johnson victory and are

reportedly taking steps to ensure that his administration does not tarnish the Conservatives image in a national election in the event of Johnson becoming Mayor. Johnson's scruffy, disorganised and somewhat chaotic persona has lead many in the Party to fear his administration would take on similar characteristics and therefore reflect badly on the Conservative Party nationally in the build up to the 2009 / 2010 General Election.

London Assembly elections

Introduction

The London Assembly is made of 25 Members. Of these members, 14 represent constituencies which cover different areas of London. The other 11 are London-wide Assembly Members, who represent London as a whole:

Party	Member	Constituency/Londonwide
Conservative	Brian Coleman	Barnet & Camden
Conservative	Bob Neil	Bexley & Bromley
Conservative	Robert Blackman	Brent & Harrow
Conservative	Andrew Pelling	Croydon & Sutton
Conservative	Richard Barnes	Ealing & Hillingdon
Conservative	Roger Evans	Havering & Redbridge
Conservative	Elizabeth Howlett	Merton & Wandsworth
Conservative	Tony Arbour	South West London
Conservative	Angie Bray	West Central London
Labour	John Biggs	City & East London
Labour	Joanne McCartney	Enfield & Haringey
Labour	Len Duvall	Greenwich & Lewisham
Labour	Valerie Shawcross	Lambeth & Southwark
Labour	Jennette Arnold	North East London
Labour	Nicky Gavron	Londonwide
Labour	Murad Qureshi	Londonwide
Liberal Democrat	Graham Tope	Londonwide
Liberal Democrat	Sally Hamwee	Londonwide
Liberal Democrat	Mike Tuffrey	Londonwide
Liberal Democrat	Dee Doocey	Londonwide
Liberal Democrat	Geoff Pope	Londonwide
Green Party	Jenny Jones	Londonwide
Green Party	Darren Johnson	Londonwide
One London Group	Peter Hulme Cross	Londonwide
One London Group	Damian Hockney	Londonwide

Powers of the Assembly

The primary function of the Assembly is to hold the Mayor to account by scrutinising his strategies, decisions and actions. This function is carried out by directly questioning him at Assembly meetings and Mayor's Question Time and by conducting detailed investigations through committees. The Assembly also carries out investigations into other issues of importance to Londoners through its committees. The Assemblies' investigations normally culminate in a final report, which contains recommendations about how to improve life in London. These recommendations are directed at the relevant bodies, which can include the Mayor, Transport for London at the Metropolitan Police Authority, among others.

The voting system

All 25 seats in the London Assembly will be up for re-election on the 1st May 2008. Voters will be asked to fill in two separate ballot papers, one for their Constituency Assembly Members and one for a political party in the London-wide Assembly Member contest. Both the Constituency and London-wide Members will be elected using the Additional Member Voting System.

The Additional Member System is a hybrid of the First Past the Post system, which is used to elect the Constituency Assembly Members, and a form of proportional representation, known as the "Modified d'Hondt Formula", which is used to elect the London-wide assembly members.

First the votes for Constituency Assembly Members are counted using the First Past the Post System with the candidate gaining the most votes in the constituency being elected. Then all votes from across London in the London-wide Assembly Member election are added together with parties who received less than 5% of the vote being eliminated. A formula is then used to proportionally allocate the 11 London-wide seats, taking into account the make-up of the 14 Constituency Assembly Member seats already allocated. This process is designed to ensure that the Assembly reflects the whole London vote.

Opinion polls

Although there have been differing predictions offered by poll data with YouGov giving Johnson a 6 point lead over Livingstone and ICM putting the two candidates effectively neck and neck, there is a consensus that Livingstone is out performing Labour's national poll standing, with a YouGov poll for the Sunday Times giving the Conservatives a national lead of 16 points. Livingstone's ability to perform above the national Labour trend can, at least partly, be put down to his personal following among many Londoners. However, in the Assembly elections Labour will not be able to count on this personal appeal and some have predicted they will be on the end of a backlash from voters, it has even been suggested that they could be wiped of the electoral map, with no constituency members.

The key "battleground" seats

With all 25 Assembly seats up for election, there is much speculation that up to 10 seats will change hands. Key seats at risk include:

Enfield and Haringay

The Labour member for Enfield and Haringay, Joanne McCartney, appears to be the most vulnerable of the constituency members. Her majority is only 1,574 and she faces a stiff Conservative challenge. Ms McCartney's low profile during her four years as an Assembly Member is likely to hamper her in the battle to retain the seat.

Lambeth and Southwark

Labour also appear to be vulnerable in Lambeth and Southwark, where the current incumbent, Valerie Shawcross, holds only a 5,475 majority. The inner city nature of the seat means it is prone to shifting allegiances, and it could well change hands this time around.

City and East

Labour's hold over the City and East is also rumoured to be under threat despite the current member, John Biggs, having a 14,336 majority. Biggs is said to fear a backlash against Labour.

Brent and Harrow

Elsewhere the Conservative member for Brent & Harrow, Bob Blackman, appears to be under threat as some have predicted a three-way marginal between Labour, the Lib Dems and the Conservatives could result in Labour gaining the seat.

South West London

In South West London the Conservative, Tony Arbour, faces a stiff fight from the Liberal candidate, Stephen Knight.

North East London

In the North East London constituency the sitting Labour member, Jennette Arnold, could find her 13,338 majority under threat if there is a sizeable swing to the Conservatives.

The full list of constituencies and the respective majorities of current incumbents are detailed below:

Constituency	Incumbent	Vote %	Majority
Barnet & Camden	Brian Coleman (Con)	33.41%	11,519
Bexley & Bromley	Robert Neil (Con)	39.01%	34,254
Brent & Harrow	Bob Blackman (Con)	31.53%	4,686
Croydon & Sutton	Andrew Pelling (Con)	36.78%	23,694
Ealing & Hillingdon	Richard Barnes (Con)	30.51%	11,016
Havering & Redbridge	Jeremy Evans (Con)	32.74%	16,076
Merton & Wandsworth	Elizabeth Howlett (Con)	36.76%	16,878
South West London	Tony Arbour (Con)	31.53%	4,067
West Central London	Angela Bray (Con)	41.70%	29,944
City & East London	John Biggs (Lab)	26.05%	14,336
Enfield & Haringay	Joanne McCartney (Lab)	27.34%	1,574
Greenwich & Lewisham	Len Duvall (Lab)	31.35%	14,083
Lambeth & Southwark	Valerie Shawcross (Lab)	29.11%	5,475
North East London	Jennette Arnold (Lab)	26.82%	13,338

**For further information please contact: Murray Stewart
(Director, Public Affairs): 020 7939 7949**