

Rikin Tailor  
Head of Corporate Finance  
City Treasurer's Department  
5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
5 The Strand  
London WC2N 5HR

24 January 2019

Dear Rikin,

### City Council Draft Budget 2019/20

Thank you for giving New West End Company the opportunity to comment on Westminster City Council's draft budget 2019-20 on behalf of over 600 businesses we represent in the West End and Mayfair.

We welcome the City Council's commitment in its budget to the long-term future of the West End and the recognition that the West End is the cultural and economic capital of the UK that belongs to, and benefits, everyone in the UK.

We agree with the Council that the West End is primarily responsible for London's status as the world's most popular visitor destination with more than 31m international visitors spending over £11bn in the West End and that it is an important gateway to other UK tourist destinations and drives growth across the UK.

We support the Council's assertion that the West End's success and long-term growth cannot be taken for granted and investment is needed to ensure that the West End can continue to compete with its global competitors.

We welcome the budget's focus on the Council's statutory duty to promote economic and employment growth. It is important both to safeguard and retain jobs as well as meeting the Council's ambitious targets for net employment growth of 77,000 new jobs by 2036.

We therefore appreciate the Council's commitment in the capital budget to invest £50m per annum for three years towards the transformation of the Oxford Street District and its stated desire to continue to work with partner organisations as options are developed for the district.

3rd Floor, Heddon House,  
149-151 Regent Street, London W1B 4JD  
Tel: +44 (0)20 7462 0680 Web: [newwestend.com](http://newwestend.com)



We also welcome the Council's commitment of £5m to Hanover Square to integrate Crossrail's new Bond Street Eastern Ticket Hall with existing heritage and other major development schemes.

We look forward to working with the Council to support and deliver these vital projects for the benefit of residents, businesses and visitors. With £50m in the 2019-20 capital budget we envisage work starting this year, particularly on transforming Oxford Circus. We stress the need to minimise the disruption caused by these works and to them to be completed as quickly as possible.

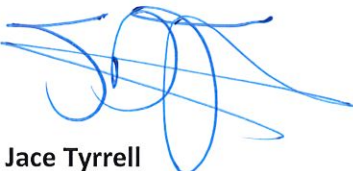
We note the commitment in the budget of £0.15m for "street cleansing costs due to increased footfall pressures following the opening of the Elizabeth line which will require an increase in street cleansing resource in order to deliver to current performance levels".

We are concerned that this does not seem to be significant additional investment in street management to complement the public realm investment. The West End public realm has deteriorated in recent years and high quality management and maintenance is vitally important to residents, visitors and businesses, particularly as the Elizabeth Line opens. We would ask the Council to consider whether it has allocated sufficient funds to provide the high level of street management required for an International Centre.

We also note your accounts show significant reserves which appear to be increasing. We believe these could be used to enhance the general levels of service, particularly around the street environment.

We would be happy to discuss this in more detail with you if it would be helpful.

Yours sincerely,



**Jace Tyrrell**  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

cc: **Stuart Love, CEO Westminster City Council**