

[A statement regarding Kate Bingham and the Vaccine Taskforce](#)

News story

A statement regarding Kate Bingham and the Vaccine Taskforce



The Chair of the Vaccine Taskforce, Kate Bingham, has placed the UK at the leading edge of the international effort to fight the Covid-19 pandemic through the development of clinically safe and effective vaccines.

An [article](#) published this week in the Sunday Times has made a series of allegations and insinuations about Kate Bingham and her role. Inaccuracies are being addressed with The Sunday Times.

A presentation she gave to a women's conference in the United States was the focus of the article. The fact of her appearance and the content of her presentation received approval from officials at the Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy in line with the process governing such engagements. Kate Bingham focused on publicly available information and said little that expert delegates at the conference could not deduce themselves.

Kate Bingham is uniquely qualified for the role of Chair, having worked in the biotech and life sciences sectors for 30 years. While not specifically a vaccines expert, she is a proven drugs discovery expert with superb deal-making skills and an excellent global reputation, recently appearing alongside Bill Gates at the Gates Grand Challenge Conference. She is well known and highly rated by multinational pharmaceutical and vaccine companies. She has a first class degree in Biochemistry from the University of Oxford, an MBA from Harvard Business School (Baker Scholar) and is a board member of the Francis Crick Institute. Her investments have led to the launch of six drugs for the treatment of patients with inflammatory and autoimmune disease and cancer. Kate stepped back from her full-time role as Managing Partner at SV Health Investors to take on this role as Chair of the Taskforce, for which she is unpaid.

Under her leadership of the Vaccine Taskforce, in the past six months:

- Britain has struck agreements to buy 350m doses of vaccine: these involve the six leading candidates under development including the Oxford/AstraZeneca and Pfizer vaccines.
- The VTF has reached in principle agreement with AstraZeneca to supply a neutralising antibody cocktail as a prophylactic treatment once clinical trials are completed and it is approved by regulators.
- 300,000 people have enrolled in a national registry expressing their interest to take part in clinical trials to accelerate the development of a successful vaccine.
- The UK is pioneering controlled human challenge studies, dependent on ethics and regulatory approvals, to assess and accelerate the development of effective vaccines more quickly and with far fewer participants than a standard phase 3 trial.
- The Vaccine Taskforce has provided funding in several UK sites to manufacture vaccine to cover the UK population.
- The UK has committed to ensuring that everyone at risk of SARS-CoV-2 infection, anywhere in the world, has access to a safe and effective vaccine, and has donated £500m to the Covax international vaccine-sharing initiative to enable this.
- The VTF has launched a series of podcasts on Amazon and Spotify with experts discussing all key aspects of vaccine development to help inform the public about what to expect from COVID-19 vaccines, in addition to extensive media interviews and conference appearances.
- An [article](#) detailing the achievements of the Vaccine Taskforce was published in The Lancet last week.

Published 1 November 2020

[UK statement following the Presidential Elections in Tanzania](#)

Press release

UK statement following the Presidential Elections in Tanzania on 28 October 2020.



Following the Presidential Elections in Tanzania on 28 October 2020, Minister for Africa, James Duddridge, has made a statement.

Minister for Africa, James Duddridge said:

As a longstanding supporter of Tanzania, the UK is concerned by widespread allegations of interference in the country's elections, including pre-filled ballot boxes and party agents being denied entry to polling stations. We are also deeply troubled by the reports of violence and heavy-handed policing in the elections, including the arrest of opposition political leaders.

Tanzania's future stability and prosperity require a credible democratic process, underpinned by a free media. We join others in calling for a transparent investigation by the electoral authorities into reported irregularities, and for all involved, including the security forces, to act with restraint to ensure the peaceful resolution of tensions.

Published 1 November 2020

[Joint statement on the Hamad International Airport Incident](#)

Press release

Joint statement by the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar on the Hamad International Airport Incident



His Excellency Sultan bin Saad Al-Muraikhi, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar, and the Rt Hon James Cleverly MP, Minister for Middle East and North Africa held a telephone call on the 31 October 2020 to discuss the Hamad International Airport Incident.

His Excellency the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs conveyed the State of Qatar's apology to the women impacted by the investigation at the airport, highlighting that the officials responsible for this violation have been referred to the Public Prosecution Office, and that this was an isolated incident and is a violation of Qatar's laws and values.

His Excellency the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs assured the United Kingdom's Minister for Middle East and North Africa of Qatar's commitment to the wellbeing and security of all passengers travelling to Qatar and through Hamad International Airport.

Commenting on the measures taken by the State of Qatar, Minister Cleverly welcomed the steps being taken to investigate the incident and efforts to ensure that such an incident does not happen again. Minister Cleverly highlighted that this is an important assurance for those travelling into or through Hamad International Airport.

The two Ministers agreed to remain in contact and to exchange updates on the investigation regularly, assuring that this is a top priority for both governments.

The two Ministers further underlined the strong partnership between the State of Qatar and the United Kingdom, and discussed ways to further enhance this relationship in all fields of cooperation.

Published 1 November 2020

[Transport for London settlement](#)

Letters

Published 1 November 2020

Last updated 31 August 2022 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 31 August 2022

TfL long-term funding settlement letter added.

2. 28 July 2022

Added new letter.

3. 13 July 2022

Added settlement extension letter for the period from 13 July 2022 to 28 July 2022.

4. 27 June 2022

Added settlement extension letter for the period from 26 February 2022 to 13 July 2022.

5. 23 June 2022

A response about TfL from the Transport Secretary to the Mayor of London.

6. 15 March 2022

Added letters extending already existing funding and financing agreements for Transport for London from December 2021 until February 2022.

7. 25 February 2022

Added settlement letter for the period from February 2022 to June 2022.

8. 1 June 2021

Addition of response letter by Secretary of State dated 1 June 2021.

9. 1 June 2021

Added settlement letter for the period from May 2021 to December 2021.

10. 23 January 2021

Letter altered to include original annexes on H2 passenger revenue forecast by period and Oversight Group terms of reference.

11. 1 November 2020

First published.

Government bailout to keep London transport running

- up to £1.7 billion from government for TfL to make up fare revenue lost due to coronavirus pandemic
- funding deal will last until March 2021 and follows previous support package of £1.6 billion
- as tougher national restrictions are introduced from Thursday, tubes and buses will remain available for those who still need to travel

The government has agreed a second extraordinary funding and financing package for Transport for London (TfL) worth up to £1.7 billion.

The package, which will provide financial support until March 2021, is focused on protecting services and ensuring the capital's transport network stands ready to support the recovery from coronavirus (COVID-19). Government funding will ensure those who need to, such as NHS staff, can continue to be able to travel as the nation enters tougher national restrictions.

As with the national rail operators, buses and tram systems, the government will make up all the fare revenue which TfL has lost due to the COVID-19 pandemic through this support package.

National taxpayers will also continue to fund free travel concessions to standard English levels and free travel to school for children who qualify under national legislation. Nearly all the package will be grants and £95 million will be loans.

The Mayor has also chosen to make £160 million in savings over the next 6 months in TfL and raise fares by RPI+1%.

The Mayor has further stated that, if he wishes to maintain Londoners' concessions above the English level, he will raise the money to pay for them himself. If he decides to do this, he will come forward with a plan to raise revenue to fund this.

In the agreeing the bailout, the Mayor proposes that he could, pay for these concessions by retaining the central London congestion charge at its current level and by increasing the existing TfL element of the GLA's council tax precept. He must make his final choice by January 2021, at the same time as he presents a plan for the long-term financial sustainability of TfL.

Expanding the congestion charging zone to inner London has been ruled out by

both the government and the Mayor. The Freedom Pass for pensioners will continue as now, as it is not funded by TfL or the Mayor.

The 2 government special representatives will continue to sit on TfL's board. A new government-chaired government oversight group will monitor the implementation of the agreement and the sustainability plan.

The Transport Secretary, Grant Shapps, said:

This deal is proof of our commitment to supporting London and the transport network on which it depends. Just as we've done for the national rail operators, we'll make up the fare income which TfL is losing due to COVID-19. Londoners making essential trips will continue to be able to use tubes, buses, and other TfL services, thanks to this government funding.

At the same time, the agreement is fair to taxpayers across the country. The Mayor has pledged that national taxpayers will not pay for benefits for Londoners that they do not get themselves elsewhere in the country.

Over the coming months, as we look to move beyond the pandemic, I look forward to working with London's representatives to achieve a long-term settlement, with London given more control over key taxes so it can pay more costs of the transport network itself. This agreement marks the first step towards that, potentially allowing a longer-term, sustainable settlement for TfL when the course of the pandemic becomes clearer.