

# London Councils and the GLA – working together

Nick Lester  
London Councils

## What we expected

- When TfL was created, everyone was supportive
- We expected TfL
  - To be strategic
  - Not to interfere with boroughs' responsibilities
  - Listen to our experience
  - Work as part of a team for London
- How naive we were!

## What we got

- TfL developed a reputation for:
  - Arrogance
  - Ignorance
  - Rapaciousness
  - Beaurocracy
  - Waste
  - Not being strategic

# The Frogs that wanted a King

- Hoped for old king log
- Got young king stork

## What's not needed

- TfL responding to any perceived failures in boroughs by seeking to take control
- Boroughs seeking to exclude TfL from any of their functions

# For London's sake

- Genuine partnerships
- Partnerships which:
  - Reflect an equality of approach
    - No automatic predominance
  - Show respect for each partner
    - And recognise that each other will have different priorities and have different accountabilities
  - Recognise that different scale projects need different leaders

# What are the ingredients?

- Devolution from TfL to boroughs
  - Reducing beaurocracy
  - Increasing flexibility
  - Local decisions made locally
- Partnerships and joint working
  - Between boroughs
    - Operating efficiencies where policies not an issue
  - Between boroughs and TfL
    - Sharing resources and powers
    - Negotiation rather than confrontation

# Practical Examples

- LIPs allocation
- LIPs monitoring
- Highways – transfer of functions
- Accessible transport

## Only the first stage

- Agreeing to look at who does what
- Need to go further
- Joint working and sharing of powers
- Can be done – abandoned vehicles
- What about:
  - Joint management of traffic signals and highways networks
  - Joint planning of bus networks and major schemes

# The Outcome

- Always weaker where we don't work together
- Conflict leads to stasis
- Joint action leads to outcomes