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# Sadiq Khan retains Mayoralty despite underwhelming result

After painful losses in its former Northern heartlands, Labour had hoped that a thumping Sadiq Khan victory in the London mayoral election would provide welcome evidence of the party's ability to connect with voters. It did not work out that way, with the widely unfancied and underfunded Conservative Shaun Bailey eating into the incumbent's margin of victory in 2016.

Nonetheless, and despite some stunning reports on Friday that Mr Bailey's team thought their man was in with a chance of overall victory, the former Tooting MP pulled away to win by over 10 percentage points.

His re-election campaign had focused on the capital's post-COVID recovery, with a promise to make London "greener, fairer and safer" under his continued leadership.

He faces numerous significant challenges over the next three years, with the capital coming to terms with a potential corporate exodus as flexible and remote working

practices are normalised. The once-booming hospitality industry – employer to around half a million Londoners before COVID – has suffered acutely, and faces an uncertain future with the number of commuters in decline and tourism levels expected to remain depressed for the foreseeable future.

Further priorities will include ushering Transport for London back into a position of financial strength, delivering more affordable housing, and tackling the capital's homelessness and knife crime problems.

In his acceptance speech, Mr Khan referenced the "crude culture war" instigated by the Tories as a key factor in the local elections. He will need to fight back with concrete policies to repay the trust of his constituents.

**For more insight and analysis and what engaging with London's government could mean for your organisation, please email [scott@gkstrategy.com](mailto:scott@gkstrategy.com)**