

COUNCIL MINUTES

(ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING)

WEDNESDAY 30 JUNE 2010



PRESENT

The Mayor Councillor Adronie Alford
Deputy Mayor Councillor Frances Stainton

Councillors:

Michael Adam	Charlie Dewhirst	Andrew Jones
Colin Aherne	Belinda Donovan	Alex Karmel
Nicholas Botterill	Rachel Ford	Ali de Lisle
Victoria Brocklebank-Fowler	Marcus Ginn	Mark Loveday
Daryl Brown	Peter Graham	PJ Murphy
Joe Carlebach	Stephen Greenhalgh	Caroline Needham
Michael Cartwright	Steve Hamilton	Harry Phibbs
Alex Chalk	Wesley Harcourt	Sally Powell
Elaine Chumnerly	Lisa Homan	Greg Smith
Georgie Cooney	Robert Iggulden	Matt Thorley
Stephen Cowan	Lucy Ivimy	Peter Tobias
Oliver Craig	Andrew Johnson	Rory Vaughan
Tom Crofts	Donald Johnson	

9. MINUTES

The minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on 26 May 2010 were confirmed and signed as an accurate record.

10. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Helen Binmore, Iain Coleman, Jean Campbell, Gavin Donovan, Jane Law and Mercy Umeh.

11. MAYOR'S/CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (IF ANY)

The Mayor's Announcements were circulated and tabled at the meeting. (Copy attached as Appendix 1 to these minutes).

12. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillor Powell declared a personal interest in agenda item 7.2 (Special Motion 2 – Careers' Centre and Carers Services) as a service user.

The following Councillors declared a personal interest in agenda item 7.7 (Special Motion 7 – H&F Credit Union), as follows:-

- Councillors Greenhalgh and Iggulden declared that they were Members of the Credit Union.
- Councillors Karmel and Hamilton declared that they were on the Board of the North Fulham New Deal for Communities which supports the Credit Union.

13. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (20 MINUTES)

The Mayor called on those members of the public who had submitted questions to the Leader or Cabinet Member to ask their questions. The Leader or the relevant Cabinet Member responded.

13.1 Public Question 1 - Ms Margaret Turley

7.05 pm - The Mayor called on Ms Margaret Turley who had submitted a question to the Cabinet Member for Community Care (Councillor Joe Carlebach) to ask her question. The Cabinet Member for Community Care responded.

13.2 Public Question 2 - Ms Pauline Trapmore

7.07 pm - The Mayor called on Ms Pauline Trapmore who had submitted a question to the Cabinet Member for Community Care (Councillor Joe Carlebach) to ask her question. The Cabinet Member for Community Care responded.

13.3 Public Question 3 - Ms Marjorie Serra

7.09 pm - The Mayor called on Ms Marjorie Serra who had submitted a question to the Leader (Councillor Stephen Greenhalgh) to ask her question. The Leader responded.

13.4 Public Question 4 - Ms Desiree Cranenburgh

7.09 pm - The Mayor called on Ms Desiree Cranenburgh who had submitted a question to the Cabinet Member for Community Care (Councillor Joe Carlebach) to ask her question. The Cabinet Member for Community Care responded.

13.5 Public Question 5 - Mr Bruce Marquart

7.13 pm - The Mayor called on Mr Bruce Marquart who had submitted a question to the Leader (Councillor Stephen Greenhalgh) to ask his question. The Leader responded.

[Copies of all public questions submitted and the replies given are attached at **Appendix 2** to these minutes.]

14. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/COMMITTEE REPORTS

14.1 Petitions Scheme

7.18pm - The report and recommendations were moved for adoption by the Leader, Councillor Stephen Greenhalgh.

The report and recommendations were put to the vote:

FOR	Unanimous
AGAINST	0
ABSTENTIONS	0

The report and recommendations were declared **CARRIED.**

7.18 pm - **RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the Petitions Scheme as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be adopted; and
- (2) That approval be given to amend the Constitution to accommodate the scheme as set out in Appendix 2 to the report.

15. SPECIAL MOTIONS

15.1 Special Motion 1 - Change to Committee Membership

7.19 pm – Councillor Stephen Greenhalgh moved, seconded by Councillor Victoria Brocklebank-Fowler, the special motion standing in their names:

"This Council agrees the following appointment under its Constitution for the rest of the Municipal Year 2010/11, effective from the day after the Council meeting:

Councillor Rachel Ford be appointed a member of the Planning Applications Committee."

The motion was put to the vote:

FOR	Unanimous
AGAINST	0
ABSTENTIONS	0

The motion was declared **CARRIED.**

7.19 pm – **RESOLVED:**

This Council agrees the following appointment under its Constitution for the rest of the Municipal Year 2010/11, effective from the day after the Council meeting:

Councillor Rachel Ford be appointed a member of the Planning Applications Committee.

15.2 Special Motion 2 - Carers' Centre and Carers' Services

7.20 pm – Councillor Rory Vaughan moved, seconded by Councillor Elaine Chumnerly the special motion standing in their names:

“The Council recognises the crucial role played by the many unpaid carers of all ages and from all backgrounds in Hammersmith and Fulham and deplores the Conservative Administration’s removal of critical support for the borough’s unpaid carers. We call on the Administration to reverse plans to close the Carers’ Centre and cut carers’ services.”

Speeches on the motion were made by Councillors Vaughan and Chumnerly (for the Opposition).

Under Council Procedure Rule 15 (e) (vi), Councillor Joe Carlebach moved, seconded by Councillor Peter Tobias, an amendment to the motion, to delete all words after “Hammersmith and Fulham” and replace with:-

“We support the Administration’s efforts to extend the support given to carers in our Borough and recognise and applaud the fact that there has been no cut in the budget provision or spend this year for this service.”

Speeches on the amendment were made by Councillors Carlebach, Tobias and Greenhalgh (for the Administration) and Councillors Needham, Powell and Cowan (for the Opposition) before it was put to the vote:

FOR	26
AGAINST	12
ABSTENTION	0

The amendment to the motion was declared **CARRIED**.

Councillor Vaughan made a speech winding up the debate before the substantive motion was put to the vote:

FOR	27
AGAINST	12
ABSTENTION	0

The substantive motion was declared **CARRIED**.

8.04 pm - **RESOLVED**:

“The Council recognises the crucial role played by the many unpaid carers of all ages and from all backgrounds in Hammersmith and Fulham. We support the Administration’s efforts to extend the support given to carers in our Borough and recognise and applaud the fact that there has been no cut in the budget provision or spend this year for this service.”

15.3 Special Motion 5 - Council Debt

8.04 pm – Under Council Procedure Rule 19 (d) (iii), Councillor Mark Loveday moved, seconded by Councillor Victoria Brocklebank-Fowler, that special motion 5 take precedence over all other motions and be heard.

Councillor Stephen Greenhalgh moved, seconded by Councillor Michael Adam, the special motion standing in their names:

“This Council:

- (1) Welcomes action by 2006-10 Conservative administration to cut non-housing debt by £36 million.
- (2) Notes that it currently pays £5 million a year in debt interest before it spends a single penny on front line services.
- (3) Pledges to halve the level of non-housing debt within the next four years and to repay this debt in full over the longer term.”

Speeches on the motion were made by Councillors Greenhalgh and Adam.

Under Council Procedure Rule 15 (e) (vi), Councillor Stephen Cowan moved, seconded by Councillor Colin Aherne, an amendment to the motion, to delete all words after “This Council and insert;-

"Recognizes the important contribution of the last Labour Administration in paying off £12 million of the £24 million debt the Conservative Administration quoted as the amount of debt reduction it achieved in the period 2006 to 2010.

The Council agrees to protect community assets such as youth clubs, parks, community centres and housing and instead will prioritize the sale of assets not utilized by the community such as staff car parks and excess office space to meet its debt reduction targets.

The Council pledges to seek maximum value for the Borough's tax payers by selling capital assets when market conditions will deliver the Council with the highest likely return."

Speeches on the amendment were made by Councillors Cowan and Powell (for the Opposition) and Councillors Andrew Johnson and Ginn (for the Administration) before it was put to the vote:

FOR	12
AGAINST	27
ABSTENTION	0

The amendment to the motion was declared **LOST**.

Councillor Greenhalgh made a speech winding up the debate before the substantive motion was put to the vote:

FOR	27
AGAINST	12
ABSTENTION	0

The substantive motion was declared **CARRIED**.

8.48 pm - **RESOLVED**:

“This Council:

- (1) Welcomes action by 2006-10 Conservative administration to cut non-housing debt by £36 million.
- (2) Notes that it currently pays £5 million a year in debt interest before it spends a single penny on front line services.
- (3) Pledges to halve the level of non-housing debt within the next four years and to repay this debt in full over the longer term.”

15.4 Special Motion 3 - H&F News

8.48 pm – Councillor Andrew Jones moved, seconded by Councillor PJ Murphy the special motion standing in their names:

“This Council welcomes the findings of the Parliamentary Culture Media and Sports Select Committee in its publication the Future for Local and Regional Media. In particular we note that it referred to the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham in paragraph 73 stating:

“Publications such as Hammersmith and Fulham Borough Council’s H&F News effectively pose as, and compete with, local commercial newspapers and are misleading to the public. It is unacceptable that a local authority can set up a newspaper in direct competition to the local commercial newspaper in this way. Nor should any council publication be a vehicle for political propaganda.”

We also note that Prime Minister David Cameron’s government has published its plans in a document called Our Programme for Government in which it says “We will impose tougher rules to stop unfair competition by local authority newspapers”.

We call on the Administration to dispose of H&F News and end all political propaganda.”

Speeches on the motion were made by Councillors Jones and Murphy (for the Opposition).

Under Council Procedure Rule 15 (e) (vi), Councillor Stephen Greenhalgh moved, seconded by Councillor Peter Graham, an amendment to the motion, to delete all words and insert:

“This Council:

1. Welcomes the substantially lower cost and higher quality provided by h&f news compared to HF Magazine.
2. Endorses the government's proposal that Council publications should offer value for money and that they should not represent unfair competition.
3. Believes that h&f news fulfils these requirements.”

Speeches on the amendment were made by Councillors Greenhalgh, Graham and Karmel (for the Administration) and Councillor Murphy (for the Opposition) before it was put to the vote:

FOR	25
AGAINST	12
ABSTENTION	0

The amendment to the motion was declared **CARRIED**.

Councillor Jones made a speech winding up the debate before the substantive motion was put to the vote:

FOR	25
AGAINST	12
ABSTENTION	0

The substantive motion was declared **CARRIED**.

9.22 pm - **RESOLVED**:

This Council:

1. Welcomes the substantially lower cost and higher quality provided by h&f news compared to HF Magazine.
2. Endorses the government's proposal that Council publications should offer value for money and that they should not represent unfair competition.
3. Believes that h&f news fulfils these requirements.

15.5 Special Motion 4 - Third Runway at Heathrow Airport

9.22pm – Councillor Nicholas Botterill moved, seconded by Councillor Robert Iggulden, the special motion standing in their names:

“This Council welcomes the government's swift implementation of its manifesto commitment to cancel the proposed third runway at Heathrow Airport.”

Speeches on the motion were made by Councillors Nicholas Botterill and Robert Iggulden.

Under Council Procedure Rule 15 (e) (vi), Councillor Michael Cartwright moved, seconded by Councillor Lisa Homan, an amendment to the motion, to delete all words after “welcomes” in the first line and insert:-

“BAA's decision to withdraw its planning application for the third runway and the Coalition's subsequent decision to make clear it would not allow it to happen anyway.

This Council regrets the Coalition decision not to allow a representative of the resident groups such as HACAN to sit on the new airports Task Force and calls on the Coalition to reverse this decision and recognise the vital work that they performed in opposing R 3”.

Speeches on the amendment were made by Councillors Cartwright and Homan (for the Opposition) and Councillors Botterill and Cooney (for the Administration) before it was put to the vote:

FOR	12
AGAINST	27
ABSTENTION	0

The amendment to the motion was declared **LOST**.

The substantive motion was put to the vote:

FOR	Unanimous
AGAINST	0
ABSTENTION	0

The substantive motion was declared **CARRIED**.

9.47 pm - **RESOLVED**:

“This Council welcomes the government's swift implementation of its manifesto commitment to cancel the proposed third runway at Heathrow Airport.”

15.6 Special Motion 6 - Western Extension of the Congestion Charge Zone

9.48pm – Councillor Nicholas Botterill moved, seconded by Councillor Thomas Crofts, the special motion standing in their names:

“This Council:

- (1) Notes the damage caused to residents and businesses in the borough by the ill-conceived Western Extension of the Congestion Charge Zone introduced by the Mayor of London's predecessor.
- (2) Notes the overwhelming opposition of borough residents and businesses to the Western Extension.
- (3) Welcomes the announcement of the Mayor of London Boris Johnson that the Western Extension will be abolished by Christmas 2010.”

Speeches on the motion were made by Councillors Botterill and Crofts.

Under Council Procedure Rule 15 (e) (vi), Councillor Wesley Harcourt moved, seconded by Councillor Colin Aherne, an amendment to the motion, to add new point 3:-

"(3) Notes that the previous Labour Administration opposed the Western Extension and the current members of the Labour Group also oppose it."

Renumber current (3)."

Speeches on the amendment were made by Councillor Harcourt (for the Opposition) and Councillor Botterill (for the Administration) before it was put to the vote:

FOR	11
AGAINST	26
ABSTENTIONS	0

The amendment to the motion was declared **LOST**.

The substantive motion was put to the vote:

FOR	27
AGAINST	0
ABSTENTIONS	11

The substantive motion was declared **CARRIED**.

9.57 pm - **RESOLVED**:

That this Council:

- (1) Notes the damage caused to residents and businesses in the borough by the ill-conceived Western Extension of the Congestion Charge Zone introduced by the Mayor of London's predecessor.
- (2) Notes the overwhelming opposition of borough residents and businesses to the Western Extension.
- (3) Welcomes the announcement of the Mayor of London Boris Johnson that the Western Extension will be abolished by Christmas 2010.

15.7 Special Motion 7 - H&F Credit Union

10.02pm – Councillor Harry Phibbs moved, seconded by Councillor Mark Loveday, the special motion standing in their names:

“This Council:

- (1) Congratulates the H&F Credit Union on its provision of straightforward, affordable financial services to anyone living in Hammersmith & Fulham.
- (2) Urges residents and staff to join the Credit Union and help it to continue to flourish.”

As the meeting had run out of debating time, the motion was put to the vote:

FOR	Unanimous
AGAINST	0
ABSTENTIONS	0

The motion was declared **CARRIED**.

10.02 pm - **RESOLVED**:

That this Council:

- (1) Congratulates the H&F Credit Union on its provision of straightforward, affordable financial services to anyone living in Hammersmith & Fulham.
- (2) Urges residents and staff to join the Credit Union and help it to continue to flourish.

Councillor Vaughan announced that he worked for the Financial Services Authority and left the Council Chamber during the discussion and did not vote on the motion.

16. **INFORMATION REPORTS - TO NOTE**

16.1 Changes to Cabinet Portfolios

10.03pm - The Mayor noted that the Leader had approved the transfer of portfolio responsibility for the 2012 Olympics (including the London Youth Games) to the Cabinet Member for Residents Services.

16.2 Special Urgency Decisions - Monitoring Report

10.03pm - The Mayor noted the information report on special urgency decisions taken between 1 February to 31 May 2010.

* * * * * CONCLUSION OF BUSINESS * * * * *

Meeting started: 7.00 pm
Meeting ended: 10.03 pm

Mayor

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE MAYOR

1. On 27th May 2010, I attended the Hammersmith Society Annual General Meeting, Island Studios, 22 St Peter's Square, W6
2. On 28th May, I attended London Oratory School Patronal Festival, The Oratory Church, Brompton Road, South Kensington
3. On 1st June, I attended the Age Concern 'Volunteers Week' Celebrations, 105 Greyhound Road W6
4. On 3rd June, accompanied by Mr George Sulimirski, my Consort, I attended a reception in aid of The Maggie's Centre, Grand Hall Olympia, W14
5. On 5th June, I attended the LMA Induction for New Mayors', Westminster City Hall, SW1
6. On 6th June, accompanied by Cllr Frances Stainton, Deputy Mayor and Mrs Diana Sulimirski, my Mayoress, I was delighted to attend the World Polo event, Hurlingham Park, SW6
7. On 7th June, I attended my chosen charity RNLI photocall and cruise along the Thames, Chiswick Lifeboat Station, W4
8. On 9th June, accompanied by my Mayoress, I attended the Aegon Tennis Championships, Queens Club, W14
9. On 11th June, I attended a luncheon with the catering students of Ealing, Hammersmith & West London College, Gliddon Road, W14
10. On 12th June, accompanied by my Mayoress, I attended Capel Manor College, Bullsmoor Lane, Enfield, EN1
11. On 14th June, I attended and welcomed Dr Mary Robinson, former President of Ireland and His Excellency, Mr Bobby McDonagh, Ambassador for Ireland, to the Irish Support and Advice Service 40th Anniversary celebrations, Irish Cultural Centre, Blacks Road, W6
12. On 14th June, accompanied by my Mayoress, I attended a schools performance of Swanning Around, Royal Albert Hall, SW7

13. On 15th June, accompanied by my Consort, I attended the London Mayors' Association, 'New Civic Mayors' reception, Westminster City Hall.
14. On 20th June, accompanied by Miss Lavender Hastie, my Mayoress, I attended the 'National Cycle Network' 10th anniversary celebration, and travelled to the event by rickshaw, Priors Bank, SW6
15. On 20th June, accompanied by my Mayoress, I attended The Hurlingham Club Garden Party and ILTC Reception, Hurlingham Club, SW6
16. On 21st June, I was honoured to raise the Armed Forces Day flag, to mark the start of the week long event, HTH Roof, W6
17. On 23rd June, I attended a Citizenship Ceremony during which, I presented each citizen with their official certificate, Council Chamber, FTH
18. On 23rd June, I attended and officially launched the Sands End Community Boxing Club, Hurlingham & Chelsea School, Peterborough Road, SW6
19. On 25th June, I attended the H&F Refugee Week celebration event, Assembly Hall, HTH
20. On 26th June, accompanied by my Mayoress, I attended and co-judged the Normand Park Dog Show, Normand Park, Lillie Road, SW6
21. On 26th June, I was delighted to officially open the new Playground in Marcus Garvey Park, Gorleston Street, W14
22. On 27th June, accompanied by my Mayoress, I attended the annual Hong Kong Dragon Boat Race Festival, London Regatta Centre, Royal Albert Docks, E16
23. On 28th June, I attended the presentation ceremony by Wing Commander Mike Dudgeon Deputy Lieutenant for H&F, of the 'Queens Award for Enterprise 2010' to Studio E Architects Ltd, Larmenier & Sacred Heart Primary School, Brook Green, W14
24. On 29th June, accompanied by my Mayoress, I attended the Republic of Poland, Book Launch, Embassy of the Republic of Poland, Portland Place, W1B
25. On 29th June, accompanied by my Mayoress, I attended the Society of Women Artists 'Summer Exhibition', Mall Galleries, The Mall, SW1

26. On 30th June, I attended a Citizenship Ceremony during which, I presented each citizen with their official certificate, Council Chamber, FTH

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

COUNCIL MEETING – 30 JUNE 2010

Question by: Ms Margaret Turley

To the: Cabinet Member for Community Care

QUESTION

“The Council’s strap line says it is “Putting Residents First”. How is the Council doing that with Hammersmith and Fulham’s unpaid carers?”

Response:

- The council is fully committed to supporting unpaid carers.
- In 2008, the council undertook extensive consultation with carers and key stakeholders as part of a process to review the borough’s 5 year Carers’ Strategy.
- The purpose of the review was to take stock, evaluate progress to date against key objectives to date and develop a revised action plan to deliver the outcomes the council’s wants to achieve by 2011.
- One of the key findings of the strategy review was that only a minority of the total carers in the borough are being identified and receiving services. In order to improve this, it is clear that carers’ support services need to outreach into the community and link with services, resources and networks that carers are already engaged with.
- The current contract for the provision of adult and young carer support service in the Borough, currently supplied by the Carers’ Centre, will end in July 2010, the new improved service for Carers in the Borough will be in place from the 1st August.
- Carers will be able to access services locally, with support groups activities being held in different areas of the borough.
- To ensure carers can access the support and advice they need, a dedicated Carer Helpline will be introduced as part of the new service.
- A leaflet is in the process of being circulated to carers, containing information about the new improved service, which will help carers to continue in their caring role.
- It is our aim to offer the best possible service we can to our carers and that is why we are making these changes.

Achievements in 09/10

- A Carers’ Strategy Group was established to provide leadership and shape direction for implementing the action plan. Carers and key stakeholders are represented.
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- Total spend on Carers Support i.e. Carers Centre and others is £1,122,000; made up of Respite = £267k (incl £20k for emergency planning); Carers Support Service Contract = £236K; Ad-hoc payments/small grants/salary = £146k; Alzheimers = £163k; Health Gain Money = £310k.
- The council participated voluntarily in a new national government carers' survey, to gain a comprehensive picture of our carers' views on support and services available.
- The council engaged with H&F LINK to make carers' issues important. LINK steering group representatives now attend the Carers' Strategy Group.
- Two full-time health trainers for carers were appointed to offer tailored advice, motivation and practical support to individuals who want to adopt a healthier lifestyle. During this first year, 56 carers have accessed the service. We have increased the number of health trainers for carers from 2-4 in 10/11.
- 1200 information booklets were circulated to over 120 GPs, pharmacists, places of worship and libraries.
- In a pro-active attempt to reach and provide support to 'hidden carers', 3868 information booklets were mailed out to registered blue badge holders.
- Carer support services were advertised through the Life Channel in 24 of the borough's GP surgeries.
- A 'Carers' Individual Budget' pilot scheme commenced to offer carers a direct payment to purchase services, including short breaks, to alleviate the stress of caring. In total, 148 assessments were completed, with just under £100,000 allocated. 135 carers' small grants were also approved.
- Emergency care planning is available to carers with 97 plans completed.

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

COUNCIL MEETING – 30 JUNE 2010

Question by: Ms Pauline Trapmore

To the: Cabinet Member for Community Care

QUESTION

“How much public money in total was spent by LBHF on all aspects of the tender for the carers’ services contract? Please break the total figure down to show what was spent from when the review began in 2008 right up to date. The Council will be aware that cost for this covers an eclectic range of areas from legal advice, training for panel members to press relations, etc. Please detail all.”

RESPONSE:

The total amount spent by LBHF on all aspects of the tender/review was – **£19,090.41**

Breakdown:

- National advertisements in Community Care Magazine (£1435.85 ex VAT) and The Guardian (£2870.40) - £4306.25
- Representative from CarersUk - £5000. To ensure transparency, a national expert was recruited to support 6 carers through the tendering assessment process. Their remit was to fully participate in the evaluation of bids, run a training workshop, offer additional support carers and submit a ‘User Involvement’ report. This will be used in future council tendering exercises.
- Hire of the Irish Centre for carer involvement training workshop (incl. refreshments) - £141.77
- Carer involvement expenses - £340
- Legal expenses from July 2009 to date - £6,918.90. This amounts to 89.5 hours of time.
- Procurement/Commissioning officer time - no additional cost as existing resources used

Expenditure related to the strategy review:

- Hire of venues for 2 consultation events (including refreshments), Irish Centre (£1325.99) and Bush Hall (£1057.50) - £2383.49

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

COUNCIL MEETING – 30 JUNE 2010

Question by: Ms Marjorie Serra

To the: The Leader

QUESTION

“We understand that the Hammersmith and Fulham Carers Centre has been valued at £1.7million. Please confirm your understanding of the building’s value.”

RESPONSE

We assume the property referred to is 182 Hammersmith Road which the Council owns. We do not have a valuation report valuing the property at £1.7million.

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

COUNCIL MEETING – 30 JUNE 2010

Question by: Ms Desiree Cranenburgh

To the: Cabinet Member for Community Care

QUESTION

“Before the election the Council gave indications that the Hammersmith and Fulham Carers Centre would get the new contract. Why was it announced almost immediately after the election date that the Hammersmith and Fulham Carers Centre would not be awarded the contract? Please detail the exact date the decision was made.”

Response:

The council did not give any such indications. All deliberations by the Tender Appraisal Panel (TAP) and decision makers who approve the TAP’s recommendations are completely confidential until such time as the decision is made and the council chooses to make this decision public.

The date the decision was made was part of the standard timeline for the council’s tender approvals process. The decision was made by the Director of Community Services in line with his delegated duties on the 11th May 2010.

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

COUNCIL MEETING – 30 JUNE 2010

Question by: Mr Bruce Marquart

To the: The Leader

QUESTION

"There are many voluntary groups, including ours, delivering extensive front-line services and jobs to local LBHF residents. We all have tenancies due to expire in August, 2010 at 241 King Street, Palingswick House, what are the future conditions for a Long term Lease Extension to Palingswick House so that this work can continue uninterrupted?"

Response:

In order to protect front line services from the impact of tightening finances, we have made a commitment to reduce the council's levels of debt. We currently owe £133 million which costs us £5 million in interest payments alone - money which could otherwise be spent on vital services such as home care for the elderly and child protection.

Our priority has to be council services before buildings.

Reducing our debt means selling assets that do not currently provide value for money. We plan to dispose of buildings we no longer need, or where services could be better and more cost-effectively delivered from alternative sites that are not suitable for disposal. We will use the proceeds from these sales to cut our debts and to protect spending on services, including voluntary sector grants.

A number of council buildings must be considered for disposal - where they do not offer excellent value for money, are not sited in our areas of highest needs, are poor in terms of access and would not be cost effective to retain.

We believe that establishing community hubs in the highest areas of deprivation in the borough will better meet the accommodation needs of the 3rd sector now and in years to come. The council is establishing a hub in Edward Woods Estate in the north of the borough, and Fulham NDC are also establishing a hub in the south of the borough.

With these points in mind, the Council will be consulting on the future of Palingswick House from July, with a view to a Cabinet decision on the future of the building later this year.

Whilst I fully appreciate the concerns of organisations based in Palingswick House, the economic climate and reducing the council's debt must remain our key priority.