

COUNCIL MINUTES

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY 18 JANUARY 2023



PRESENT

The Mayor – Councillor Emma Apthorp
Deputy Mayor – Councillor Daryl Brown

Councillors:

Jose Afonso	Rebecca Harvey	Patricia Quigley
Aliya Afzal-Khan	Sharon Holder	Rowan Ree
Paul Alexander	Lisa Homan	Lucy Richardson
Adronie Alford	Laura Janes	Helen Rowbottom
Stala Antoniadis	Andrew Jones	Alex Sanderson
Jackie Borland	Alex Karmel	Asif Siddique
Victoria Brocklebank-Fowler	Bora Kwon	Nikos Souslous
Trey Campbell-Simon	Adam Peter Lang	Dominic Stanton
Florian Chevoppe-Verdier	Ross Melton	Nicole Trehy
Ben Coleman	Omid Miri	Frances Umeh
Liz Collins	David Morton	Mercy Umeh
Stephen Cowan	Genevieve Nwaogbe	Rory Vaughan
Jacolyn Daly	Adrian Pascu-Tulbure	Patrick Walsh
Andrew Dinsmore	Ashok Patel	
Wesley Harcourt	Natalia Perez	
	Zarar Qayyum	

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Sally Taylor, Max Schmid, Amanda Lloyd-Harris, and Ann Rosenberg.

Apologies for lateness were received from Councillors Andrew Jones, Laura Janes, and Trey Campbell-Simon.

Councillor Patricia Quigley attended the meeting remotely.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillor Rory Vaughan declared non-pecuniary interests in Special Motions 3 and 7 due to his employment as a financial regulator and left the room for the debates and votes on those motions.

Councillors Adronie Alford and Alex Karmel declared non-pecuniary interests in Special Motion 7 as deferred members of the LBHF pension scheme. The Councillors considered that this did not give rise to a perception of a conflict of interests, and it would be reasonable to participate in the debates and votes on the motions.

Councillor Jackie Borland declared a non-pecuniary interest in Special Motion 2 as the director of a company which owned LBHF leasehold property. Councillor Borland considered that this did not give rise to a perception of a conflict of interests, and it would be reasonable to participate in the debate and vote on the motion.

Councillor Dominic Stanton declared a non-pecuniary interest in Special Motion 2 as a resident of a property where LBHF was the freeholder. Councillor Stanton considered that this did not give rise to a perception of a conflict of interests, and it would be reasonable to participate in the debate and vote on the motion.

3. MINUTES

Councillor Rory Vaughan noted that the following declaration made at the previous meeting was missing from the minutes and asked that it be added under Declarations of Interests:

“Councillor Rory Vaughan declared non-pecuniary interests in Special Motions 5, 6, and 9 due to his employment as a financial regulator and left the room for the debate and voting on those items.”

7.07pm – With the amendment noted above, the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 19 October 2022 were agreed as an accurate record.

4. MAYOR'S/CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Death of Honorary Freeman George Cohen MBE

The Mayor noted, with great sadness, the death of Honorary Freeman George Cohen MBE who passed away on 23 December 2022.

The Leader, Councillor Stephen Cowan, and Councillor Alex Karmel made speeches of remembrance.

The Council then observed a minute of silence in his memory.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (20 MINUTES)

The Mayor thanked the residents who submitted questions. Questions 1 and 2 were addressed in the meeting. The Mayor explained that any questions not addressed in the meeting would receive written responses. All questions and responses can be found in Appendix 1.

6. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/COMMITTEE REPORTS

6.1 Council Tax Support Scheme 2023/24

7.28pm – The report and recommendations were formally moved for adoption by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Reform, Councillor Rowan Ree.

Speeches on the report were made by Councillors Ree and Daly (for the Administration).

The report and recommendations were put to the vote:

FOR	UNANIMOUS
AGAINST	0
NOT VOTING	0

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

7.37pm – RESOLVED:

That Full Council agreed:

1. That the Council Tax Support Scheme in operation in 2022/2023 (included at Appendix 1) shall continue in 2023/2024.
2. That the Council shall apply the annual uprating of allowances, applicable amounts and income, set out in the DWP Housing Benefit circular, to the Council Tax Support scheme for 2023/2024.

6.2 Council Tax Base and Collection 2023/24 and Delegation of the Business Rates Estimate

7.37pm – The report and recommendations were formally moved for adoption by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Reform, Councillor Rowan Ree.

The report and recommendations were then put to the vote:

FOR	UNANIMOUS
AGAINST	0
NOT VOTING	0

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

7.38pm – RESOLVED:

1. That Full Council approved the following for the financial year 2023/24:
 - a. The estimated numbers of properties for each Valuation Band as set out in the report.

- b. An estimated collection rate of 97.0%.
- c. The Council Tax Base of 83,936 Band “D” equivalent properties.
- d. The delegation of authority to the Director of Finance to determine the business rates tax base for 2023/24.

6.3 **Review of the Constitution**

7.38pm – The report and recommendations were formally moved for adoption by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Reform, Councillor Rowan Ree.

The report and recommendations were then put to the vote:

FOR	UNANIMOUS
AGAINST	0
NOT VOTING	0

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

7.38pm – RESOLVED:

1. That Full Council approved the revisions to the Constitution listed in the report.
2. That Full Council approved the updates terms of reference for the North West London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee attached at Appendix 1 to the report.
3. That Full Council noted the amendment to the responsibilities of the Assistant Director, Legal Services.

6.4 **Council Calendar of Meetings 2023/24**

7.38pm – The report and recommendations were formally moved for adoption by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Reform, Councillor Rowan Ree.

The report and recommendations were then put to the vote:

FOR	UNANIMOUS
AGAINST	0
NOT VOTING	0

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

7.38pm – RESOLVED:

1. That the 2023/24 Council calendar of meetings at Appendix 1 be approved.

7. **SPECIAL MOTIONS**

7.39pm – Councillor Genevieve Nwaogbe moved, seconded by Councillor Patrick Walsh, a motion under Standing Order 15(e)3 to change the order of the special motions as follows: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 1, 2.

The motion was then put to the vote:

FOR	33
AGAINST	9
NOT VOTING	1

The motion was declared **CARRIED**.

7.3 **Special Motion 3 - Liz Truss**

7.40pm – Councillor Nicole Trehy moved, seconded by Genevieve Nwaogbe, the special motion in their names:

“The Council notes that the Resolution Foundation has calculated that the Truss Conservative government was responsible for causing at least £30bn of the fiscal hole now in the UK’s finances.

The Council calls on all the Conservative members who voted to make Liz Truss the Conservative Party leader and UK Prime Minister, and the Conservative MPs who served in her administration as ministers, to apologise for damaging Britain and wreaking havoc on Hammersmith & Fulham’s residents and businesses.”

Speeches on the motion were made by Councillors Trehy (who made her maiden speech), Lang, Miri, and Coleman (for the Administration) – and Pascu-Tulbure, Karmel, and Dinsmore (for the Opposition).

Councillor Trehy made a short speech winding up the debate before the motion was put to the vote:

FOR	33
AGAINST	9
NOT VOTING	1

I declare the motion **CARRIED**.

8.10pm – RESOLVED:

The Council notes that the Resolution Foundation has calculated that the Truss Conservative government was responsible for causing at least £30bn of the fiscal hole now in the UK’s finances.

The Council calls on all the Conservative members who voted to make Liz Truss the Conservative Party leader and UK Prime Minister, and the Conservative MPs who served in her administration as ministers, to apologise for damaging Britain and wreaking havoc on Hammersmith & Fulham’s residents and businesses.

“Councillor Rory Vaughan declared non-pecuniary interests in the Special Motion due to his employment as a financial regulator and left the room for the debate”.

7.4 Special Motion 4 - The crisis in the NHS and the importance of having saved Charing Cross Hospital

8.10pm – Councillor Ben Coleman moved, seconded by Councillor Patricia Quigley, the special motion in their names:

“This Council:

Deplores the crisis in the NHS.

Notes that the underlying causes of the crisis are not new and are the result of political choices made in the name of the Conservative government’s ideologically-driven austerity programme.

Notes that by 2010, the Labour government had reduced NHS waiting lists to 2.5m but that waiting lists rose to 4.4m over the next 10 years under the Conservative government, which included Greg Hands as Chief Secretary to Treasury.

Notes that since 2010, the government’s limited increases in funding for the NHS have failed to keep pace with the growth in demand from a rapidly ageing and ailing population.

Notes that the UK now has a lower overall health spend than comparable countries and that a lack of investment in recruitment, training and buildings has resulted in fewer doctors, nurses, beds and intensive care places per head of population than in comparable countries – for example, the UK has just a third of hospital beds by population of Germany.

Regrets that this meant the NHS entered Covid in a weaker state than comparable countries, with an existing shortage of beds and equipment and a 4.4m waiting list.

Notes that, as a Financial Times analyst put it on 23 December 2022, “The effects of the Conservative austerity programme during the Cameron-Osborne years have been steadily accumulating over the past decade, but this winter that trickle has become a torrent.”

Recalls the findings of the 2010 Marmot Review that the lower people’s social and economic status, the poorer their health, and that health is affected by “social determinants” such as housing, income, education, social isolation and disability.

Notes that the Conservative government, aided and abetted by Greg Hands while Chief Secretary to the Treasury, reduced benefits, introduced the bedroom tax, cut rent subsidy (increasing overcrowding and making families take children out of school and move away), cut councils’ funding, neglected social care, reduced the funding available for social housing and instigated a myriad of other damaging measures which made people poorer and less healthy.

Notes that real wages have now fallen to less than where they were 18 years ago, and that life expectancy is lower than in most other developed countries and avoidable mortality higher than in these.

Notes the essential role played by Charing Cross Hospital during the Covid crisis and the huge challenges facing the hospital now, and thanks its dedicated doctors, nurses and support staff for their ongoing care for H&F residents.

Notes that Charing Cross Hospital would not be able to play its essential role if the destructive plans signed off by the Conservative Health Secretary and supported by Conservative politicians in Hammersmith, Fulham and Chelsea had been realised to:

- *Demolish the hospital and sell off most of the site*
- *Replace the hospital with a series of clinics on a site no more than 13% the size*
- *Re-brand these clinics as a “local hospital”*
- *Replace the A&E with an urgent care clinic*
- *Lose more than 300, and possibly all, acute care beds.*

Welcomes the success of the campaign by H&F Labour Council and residents to save Charing Cross Hospital.

Highlights the Council’s excellent record of timely discharge of patients from hospitals across North West London with suitable care in place.

Highlights the crucial role played by the Council’s “reablement” service in helping people who leave hospital to regain their independence, making future hospital care less likely.

Congratulates the reablement service for achieving the very highest Care Quality Commission rating of Outstanding in three inspections in a row, and notes the extra difficulty of achieving such a rating in such tough times, when the demand for NHS and social care is at its highest.

Urges the government to apologise for the crisis into which it has driven the NHS and to call a general election so that the country can vote for a change of government.”

Speeches on the motion were made by Councillors Coleman, Quigley, Vaughan, Perez, Souslous (for the Administration) – and Councillors Borland and Afonso (for the Opposition).

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

FOR	33
AGAINST	9
NOT VOTING	1

The motion was declared **CARRIED**.

8.51pm – RESOLVED:

This Council:

Deplores the crisis in the NHS.

Notes that the underlying causes of the crisis are not new and are the result of political choices made in the name of the Conservative government's ideologically-driven austerity programme.

Notes that by 2010, the Labour government had reduced NHS waiting lists to 2.5m but that waiting lists rose to 4.4m over the next 10 years under the Conservative government, which included Greg Hands as Chief Secretary to Treasury.

Notes that since 2010, the government's limited increases in funding for the NHS have failed to keep pace with the growth in demand from a rapidly ageing and ailing population.

Notes that the UK now has a lower overall health spend than comparable countries and that a lack of investment in recruitment, training and buildings has resulted in fewer doctors, nurses, beds and intensive care places per head of population than in comparable countries – for example, the UK has just a third of hospital beds by population of Germany.

Regrets that this meant the NHS entered Covid in a weaker state than comparable countries, with an existing shortage of beds and equipment and a 4.4m waiting list.

Notes that, as a Financial Times analyst put it on 23 December 2022, "The effects of the Conservative austerity programme during the Cameron-Osborne years have been steadily accumulating over the past decade, but this winter that trickle has become a torrent."

Recalls the findings of the 2010 Marmot Review that the lower people's social and economic status, the poorer their health, and that health is affected by "social determinants" such as housing, income, education, social isolation and disability.

Notes that the Conservative government, aided and abetted by Greg Hands while Chief Secretary to the Treasury, reduced benefits, introduced the bedroom tax, cut rent subsidy (increasing overcrowding and making families take children out of school and move away), cut councils' funding, neglected social care, reduced the funding available for social housing and instigated a myriad of other damaging measures which made people poorer and less healthy.

Notes that real wages have now fallen to less than where they were 18 years ago, and that life expectancy is lower than in most other developed countries and avoidable mortality higher than in these.

Notes the essential role played by Charing Cross Hospital during the Covid crisis and the huge challenges facing the hospital now, and thanks its dedicated doctors, nurses and support staff for their ongoing care for H&F residents.

Notes that Charing Cross Hospital would not be able to play its essential role if the destructive plans signed off by the Conservative Health Secretary and supported by Conservative politicians in Hammersmith, Fulham and Chelsea had been realised to:

- Demolish the hospital and sell off most of the site
- Replace the hospital with a series of clinics on a site no more than 13% the size
- Re-brand these clinics as a “local hospital”
- Replace the A&E with an urgent care clinic
- Lose more than 300, and possibly all, acute care beds.

Welcomes the success of the campaign by H&F Labour Council and residents to save Charing Cross Hospital.

Highlights the Council’s excellent record of timely discharge of patients from hospitals across North West London with suitable care in place.

Highlights the crucial role played by the Council’s “reablement” service in helping people who leave hospital to regain their independence, making future hospital care less likely.

Congratulates the reablement service for achieving the very highest Care Quality Commission rating of Outstanding in three inspections in a row, and notes the extra difficulty of achieving such a rating in such tough times, when the demand for NHS and social care is at its highest.

Urges the government to apologise for the crisis into which it has driven the NHS and to call a general election so that the country can vote for a change of government.

7.5 **Special Motion 5 - The Conservative government’s failing justice system**

8.51pm – Councillor Rebecca Harvey moved, seconded by Councillor Lisa Homan, the special motion in their names:

“The Council is deeply concerned that crime is rising nationally.

- *Police-recorded violence is up 13% from nearly 1.8 million cases to more than 2 million in 2021.*
- *Increases have been seen across most crime types, with levels of some, such as sexual offences, now exceeding pre-pandemic levels.*
- *Sexual offences have increased by 32% compared with the previous year.*
- *A similar pattern exists for most violent crime types, such as homicide, which up by 25% following a 20% fall the previous year.*
- *37% of sexual offences recorded are rape and more rape is being reported, yet according to the Victims Commissioner for England and Wales the number of prosecutions has fallen nearly 60%.*

The Council is concerned that there are insufficient police due to the government’s ideological programme of austerity.

The Council notes that there is a disastrous court backlog of cases waiting to be heard, with closures of courts and underfunding of the criminal justice system, court buildings in disrepair and court estates being sold off when there is clearly a need for them. Criminal trials are being delayed due to lack of barristers to prosecute and defend the cases.

The Council supports the proactive measures that Hammersmith & Fulham's Labour administration has taken to mitigate the damaging performance of the Conservative government on crime and make our streets safer. These include:

- Investing £5.5 million on CCTV to improve and grow the borough's 24/7 network of CCTV cameras over the next five years*
- Creating the country's largest council Law Enforcement Team, with 72 LET officers who are working to make our streets safer*
- Investing in a specialised Gangs Unit dedicated to safeguarding children and young people*
- Engaging dedicated officers to support women and girls.*

The Council recognises the dedication and the effectiveness of its Community Safety and Law Enforcement Teams in working to make residents safer.

The Council calls on the Conservative government to fund the police and criminal justice system properly so that residents and those that come to work in and visit Hammersmith and Fulham feel safe and protected."

Speeches on the motion were made by Councillors Harvey, Homan, Patel, and Cowan (for the Administration) – and Councillors Afonso and Dinsmore (for the Opposition).

Councillor Harvey then made a speech winding up the debate before the motion was put to the vote:

FOR	33
AGAINST	9
NOT VOTING	1

The motion was declared **CARRIED**.

9.24pm – RESOLVED:

The Council is deeply concerned that crime is rising nationally.

- Police-recorded violence is up 13% from nearly 1.8 million cases to more than 2 million in 2021.
- Increases have been seen across most crime types, with levels of some, such as sexual offences, now exceeding pre-pandemic levels.
- Sexual offences have increased by 32% compared with the previous year.
- A similar pattern exists for most violent crime types, such as homicide, which up by 25% following a 20% fall the previous year.
- 37% of sexual offences recorded are rape and more rape is being reported, yet according to the Victims Commissioner for England and Wales the number of prosecutions has fallen nearly 60%.

The Council is concerned that there are insufficient police due to the government's ideological programme of austerity.

The Council notes that there is a disastrous court backlog of cases waiting to be heard, with closures of courts and underfunding of the criminal justice system, court buildings in disrepair and court estates being sold off when there is clearly a need for them. Criminal trials are being delayed due to lack of barristers to prosecute and defend the cases.

The Council supports the proactive measures that Hammersmith & Fulham's Labour administration has taken to mitigate the damaging performance of the Conservative government on crime and make our streets safer. These include:

- Investing £5.5 million on CCTV to improve and grow the borough's 24/7 network of CCTV cameras over the next five years
- Creating the country's largest council Law Enforcement Team, with 72 LET officers who are working to make our streets safer
- Investing in a specialised Gangs Unit dedicated to safeguarding children and young people
- Engaging dedicated officers to support women and girls.

The Council recognises the dedication and the effectiveness of its Community Safety and Law Enforcement Teams in working to make residents safer.

The Council calls on the Conservative government to fund the police and criminal justice system properly so that residents and those that come to work in and visit Hammersmith and Fulham feel safe and protected.

7.6 **Special Motion 6 - Risk to voting rights from Conservative photo identification requirement**

9.24pm – Councillor Bora Kwon moved, seconded by Councillor Patrick Walsh, the special motion in their names:

“The Council regrets the Conservative government's hurried plans to introduce photo identification for voters in national and local elections from May 2023 this year.

In a country where there is no existing form of compulsory identity documentation, imposing such a demand will be a barrier to participation in democracy for those who are not in possession of a passport or driving licence, both of which cost money to apply for and obtain. The move in particular imposes restrictions on, and disenfranchises, younger voters, who are less likely to have a qualifying photo ID.

Given the delays and long wait times to obtain passports due to shocking delays at the Home Office, the Council also has serious concerns about the Home Office's ability to put in place and run an alternative photo ID scheme. The shameful experiences of the Windrush generation show what can happen when we take for granted the ability of the Home Office to maintain accurate records on identity of this country's citizens.

The proposed requirement for photo ID will impose demands on council officers and public officials who run elections and may lead to valid voters across the country being turned away from the polling stations and denied their right to vote.

The extra burden on officers presiding over elections will also push up costs at a time when local government budgets are under unprecedented pressure.

The Council notes that elections in this country are very well run, with extremely low levels of voter fraud, and that public confidence in the process is high. The borough of Hammersmith and Fulham has an extremely efficient, well-regarded elections team.

Should the scheme come in, the Council commits to taking every step to ensure that all Hammersmith & Fulham residents entitled to vote are able to in future local and national elections.

Rather than putting up barriers to democracy, the government should be encouraging participation in the democratic process. The Council therefore calls on the government to scrap its proposed voter identification scheme.”

Speeches on the motion were made by Councillors Kwon, Walsh, Holder, Chevoppe-Verdier, and Jones (for the Administration) – and Councillors Brocklebank-Fowler and Karmel (for the Opposition).

Councillor Kwon then made a short speech winding up the debate as the guillotine fell. The motion was then put to the vote:

FOR	33
AGAINST	9
NOT VOTING	1

The motion was declared **CARRIED**.

10.05pm – RESOLVED:

The Council regrets the Conservative government’s hurried plans to introduce photo identification for voters in national and local elections from May 2023 this year.

In a country where there is no existing form of compulsory identity documentation, imposing such a demand will be a barrier to participation in democracy for those who are not in possession of a passport or driving licence, both of which cost money to apply for and obtain. The move in particular imposes restrictions on, and disenfranchises, younger voters, who are less likely to have a qualifying photo ID.

Given the delays and long wait times to obtain passports due to shocking delays at the Home Office, the Council also has serious concerns about the Home Office’s ability to put in place and run an alternative photo ID scheme. The shameful experiences of the Windrush generation show what can happen when we take for granted the ability of the Home Office to maintain accurate records on identity of this country’s citizens.

The proposed requirement for photo ID will impose demands on council officers and public officials who run elections and may lead to valid voters across the country being turned away from the polling stations and denied their right to vote.

The extra burden on officers presiding over elections will also push up costs at a time when local government budgets are under unprecedented pressure.

The Council notes that elections in this country are very well run, with extremely low levels of voter fraud, and that public confidence in the process is high. The borough of Hammersmith and Fulham has an extremely efficient, well-regarded elections team.

Should the scheme come in, the Council commits to taking every step to ensure that all Hammersmith & Fulham residents entitled to vote are able to in future local and national elections.

Rather than putting up barriers to democracy, the government should be encouraging participation in the democratic process. The Council therefore calls on the government to scrap its proposed voter identification scheme.

7.7 Special Motion 7 - Hammersmith & Fulham Pension Fund

The special motion was withdrawn.

7.1 Special Motion 1 - Tackling Violent Crime

The special motion was withdrawn.

7.2 Special Motion 2 - The Housing Department

The special motion was withdrawn.

Meeting started: 7.04 pm
Meeting ended: 10.06 pm

Mayor

Appendix 1 – Public Questions and Responses

Question 1

From: Casey Abaraonye, Resident

To: The Cabinet Member for Public Realm / The Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Ecology

Question: “The Council is proposing to introduce Clean Air Neighbourhoods and we cannot welcome this initiative enough. We are aware that to improve our environment we need to reclaim the way it has been ceded to motor vehicles and their use, and that now, planning around our public space starts from the influence of and impact on the motor vehicle.

Clean Air Neighbourhoods are part of the approach to address this. In order to take an overall approach to the many components of the part vehicles play in our environment, what is the council's transport strategy?”

Response from the Cabinet Member for Public Realm:

The Council's Transport Plan is set out in the second Local Implementation Plan LIP3 2019-2041 which outlines the borough transport objectives and delivery plan. The recently approved Clean Air Neighbourhoods programme is a borough wide initiative which seeks to integrate workstreams from across the Council, including the Transport Plan, to deliver an ambitious programme of 14 areas over the next 2 years.

The outline programme was agreed by Cabinet in November 2022 which has been further developed with a phased approach to the delivery process. At its heart, a Clean Air Neighbourhood is a comprehensive Public Health initiative with the ambition of reducing many of the impacts of poor air quality and improving the health of residents.

During the first phase of developing Clean Air Neighbourhoods, the Council will seek to make many neighbourhood-level public realm improvements, including but not limited to:

- Introduction of additional street trees and greening with native species to encourage biodiversity
- Flood mitigation measures
- Parklets / pocket parks
- Reducing the impact of out-of-borough traffic (initially on an experimental basis)
- Consideration for reducing the air quality impact of PM2.5 emissions from wood burning stoves
- Localised walking and cycling improvements
- Tackling energy and heating demand

This approach will enable us to deliver a more holistic transport strategy for the borough and work towards our goal of achieving net-zero carbon from travel transport by 2030.

Question 2

From: Caroline Shuffrey, Resident

To: The Leader of the Council

Question: “Despite the measures that the council have put in place, residents continue to be dropped away from their homes by Uber and minicab drivers, leaving women to walk home in the dark late at night and frail elderly or disabled residents in difficulty struggling to get home. Local minicab firms who are supposedly registered with the council send vehicles that are not allowed through the cameras. All private hire vehicles are licensed by TFL. Why is it not possible for LBHF to access this database to allow all private hire vehicles to cross the cameras without penalty?”

Response from the Cabinet Member for Public Realm:

I am grateful to the questioner for raising concerns about local minicab firms who are registered with the council sending vehicles that are not exempt. This should not be happening, and I have asked the Clean Air Neighbourhood team to recontact these local firms and fully update their vehicle details.

Black cabs continue to be exempt. With regard to the ride hailing firms, we are pleased that Uber and Bolt have recently upgraded their satnav systems but appreciate there is more work to be done to educate drivers. We are meeting with these companies regularly and urging them to adopt a technical solution which would automatically exempt those vehicles doing pick-ups and drop-offs in South Fulham. We have also made it clear that any of these drivers who receive penalty charge notices will be entitled to have those fines rescinded on providing the evidence of their trip involving residents.

We cannot give blanket access to all private hire vehicles as they account for a large proportion of the out of borough traffic that uses residential streets as cut throughs and to do so would wholly undermine our clean air ambitions.

Question 3

From: Donald Grant, Resident

To: The Leader of the Council

Question: “The Leader has recently been expressing support for small businesses in LBHF. Around 160 businesses affected by the second LTN traffic camera scheme in Fulham signed a letter objecting to it. However business rates go to the Government, whilst fines from the LTNs go to LBHF. Is this why the Leader supports LTNs more than he supports small local businesses?”

Response from the Cabinet Member for Public Realm:

For clarity, there are no LTNs in Hammersmith & Fulham. What we do have is a pioneering Industrial Strategy in partnership with Imperial College London and ambitious plans to redevelop the borough’s high streets as thriving destination places and community hubs,

inspiring the next generation of thriving SMEs through new affordable, flexible office spaces and pop-ups. We are immensely proud of how we are delivering the best new jobs and start-ups with an economic strategy that is transforming H&F into a global hotspot offering the best opportunities in life.

We are also, working with businesses as part of the Clean Air Neighbourhood programme, which remains a key aspect of our consultation process in South Fulham that does not end until January 2024.

Question 4

From: W. Benedict Nightingale, Resident

To: The Leader of the Council

Question: “How do you justify the instruction, enshrined in a new yellow sign, to visitors driving on the eastward section of the New Kings Road to make a circuitous way to Wandsworth Bridge and Wandsworth Bridge Road via Putney Bridge and Putney itself instead of using Broomhouse Lane or Peterborough Road, two link roads now barricaded by traffic cameras?”

Response from the Cabinet Member for Public Realm:

All out of borough visitors can access the whole Clean Air Neighbourhood without going through a camera either by entering and exiting via New Kings Road or by entering and exiting via Wandsworth Bridge Road. They can also be granted access through the cameras by residents using the visitor permit system.

The scheme is designed to prevent out of borough motorists who are not stopping to visit friends or family or to go shopping, and motorist using residential side streets as cut throughs.

London’s Strategic Road Network was designed for no right turn from the west into Wandsworth Bridge Road, as it wants traffic heading south over the bridges in the area to use Putney. (Similarly, there is no right turn from NKR heading east up the Ful-ham Palace Road, as the Strategic Road Network wants people heading north to use North End Road.)

The advent of satnavs over recent years has resulted in a huge increase in the use of residential side streets such as Studdridge Street and Perrymead Street as cut throughs by non-local traffic causing significant air pollution and congestion. We are attempting to reverse this.

The trial aims to encourage non-H&F motorists to use the roads as they are designed. As the trial embeds, we will give consideration to any changes that can be made to improve it. Any consideration of changes to the New Kings Road/ Wandsworth Bridge Road would require approval from Transport for London, as the capital's strategic transport authority.

Question 5

From: Anthony Llewelyn-Davies, Resident

To: The Leader of the Council

Question: “When will Ringo become user friendly for the South Fulham ‘clean air zone’, showing what is asked for rather than 1 minute and be easily ‘findable’ on the App?”

Response from the Cabinet Member for Public Realm:

I am sorry to hear that you have been having problems using the RingGo app to register vehicles for the South Fulham Clean Air Neighbourhood. We are continuously working with RingGo to improve the app adding new features and most importantly seeking to improve the user experience. We will pass your concern to the team working with RingGo.