

COUNCIL MINUTES

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY 12 JULY 2023



PRESENT

The Mayor Councillor Patricia Quigley
Deputy Mayor Councillor Daryl Brown

Councillors:

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

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ann Rosenberg, Andrew Jones Nikos Souslous, Emma Apthorp and Rebecca Harvey.

Councillors Asif Siddique and Zarar Qayyum joined the meeting remotely.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillor Rory Vaughan declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 6.1, Special Motion 1 – Hammersmith & Fulham Pension Fund, due to his employment as a financial regulator. He left the room for the duration of the item.

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the Annual and Special Council meetings held on 24 May 2023 were approved as accurate records.

4. MAYOR'S/CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

King's Official Birthday Honours List 2023

The Mayor noted the Council's congratulations to the following people who were recognised in the King's Birthday Honours list for their outstanding achievements.

Professor Peter Barnes FRS, Professor of Thoracic Medicine at Imperial College London, was awarded a Knighthood for services to Respiratory Science.

David Buxton, Chief Executive Officer, Action on Disability and lately Chair, British Deaf Association was awarded an OBE for services to the Deaf and British Sign Language Communities.

Patricia Longdon - Chair, Strategic Lay Forum at Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust was awarded an MBE for services to Health and Social Care.

Brenda Deo-Campo, Ward Manager, Acute Medicine at Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust was awarded an MBE for services to Nursing.

Mark Younger was awarded an BEM for services to the community in Parsons Green.

The Mayor then led a round of applause to thank them for their hard work and contributions.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (20 MINUTES)

The Mayor thanked the residents who submitted questions. Questions 1, 3, 5, and 6 were addressed in the meeting. The Mayor explained that any questions not addressed in the meeting would receive written responses. All questions and responses to them can be found in Appendix 1.

6. SPECIAL MOTIONS

7.32pm – Councillor Karmel addressed the meeting and asked that Special Motion 5 take precedence on the agenda.

Councillor Schmid moved, under Standing Order 15(e)3, that the Special Motions listed in the agenda be taken in the following order: 5, 8, 7, 6, 9, 1, 2, 3, 4. Councillor Genevieve Nwaogbe seconded the motion, and it was agreed.

6.5 Special Motion 5 - Support for South Fulham businesses

7.34pm – Councillor Jose Afonso moved, seconded by Councillor Adrian Pascu-Tulbure, the special motion in their names:

“This Council notes with alarm the closure of Wandsworth Bridge this summer, which will be the second of three bridges serving the Borough to be closed to traffic. This Council calls upon the Administration to work constructively with Wandsworth Council to ensure the works to take place as swiftly as possible, offer a business rates rebate for businesses affected, and lift traffic restrictions for the duration of the works, so businesses can make up the loss in customers from Wandsworth by allowing people to come in from other boroughs.”

Speeches on the special motion were made by Councillors Afonso and Pascu-Tulbure (for the Opposition).

Under Standing Order 15(e)(6), Councillor Sharon Holder moved, seconded by Councillor Ben Coleman, an amendment:

“Delete after “This Council” and replace with:

- Notes with concern the impending 10-week closure by Wandsworth Council of Wandsworth Bridge due to essential safety work.*
- Resolves to work constructively with Wandsworth Council to ensure the works are completed as swiftly as possible.*
- Recognises the difficulties that the closure will cause for South Fulham businesses already dealing with the worst cost-of-living crisis in memory caused by the Conservative government’s economic failures.*
- Welcomes the announcement of the new business visitor access permit which enables businesses to give free access through the Clean Air Neighbourhood cameras for shoppers, staff and deliveries.*
- Notes that 60 businesses have already taken advantage of the new business visitor access permit and around 2,000 visits per month have been authorised using the bespoke RingGo codes provided to businesses and business parks from the early days of the trial.*
- Notes the introduction of extra shopper parking bays and e-cargo bikes to support businesses and the suspension of the Imperial Road camera to enable visitors without permits to have easier access to Wandsworth Bridge Road businesses during the bridge closure.*
- Notes the continued support of residents for the South Fulham Clean Air Neighbourhood and the view of traffic experts that suspending the scheme during the closure of Wandsworth Bridge would lead to large amounts of traffic on residential roads that are benefiting from the Clean Air Neighbourhood.*
- Commits to working closely with businesses to develop further measures to enable customers to access businesses in South Fulham during the closure of Wandsworth Bridge.*
- Notes that the government sets business rates, which councils are required to collect in full and hand over to the government, and that if councils offer rebates*

they still have to pay the full sum to the government; and therefore calls on the area's Member of Parliament, Greg Hands, to press the government to introduce a targeted business rates relief scheme for South Fulham businesses affected by the Wandsworth Bridge's closure."

Speeches on the amendment were made by Councillors Holder, Coleman, Ree, and Cowan (for the Administration) – and Councillor Dinsmore (for the Opposition). The amendment was then put to the vote:

FOR	31
AGAINST	10
NOT VOTING	0

The amendment was declared **CARRIED**.

Councillor Afonso then made a speech winding up the debate. During the speech, the Mayor suspended the meeting for 10 minutes due to an interruption from the public gallery. When the meeting resumed, Councillor Afonso finished his speech and the amended motion was put to the vote. Opposition Councillors requested a named vote.

FOR	AGAINST	NOT VOTING
Alexander	Afonso	
Antoniades	Afzal-Khan	
Brown	Alford	
Campbell-Simon	Borland	
Chevoppe-Verdier	Brocklebank-Fowler	
Coleman	Dinsmore	
Collins	Karmel	
Cowan	Lloyd-Harris	
Daly	Pascu-Tulbure	
Harcourt	Stanton	
Holder		
Homan		
Janes		
Kwon		
Lang		
Melton		
Miri		
Nwaogbe		
Patel		
Perez		
Ree		
Richardson		
Rowbottom		
Sanderson		
Schmid		
Taylor		
Trehy		
Umeh (Frances)		
Umeh (Mercy)		

Vaughan Walsh		
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FOR	31
AGAINST	10
NOT VOTING	0

The amended motion was declared **CARRIED**.

8.24pm – RESOLVED

This Council:

- Notes with concern the impending 10-week closure by Wandsworth Council of Wandsworth Bridge due to essential safety work.
- Resolves to work constructively with Wandsworth Council to ensure the works are completed as swiftly as possible.
- Recognises the difficulties that the closure will cause for South Fulham businesses already dealing with the worst cost-of-living crisis in memory caused by the Conservative government's economic failures.
- Welcomes the announcement of the new business visitor access permit which enables businesses to give free access through the Clean Air Neighbourhood cameras for shoppers, staff and deliveries.
- Notes that 60 businesses have already taken advantage of the new business visitor access permit and around 2,000 visits per month have been authorised using the bespoke RingGo codes provided to businesses and business parks from the early days of the trial.
- Notes the introduction of extra shopper parking bays and e-cargo bikes to support businesses and the suspension of the Imperial Road camera to enable visitors without permits to have easier access to Wandsworth Bridge Road businesses during the bridge closure.
- Notes the continued support of residents for the South Fulham Clean Air Neighbourhood and the view of traffic experts that suspending the scheme during the closure of Wandsworth Bridge would lead to large amounts of traffic on residential roads that are benefiting from the Clean Air Neighbourhood.
- Commits to working closely with businesses to develop further measures to enable customers to access businesses in South Fulham during the closure of Wandsworth Bridge.
- Notes that the government sets business rates, which councils are required to collect in full and hand over to the government, and that if councils offer rebates they still have to pay the full sum to the government; and therefore calls on the area's Member of Parliament, Greg Hands, to press the government to introduce a targeted business rates relief scheme for South Fulham businesses affected by the Wandsworth Bridge's closure.

6.8 Special Motion 8 - Celebrating the Windrush Generation

8.24pm – Councillor Sharon Holder moved, seconded by Councillor Mercy Umeh, the special motion in their names:

“The council notes that 22 June 2023 marked the 75th anniversary of the arrival of MV Empire Windrush in the UK, a day celebrated locally by a special event on Shepherd’s Bush Green.

This council gives thanks:

- To the Windrush Generation, who came from the Caribbean to help Britain rebuild following the Second World War.*
- To the many thousands of Caribbean men and women who had previously volunteered to serve in the British Armed Forces during the Second World War.*
- To those of the Windrush Generation who played an invaluable role serving in the newly established NHS.*
- To those of the Windrush Generation who contributed immensely to modern British culture, bringing and enhancing a wide range of music—including Jazz, Soca and Reggae—as well as dance and other arts.*
- To the many members of the Windrush Generation who made their homes in Hammersmith and Fulham, contributing greatly to the area’s economy, public services and culture.*

The council further commends the extraordinary resilience of this pioneering generation, who faced discrimination not only when they first arrived but also up to and through the period marked by the Government’s pernicious Hostile Environment Policy, which led to the injustice of the Windrush Scandal.

The council calls on the Government to move urgently to reform the Windrush Compensation Scheme – making it transparent, fair and fit for purpose – and ensure that British people of colour will never again be victimised by the very authorities that are meant to protect and serve them.”

Speeches on the special motion were made by Councillors Holder, Mercy Umeh, Lang, Chevoppe-Verdier, Patel, and Antoniadis (for the Administration) – and Councillors Lloyd-Harris and Borland (for the Opposition).

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

FOR	UNANIMOUS
AGAINST	0
NOT VOTING	0

The motion was declared **CARRIED**.

9.05pm – RESOLVED

The council notes that 22 June 2023 marked the 75th anniversary of the arrival of MV Empire Windrush in the UK, a day celebrated locally by a special event on Shepherd's Bush Green.

This council gives thanks:

- To the Windrush Generation, who came from the Caribbean to help Britain rebuild following the Second World War.
- To the many thousands of Caribbean men and women who had previously volunteered to serve in the British Armed Forces during the Second World War.
- To those of the Windrush Generation who played an invaluable role serving in the newly established NHS.
- To those of the Windrush Generation who contributed immensely to modern British culture, bringing and enhancing a wide range of music—including Jazz, Soca and Reggae—as well as dance and other arts.
- To the many members of the Windrush Generation who made their homes in Hammersmith and Fulham, contributing greatly to the area's economy, public services and culture.

The council further commends the extraordinary resilience of this pioneering generation, who faced discrimination not only when they first arrived but also up to and through the period marked by the Government's pernicious Hostile Environment Policy, which led to the injustice of the Windrush Scandal.

The council calls on the Government to move urgently to reform the Windrush Compensation Scheme – making it transparent, fair and fit for purpose – and ensure that British people of colour will never again be victimised by the very authorities that are meant to protect and serve them.

NOTE: The Mayor suspended the meeting for a comfort break.

6.7 **Special Motion 7 - The Government's broken promise to refurbish and rebuild Charing Cross, Hammersmith and St Mary's hospitals by 2030**

9.20pm – Councillor Ben Coleman moved, seconded by Councillor Rowan Ree, the special motion in their names:

“This Council:

- *Regrets the statement by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Stephen Barclay, in the House of Commons on 25 May 2023 that Charing Cross Hospital, Hammersmith and St Mary's Hospitals are no longer on the*

list of 40 hospitals to be refurbished or rebuilt by 2030 but instead “may now fully complete construction after 2030”.

- *Notes that this breaks the pledge given by the Conservative government in 2019 to refurbish and rebuild Charing Cross, Hammersmith and St Mary’s Hospitals by 2030 as part of the New Hospitals Programme.*
- *Notes that the well-respected Professor Tim Orchard, chief executive of Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust, which runs Charing Cross, Hammersmith and St Mary’s, said the Health Secretary’s statement was “clearly disappointing” and “hugely damaging for the health and healthcare of hundreds of thousands of people”.*
- *Notes that Professor Orchard also said the statement “does not reflect our understanding of next steps on the urgently needed redevelopment of our hospitals”; and notes that Mr Barclay subsequently apologised for making the incorrect claim in the House of Commons that work had already started at Charing Cross Hospital.*
- *Views as meaningless the government’s claim to be committed to refurbishing Charing Cross, given that they have delayed any building work, given no deadline by which any refurbishment will be completed and not guaranteed any funding for the building work.*
- *Regrets the inaccurate and disingenuous statements by Greg Hands, MP for Chelsea and Fulham, who in leaflets and on his website has wrongly claimed that funding has been secured for the full refurbishment whereas funding has not been secured and the previous 2030 deadline for completion of works has been scrapped.*
- *Urges the Conservative government to honour its promise to provide the funding for the refurbishment and rebuilding of Charing Cross, Hammersmith and St Mary’s hospitals and to reinstate the 2030 deadline for completion of the works.”*

Speeches on the special motion were made by Councillors Coleman and Ree (for the Administration).

Under Standing Order 15(e)(6), Councillor Amanda Lloyd-Harris moved, seconded by Councillor Jose Afonso, an amendment:

“Delete after “This Council” and replace with:

“notes the letter sent by the Borough’s Monitoring Officer on 9 June, which makes clear that the floor-by-floor refurbishment of Charing Cross Hospital will indeed go ahead, and that political language suggesting the contrary was inappropriate in a Council publication. This Council calls upon the Administration to apologise for telling residents that the refurbishment of Charing Cross Hospital has been ‘scrapped’, and to instead welcome the confirmation that the hospital will be refurbished. This Council further calls upon the Administration not to spread false information, alarming the most vulnerable in our community, for party political purposes.””

Speeches on the amendment were made by Councillors Lloyd-Harris, Afonso, and Dinsmore (for the Opposition) – and Councillors Miri, Vaughan, Perez, Ree, Schmid, and Cowan (for the Administration). The amendment was then put to the vote. Administration Councillors requested a named vote.

FOR	AGAINST	NOT VOTING
Afonso	Alexander	
Afzal-Khan	Antoniades	
Alford	Brown	
Borland	Campbell-Simon	
Brocklebank-Fowler	Chevoppe-Verdier	
Dinsmore	Coleman	
Karmel	Collins	
Lloyd-Harris	Cowan	
Pascu-Tulbure	Daly	
Stanton	Harcourt	
	Holder	
	Homan	
	Janes	
	Kwon	
	Lang	
	Melton	
	Miri	
	Nwaogbe	
	Patel	
	Perez	
	Ree	
	Rowbottom	
	Schmid	
	Taylor	
	Trehy	
	Umeh (Frances)	
	Umeh (Mercy)	
	Vaughan	
	Walsh	

FOR	10
AGAINST	29
NOT VOTING	0

The amendment was declared **LOST**.

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

FOR	29
AGAINST	10
NOT VOTING	0

The substantive motion was declared **CARRIED**.

10.28pm – RESOLVED

This Council:

- Regrets the statement by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Stephen Barclay, in the House of Commons on 25 May 2023 that Charing Cross Hospital, Hammersmith and St Mary's Hospitals are no longer on the list of 40 hospitals to be refurbished or rebuilt by 2030 but instead *“may now fully complete construction after 2030”*.
- Notes that this breaks the pledge given by the Conservative government in 2019 to refurbish and rebuild Charing Cross, Hammersmith and St Mary's Hospitals by 2030 as part of the New Hospitals Programme.
- Notes that the well-respected Professor Tim Orchard, chief executive of Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust, which runs Charing Cross, Hammersmith and St Mary's, said the Health Secretary's statement was *“clearly disappointing”* and *“hugely damaging for the health and healthcare of hundreds of thousands of people”*.
- Notes that Professor Orchard also said the statement *“does not reflect our understanding of next steps on the urgently needed redevelopment of our hospitals”*; and notes that Mr Barclay subsequently apologised for making the incorrect claim in the House of Commons that work had already started at Charing Cross Hospital.
- Views as meaningless the government's claim to be committed to refurbishing Charing Cross, given that they have delayed any building work, given no deadline by which any refurbishment will be completed and not guaranteed any funding for the building work.
- Regrets the inaccurate and disingenuous statements by Greg Hands, MP for Chelsea and Fulham, who in leaflets and on his website has wrongly claimed that funding has been secured for the full refurbishment whereas funding has not been secured and the previous 2030 deadline for completion of works has been scrapped.
- Urges the Conservative government to honour its promise to provide the funding for the refurbishment and rebuilding of Charing Cross, Hammersmith and St Mary's hospitals and to reinstate the 2030 deadline for completion of the works.

6.6 **Special Motion 6 - Calling on Fulham's Member of Parliament, Greg Hands, to apologise for the “jingle and mingle” lockdown party on his watch**

The special motion was withdrawn.

6.9 **Special Motion 9 - Calling On The Government To Tackle Sewage Discharges**

The special motion was withdrawn.

6.1 **Special Motion 1 - Hammersmith & Fulham Pension Fund**

As the guillotine had fallen, the special motion standing in the names of Councillors Ross Melton and Rowan Ree was taken as moved and seconded and put to the vote.

FOR	UNANIMOUS
AGAINST	0
NOT VOTING	0

The motion was declared **CARRIED**.

10.30pm – RESOLVED

The Council welcomes the shortlisting the of the Hammersmith & Fulham Pension Fund as one of the four top performing funds valued under £2.5 billion in the country in the 2022 Local Authority Pension Fund (LAPF) Investment Awards.

The Council:

Praises the skill, dedication and strong performance of the Council's pensions officials and independent advisors in successfully maintaining the value of the H&F Pension Fund during a period of extreme economic volatility.

Congratulates the H&F Pension Fund's pioneering divestment programme for developing an innovative, world-first Environmental, Social and Governance dashboard which enables all fund members to see in detail how their pension contributions are part of a robust response to global climate change.

Highlights the value of responsible local government fiscal management and robust, transparent governance in giving confidence to members to the H&F Pension Fund.

6.2 **Special Motion 2 - Tackling Violent Crime**

The special motion was withdrawn.

6.3 **Special Motion 3 - The Housing Department**

The special motion was withdrawn.

6.4 **Special Motion 4 - Charing Cross Hospital**

The special motion was withdrawn.

7. INFORMATION REPORTS - TO NOTE

7.1 Review of the Constitution

10.31pm – The report was noted.

7.2 Petitions Monitoring Report 2022/23

10.31pm – The report was noted.

Meeting started: 7.03 pm
Meeting ended: 10.31 pm

Mayor

Appendix 1 – Public Questions and Responses

Question 1

From: Donald Grant, Resident

The CAN LTN trial West of Wandsworth Bridge Road has been in place longer than the 6 months minimum required by Government guidance. During the closure of Wandsworth Bridge there will be little through traffic, yet still no short route will exist to Sands End West from New King's Road, and vice versa, for visiting vehicles. Will the Leader therefore suspend the traffic cameras during the bridge closure, to let visitors access all roads and businesses in Sands End via their quickest, shortest, least polluting route without the intrusion to residents of registering every visitor online?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Public Realm:

No. Opening up the roads to all traffic during the closure would mean satnav systems would try to reroute drivers into residential streets. This would bring back the gridlock we have finally got rid of after so many years. It would cause chaos and inconvenience to residents and businesses alike. And it would generate more pollution.

Question 2

From: Siobhan Cummins, Resident

Other Councils experimenting with LTNs have admitted that the traffic counters used do not count slow moving traffic, after the manufacturer Metrodata confirmed this. Will the Leader advise if H&F have used counters from the same manufacturer when measuring the impact of their CAN LTNs?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Public Realm:

We use several methods to calculate traffic volumes, including: traffic loops; Advanced Number Plate Recognition cameras; AI smart route tracking cameras; and third-party data from mobile phone tracking, sat navs and bus information.

As traffic volumes and breakdowns vary daily, we use five-day and seven- day weekly averages. These even out any anomalies in the data.

Question 3

From: Vivienne Goldstein, Resident

How many contraventions were recorded on the day of the Wandsworth Bridge Rd Fayre?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Public Realm:

Unfortunately, this question is not specific. However, we can say that across the borough on that day, we issued slightly less than the average number of penalty charge notices than we do on a typical Sunday.

Question 4

From: Kerry Collins, Resident

Can you confirm that the initial East Working party for the introduction of the trial traffic scheme met the official requirements of consultation and that it did not include an elderly, business owner or Wandsworth Bridge Road/New Kings Road resident representative from within the area, but did include a bicycle shop owner from outside of the Sands End East area? Was the final meeting with the working party then cancelled which was to consult with them on final data and results on the trial, before making the scheme permanent? Thereby not having any input or say from the party you were working with on the trial regarding making the scheme permanent?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Public Realm:

At the outset, it was clearly stated that the working party was formed from a random selection of volunteers. It was a focus group to help inform the council not a decision-making body. The decision to make the trial permanent, under the council's constitution, was informed by a wide range of discussions with residents and was taken by the Cabinet.

Question 5

From: Merril Hammer, Resident

I note that the Government has pushed back the original commitment for funding for the complete rebuild of St Mary's Hospital and the refurbishment and expansion of Charing Cross and Hammersmith Hospitals to be completed by 2030. As these hospitals are used extensively by residents of our borough, and as Imperial has the biggest backlog of maintenance work in the entire country, what is the council doing to persuade the government of the necessity of restoring St Mary's to the list of top priorities, with clear and immediate funding, to be completed by 2030; and to advance immediate funding and establish clear dates for the work at Charing Cross and Hammersmith Hospitals.

Response from the Deputy Leader:

Thank you for your question. It's a huge issue this – you're absolutely right to state that the Government has pushed back its original date for the refurbishment and rebuilding of Charing Cross and St Mary's and Hammersmith Hospitals by 2030.

There was an indication, as we talked about in the last Council meeting of what was going to happen at the beginning of the year. On the 17th of January we talked here, we noted that the health Minister, Will Quince's statement to the House of Commons was that Charing Cross and St Mary's and Hammersmith had no planning permission for improvements. And that was already the case on the 17th of January, while claims the country were being made – he said that in the House. But as you allude to, the actual blow came on the 26th of May when the Health Secretary Stephen Barclay told the House of Commons that Charing Cross Hospital, Hammersmith Hospital, and St Mary's Hospital were no longer on the list of the 40 hospitals to be refurbished or rebuilt by 2030. He said that in the House of Commons and he then wrote to Andy Slaughter MP and to Greg Hands MP a joint letter, and he said that these hospitals, and I quote, "may now fully complete construction after 2030".

So, no shock that Professor Tim Orchard, highly respected Chief Executive of Imperial College Healthcare Trust, which runs the three hospitals – he immediately called the announcement clearly disappointing and he warned that it would be ‘hugely damaging’ – his words – for the health and health care of hundreds of thousands of people.

So I think it's helpful for me to be able to take this opportunity to say that we have to be absolutely clear there is no confirmed funding now, there is no deadline now for refurbishing the hospital – and indeed anyone who doubted that because they may have been reading stuff put out by Greg Hands and other people recently only needed to go to Hammersmith and Fulham’s Health and Wellbeing Board, which is of course on the YouTube channel, you can watch it, on the 22nd of June and they will have heard Imperial’s Director of Engagement and Experience state, and again I quote, “it's clear that the bulk of the capital money to complete the schemes will not be committed until post-2030”. She was very, very upset and very worried. She said we don't know when we will get the main capital funding, the commitment is that it will not be there before 2030.

Now I'm aware that some people are claiming that somehow an absolute statement like that can still be interpreted as meaning the funding is ‘secure’. I think we can hear exactly from what she says that it is not, and this is very worrying Madam Mayor because Imperial’s hospitals play a key role in the whole of the healthcare system. They provide services not just to our Borough but also the whole of England – they care for 1.6 million patients a year. The three hospitals host the largest biomedical research centre in the Country and Charing Cross's major acute and Specialist Hospital. But the sad fact is that they were all built in the 70s and they all have the need for constant repair, as you've touched on and you're asking what we would like – what we're going to do about the problem.

Well we know that they've got the largest backlog maintenance liability in the NHS of £105m, we know that Imperial uses half of its capital budget every year just to stay operational, we know that the floor by floor refurbishment will cost around £2bn, and we know that they were promised this in 2018 – it just never happened then. And they put in a bid for enabling works, the small works that need to happen, that hasn't been approved. They're still working on a first stage business case – that hasn't yet gone through or been approved. I'm sorry if this is boring any of the members opposite, but I think it matters for us to understand absolutely clearly and without any doubt what is happening with Charing Cross hospital and what is not happening. And the question the question was asking about this and I'll continue to make some progress.

The sad situation which I don't think has been picked up, if you look at the briefing that the hospitals provided to the Health and Wellbeing Board and indeed provided to MPs in the House of Commons, they said the only way they're going to get money to do Charing Cross is, I quote, “if there's slippage in capital spending in the new hospital program”. They’ve said they hope that this will be made available to other suitable schemes that are ready to commence building works. So the only chance that they're getting funding before 2030 is that they can slip in before other people and get piecemeal refurbishment. That's the best they can hope. And the services at St Mary's and Charing Cross are threatened – St Mary’s has already closed wards, which of course is not just bad for St Mary’s but for patients who need to be treated there, it's bad for Charing Cross because it puts extra pressure on them. And again, it was made quite clear to us at the Health and Wellbeing

Board if they don't get the money they need for rebuilding they might have to stop some services completely over the next three to seven years.

And this isn't a frivolous situation at all, anybody who attends any health meetings and talks about these issues ought to understand this and ought to be worried. I've raised our concerns publicly, I've raised our concerns at the North West London NHS Integrated Care Board of which I'm a member, I've raised at the Hammersmith and Fulham's Health and Wellbeing Board. The next meeting of the Health and Social Care Policy and Accountability Committee, for those of you in this room and elsewhere who are interested in what happens to our hospital will be on the 19th of July, Chaired by my colleague Councillor Perez, and they're going to be exploring this further. And I'm also working with my counterparts in Westminster City Council and with colleagues and other boroughs to ensure that residents understand fully the implications for the hospitals, of the government's change of heart, because what we've got to do as a community is we've got to get the Government to change its mind.

And it's not right therefore for local Conservative politicians to say that funding is secure when it's not, because that only puts people off making the case that we all need to make which is to get that funding before, and the refurbishment done before, 2030. So we're going to carry on fighting for that and I hope this has been a helpful response.

Question 6

From: Jim Grealy, Resident

The Metropolitan Police Commissioner has written to councils to say their officers will no longer attend mental health calls from 31 August. What impact will this have on H&F's social care services and how is the council preparing for this surprisingly short deadline? Further, is the Council engaging with West London Trust and the ICB to try to mitigate any adverse effects this may have on social services, overstretched mental health services and local residents?

Response from the Deputy Leader:

This is a really tough issue. One of the most worrying things about the way the world is going since Covid is the huge rise in people with mental health problems. It is a challenging situation for the police to deal with, they're very often the first line of dealing with these issues and they're not necessarily always best placed to do it, but they've taken a bit of a, I would say, crude and worrying approach.

They've just said we're going to stop being first line of defence, we're going to stop being the first line of contact within three months. Now we can see that it is challenging for the police to deal with mental health emergencies, it can take far too long for the police to hand over patients in health facilities to appropriate health professionals who can help them, while they can't attend to real crime as opposed to mental health issues. And people are also waiting too long to get assessments, and there are a lot of problems with the system – and the fact that there are more and more people needing these issues and there's less and less money in the system because the funding hasn't gone up to keep pace with demand for various reasons.

We understand where the police are coming from, the problem is that if they do this in a rush... [*The Mayor closed the item at this point as time ran out*]

Question 7

From: Caroline Brooman-White, Resident

The Wandsworth Bridge Road Association displayed the latest designs for the transformation of Wandsworth Bridge Road at their fair. They have told everyone that work will begin in the Summer next year. What work will begin on the transformation at that time and how long do the Council believe it will take to transform the road as a traffic planner wrote to me stating It will take quite a few years to get to implemented, as TfL will need to be involved in the process as modelling and impact assessments all need to be done on the transport side and mayor's strategy.

Response from the Cabinet Member for Public Realm:

Some public realm improvements can get underway in the summer. These include tree planting, greening and pedestrian crossings – as well as flood mitigation measures such as sustainable drainage systems.

For others, as with all public realm schemes, due process and consultation will be undertaken. The Wandsworth Bridge Road Association is working with the council as a reference group to develop a scheme which will involve consultation with, and the approval of, Transport for London.

The council would like to install pedestrian phases at the junction with Townmead Rd. This will require consultation with Wandsworth Council, whose previous administration opposed this.

Question 8

From: Clementine Wallop, Resident

What is the average age of play equipment in Ravenscourt Park and how does the condition of the park's playgrounds align with the council's aims to prioritise physical wellbeing, to make H&F a great place to live, and to keep young families in the borough? How does the council intend to engage the borough's children on making LBHF a place where play provision meets their physical and mental health needs?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Public Realm:

There are four playgrounds and 1 Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) in Ravenscourt.

The playgrounds by the Café, in the east of the park and the South of the park mostly have equipment which is over 20 years old. The expected remaining lifespan of this equipment is 10-12 years. Much of this equipment is of metal construction which has a long lifespan.

The playground in the North and the MUGA mostly have equipment which is 13 years old. The expected remaining lifespan of this equipment is 10 years. Much of the equipment in the playground is of timber construction which has a shorter lifespan than metal.

The health and safety of our residents is paramount, and their enjoyment of playgrounds is especially important to us. The condition of our playgrounds is assessed by regular inspections both for safety and play value. Priority repairs are carried out immediately, where the risk of an incident is high/medium, and all concerns are logged and monitored. Inspections and repairs are funded through a fixed revenue budget. Play value can usually only be addressed by new or replacement equipment purchased through a capital budget.

Our Capital programme includes plans to replace and improve all thirty-four playgrounds according to condition. This includes plans for Ravenscourt Park playgrounds which are a high priority.

Capital is being identified to fund other projects for Ravenscourt Park playgrounds. Once identified, we can begin working with residents on options that will meet the needs of local children and we would expect this work to begin next year (2024).

Question 9

From: Caroline Shuffrey, Resident

Multiple petitions and surveys have demonstrated that residents across the borough do not want camera schemes, and in particular they do not want them in South Fulham. The evidence collected by the Council on air quality in South Fulham to support their opinion that air is now cleaner does not measure the impact over the wider area where vehicles have displaced to, including other parts of Fulham and Chelsea. There is plenty of evidence that businesses have been materially adversely affected. Nevertheless the Council is continuing with the trial in South Fulham for another 12 months. Does the Council seriously believe that residents both in South Fulham and across the borough will change their minds during this period?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Public Realm:

There is no evidence of displacement of traffic from the South Fulham Clean Air Neighbourhood trial. The council will follow due process and access all aspects of the scheme and qualified data. The success criteria of the scheme which were agreed with residents in focus group meetings – and which were stated in the Experimental Traffic Reduction Order – include reducing emissions by reducing the amount of out-of-borough traffic cutting through local residential streets.

Question 10

From: Richard Cazenove, Resident

Since the start of the south-west Fulham CAN trial (whose aims I broadly support) in December 2022, there has been a dramatic (500%+) increase in traffic using Ranelagh Avenue. This is primarily due to non-LBHF traffic originating from Putney Bridge and Hammersmith being funnelled down our street via Grimston Road to access the Hurlingham Club as well as the 400 adjacent flats and, in the process, avoid the CAN “penalty” camera on Hurlingham Road. Seven months into the trial, what SPECIFICALLY is the Council going to do to fix this SOLVABLE problem?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Public Realm:

The Clean Air Neighbourhood trial to the west of Wandsworth Bridge Road has resulted in over 7,000 fewer cars a day using residential streets as cut-throughs and a reduction of 0.65 tonnes of deadly nitrogen oxide and 0.9 tonnes of climate-damaging carbon emissions per day.

I understand that officers have already communicated to you that local traffic is taking slightly different routes in your area. This has resulted in a balancing of the traffic more fairly in the surrounding streets. It has also improved traffic flows from New Kings Road to Fulham Palace Road.

We have had requests to realign some junctions in Ranelagh Avenue to reduce local traffic in the street. We would expect to do this work as part of the greening phase, if the trial is made permanent.