

**PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

**LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM**

**COUNCIL MEETING – 3 JULY 2013**

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Question by: Ms Anne Drinkell

To: Cabinet Member for Community Care

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**QUESTION**

“Does the council support the aims of the Save Our Hospital campaign?”

**ANSWER**

The Council has always supported the campaign to protect our hospitals and ensure that residents of this borough have the highest quality health services possible. But our approach to achieving these aims now differs from that taken by some. The Council now takes the view that we will secure the best possible hospital services, primary care services and out of hospital services for our residents, through negotiation and detailed planning with the NHS. That is what we have done and what we will continue to do.

The Save Our Hospital campaign enabled the Council to negotiate a far better set of proposals than originally suggested. The original proposals would have downgraded Charing Cross to a GP clinic but with the help of the community campaign we demonstrated a political and clinical case for more.

The new proposals will mean that the vast majority of everyday health services that we all rely on will continue to be delivered there. In some cases new services will be added. In the Council's view the Save our Hospitals campaign did exactly that – it saved Charing Cross as a viable hospital.

We accept that the proposals do not go far enough, particularly in areas including everyday emergency care and elective surgery.

We think getting round the table and working with our NHS partners is a better tactic than the simplistic and confrontational position adopted by Ealing. Those tactics were right at the start but there comes a point when you have to be prepared to listen and to negotiate – rather than bury your head in sand and hope that the challenges facing our NHS will go away. In the end, no change was simply not an option.