

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

COUNCIL MEETING – 3 JULY 2013

Question by: Ms Julia Dickinson

To: Cabinet Member for Community Care

QUESTION

“Why didn't you listen to your residents who signed a petition not to close ANY Services at Charing Cross Hospital (CCH)? 80,000+ *[as amended on the night from original figure of 60,000+]* residents signed the petition to save CCH but the petition was ignored.”

ANSWER

We did listen to our residents which is why we campaigned so vehemently against the original proposals to close Charing Cross.

But we had to make a choice. Do we campaign for ‘no change’, just like Ealing Council, or do we try and negotiate the best possible position for our residents.

We believed that the Ealing route is very risky. There is a high possibility that they will lose legal action and could be left with nothing except a £1m legal bill. We were not prepared to take that risk.

We have also listened to clinicians, who have consistently and clearly made the argument that lives will be saved if services are concentrated at centres of excellence.

We decided to get round the table and protect as many services as possible. So far we have achieved a lot, but not everything. The new business cases that are being developed would mean that 85% of people who currently use Charing Cross would continue to use it in the same way. While being pleased with that, we are still talking to the NHS. A week does not go past without some kind of discussion. We continue to fight for better health services in this borough and a central role for CX.