



## How We Can Help You

### Questions to the Mayor

**Send them in** – it helps us to be raising local issues and it helps you to show your residents you are active campaigners. All questions get written responses and are available on the website.

### Petitions

Presented formally at an Assembly session - on agenda and in minutes, webcast (so can be clipped), and formal reply must be published online (so can then be sent to all signers). Speak to our office first so you can get the wording right – it is specific and needs to be clear.

### Casework

Similarly to Councillors, London AMs can be contacted by residents from across London with Casework. If you have or receive questions related to TfL, the Met, LFB, etc. Feel free to contact the team to find an answer to your question.

### Letters to Officials

As AMs we can send letters to the Mayor, government ministers and many other officials and ask questions. If you have questions about areas where the GLA has powers, do get in contact with our team.

### Site Visits & London Media

Site visits help to get a better understanding of the issues faced by residents and are also a great picture opportunity. As AMs we can reach the wider London media to highlight issues and we can reach local, regional and national press outlets.

### Consultations

We respond to consultations on issues that matter to Londoners, so feel free to send on anything that matters in your area. This year we've responded to dozens, including on Stratford Station, Heathrow & City Airport expansions, the OceanDiva party boat and many more.

### Diversity & Inclusion

Hina has been working with local parties by supporting and strengthening their initiatives to reach out to the many communities that they have in their area and she also set up a diversity panel in December 2022. Get in touch!



# GLA Lib Dems Annual Report 2023



Welcome to the latest report back from City Hall by Liberal Democrat Assembly Members, Caroline Pidgeon MBE and Hina Bokhari. This year has been dominated by a cost of living crisis, the Mayor's mishandled ULEZ expansion, deeply disturbing revelations appearing about London's emergency services, and the continued fallout on building safety. These are huge issues for Londoners, and Caroline and Hina have been at the forefront of holding the Mayor and London's key services to account.

We can look back at a difficult year for London, but two Liberal Democrat Assembly Members speaking up and achieving real progress made a real difference.

### The Mayor's Budget

Scrutinising the Mayor's Budget is one of the key pieces of work for the Assembly every year, looking both at the strategic shape of the Mayor's

plans, and at points of detailed implementation. This year we were concerned about the extent of the Mayor's unspent reserves, his **inadequate ULEZ scrappage scheme**, whether he will meet police recruitment targets, and the reliability of his green financing programmes.

Through her work on the Budget and Performance Committee, Caroline has questioned all the GLA's functional bodies – the Met, Fire Brigade, TfL, and the development agencies for the Olympic Park and for Old Oak and Park Royal – about their budget plans for next year. This included pushing policy points like **extra buses for Outer London** and the restoration of the **Go Sutton Bus**, as well as emphasising the need to provide resources to support vital work on **"cultural issues" – poor behaviour – in the Met and the Fire Brigade**. She also questioned the Mayor on the budget as a whole, and summonsed him to answer further questions on ULEZ expansion and TfL fares.

## How to Get in Contact

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Caroline is Vice Chair of the Transport Committee and also is a member on the Police & Crime Committee, the Budget & Performance Committee and the GLA Oversight Committee.

### Hina Bokhari AM

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Hina is a member of the Economy Committee, the Environment Committee and the Fire, Resilience & Emergency Planning Committee.



## Holding the Mayor of London to Account



## Working hard all year round for Londoners



Hina Bokhari AM, Liberal Democrat Group  
Item 4: Question and Answer Session - Cost of Living  
How can they be tackled? 2022/3839 What cost of living pressures are Londoners facing?

### Tackling the Cost of Living Crisis

Hina has been undertaking significant work on the Cost of Living crisis both in her role on the Economy Committee and the London Assembly's specialist working group. Her focus has been on scrutinising the effectiveness of the Mayor's Cost of Living Hub, as well as meeting with organisations supporting Londoners such as the Citizen's Advice Bureau. In November she spoke on how the economy has impacted out mental health and wellbeing at City Hall's Cost of Living Conference, and met with practitioners at the Thrive London Conference.



to open up the scrappage scheme

### Making ULEZ work

There's no doubt that the Mayor's expansion of the ULEZ to Outer London has been controversial. Caroline and Hina have recognised the challenges it poses for some Londoners, and have done all they can to make ULEZ work. In February, Caroline and Hina tried to force the Mayor to **double the ULEZ scrappage scheme** to £220 million through the Budget process - **open to all Londoners** - and drawing on cash reserves he has sitting unused. This was long before the Mayor announced any change to the scrappage scheme on his own. They also proposed to put **£25m into extra buses for Outer London**. Yet, the Labour members of the assembly voted against it. If the Mayor had listened to Lib Dems then, thousands of Londoners would have been given greater clarity and peace of mind on whether they would be eligible for financial support when upgrading their cars. The Mayor did not listen. Labour did not listen. And £125m of support for Outer Londoners was discarded.



### Holding the Mayor to Account on Policing

The **Casey Report into the Met** was a watershed moment for London. On its release in March, Caroline roundly condemned the **misogyny, racism and homophobia** it highlighted. 24 hours later, she was questioning Baroness Casey and the Met Commissioner, Sir Mark Rowley, in person at the Police and Crime Committee. Her questioning led to a revelation that was immediately picked up by the media, and

made a real impact: several hundreds of officers are likely to be dismissed.

In July, the Met responded to the review with the release of its **'New Met for London'** plan. Caroline cautiously welcomed the plan in the Evening Standard, noting its shift in tone towards community policing and devolution of resources to local boroughs, which the London Lib Dems have long campaigned for. She will continue to scrutinise how the plan is rolled out.

One established way the Met can foster trust with the public is through the use of body-worn cameras during stop and search checks; a written question to the Mayor from Caroline in July revealed that over 6200 incidents of stop and search have not been recorded in the last 15 months. Caroline spoke to the Evening Standard about this, highlighting the significant number of people whose encounters with the police have not been monitored and the problem this poses both for communities and the police service.

### Holding the Mayor to Account on Transport

ULEZ has dominated headlines, but your Assembly Members' focus has been on other transport issues too. Caroline spoke to BBC London News about the Mayor's so-called **'Superloop' bus** idea. She's been calling for more orbital routes for 15 years, and was disappointed that so much of what Sadiq Khan is offering is just a rebranding exercise. No new bus routes are arriving to support the expansion of ULEZ. Much of the 'superloop' will not appear until 2024.

Caroline pressed the Mayor on his **19.3 million bus kilometre cuts** since he became Mayor, in particular, cuts to buses in Sutton, Kingston and Richmond. She showed that his claims to be introducing two new buses in Sutton are false: he's rebranding existing routes.

At the March plenary Caroline questioned the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC) about **plans to transform Stratford and Stratford International stations** to improve passenger experiences and she



responded to TfL's consultation on those plans. She has fought to ensure step-free access is available at the station too, as well as across London's network, particularly at new stations on the Elizabeth Line.

Caroline and Hina both visited Merton and Sutton bus garages to see the work going on to prepare them for e-buses, and Hina followed up her commitment to green transport by delivering an address at the first National Cargo Bike Summit at the Guildhall.



### Holding the Mayor to account on the Economy and the Environment

Hina's busy time as Chair of the Economy Committee ended with the release of several reports, covering incentivising the use of cargo bikes, food poverty, and grassroots cultural venues. As Chair, she also called for the Mayor to give more detail and costings on his free school meal scheme - as a long-term solution is needed - and she also called on the Government to restore the £20 uplift in Universal Credit.

Hina has been scrutinising the Mayor's commitment to tackling the issue of sewage dumping in London's waterways. Given the Mayor has set himself a target of reducing water pollution incidents by 30% by 2025 - yet shockingly has made no moves to enable this - she will not let the issue lie. In July, Hina's questioning of Thames Water's CEO at the Environment Committee led to the revelation that not a single river in London is considered 'healthy' by EU standards. Hina also challenged Thames Water over dumping of treated sewage in Teddington Weir, following on from campaigns by parliamentary colleagues Sarah Olney and Munira Wilson. Clean water in London will be an issue she continues to pursue.

In November, Hina and Caroline were delighted their motion to protect Richmond Park from increased flights was supported and passed by the Assembly.

### Tackling Fire Safety

Six years on from the Grenfell Fire, and thousands of Londoners are still vulnerable, living in homes with **unsafe cladding** and facing high costs for work to fix it. Hina has long advocated for residents facing these problems, particularly leaseholders. She pushed the Mayor to do more on the reluctance of some developers to undertake remedial fire safety works. Hina continues to lobby the Mayor through Mayor's Questions to withhold funding from landlords who refuse to take responsibility for fire safety measures.

Hina has continued to highlight the need for legislation of the online sale of **unsafe lithium-ion batteries** for e-bikes and scooters - her lobbying prompted the London Fire Brigade to launch its Charge Safe campaign in response.