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As part of this process, and following our own review of the transcripts, the GLA identified errors in the transcription of the audio recordings of the interviews. These included

- typographical errors;
- comments being attributed to the wrong person;
- text being omitted in the transcription; and
- instances where the transcriber completely misunderstood what was being said, and writing something wholly incorrect.

Where the GLA has identified genuine errors in the transcription when compared to the audio recording, we have made corrections to these transcripts using “tracked-changes”.

In each case, the corrected text is shown in the margins of the page and is accompanied by a brief explanation for that correction.

The GLA has taken this approach to ensure both the corrections and original text are available, and so we can balance our legal obligations under the EIR with our duty to help ensure accurate information is released in respect of the individuals interviewed as part of the Garden Bridge Review.

In some case, the parties interviewed have asked the GLA to include certain comments regarding their comments to help provide some clarification about what they were intending to convey. Again, these are clearly marked on the transcripts.

Please note however, the transcript may, despite our best endeavours, contain errors due the transcription process itself.

Garden Bridge Review Meeting transcript

Event: MH/Caroline Pidgeon AM

Date: 22 November 2016

Interviewer: Dame Margaret Hodge MP

Caroline Pidgeon AM

Claire Hamilton

Mark Morris

Caroline Pigdeon (CP): I presume you'll be making recommendations on the public projects or sort of taking future projects; that sort of thing?

Dame Margret Hodge (MH): Yeah.

CP: Brilliant. I mean -- so, really, I first got involved and actually then -- which led to the Assembly getting involved in this back in early 2015 --

MH: Right.

CP: -- because Will Hurst, from Architects Journal, he had --

MH: Yeah, who I've met.

CP: Yes, who's -- right. He had got copies of the three tenders for the design services. And the marking just seemed to be very strange and Heatherwick got more marks than other more experienced architects. And so I raised this as an oral question to the Mayor, who obviously reacted in the way -- and you'll have all this in your files. He dismissed any concerns I had and said that I had a Taliban view of all things beautiful, which was lovely. And -- but I was really, really concerned about it. So I thought, "Actually, I wonder whether an audit or something could take place".

So I called in the head of audit for the GLA and the director of finance and resources, Martin Clarke. And they came and met me and I said to them, "I've got these concerns" and had a chat. And they said, "Oh but the scoring would have been ..." I said, "Well, look, here's the scoring. Look". And they looked at it and they said, "That doesn't quite look right". So Martin -- but then they explained to me, which I hadn't quite appreciated, that they couldn't do an audit of TfL. TfL had to have their own -- instruct their own internal audit.

So I then ~~wrote~~ to -- for some reason, my letter isn't dated. I presume you might have this but, if not, we can let you have it.

Commented [GLA FoI1]: This was corrected after the GLA identified an obvious error in the transcription.

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MH: (Overspeaking)

CP: I wrote to Sir Peter Hendy, requesting that he fully examine things and a series of questions.

MH: I have just seen that, yeah.

CP: And basically, that -- the help in that actually came from the director of resources at City Hall. Martin Clarke advised me, "I think this is what you need to ask to get what you want". And then Peter obviously wrote back and he did instruct this. He did agree to have this audit carried out, internal audit, which then started. And then the Assembly started to get more interested. And you've seen -- and I know Len and Len's come to meet you. But it just said -- just felt, to me, it didn't quite stack up. How can someone without the experience of others yet have won this, hands down? And also, they had an idea of a garden bridge and that's what gradually came out, in all of our hearings; is that the Garden Bridge, the Mayor clearly had an idea of the Heatherwick design and that's what they were pushing for. Yet in the tender that went out, it said, you know, "a pedestrian link between ..."

So things like that. So you've already -- and I guess any mayor -- this is one of the things I was mentioning just now. Every Mayor, from Ken - and Sadiq will be the same - will suddenly have a project they like and there's nothing wrong with that. But it's how do you, in a transparent way, procure it and go about the whole process and where do you get the funding from?

So, you know, Ken used the LDA an awful lot for different projects. Boris didn't have that so he's used TfL. Cable car, things like that, that's not actually a transport mode or it's not really -- it's a tourist -- you know, it's just how do you fund these things and do it in a proper, transparent way, that's open? And I think that is one of the real challenges, actually.

MH: Actually, interestingly, the end of the work, when the £30 million -- which I know £20 million, which is a loan(?), that came from GLA to TfL or it came out of TfL balances? Do you know? Do we know?

Claire Hamilton (CH): I don't. I think it's from TfL (Overspeaking)

CP: I think it's TfL. I don't think it's City Hall.

MH: Well, can we just check that (Overspeaking)

CH: I think it's TfL.

Mark Morris (MM): TfL, I understand. It was (Overspeaking) for TfL.

MH: TfL?

MM: Yeah.

CP: Yeah.

MH: But it wasn't GLA money given to TfL for the purpose --

MM: No.

CP: No, I think it's --

MH: -- when he gave a direction?

MM: The GLA money relates to future it spends(?), essentially the guarantee.

CP: Yeah, but --

MH: Yeah, the guarantees.

CP: -- but it's -- but no, it's absolutely TfL.

MH: Okay.

CP: And the same with the cable car and other stuff. It's all been --

MH: Okay.

CP: And I just think that that's a general thing that you might want to reflect on --

MH: Okay, yeah, thank you. Thank you.

CP: -- because I think that's a challenge because any Mayor will get a exciting project that they like. And if you wanted to go out and for a garden bridge, why didn't your tender specify that's -- you wanted a garden bridge that had this and built this? Then it would have been an open --

MM: And (Overspeaking)

MH: I mean, it's also -- another thing that's -- is -- came up yesterday actually which I've got to understand is -- I agree with you. You know, everybody can have their sort of ideas. That's what politics is really about. But what I don't understand - and you might have to do(?) - is if there's a mayor's direction, what are then the processes for authorisation and checking; so checks and balances in the system?

CP: In the system. Yeah, absolutely.

MH: Do you know?

CP: No, I mean, the Mayor can direct. But then if it's directing "I want to tender for a garden bridge at this point" --

MH: Somebody's got to make sure there's probity and value(?).

CP: -- it then has to be the proper process.

MH: And are not -- yeah.

CP: But I'm not --

MH: But Isabel Dedring was quite clear. Once it's a mayor's direction, it's out of her hands.

CP: Yeah but they've still got to go through proper process, haven't they? They can't --

MH: Well, who checks and balances?

CP: Yeah, think that's -- no, I think that's a really, really good point.

MM: I mean, this is the original tender. I don't know if you've ever seen it.

MH: Yeah, I have seen it. Yeah.

MM: There's no reference to -- it's just "a bridge" and that (Overspeaking)

MH: Yeah, I've seen that. I've seen that, yeah.

CP: And that -- I think, yeah.

MM: Have you seen the three submissions (Overspeaking)

MH: Yeah, I've seen those.

CP: Yeah, we've seen all those. Brilliant. Mark's --

MM: Sorry, I've spilt it(?).

MH: I've seen those.

CP: Yeah, good. Good, I'm sure you have.

MH: I've seen those. Thank you very much.

MM: Good. No.

CP: One of the big issues that we think going forward at the moment is -- with this whole Garden Bridge, is there's a huge clash between the river movements from the Thames Tideway Tunnel and the construction of it. In various online and whatever it says almost the garden bridge needed to have started way ahead because of the work --

MH: I think they've resolved that to be honest.

CP: You think they have?

MH: Well, they tell me they have. They tell me it's no longer an issue.

CP: Oh, interesting. I'm not -- that's not what you picked up.

MM: Well --

MH: Okay, so (Overspeaking)

MM: -- people have different views.

MH: Go on.

MM: Ports of London haven't given them a licence yet.

CP: Port of London Authority.

MH: They're about to.

MM: Okay. Well, this --

CP: Yeah, okay.

MH: This is what I'm told.

MM: Okay, have you got --

CP: Yeah. No, well, you're ahead of us on these things.

MM: Okay (Overspeaking)

MH: But you were -- thank you for raising that.

CP: Yeah, you're ahead on these things.

MH: And we will check again. Can we do that?

CH: Yeah.

MM: Yeah.

CP: Yeah.

MH: Just check the border(?) licences and the problems that were originally envisaged appear to have vanished.

CP: Okay.

MM: Okay.

CP: That's interesting. It's --

MM: I mean --

MH: But I will check that.

CP: Yeah.

MM: -- I mean, there's an argument that Boris wanted -- he kept raising, "We have to get on with it. We have to get on with it before" --

MH: Because (Overspeaking)

MM: And whether he used it as a false argument or whether it's real, suddenly there'll be a huge number of increased river movements because of the movement of soil. The Tideway Tunnelling starts proper next year and it was initially envisaged that some of the major work on the ridge would be finished before the Tideway tunnelling started. So suddenly there is going to be a clash. Now whether the clash causes no problems, it's certainly an issue that needs to be clarified. But definitely a clash will occur.

CP: It had been raised as a problem before, hadn't it?

MH: Yeah. Well, they tell me they have resolved it but I will check. I mean --

CP: I guess they are going to.

MH: -- what we could do is just to do a letter to the Port of London. I don't have to see them but if we do a letter just saying the issue's been raised and we've got an issue around it.

CH: Yeah, we've got contacts there. We can check that.

CP: Clarify it.

MH: That -- yeah, that --

CP: Brilliant. About there being whether it's poised for public money. I mean, that's what you'll be assessing. Obviously a huge amount of public money's gone in. They -- it's questionable how much the private trust have actually raised and so much of it is anonymous. People who sound like some are dropping out as well and I just fear, even if they start building it, they will find they need more money. And where's that going to come from? I am fearful that will come to TfL.

I'm also really concerned about the annual maintenance and upkeep because that hasn't been signed off yet though that's a condition of planning from certainly Westminster. I'm not sure if Lambeth -- and Lambeth put it in as well.

MM: I think Lambeth (Overspeaking)

CP: We've heard anything £2.5 to £3/3.5 million a year and that's just for the routine with all these trees and things and managing it, staffing.

MM: (Overspeaking)

CP: What then happens in 10/20 years when it needs major works? You know, if you think about Tower Bridge at the moment, that must be costing a fortune. Who's going to be paying for that? Will that again fall to TfL? You know, it's a huge liability that's coming.

And the Bridge House Trust and the City of London have just -- you know, do not want to touch this, quite rightly. My understanding from talking to their chair --

MH: The which trust?

CP: Bridge House Trust is a charity that's run through the City of London.

MH: Right.

CP: But Boris -- my understanding is Boris thought that it would fund --

MH: Fund.

CP: -- the bridges.

MH: City Bridge? I've got money out of them.

CP: Yes.

MH: This is a general trust.

CP: Yes, you know the charity and they do lots --

MH: Yeah, the City Bridge Trust or something.

CP: Yes and --

MH: Is it called -- where has Matt gone?

CP: Or Bridge House Trust.

CH: It is City Bridge Trust.

MH: It is Bridge House.

CP: Okay, it was Bridge House, was it?

MH: Okay.

CP: Okay, but that --

MH: Well, there -- this isn't a specific one to the bridges? This is the (Overspeaking)

MM: No.

CP: Yes, but it's --

MM: It funds youth clubs, schools, anything but bridges.

CP: Yes, but they --

MH: Funding some research (Overspeaking)

CP: But Boris -- my understanding is Boris thought that was a way through that.

MH: Right.

CP: They could fund and they said no. And he also went to the City basically saying, "Will you fund it?" and they were very clear, "No". So --

MH: Right. Is there evidence of that?

CH: I don't know because --

CP: You may -- you might want to talk to City of London. They have quite strong views on this. Or write to them.

CH: Okay. Want to do that?

MH: Yeah.

CP: But Mark Boleat who's their chair, you know --

MH: Yeah.

CP: Because he's obviously had lots of --

MH: I haven't seen anything about trying to negotiate ...

MM: In the exchange of correspondence between Boris Johnson and George Osborne, he wrote, "Can the garden" -- sorry, "Can the City Bridge fund it?"

MH: Oh, yeah, he did. He did on --

MM: Yeah. So he obviously has --

CP: But he's clearly -- Boris clearly spoke to Mark. Whether there's anything in writing because Mark, you know, told me this at a dinner, that --

MH: Okay. Maybe we can do a --

CH: We could ask (Overspeaking)

CP: Just --

MH: I think just do a letter again and see where that gets us.

CH: Yeah.

CP: (Inaudible) and trying to "The City would bail out of this and oh, you can just pay for it, can't you?" And they're, like, "No, it's a waste of public money".

MH: Okay.

CH: Because the City Bridge Trust does do the maintenance for other bridges in London, is that right, as well as the wider charity stuff? I think it's --

CP: I think it might do. I don't know.

MH: (Overspeaking) said that it was originally established to do that and it had so much funding that it's now doing the wider public interest.

MM: Certainly, the City of London is responsible for Tower Bridge, isn't it?

CP: Yeah, and they do some of the other --

MM: But their remit and work goes much, much wider than the bridge, yeah.

CP: Yeah.

CH: We can try and clarify that as well, thank you.

MH: So they're funding, are they, all the renew of --

CP: Yes, Tower.

MH: No, London Bridge, it is, that's being --

CP: No, it's Tower Bridge.

MM: Tower Bridge.

MH: Tower Bridge (Overspeaking)

CP: It's closed at the moment, yeah. So -- but I think that annual £2.5 to £3 million is significant and it's a huge, huge liability and potentially could be more, and I think that's a worry for us.

The other thing: Garden Bridge Trust. I mean, you've been dealing with them and we found them dreadful to deal with. They're not subject to FOIs of course. They haven't published their accounts yet, have they? They've been delayed?

MM: Their first -- their second year operational accounts should have been published in July and they've held over for five months. They've used the argument that they're trying to put them into a financial year. But it's just convenient they didn't come out in the summer. So we really don't know their second - which is their major year of operation. Their accounts, both to the Charity Commission and to Companies House, they haven't been lodged.

CP: Which is --

MH: I'm aware of that.

CP: Yeah, okay, but that, we think, is a bit strange.

MH: I'm aware of that.

CP: I mean, in terms of dealing with them, I mean, we wrote months and months ago. We've just had a reply. They of course claim they hadn't seen it. You know, it's all the sort of usual tactics, stalling tactics, which you, I'm sure, have experienced over the years. But we find that -- find them very difficult to deal with.

MH: Which just reminded me. The other thing I wondered is -- am I seeing the Charity Commission? I can't remember if I said yes or no.

CH: They -- you haven't asked yet and they haven't been in contact with you. So we can put them in as soon as possible, yeah.

MH: Okay, I can -- probably should see them. They're apparently doing their report in about a week's time so ...

CH: Oh, yeah.

CP: Oh, yeah, but I do find it very strange.

MH: Charity -- I don't have a lot of month. The Charity Commission is not the world's most effective regulatory body.

CP: Yes. But I do think it's very strange that if you are building a new bridge that you have a private trust who will be in charge of sort of running it, but the maintenance costs would fall to the public. So it just feels it's a very strange mix and the idea it's closed for fundraising so many times a year, all that, doesn't feel very comfortable.

MH: Just tell me. Originally, before it was changed, it got down to 12. What I haven't picked up is what was it originally?

MM: I think it was 12.

MH: It was always 12?

MM: I think it was --

MH: Because --

CH: I think it was -- it wasn't a massive change. I think it was something like 18 potentially before Sadiq got it down to 12.

MH: And then he got down to 12?

CH: I can't quite remember the way round but it was about a third, I think.

CP: It was always around about 12. I --

MH: It was always around ...?

CP: -- I think so.

MH: And is there sort of anything in saying -- is it Saturdays or is it -- have they not said?

CH: I don't think they specified when that would be.

MM: No, I don't think (Overspeaking)

MH: They haven't specified.

CP: But I just fear once you get it, they'll think, "Oh, could we squeeze another two in because we can raise this?" and it all just -- it just doesn't feel very comfortable. And if this is public infrastructure, you're building a foot bridge in theory - it's more than that - surely it should be open to the public and managed potentially by the public sector rather than a private trust that's not really accountable to anyone. It just feels it's a really strange rub. You know, we're -- Sadiq's agreed to build the pedestrian cycle bridge between Rotherhithe and Canary Wharf, which I've been pushing for. Well, that won't be in this sort of structure. It'll be proper public infrastructure.

MH: There is one that's been done completely privately. I can't remember which one. Vauxhall, is that the one? Or -- it's one that is completely private money. I don't think there's any --

CP: There's talk of some other pedestrian ones. I'm not aware. There might be.

MH: Is that -- am I right, Vauxhall and ...?

MM: There -- it hasn't really progressed but there are (Overspeaking)

CP: Vauxhall and Nine Elms, there's talk of one --

MH: Nine Elms, that's --

CP: -- sort of by the, yeah, development.

MH: Yeah because there was a discussion about whether they should --

MM: I don't think the private funding's really come forward, is the problem.

MH: You don't think what?

MM: The private funding's actually come forward.

CP: Private funding.

MH: Come forward, right.

MM: They got the planning permission, I understand, but not the --

MH: Right.

MM: -- the means in terms of finance.

MH: Right, yeah.

CP: The other things: I mean, obviously you've got so much information which you're taking on board. I don't envy you. I mean --

MH: Far too much.

CP: -- just to -- I mean, just to flag up another -- sorry, this is me slightly bouncing around. One of the issues: when we had the big Assembly hearings on this, you know, we asked TfL for all this information. They sent it to -- as I understand it, they sent it in a way -- I'm not sure if they sent it paper-based or in a way that wasn't searchable. I don't think we had it even electronically on -- just being awkward. You know, most things when we deal -- I mean, we deal with them all the time with our scrutiny work. They would send it over so our team can search for things and do whatever. And they sent it in a really awkward way, thinking we wouldn't -- and, you know, quite late in the day. And our team of staff, I have to say, you know, ploughed through the lot to make sure -- but again, it's just slightly -- every step of the way, in fact, they've been awkward and obstacles to -- and gradually --

MH: Yeah. Why didn't you look at the second contract? Why did you only look at the first?

CP: The -- I genuinely don't know why. But I mean, I think there are issues around the Arup one as well.

MH: Both. Yeah, but it --

CP: And I think that's something you might want to --

MH: -- it was just you never looked at it, did you?

CP: We didn't. We didn't, no. I mean, in some ways we were lucky. The Tories were -- kind of didn't say much of a word at committee. They just kind of let it happen. Whether they would have supported us getting into another one and might have been more difficult. But they supported and the report was cross-party. They didn't -- I don't think they exempted themselves from it so -- which is powerful. But I don't know why we didn't particularly do the Arup one.

MM: No, I mean --

CP: I can't recall it even being discussed.

MM: -- it's --

CP: I think we just felt we'd done it on that and then later I've been meeting with Will(?) and hearing about the Arup one and that doesn't sound quite right either.

I mean, the other very strange thing was that Boris was so fixed on this idea and we gradually found out through different FOIs and different things and Len had found out -- had got off a tip off. He had flown San Francisco to see Apple about sponsoring this with Heatherwick, with Isabel Dedring, all these people, and it wasn't in his public diary. Yet it was clearly a public ... And that really is very strange behaviour because, you know, the Mayor's diary's public. And I think that -- so he's deliberately just -- I mean, it was a sort of 48-hour -- it must have been hideous, 48-hour trip to San Francisco and back.

That's just -- the whole thing about this: it's just very strange behaviour, going beyond that extra mile because you're so desperate for this project and for Heatherwick. And when you're about to go out to tender, to take someone with you just ...

MH: Again, I mean, I don't know how the GLA works. Just talk to -- from your impression as a GLA AM member. So you know, it's quite okay. Boris has an idea and Boris -- Heatherwick has obviously been getting inside, floating this idea around to lots of people, which is fine. And so has Joanna Lumley. Fine. But once it gets into the bureaucratic machinery, explain to me why you think -- because that's the sort of allegation really that's lying underneath what you're saying, why you think the machinery would respond to Boris in a way that looks to be giving preferential treatment to one looks to be given. Why would the machinery do that? Because that - you know, I would -- my years as a minister, I had crazy ideas. But the machinery --

CP: Stopped it.

MH: Well, they would respond in a properly bureaucratic way.

CP: Yes.

MH: And I never did the -- you know, I didn't sort of -- but I had ideas of things that I wanted to do.

CP: Yes.

MH: But the machinery would make me act appropriately. So what I don't quite understand/get with the GLA/Mayor's machinery is what is it in the machinery that might lead to the preferential treatment of one of the tenderers? Why does the machinery not ensure your proper, appropriate behaviour?

CP: Yeah. I think you're spot on there because I don't think -- it's still relatively a new institution. I don't think they quite -- or they're not used to Mayors ever directing. Boris then has started to -- over the last four years, he did. The Fire Authority and others, he was directing. I think there's one thing for the Mayor to do a direction

saying, "I want to see a garden -- a bridge between this which will be a garden and whatever. Please procure whatever" and then they should go through a proper process. But it's almost like they were hiding the fact they wanted this garden on the bridge so nobody could fairly tender. So Heatherwick was the only one.

MH: But did they? Did Boris want it as a garden bridge?

CP: Yeah, I think -- I don't think he's --

MH: Did he?

CP: I think so. I think he's going with --

MH: Did he say that in his -- can you point me to evidence where he's actually said that before the tender was let?

CP: Well, didn't he go to San Francisco before the tender?

MM: He was in San Francisco with Heatherwick whose vision was for a garden bridge. He was meeting potential sponsors before the tender had been completed.

CP: Yeah.

MH: So why did the machinery not pick that up? Why -- what is it in the way the -- just as a more general issue because, you know, any Mayor could do this.

CP: I don't think they -- I think they just --

MM: A very good question.

CP: I don't understand why there's not a proper check there. I think they felt, "We've got a mayor that wants this. We've got to find a way to deliver it. Just find a way to deliver it quickly in this timescale". He obviously wanted something probably before his end of his term. And so they -- you know, Richard de Cani who's the officer who did all the scoring, I have a lot of time for. I have huge respect, but in this area I just don't know what happened where he was told, "Just find a way to deliver this and find a way ...". He wants Heatherwick. And they went through a sort of pretend(?) process but reality was it didn't seem to all stack up. They probably didn't ever think -- if everyone would love it, they didn't think there'd be this outcry. They didn't think there'd be, you know, proper journalists going through and doing all the FOIs and then the Assembly picking it up and taking it. I don't think they probably even conceived that would ever happen. They thought it would be like the cable car. People joke about it but it happened and so on. But I don't think there -- or there hadn't been. Whether Mike Brown, as Commissioner, would be different. I think they just thought, "Just deliver this for the Mayor. He wants this. Just get on and find a way to quickly do it".

MM: The only on record --

MH: Is it --

MM: -- I can think of, of kickback, is Sir Peter Hendy, the Commissioner of TfL, produces a report - their own report - for every TfL board meeting. And there was one paragraph from the Commissioner's report but I can't remember the date but happy dig it out - where he says, "Our work for the garden bridge is limited to just planning and other support services and we have no resources for it".

MH: Yeah, I found that. I found that.

MM: So for me -- I thought that was quite a --

CP: You've seen that.

MM: He was trying to go on record.

MH: That was early on. That was in 2012.

MM: And that's quite --

CP: That's him asserting himself.

MM: I thought it was quite an assertive comment.

MH: Yeah.

MM: But that's the only thing. I haven't looked at it. The only thing I can think of on record is --

MH: But I don't understand. It still doesn't answer it. So, you know, "I want a garden bridge until the cows come home". You know, I could want -- I don't know what I wanted. But you've still got to -- you've got to do it.

CP: Well, also normally things (Overspeaking)

MH: So I don't understand why the machine didn't.

CP: Yeah. Most project planning is in, like, the business planning cycle. So lots of stuff the Mayor wants at the moment, the new Mayor, will be going into the business plan that comes out in December. This is kind of something that's outside of that whole process.

MH: It's small in their big --

CP: Yes. Yes, it is --

MH: It wasn't -- I mean, that -- it doesn't -- it's still a lot of money.

CP: Well, it's a lot of money but relatively for them it's, yes, a small change sort of project. And also it was -- sometimes I kind of feel they deliver things for the Mayor. It's all, like the cable car, it's a bit of a play thing and was, "Oh, the Mayor wants it so let's just get on. Deliver it, find a way. Find some money, find a way". And that it is true. How do you make sure there's a proper process in there and I think that --

MH: And you --

CP: I don't think there probably was.

CH: Do you think that was done better with the cable car or was that a similar (Overspeaking)

CP: Well, also it's -- I mean, they managed to get European funding, ironically, for it and things like that. They found a way to fund it. But it wasn't quite the same because they decided "We want a cable car" so any of the processes would have been for a cable car. Whereas this was saying, "We want a pedestrian bridge". But the Mayor in his mind, I think, wanted this garden bridge.

MM: And that's --

CP: It's how you evidence -- I realise how you evidence --

MM: The Emirates sponsorship was arguably better deal than Barclays. They'd learnt some things about (Overspeaking)

CP: Oh, for the cable car, yeah.

MH: So this is about (Overspeaking)

MM: The Emirates sponsorship was --

CP: Of the cable car.

MM: -- is longer term and arguably a better contract than they got for cycle hire scheme with Barclays.

MH: Oh, yeah.

CP: Yeah.

MM: Yeah.

CP: So they have learnt on -- yeah, on that. But yeah, I -- some of it, I guess - and this is what you've got to find - is the evidence that points to things rather than just your intuition. But my intuition early on was "This doesn't feel right" and some of it is very - it's very coincidental that, you know, Richard de Cani is, you know, scoring. His -- all his paperwork will happen to have disappeared when they moved office. Funny that. You know, it's not how TfL would normally be. They would have very clear --

MH: I mean, I think the scoring was on the other one that disappeared. It was on the -- wasn't it? It wasn't on the --

CP: Wasn't on the Arup one, no.

MH: Yeah, it was on the Arup one.

CP: Oh, was it the Arup one that disappeared.

MH: Yeah, I think so. I think so.

CP: I thought the original documents for the first one had disappeared as well because they've moved office.

MH: Do you remember, Claire?

CH: I don't, sorry, no (Overspeaking)

MH: I think it was the second one but I will check. Let's check because I have it in my brain it was the Arup one.

CP: Yeah. Well, you've been reading -- I mean, I don't envy you.

MH: This is -- you want to see down there. I've got two lots full. Crazy.

CP: Yeah, but this is what you would have done on your committee with all the years they kept making(?) mistakes.

MH: Not -- well, I have dealt(?) there.

CP: Yeah. But I think, looking forward, it's about how you support any Mayor who's got an idea for projects so it's transparent, open, very clear and explicit, what they want, so that it can be an open, fair process and everyone could have the opportunity to bid for whatever it is. And that it's clear where the funding --

MH: (Overspeaking) why is it -- I mean, when you look at the -- because one of the things that has gone wrong here is they've lost support, you know, which is -- which will have financial implications. So why? Why is it -- I mean, they clearly thought they had (Several inaudible words) -- you're probably not in. But they clearly thought that there was support there. They had -- they did their public engagement and he had overwhelming support for that for the bridge at that point. So --

CP: But did they actually do it, like, where it lands and wider(?)? Because I mean, you know, I think to a general person, "Would you like to see a garden bridge over Thames?" "Oh, that would be lovely". "Would you like it here to here and these are some of the conditions on it and it won't always be open at night" and this, that and the other, actually. And it's going to cost this much of the public purse". I think once people start

seeing how much it's going to cost, people start thinking, "Hang on, is that value for money when, actually, we could do with investment here or here". You're -- you know, across London people always want to --

MM: I mean, a small issue about public engagement or lack of understanding of almost London was a journalist went to one of the first public meetings and the Garden Bridge Trust were just shocked that there are people living on the South Bank. They just assumed it was just a kind of commercial/visitor area. And the fact that local residents were coming and raising serious concerns, they just thought, "Well, we're doing this for tourists" and, you know, they were quite taken back that there are ordinary --

CP: Yeah, there are.

MM: It's a real mixed community in that area actually around the South Bank and LWT. And this is a journalist on the SE1 website. He was -- they -- he reported that they were just taken back. They just thought they were building something. You know, people don't live in central London. You know, they were really kind of a bit naïve.

CP: Yeah. I think the trust have been naïve actually in all their -- because suddenly I just had the first Garden Bridge Trust newsletter and they're myth buster and all this which just made me laugh.

MH: Their what?

CP: Myth buster, and so all the stories that are out there about it.

MH: I haven't seen that.

CP: Oh, that made me laugh. I'm sure we've --

MH: Have you got a copy of that?

CP: Yeah, shall we -- can we send that over?

MM: Yeah, we (Overspeaking)

CP: Yeah, which made me laugh. But I thought, "Well, that's the first time you've proactively tried to engage me". And I may have expressed concerns as I do about things like Heathrow, but they have always continued to engage with me. And I just think it's very bizarre. They obviously just thought it was going to happen, "Keep your heads down" and --

MH: And when you did your inquiry, can you just take me through the argument over day rates and that because I haven't quite bottomed it out? Or didn't you really quite bottom that out either?

CP: We did. Is there something in the report on it? I remember there were lots of questions as to how they -- they sort of got the --

MH: Because in the audit there's a question about how did they with so -- such varying date rates end up with the same --

CP: And they got the figures and then they went back to them and said -- and you put them down.

MH: -- end up with the same --

CP: And they said that was quite normal.

MM: It was actually going back to Peter Hendy's letter of reply to you. I think he made some reference to --

CP: Is it in that one?

MM: -- day rates.

CP: I haven't looked at these more recently. But they -- I remember they did say that it was quite normal. Because when I was questioning, saying, "This seems very strange", they said that was quite normal practice. You get it in, then you go back because they sort of scored higher in other areas, supposedly go back and get them to negotiate down. I don't know if that's normal at all. Surely, if you bid for something, this is how much --

MH: Well, it should be -- on what the audit report says, it should then be on the --

CP: But there was a discussion about it. I mean, it was a long time ago we looked at this of course so my -- a lot's gone on since. But there was discussion about that.

The other thing: I do remember the guy who had done the audit at TfL - because the final audit was published, was very much watered down and didn't really address the original thing - and he was very uncomfortable throughout the whole hearing. And clearly I felt -- though he said he hadn't, I felt he clearly had been under pressure to weaken it really. What's it say in his letter:

"Whilst we are not able to reveal the exact day rates ... can say they were within a very narrow range, one being 4 per cent higher. So all three received the same commercial score in the evaluation."

MM: I mean, there is an issue. You're very right that there's two. There's the Arup contract and there's the initial design services and the design services was a relatively small amount of money. And almost, they used that as an argument that "This is all quite technical". But then it's how the industry works is the argument that that -- the initial designer then gets work with the major contractor. So I think there are issues about the Arup contract. I don't think the initial designer gets their money through putting in a design -- initial design contract.

CP: Yeah so:

"Heatherwick was awarded the contract based on day rates submitted, but with a capped fee of £60,000."

Yeah. But you're having to wade through all of this but it just -- I -- some of it, you're right. I wish some of it I could evidence more. But it's just the whole feeling, the whole process from start to finish and it's still not there.

MH: And did you -- you never interviewed Isabel Dedring?

CP: Interviewed Isabel?

MH: Or why did you not go to either her or what's his name?

CP: We had Boris come.

MH: You -- because you had Boris, and that's sort of seen as being ...?

CP: Yeah.

MH: Because she was doing day-to-day and Ed Lister?

CP: Yes, but Boris definitely came before us. I mean --

MM: I mean, I'm not -- one thing the --

CP: -- I mean, with all --

MM: The oversight committee hasn't actually done many long-term investigations.

CP: No.

MM: This was kind of -- normally it's for a committee. It was actually quite --

CP: Because it came up just before the election as well. That will be why we wouldn't have done Arup because we probably wouldn't have had the time --

MH: Time, yeah.

CP: -- because it went into the election period.

MM: Yeah, there wasn't the time. There was a bit of pressure.

CP: I think all the transcripts and stuff would be available.

MH: Yeah. No, I've got them all.

CP: You've got them?

MM: Yeah, they're all -- you've got them actually(?).

CP: So that would give you all that.

MH: Yeah.

CP: I was just saying(?) minority report from the Conservatives. Well, my talking to them off the record was they absolutely supported what we were doing but they had to be a bit careful and they're actually saying they didn't agree to it.

MM: They tried to kick up almost for the sake of it actually just before election.

MH: It's probably -- it was very close to the election.

MM: Yeah, it was just --

CP: Yeah, they weren't. I mean, that's --

MH: When was it published?

CP: March.

MM: March.

CP: So that's why. That would be why.

MH: (Overspeaking)

MM: And apparently started in the third week of March. I mean, it was just a week or two before.

MH: Yeah, close to the election.

CP: Well, this -- they may have --

MH: They were quite quiet in the --

CP: And they didn't say anything.

MH: -- in the evidence sessions. I mean, there was just one, the guy who lives out in my patch actually.

MM: Andrew Boff has --

MH: Yeah, he was the only one.

MM: -- he has said something, yeah.

CP: A lot of them sat there quietly, didn't really interject. They just let it happen. They thought it was right it should happen. They just felt uncomfortable.

MH: Yeah. Have you got an example of a similar sort of thing which was done really well, either by Ken -- I don't know how long you've been in the --

CP: I wasn't here when Ken was --

MH: Ken was here. Under Boris, a similar sort of ...? And you were looking a bit at the cable car to see --

CP: Yeah, I mean, cable --

MH: Did you look at the business case?

CP: I think the committee - I wasn't on budget - may have looked at that and I think we were concerned -- they were concerned about that. But also, that was kind of linking to the Olympics, I think, is how they sold it partly as well, from memory. But I didn't -- I wasn't on -- I wasn't looking at that at that time.

MH: Any case where you think there was a similar sort of capital project which was a niche project?

CP: It's trying to think of something that's kind of a niche project, exactly.

MM: I mean, there's certainly been a lot of examination done of the cycle hire scheme because it was sold initially that it wouldn't cost anything to the taxpayer. That was actually what Boris said in 2008.

CP: Yeah, but that was much bigger and did end up in his business plan. He was going to do it. I mean --

MM: Plan, yeah. But the issue is that people actually understand there was a case for public --

MH: So what happened there? He said, "I want to do" -- wasn't it Ken who did that?

CP: His manifesto.

MH: Wasn't that a Ken thing?

CP: Well, I'd argue it **was a Lib Dem** thing but let's not --

Commented [GLA FoI2]: This was corrected after the GLA identified an obvious error in the transcription.

Deleted: wasn't(?) a Ken

MM: He initiated in his last few months TfL to start looking at it.

MH: Right, okay.

CP: Yeah, but Boris put it in his manifesto.

MH: Okay.

CP: It was a big thing and wouldn't cost a penny and then --

MM: There actually are cycle hire schemes across Europe actually for --

MH: Yeah.

CP: Yeah.

MM: Paris has had -- it's not a new --

MH: No. I know.

MM: -- not a unique idea to London.

MH: No, I know. Yeah.

MM: I mean, that existed in a whole range of German and --

MH: Yeah. So what happened then?

MM: So the last few months, Ken initiated it. I don't actually -- as Caroline said, it was raised with Ken back in 2001. He did nothing for seven years but in the last few months --

CP: And he did put it in, yeah.

MM: -- he got TfL to start looking at it. It was kind of fast-tracked and it started -- we forget it was actually a much smaller scheme. It didn't have the eastward expansion going into Tower Hamlets and out to Olympic Park. It didn't have --

CP: Sort of Lambeth/Wandsworth area.

MM: Going out to -- well into Lambeth and out into Wandsworth and Hammersmith.

CP: Hammersmith.

MM: So it's had two expansions since. And it's taken a while to get full understanding of the finances. They've had -- the boroughs have had to contribute to its expansion. The sort of sponsorship contract weren't published initially though now they do publish

sponsorship contracts. So there's a lot -- there was a lot of pushing to get more information.

CP: Make it a better -- but it was still -- it was in the plan. It was in the Mayor's manifesto so there was a clear commitment to deliver it, a bit like, you know, Sadiq has got things he's promised. That will all come out in the business plan. It's -- I mean, the cable car's the most obvious one that came out that was a quirky project that wasn't sort of in any plan. Because I do recall one of my first Mayor's question times, Darren from the Greens made some comment about, "Well, you could even have a cable car across". And Boris made some -- it was some big joke. And I remember thinking, "This is madness" and then later we end up with a cable car.

MH: A cable car.

CP: But it was --

MH: Have you been on it?

CP: I went on the day it opened. I got a, you know, free thing --

MH: Have you?

CP: -- with Mike Brown actually, the Commissioner, was -- now Commissioner was in, you know. So I did a there and back (Overspeaking)

MM: I mean, it is incredible that it obviously had to open before the Olympics and sure enough, it did. It opened, I think, in June of 2012. So --

CP: Yeah and it was a success for the Olympics. It just hasn't been since really. But I mean -- and it's a tourist attraction really.

MH: Yeah.

CP: But I'll rack my brains to see if I can think of anything else and drop you a line. Trying to think what the other sort of quirky thoughts we've always called "his vanity". His bus. I suppose he did force his bus through, didn't he, which if you looked at it objectively --

MH: The new -- the Heatherwick bus?

CP: The new -- yeah. That was kind of forced through, wasn't it? And it didn't stack up environmentally.

MH: And was that a proper -- was there a proper competition for that?

MM: The other bus tenderers do raise concerns that they thought it was --

MH: Fixed?

MM: -- fixed. It's certainly an incredibly expensive bus and obviously no more are now being procured.

CP: Thank goodness. Yeah.

MM: And the initial vision of it being a "You can jump on and off" has ended because it's too expensive to run with conductors. And it didn't actually meet its initial spec. It came out -- the bus is a lot -- the initial ones were longer than actually what the designers did(?) actually. So there's lots -- and we also don't know what the costs of actually getting them introduced very quickly, the actual cancellation of system contracts. They haven't published that information. So there's a lot --

MH: Why haven't you got on it? Why haven't you got it automatically?

CP: Yeah, we don't have the right --

MM: They're saying their only published information in the New Year over the costs of cancelling -- they wanted to introduce them so quickly they obviously had to --

MH: Pull out of previous contracts?

MM: Contracts, yeah.

CP: Of course, there's -- there is a real issue on the whole work on the Assembly; that we don't have a power to summons papers and people. In certain circumstances, we can summons the Mayor as chair of TfL and things like that. But it's -- it frustrates sometimes.

MH: You don't have the power to summons people? So when you do your inquiries ...?

CP: It's on the basis of --

MM: Largely goodwill (Overspeaking)

CP: Goodwill. The Commissioner --

MH: Right, but I mean, ours is a bit the same. I don't have any powers. I used to sign these sorts of things telling them they had to come and always worrying in case they just said -- if they'd ignored them, I could have taken them to the House and they'd have been committed to a period of internment in the Clock Tower! (laughs)

CP: This'll add something! Is that it really? Marvellous!

MH: So we never -- so actually it was just the public pressure. Nobody ever turned us down.

CP: No, but ours do. I mean, High Speed 2 refused to come when I did --

Commented [GLA FoI3]: This was corrected after the GLA identified an error in the transcription.

Deleted: appear and turn them

Deleted: to

MH: Really?

CP: -- we did the investigation to high-speed rail and the benefits or it or not, but benefits of it a few years.

MH: Through London?

CP: High Speed 2 refused to come. I ended up having to have an expert on high-speed rail because I had everyone against and I had no one being able to -- because they wouldn't come and sell their project. So at times, it can be tricky.

But no, the bus -- the new bus for London is probably another example where the Mayor -- he did have some sort of design competition because I remember going -- but that was more pictorial designs. I remember going to the Transport Museum to look at things and Heatherwick's was there and whatever and clearly they loved the design. I don't, but they loved it and then they decided to go ahead with that. But what they've done as well is TfL have bought even more of the buses to get up to 1,000 so that they then own the --

MH: Copyright or something?

CP: Or trade -- or -- they own it then, which is slightly bizarre because no one around the world is buying these. It's not like they're a -- so the -- Boris pushed that through just before he left.

MH: What, the buying of the 1,000?

CP: Buying up to 1,000. He hiked -- pushed it up.

MM: He pushed up -- he put in an extra order just before the election.

CP: So that's --

MH: And ...?

CP: And well, Sadiq's kind of had to say, "Well, I'm not buying any more", but he's clearly just having to keep it at that order.

MH: Did he do it in the purdah period or before the purdah?

CP: Just before, wasn't it?

MM: Just before purdah.

CP: Just before. This was all again March time. They were pushing through and suddenly, "Oh, going to order another 100 and something".

MH: Can we just have a little note on that because that might a -- sort of another example on process that I can then --

CP: Yes. Yes.

MH: -- look.

CH: Yeah.

MH: Is that on -- not -- I don't want all the blooming papers but I want somebody to --

CH: Yeah, some of them summarised.

CP: Well, shall we have a -- see what we've got we could send to you?

MM: I've got (Overspeaking) last night, yeah (Overspeaking)

CP: Yeah. Oh, did they? Okay. So we've been pushing that.

MH: Just to see the processes there.

CH: Yeah.

MM: I mean, one just observation about the whole investigation is how much has been through, I would say, very good journalism and a very **sensible use** of Freedom of Information requests. That's how a lot of information has come out about this.

Commented [GLA FoI4]: This was corrected after the GLA identified an obvious error in the transcription.

Deleted: (Inaudible)

CP: Yeah and as far -- unlike others things from the TfL are quite "Here you go". It has felt constantly been pulling --

MH: All my stuff on the **PAC** was journalists and whistleblowers.

Commented [GLA FoI5]: This was corrected after the GLA identified an obvious error in the transcription.

Deleted: PSE(?)

CP: Yes. But how powerful. Goodness.

MH: It's good. It's a good bit of democracy. It's good. I mean, it's -- I should sort of celebrate it really because I think it sort of shows democracy somewhere is working sometimes.

CP: But we'll have a think if there's something else.

MH: Good, all right.

CP: But I think the bus actually is probably the closest though it was a bigger scale. But again, things weren't -- all the claims it's the greenest bus and all this were proved weren't, saying it's not.

MH: Yeah.

CP: So there were lots of things and that was again, "This is Boris's bus".

MH: Can I nick that off you? Only because it's in my pile somewhere and I was looking for --

MM: Yeah, I brought this in case there's any --

CP: What do you want? This?

MH: No, your -- those. That, I've got. That's the original --

MM: That's the article, just the potential -- well, there's -- about the clash of the --

MH: Yeah. No, not that. The tenders, the one (Overspeaking)

MM: Oh, no, sorry. Yeah, I did -- yeah, I've got them.

MH: I've got them but I --

CP: I mean, you're meeting Walter Menteth?

MM: So that's Heatherwick's --

CH: Yes, he's from the Thames Central Open Spaces group that's going to come. There's about five people coming together.

CP: Right. Walter's very good. Walter, I've known for --

MH: Walter ...?

CH: Menteth.

CP: Menteth. He's an architect and he came and gave evidence to our committee. But he's done some analysis and stuff, why he thinks it -- things don't add up.

MM: Have you seen that?

CH: We've had that, yeah.

CP: He -- to be fair, I've known him for decades, used to be -- his practice was in my ward when I was a councillor. And when he came up and he was raising it, I thought, "Well, I've known you a long time. You're actually --

MH: Which is that procurement thing? The only reason I'm probably being --

CH: It's the Project Compass(?) one which you have seen.

MH: Oh, yeah, I have seen it. Bloody hell, I've no idea where -- leave it with me. Leave it with me.

CP: Yeah? Shall we leave that with you as well?

MH: Just leave it with me and I'll chuck them if I --

CP: (Overspeaking)

MH: You know what I'm doing is -- I'm probably doing something stupid. But in a way, one needs to go through all my papers because they're in such a mess.

CH: Do you want a bit of a sorting (Overspeaking)

MH: It needs a sorting. It needs a sort because I just -- there's too many of them.

CP: But it's great you're doing this.

MH: Well --

CP: I think it's really important, learnings.

MM: What's your --

MH: Timetable?

MM: -- timescale, yeah.

MH: I haven't a clue.

MM: Haven't a clue.

MH: It depends. I mean, I -- if we -- I'm not going to write a massively long report.

CP: No, you don't --

MH: I think I'm going to write as short a report as I can which is the key issue. And I won't commit, but end of January/February if I can. But I may feel I need to go back to people on that but then we should have seen everybody by Christmas, shouldn't we? And I'm going off for a couple of weeks. So probably February actually because I'm off on (Overspeaking)

MM: And so it'd be interesting to see when the Garden Bridge Trust's accounts are published as well. They should come out in December and January.

CP: That's true. They're supposed in the New Year, aren't they?

MM: Yeah, so we can --

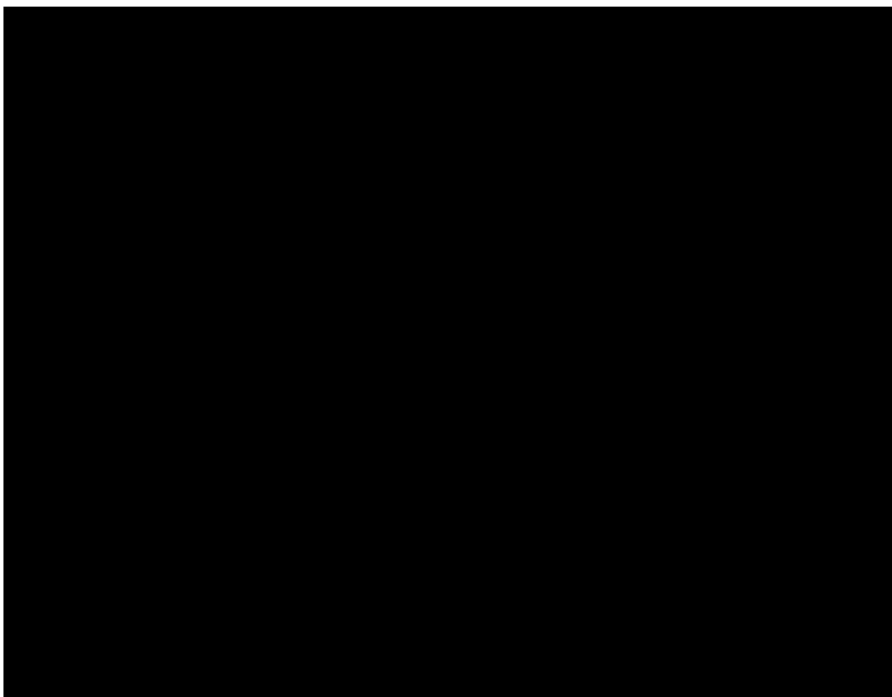
CP: Yeah and you've met with them, have you?

MH: I met with them yesterday.

CP: Wow. Okay. Yeah, I think they're struggling financially. They sort of claim they've got all these pledges and the Newsnight keep doing these things and the figure keeps changing.

MH: Yeah, I've seen the Newsnight because she's obviously done quite a lot of --

CP: Oh, she's on maternity, isn't she?



Commented [GLA FoI6]: The GLA has redacted the remaining part of the transcript as the conversation becomes a private conversation. The conversation does not relate in any way to the Garden Bridge or contain anything remotely relating to the scope of the Garden Bridge Review.

It has therefore been removed as being out-of-scope of "a transcript of the conversation in relation to the Garden Bridge Review".

