

# MDA No.: 1589

## Title: People's Question Time Consultation

### 1. Executive Summary

1.1 At the GLA Oversight Committee meeting on 14 December 2023 the Committee resolved that:

*Authority be delegated to the Chairman of the GLA Oversight Committee, in consultation with the Deputy Chair of the Committee and Group Leads, to respond to any consultations in relation to the arrangements for People's Question Time meetings.*

1.2 Following consultation with the Deputy Chair and Group Leads, the Chairman agreed the Committee's letter to the Mayor, as attached at **Appendix 1**.

### 2. Decision

2.1 **That the Chairman agrees the letter to the Mayor responding to a consultation on the arrangements for People's Question Time, as attached at Appendix 1.**

#### Assembly Member

I confirm that I do not have any disclosable pecuniary interests in the proposed decision and take the decision in compliance with the Code of Conduct for elected Members of the Authority.

The above request has my approval.

**Signature:**



**Printed Name:** Emma Best AM, Chairman of the GLA Oversight Committee

**Date:** 12 January 2024

### 3. Decision by an Assembly Member under Delegated Authority

#### Background and proposed next steps:

- 3.1 The exercise of delegated authority approving the letter to the Mayor will be formally noted at the GLA Oversight Committee's next appropriate meeting.

#### Confirmation that appropriate delegated authority exists for this decision:

Signature (Committee Services): Lauren Harvey

Printed Name: Lauren Harvey

Date: 11 January 2024

#### Financial Implications: NOT REQUIRED

Note: Finance comments and signature are required only where there are financial implications arising or the potential for financial implications.


Signature (Finance): Not Required

Printed Name:

Date:

#### Legal Implications:

The Chairman of the GLA Oversight Committee has the power to make the decision set out in this report.

Signature (Legal): 

Printed Name: Rory McKenna, Monitoring Officer

Date: 15.01.24

Email: [rory.mckenna@london.gov.uk](mailto:rory.mckenna@london.gov.uk)

#### Supporting Detail / List of Consultees:

- Len Duvall AM
- Caroline Russell AM
- Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM

#### 4. Public Access to Information

- 4.1 Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the FoIA, or the EIR and will be made available on the GLA Website, usually within one working day of approval.
- 4.2 If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the decision (for example, to complete a procurement process), it can be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods should be kept to the shortest length strictly necessary.
- 4.3 **Note:** this form (Part 1) will either be published within one working day after it has been approved or on the defer date.

##### **Part 1 - Deferral:**

Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? NO

If yes, until what date:

##### **Part 2 – Sensitive Information:**

Only the facts or advice that would be exempt from disclosure under FoIA or EIR should be included in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a part 2 form? NO

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#### **Lead Officer / Author**

Signature: Lauren Harvey

Printed Name: Lauren Harvey

Job Title: Senior Committee Officer

Date: 11 January 2024

#### **Countersigned by Executive Director:**

Signature:



Printed Name: Helen Ewen, Executive Director of Assembly Secretariat

Date: 11 January 2024



**Emma Best AM**  
**Chairman of the GLA Oversight Committee**

Sadiq Khan  
Mayor of London

(Sent by email)

12 January 2024

Dear Mr Mayor,

I am writing in relation to proposed arrangements for the next People's Question Time (PQT), planned for 29 February 2024. The Assembly has had an opportunity to consider the proposals put forward by officers on your behalf, and as the basis for consultation with the Assembly on this matter.

People's Question Time provides a hugely important opportunity for both the Mayor and Assembly Members to engage directly with Londoners – longstanding practice has seen these events take place in Boroughs, ensuring we are collectively able to hear from our constituents in their own communities. These events are an important signal of our commitment to listening to, and reflecting on, the views of those we serve.

Alongside this, the Assembly recognises the need to ensure such events are secure for the public, for Elected Members, and for those staff involved in supporting the delivery of the event. Our approach must ensure all Londoners have the opportunity to participate in debate in a way that is safe, inclusive and reflective of a full diversity of views.

Against this backdrop, the Assembly welcomes the proposal for a full review of the purpose and format of People's Question Time, something we have requested for some time, and which will allow us to consider whether the current format best allows for the kind of quality engagement we all desire. The Assembly looks forward to engaging in this review in the coming months.

The Assembly considers, however, that it would be inappropriate to change the format of PQT ahead of the conclusion of that work. Whilst security considerations must be paramount, moving PQT online now, at the very end of this term, would send a damaging signal to our constituents about our commitment to direct engagement.

A move online should not be taken lightly. Before such a decision is taken, the Assembly considers that further work should be done to review available venues in Richmond, identifying those with appropriate levels of security (akin to that in City Hall), and allowing us to maintain an important presence in our local communities. If it is considered that no such suitable venues are available, the Assembly would welcome further information regarding the security advice underpinning that assessment.

You have further proposed that the February PQT should be chaired by a professional compère, rather than an Assembly Member, in light of the increased challenges of managing audience participation. Again, ahead of a full review, the Assembly considers that further steps should be put in place to better support the relevant Assembly Member in undertaking this role (including particular consideration of lighting and visibility), rather than making a move to an external party.

Our preference is for an in person PQT in Richmond, with the local constituency member in the Chair. However, if a decision is taken to move online, then the Assembly considers that it would be better to undertake an entirely online event, rather than have partial attendance in City Hall, noting that such a decision will presumably only be taken because of strong security considerations, which would continue to apply even in a context of limited in person attendance. This event should be chaired by an Assembly Member, not a professional compère.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Emma Best', written in a cursive style.

**Emma Best AM**  
**Chairman of the GLA Oversight Committee**