

VERBATIM REPORT OF LEEDS CITY COUNCIL
ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 23rd MAY 2005

THE LORD MAYOR (Councillor C. Townsley): My Lord Lieutenant, High Sheriff, Honoured Guests, Members of Council, ladies and gentlemen, good evening to you all, and welcome to the Annual Meeting of Leeds City Council.

Can I first of all, as you all probably read on the order paper, ask that if you do have a mobile phone with you or a pager, would you like to either turn it off or at least put it onto mute. Thank you.

ITEM 1 - ELECTION OF LORD MAYOR

COUNCILLOR A. CARTER: My Lord Mayor, Deputy Lord Lieutenant, High Sheriff, Honorary Recorder, Sir Jimmy, Honorary Aldermen, ladies and gentlemen, it is a good job we aren't timed because my speech would have to come to an end after that, I think.

On Friday of last week I moved a resolution to confer the Honorary Freedom of the City on Jane Tomlinson. In her response she pointed out that she had for a few years lived in Liverpool. Now I am moving a resolution to confer the honour of the Lord Mayoralty on Councillor Bill Hyde, and some of you may not know this but Bill was born in Lancashire. (Interruptions) Nevertheless, in both these cases the recipients have lived most of their lives in Leeds and grown to love and indeed to serve their adopted cities.

I first met Bill Hyde in the early 1970s when we were candidates for the Council, the new Council, the Leeds Metropolitan District Council as it was then known. I was a Councillor on the Pudsey Borough and Bill had been a Councillor in Sheffield, where he lived with his wife Pat and two daughters in their very early married life.

Now, something else you probably don't know, but Bill had the distinct privilege, unusual privilege, I might add, of becoming part of the Conservative administration in the City of Sheffield that was elected in 1966 - a very singular achievement indeed. Unfortunately, they were only elected with a wafer-thin majority and Bill missed the first Council Meeting because he was away on holiday in Spain. I am sure my telling you that story will make sure I am not on the guest

list very often, unless Pat speaks up for me, as she has been doing for many years.

Of course, had Bill been a Councillor in Leeds, he would have had to return from his holiday in Spain to vote, as Honorary Alderman Geoffrey Sherwin will testify when a similar fate befell him.

Bill grew up in Whitkirk, where he attended Templenewsam and Colton Primary School, moving on to Leeds Central High School. His first job was with the TSB, then the Leeds Skyrack and Morley Savings Bank. That was followed by National Service. He joined Marks & Spencers as a management trainee in 1954 but was quickly recalled to the Army, just one week before his marriage to Pat, where he served a further 5 months as a Captain during the Suez Emergency.

After a few years of moving around with his job, Bill and Pat returned to Leeds and in 1970 started their first newsagency business in Manston, still known locally as Hyde's Corner. He became managing director of the trade buying group Bridewell Newspaper Yorkshire in 1988 and managed the company until its merger in 2000.

In 1973 Bill was indeed elected to represent the Halton Ward on the new Leeds Metropolitan District Council and served on Leeds City Council until 1995, being re-elected again in the year 2000. Bill's particular interests have always been in Education and Leisure Services. He is a trustee of the Leeds Convalescent Society and of the Wade's Charity, and in this last year has been the Chair of the Education Scrutiny Board on Leeds City Council.

Bill would be furious if I didn't mention the fact that when Education Leeds had its Ofsted inspection last year the Ofsted Inspectors made particular mention of the Education Scrutiny Board, praised them for their high standards of scrutiny, and held them up as a national example of good scrutiny practice. Bill told me to say that, so I will now go on to some more of my bit!

Throughout Bill's political life and his involvement with voluntary groups and charities, he has been ably supported by Pat, which is why they will make such a very good team as our Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress. Pat has many of her own interests as well, particularly in the church and the Girl

Guide Movement, but Bill is a well-rounded fellow (Laughter) in all senses of the word. The chain will sit very comfortably on him. Besides his interest in politics, he has travelled all over the world, including fishing expeditions in Alaska and New Zealand, catching large salmon and salmon trout. He has a great love of music, enhanced by the cello-playing of his younger daughter, Anne-Louise, who played at the Royal Albert Hall. He has also had a very long involvement with the College of Music and is a Governor and Honorary Fellow.

He is also a lover of cricket, although I wonder who he cheers for when Yorkshire play Lancashire. He actually joined, however, the Yorkshire County Cricket Club as a junior member in the late 19940s.

On the subject of sport, of course, there is another story which many of you will find hard to believe. In the early 1970s a group of much younger Conservative Councillors began playing badminton. Now, when I tell you the names of those young Conservative Councillors who began playing badminton, please don't laugh as it distresses us as we grow older: Keith Louden, Bill Hyde, of course, Les Carter and myself. When the Conservatives took power, in 1975 I think it was, Les and I became known as the Bellow Babes. In Les's case that was stretching the imagination a bit, I admit. Bill, of course, went on to fill all sorts of roles, particularly involved with Education. It was then that he established his firm interest in the education of our young people, something he has maintained, as I have already said, up to this present time.

Bill and Pat Hyde have a great love of this City with which their lives are entwined. They have already in their different ways been of great service to the City and now it is with pride that I am able to move this resolution, but before formally moving the resolution I should also say that Bill and Pat have been personal friends of mine now for well over 30 years. I know them extremely well, and that is why I felt doubly privileged to be asked by Bill to move this resolution this evening.

I therefore have great pride in moving that William Schofield Hyde be elected Lord Mayor for the City of Leeds for the ensuing municipal year and, in moving that resolution, I have every confidence that the year will be in the best traditions of the Lord Mayoralty of this City and that Bill and Pat will serve with great distinction. I also take the

opportunity of being the first to congratulate them, subject to your vote, of course, and wish them a splendid year. I move, my Lord Mayor. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR DRIVER: Lord Mayor, Lady Mayoress, Vice Lord Lieutenant, High Sheriff, Honorary Recorder, ladies and gentlemen, it is with pleasure that, on behalf of the Opposition Labour Group, I second the proposal to elect Councillor Bill Hyde to be the next Lord Mayor of our great City. His consistent and valuable contribution to the Council over the past 30 years, as Andrew has already indicated, surely makes him a worthy candidate for the Council's highest office.

Bill has, of course, done many things over those years on the Council but I will confine myself to his work on Education, as both of us have been deeply involved in what has often been called, affectionately or otherwise, the Council's Education Maffia. In asking me to make this speech this evening, Bill recalled that he and I have spent about a quarter of a century debating a multitude of educational matters and, despite our political disagreements, have worked together in a spirit of friendship and respect, and tonight I want to say that Bill's ability to work in this way, which many of us recognise as one of his many fine qualities, will quickly recommend him to the citizens of Leeds as their new Mayor.

Back in 1978, as a brand new Labour Member for Hunslet, I soon came across Bill at meetings of the Education Committee, of which he was already, as Andrew has said, an experienced member. We seemed to meet almost daily in the busy round of committees working parties and interview panels which took place in those days mostly chaired by Paddy Crotty, who many of us will remember with affection, amid the oak and mahogany panelled Victorian grandeur of the old School Board offices down on Calverley Street.

From the outset, I recognised Bill's whole-hearted commitment to Education as a public service, and learned to appreciate his frank, patient and friendly manner - qualities that made him a pleasure to work with for not only myself but for many others as well.

The late 1970s and early 1980s were, of course, years of significant political change nationally and locally. In the Leeds LEA then as now falling birth rates meant empty school

places with a big issue in terms of school reorganisation to be faced. There were days when there was much about which we could disagree, yet I recall that we were still able to collaborate and even make painful decisions in a sensible and coherent manner, because on all sides there was a belief that what motivated us was to seek the best possible educational opportunities for the young people of Leeds.

Two decades on, I know that in Bill that motivation still thrives, and I am sure we will see some of it in the interest, warmth and enthusiasm with which he meets and greets young people across the City during his mayoral year. In return, I am sure his genial personality will win him many more young friends.

The best recollection I have of Bill's amiable personality at work came when, in the late 1980s, he and I together with the then Councillor Aileen Larsen went on a visit to China. Under arrangements between the British and Chinese Governments we had been invited by the City government of Tianjin to share with it our experience in Leeds of running education services at all levels, but particularly higher and further education.

We were accompanied by Christopher Price, at that time the Director of the LEA-controlled Leeds Polytechnic, which ironically in view of the purpose of our visit, was soon to become an independent higher educational institution which we know today as the Leeds Metropolitan University.

Our trip started badly when, because of bad weather over Leeds/Bradford Airport, we missed our direct flight eastwards from London to Beijing. A new flight schedule had hastily to be arranged for the party which meant going west instead of east. Our almost serendipitous journey over the next 36 hours involved crossing the North Pole, seeing an active volcano when we were flying over Alaska, and spending much, much, much too much time sitting around in airport lounges in London, Anchorage and Tokyo, but at length we reached Beijing and, after what seemed to us a midnight car ride across country - it was probably only early evening - we arrived bleary-eyed in a wintry Tianjin.

There we were greeted, wined and dined by our hosts at a sumptuous civic banquet which, given our exhaustion, probably challenged Bill's skills with the chopsticks as much as it did mine.

The week which followed was pretty much filled with meetings, visits and hospitality events, and incidentally we did get better with the chopsticks. At each meeting we had to introduce ourselves, which was fairly easy for Aileen and myself since as Chairs of committee we were taken to be members of the ruling party, but when it came to Bill he started by saying he was Opposition Spokesperson for Education, something which with their experience of the Chinese one-party system, our many new friends couldn't quite understand. Bill quickly saw this and came up with a brilliant explanation, "I am a Mrs. Thatcher man", he said smilingly. Bill, of course, had again done what he can be really good at, which is raising a smile, putting people at their ease, improving understanding, breaking down barriers and making friends, things which I am sure he will be doing as our Lord Mayor throughout the coming year.

Given time, Lord Mayor, there are many other qualities in Councillor Bill Hyde which I could highlight as reasons why we should tonight elect him as your successor, but I am sure I have spoken for long enough.

Lord Mayor, I have great pleasure in seconding Councillor Carter's proposal that Councillor William Hyde be elected to serve as Lord Mayor of Leeds for the council year 2005/2006. Thank you. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR JENNINGS: My Lord Mayor, Deputy Lord Lieutenant, High Sheriff, Honorary Aldermen, ladies and gentlemen, I, of course, was absolutely delighted when Bill approached me a few weeks ago and asked me to speak on behalf of the Liberal Democrat Group supporting his nomination to be Lord Mayor.

I, unlike Andrew and Geoff, have only known Bill since I was elected in '99, which was the same year, of course, as he was re-elected to the Council, but we have worked together on a number of boards and committees and I have come to respect him enormously in that time.

He specifically suggested to me that I might like to mention a little bit about his Army service. Presumably as a fellow Army man he thought I might be able to cast some light on what he did. After officer training at Catterick and Chester, he was commissioned into the Royal Army Ordnance Corps in 1952 and, as we heard from Andrew who mentioned it previously, he served in Suez and then was recalled when the Suez crisis blew up just after he thought he had left, which I

must admit had a certain amount of déjà vu for me as my reservist service with the Royal Artillery ran out about 7 days before we went into the Gulf the first time in 1991, and if anybody remembers the fact that it was going to be supposedly the Mother of all Battles, I was desperately looking for my combat gear to see if I could still fit into it. Unfortunately, I probably couldn't.

As Bill would no doubt agree with me, one of the great privileges of being an Army officer is working with British soldiers, who are a breed apart. Their loyalty, hard work and sense of humour and irreverence is something to behold. Any of you who have seen the recent video that was produced by the Royal Dragoon Guards, the spoof of "On the Road to Amarillo", which has been on our televisions recently and was produced in pretty horrific looking conditions in Basra, will understand that, and they were certainly the same in my time, and I am quite sure they were the same in Bill's, and they certainly give you a different outlook on life.

I was going to try and think of an anecdote to tell from my own time in the Army, but I then realised as I ran through the options if I was to tell virtually any of them I would have the politically correct thought police on my neck pretty quickly. But I then remembered a lovely story which I think is particularly apt because (a) it comes from the 1950s, the time of Bill's service in the Army, and also is about a prince at Sandhurst and, of course, that again is also rather topical.

This, however, wasn't one of our own princes, it was Prince Hussain of Jordan who, like so many people from overseas, spent time with the British Forces.

Outside the old college at Sandhurst is the main parade ground and about 300 yards down a road is a very large statue of Queen Victoria, and one morning there was a drill parade going on and Prince Hussain was seen to very, very obviously yawn and this, of course, incurred the wrath of various sergeant-majors who immediately pounced on him and shouted at him in the typical Army style. I can assure you, anybody who has been told off by the Academy Sergeant Major at Sandhurst never fears being told off by anybody else in the rest of their lives, and as a punishment he was told to run down to the statue of Queen Victoria and apologise to her for yawning in her presence. So the little Prince was seen to double down to the statue, come to attention, salute her and hold a quite

lengthy conversation with her. He then saluted again, turned round, doubled back to the parade ground and the Sergeant Major said, "Well, Mr. Prince, sir, what did her Majesty have to say?" and Prince Hussain said, "The Queen said that if I was yawning on parade I must be a very tired prince and I am to have the rest of the day off". (Laughter) At which point typically the Sergeant Major said, "Very well, sir. Dismissed. You may take the rest of the day off." That is the British Army through and through.

As we have also heard from Andrew, after his time in the Army Bill went into business, and the business which he spent most time involved in was newsagents and corner shops, particularly I believe it is the famous Hyde Corner in East Leeds which still bears his name to this day. 200 years ago Napoleon very famously said England was a nation of shop-keepers. All I can say is if Napoleon had met a shop-keeper like Bill he would probably have been best advised to stay in Corsica!

He is an example to us all, he takes that extra mile, he takes that extra bit of effort into everything he does, and it gives me great pleasure to support Bill Hyde as our next Lord Mayor. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Lord Mayor, Honourable Guests, ladies and gentlemen and fellow Councillors, it gives me great pleasure on behalf of the Morley Borough Independent Group to support the nomination of Councillor Bill Hyde as the next Lord Mayor of Leeds.

Bill Hyde has a reputation that precedes him. He is tenacious, committed and is guaranteed to work hard for the communities he represents. He has been called a political rottweiler, but I am sure that his bark is worse than his bite, and he will always respond positively to a tickling of the tummy (Laughter).

Bill Hyde has a strong reputation as a battler, and his remarkable campaign to support local parents with their high school places campaign is one which Morley Members particularly relate to.

Bill Hyde is a loyal, hard-working committed and entertaining person, a man we all find it hard to ignore. He will serve the City of Leeds well and bring credit to the role

of Lord Mayor.

As ever, we in Morley in our own inimitable way will work quietly with the new Lord Mayor, barely causing a ripple in the fabric of Council Meetings, speaking infrequently and rarely raising concerns about a little town we have a deep affection for - Morley.

To conclude, I fully endorse the comments and best wishes of all the other speakers. It gives me great pleasure to support the nomination of Councillor Bill Hyde for the role of Lord Mayor of Leeds for the municipal year 2005/2006.
(Applause)

COUNCILLOR D. BLACKBURN: Lord Mayor, Honoured Guests, fellow Members, it gives me great pleasure to support the motion making Bill Hyde Lord Mayor. I have got a little secret. Not a lot of people know this, but actually Bill Hyde is my insider on the Tory Group. Andrew was just on about Bellow's Babes. Well, I went in Bill's office some months ago - actually, it was after the Council Meeting he forgot about the Greens being in the coalition, actually, so he has to get the right side of me - and I went in there and he showed me the Tory calendar, and the March Tory of the Month was one of Bellow's Babes and I have got a picture of it here, but I won't tell anybody, Andrew!

As I say, it gives me great pleasure to support Bill. Bill is a wonderful fellow. I really like the guy, and I think he will do a really wonderful job in the coming year, and he deserves it after all the years of service. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: So, Members of Council, I will now call for the vote that Councillor William Schofield Hyde be elected the Lord Mayor of the City of Leeds to hold office until the date of the Annual Meeting of the Council in 2006.

(The motion was carried unanimously)

Right, this is the point in proceedings where we now disappear, and talk amongst yourselves for a few minutes and then we will resume in a few minutes time.

(The Lord Mayor and Party Leaders left the chamber and returned with the Lord Mayor Elect. Following the chaining ceremony, the

Lord Mayor Elect made the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and signed the register)

THE LORD MAYOR (Councillor W. S. Hyde): I am hoping that this won't take very long but I have one or two words to say. First of all, Vice Lord Lieutenant, High Sheriff, Recorder, Distinguished Guests, Members of Council, ladies and gentlemen, I think at the outset I ought to thank my fellow Councillors for electing me to be the first citizen of this great City of ours. I will not claim, as some of my predecessors have, to feel humble. Nobody would believe it. (Laughter) A humble person I have never been, nor am I likely to be!

I am certain, however, that I am proud, indeed very proud, to be the 112th Lord Mayor of Leeds. Most Lord Mayors previously have commented about this very strange practice we have of being kept out of earshot of the Council Chamber whilst colleagues talk about you. Until this year this has caused me no concern whatever. I have never worried about it, never even thought about it, but I now realise just how worrying it can be, what everyone was worrying about.

I am not generally a nervous person but I am bound to say that waiting for half an hour or so under close guard of the Lord Mayor's Secretary reminded me of my school days waiting outside the headmaster's study to be reprimanded for some misdemeanour. The main worry is that you have no idea what your colleagues are going to say about you. My only comment at this stage, without having known what has been said, is that any kind any generous things that have been said are absolutely true (Laughter) and any derogatory comments are, of course, totally untrue!

In preparing for the coming year, I have had to face the difficult task of choosing one or more official charities. Extremely convincing cases were made by each of the eight charities which asked to be recognised, and I have told each of them that I will support their fund-raising activities whenever possible. The two charities which have been named as joint beneficiaries of the Lord Mayor's Appeal for the year are the West Yorkshire Hospital Heartbeat Appeal and the St. George's Crypt 75th Anniversary Appeal. Both of these groups are Leeds-based volunteer charities, and I hope and trust that you will all support the many events which will be held throughout the year.

I have agreed that the Deputy Lord Mayor will be in charge of any stunts, and I know that the Director of Democratic Services will be interested to hear this: I have agreed that the Deputy Lord Mayor will be in charge of any stunts which have the remotest hint of danger (Laughter) such as jumping out of aeroplanes, abseiling down buildings and bungee-jumping, you know, those sort of things.

That wasn't, however, a consideration at all in inviting my very good friend Councillor Ann Castle to be my deputy. Much more important is the fact that she is, as all the Councillors in this chamber will acknowledge, a very experienced Councillor who is well known and well respected for her work across the City.

My wife Pat will, of course, as you would expect - well, everybody except Bernard Atha might expect, anyway - to be my Lady Mayoress and, with Ann's husband Grahame completing the line-up as Deputy Lord Mayor's Consort, we are looking forward to a hectic but hopefully enjoyable year.

The Vicar of St. Mary's, Whitkirk, the Reverend Ian Black has agreed to be the Lord Mayor's Chaplain, and both he and I look forward to welcoming all here today to the Civic Service which will be held at Whitkirk Church on Sunday, 26th June.

I would like to place on record my thanks to all my fellow Councillors for affording me the opportunity to hold the highest office in the City. A special thank you to the proposer, seconder and supporters who have spoken for me here today. No doubt the retiring Lord Mayor will have been thanked by colleagues already for his sterling contribution, but I would just like to add my own thanks to Councillor Townsley for a job superbly well done. Our paths have crossed on a number of occasions over the past year and my lasting memory of Chris and Margaret Townsley is that they are both friendly and caring people. Many of you will not know, but I was in hospital for a short spell just before Christmas and the Retiring Lord Mayor rang up, I am told, every day of the first week I was there to see how I was. Now, that really was much appreciated.

Turning to the year ahead, I intend to use the great office of Lord Mayor to promote the continuing development of Leeds as the regional capital which, of course, it is. I will also do all I can to make Leeds the pre-eminent city of the

north of England, even if this does mean displacing the city of my birth, Manchester.

Leeds achieves success through a combination of factors; business and commerce provide the basis for the achievement of prosperity, but only the basis. A vibrant successful city is one which offers a diverse cultural and entertainment environment, one which attracts people to it not just because of its job opportunities but also because it offers the very best educational facilities. Our two universities and our many specialist further education colleges enjoy international reputations. Our two flagship hospitals, the LGI and St. James's, lead the way in medical, surgical and nursing care. In the year ahead I am looking forward to working with all these institutions, together with schools, arts and theatre groups and voluntary organisations in pursuit of the goal of making Leeds an even better place to live in, to work in, to learn in, to care in and to enjoy.

Once again, thank you for the confidence you placed in me by electing me to the office of Lord Mayor of Leeds. I promise that I will do the job to the best of my ability. Thank you very much. (Applause)

ITEM 2 - VOTE OF THANKS TO THE RETIRING LORD MAYOR

COUNCILLOR HARRIS: Lord Mayor, Guests, fellow Members of Council, can I first of all begin by congratulating you and the Lady Mayoress on taking office. I am sure you are going to have a splendid year, and also as well can I congratulate Ann Castle and her husband Grahame on being Deputy Lord Mayor for the coming year. It is 6 years since I was Deputy Lord Mayor and I have extremely fond memories of doing that job; dare I say perhaps fonder memories of the last year doing a different job.

Lord Mayor, before I say a few words about Chris Townsley, not that I would ever have the temerity to take issue with what a Lord Mayor has said, but I really do have to pick you up on something you said a few minutes ago in your speech which, if I remember correctly, you made mention of displacing Manchester.

I am sorry to tell you, but Manchester was displaced by Leeds a long time ago. (Applause)

Lord Mayor, in making this vote of thanks to Chris Townsley, the Retiring Lord Mayor, I am trying to find a

suitable comparison in history, a great person from history to compare Chris to. I have gone back through very eminent politicians. I had thought of Margaret Thatcher, Paddy Ashdown - I didn't think of Jeremy Thorpe. I thought about Churchill, Lloyd George, and so forth and so forth, and finally I lighted on Castlereagh. "Who is Castlereagh?" you all say.

Well, let me let you into a secret. I always wanted to be a historian, not the various other things I have ended up doing by mistake, but I remember Castlereagh, this great Foreign Secretary from 1815, who I always believed was the greatest 19th century Foreign Secretary, even though he had some stiff competition, and I thought it was worth comparing Chris to Castlereagh. Not, and I am just wondering as I look at this, I wonder if Lewis is here? He will probably pick me up on this, but I am sure I remember a very derogatory poem about Castlereagh and the rest of the then Cabinet in which Castlereagh was described as some sort of slinking, malingering thief coming in the night, and it was not that comparison that I was seeking to make.

Rather, I always remember (inaudible) this argument that Castlereagh found himself in an altogether unique situation, having to cobble together a foreign policy in a situation where he had nobody else to look back on to garner advice or look at the way in which they did it, and so it has been for you, because you have had the unique situation of being Lord Mayor - well, unique for 24 years at least - and seeing the whole Council Chamber turn around, and not only that but you have had the double problem of trying to work out where Bungle, Zippy and George have been sitting, as we have sort of humped around from place to place playing musical chairs, and I know that that has been very difficult for you, but at least the Scarlet Pimpernel has always been in the same place for the last year!

Lord Mayor, I remember when I proposed you for office a year ago I did make mention of concerns that many people had expressed about your health, and whether the 12 months in office would be too taxing for you. I stand corrected but I am not aware that you have had any time off for illness bar, I think, you had to have a little service for a couple of days, but that was a planned service. As far as I know it wasn't because the engine broke down half way through the year; you were planning to go for your MOT, and I think that really says so much about the way in which you have handled your year in office.

My memories are of you and Margaret always smiling, always outgoing, at so many functions and events it is impossible to remember them all. In the newspaper, day after day after day, not just raising money for your own charity but doing everything you can or could for the people of Leeds and a myriad of other very worthy causes where people had come to you to ask that in your year of office you would help them raise money for the benefit of all the people of Leeds, and this is an abiding memory I have.

Lord Mayor, before concluding, because nobody ever did this for me - tears - I would like to say a thank you as well to Brenda Lancaster and Ralph Lancaster. They too, I know, have had a fantastic year in the office of Deputy Lord Mayor, and Brenda as a co-Councillor in Moortown we have talked about this last year so often and I know that it has been an absolutely fantastic time for them, so with that, Lord Mayor, I will conclude. Thank you very much for the way you have conducted things for the last year, and I know now that you will return to our benches and pick up the baton and carry on doing what you have done for so many years not just on our behalf but on behalf of the whole Council. Thank you.
(Applause)

COUNCILLOR ATHA: My Lord Mayor, I really think we ought to start now by my raising a point of order. (Laughter) It might be inappropriate on this occasion, and so I shall say instead, Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress, what a great pleasure it is for us on this side to welcome you into that chair. We promise you in the next municipal year our unrefined attention to Standing Orders, strict obedience, and if you believe that you are not the politician I think you are!

Unlike my colleague over there who has moved the vote of thanks, my Past Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress, I shall not go into the history of the Liberal Party in the last century, nor into its future, which would interest even more. What I can say, my Lord Mayor, is we have not seen a Lord Mayor who so obviously enjoyed the function of that post, and that communication, that enjoyment you clearly demonstrated in everything you have done, has been communicated and I know as people round the City have found Lord Mayor after Lord Mayor matching the standard. I think you, sir, and your Lady Mayoress have in fact imbued your passage through the City with this tremendous enjoyment, and that is a great thing when you can communicate that - something that is not always apparent in

the chamber or even outside.

It is a fact that the school you went to, Hawksworth Wood Primary School, which happens to be served by the three most distinguished Councillors in Leeds (Laughter) - I won't mention the names because, unlike the Lord Mayor, I am a humble servant of the people - but the school was actually delighted that a former pupil from that estate achieved the rank and elegance of the Lord Mayorship in Leeds, and I know your visit to that school was greatly welcomed, and I am sure they will welcome you back in your less than elevated status, but status is a matter of gowns and so on, and the individual under that is the thing that counts.

I would say also about the Retiring Lord Mayor that he has been a tremendous lover of the theatre. I don't think any Lord Mayor in its history has visited so many theatres and seen so many shows so frequently as this current Lord Mayor, and I think that passion for the arts and the theatre in particular is something which hopefully will stir the City to remembering how important the arts are to the quality of life of everyone who lives in this City.

I really think that most of us now feel at this stage brevity is the soul of the requirement of the moment, and so it is with great sincerity I say to you both thank you very much for a most distinguished year, a year that we have all appreciated, and I know you must leave with memories and the thought, how did it go so quickly?

I would also say to Brenda Lancaster, again our appreciation because in choosing her you chose someone who had the absolutely unconstrained respect of the Council, and she has in fact comported herself with the dignity and the great pleasure and humanity we expected. So a very successful year for the lot of you and we hope you, Lord Mayor, will emulate his distinguished predecessor for yourself, and we look forward to watching it with great interest, but in the meantime our very best wishes to you, Lord Mayor, Lady Mayoress, and you, Retiring Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: And now I call on our other modest Member of Council to support the vote of thanks to the Retiring Lord Mayor, Councillor J. Leslie Carter.

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Deputy Lord

Lieutenant, High Sheriff, Mr. Recorder, Honorary Aldermen, Distinguished Guests, ladies and gentlemen, and Members of Council, of course, may I start by congratulating you, Lord Mayor, and I will call you Bill and Pat for the last time for a year now. You are great friends of mine and Carol's. You have been for many years, and we are absolutely delighted to see you sat there and Pat over there, and we wish you all the best.

Now, tonight it my pleasure to support the vote of thanks to the Retiring Lord Mayor, and there have been two, actually, who have gone before me. I mean, first Bernard - I don't think Bernard realises about five years ago we abolished Standing Orders and we now have a Constitution, but the Lord Mayor has promised me he will send you a copy, Bernard, so you can read it later.

COUNCILLOR ATHA: I won't read it. I will make up my own, like you do! (Laughter)

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: I am also told that Castlereagh was assassinated. I don't know if that's true, actually, but I have been advised, and I hope that doesn't happen to our Retiring Lord Mayor.

Can I just pay tribute to start with to the Lady Mayoress, or the former Lady Mayoress, who amongst her many qualities, and there are many as she has met lots of people and been superb with people, has led the City in fashion in both evening and day-time clothes. Now, some of you may unkindly say that is not much of a compliment coming from a man who doesn't know the difference between a Burberry and a donkey jacket. Well, this may be so. However, my Lord Mayor, it is not me that is saying it. It is my wife's compliment, who is sat at the back there, and that is an expert because my wife has spent a lifetime in shops (Laughter) which both I and my bank manager can confirm.

My Lord Mayor, it is always difficult at the end of the year when the Retiring Lord Mayor has to return back to the mere mortals which we all are. However, when you have had the splendid year which Chris and Margaret have had, it will become, I would say, a little easier -- to make it easier you will have many fond memories of this year, and it is those fond memories you will take away with you and you will remember for many, many years to come of the way you have done the job.

Indeed, I understand, my Lord Mayor, that one of your fond memories will be at the switching on of the Christmas lights, which I am reliably informed you were very well chaperoned by a group called Girls Aloud. Now, for those like Honorary Alderman Sparling across the chamber and myself who still have Abba in our car, many of us will obviously not know who they are, but I am reliably informed that they are very minimalistic but they have an interesting dress sense, so we shall see and wait.

My Lord Mayor, Chris will now have to join, as his Leader said, the ranks of his own party and, as he does that, he will now realise he has a Member of Parliament, Councillor Greg Mulholland MP for North-West Leeds amongst his colleagues. Greg will be long remembered in North-West Leeds for his Svengali-type influence over the students (Laughter) arranging for them to successfully vote for him. Indeed, my Lord Mayor, in North-West Leeds he is now known as the Student Prince. (Laughter)

One of the very interesting events which has taken place this year in your year of office, and you will not be aware of it, Lord Mayor, is this is the first time for over 50 years that the green spotted warbler bird has decided to breed in Leeds. First time in 50 years. Now, these are extremely rare birds who all nest in the same town or city every year, but, you know, they don't choose the same one every time, and they can go into the hedgerows but they mainly like to go into the grass verges (Laughter) This has obviously meant that this year we have to delay the grass-cutting. (Laughter) However, I can assure all here today that the grass-cutting will soon be back to normal now that the green spotted warbler birds have left the City.

My Lord Mayor, Chris and Margaret may be proud of the way they have represented this great City. They have raised money for worthy charities, they have supported good causes, such as the one run by the YEP in support of the City Varieties. They have been innovative in their approach to the job, and they have performed their tasks with great dignity, and I too would like to include Brenda in this because I know she has as well.

My Lord Mayor, on behalf of the Conservative Group, we warmly support this vote of thanks to the Retiring Lord Mayor. Thank you. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Lord Mayor, can we pass on our congratulations to yourself and the shortly to be elected Councillor Castle on her forthcoming elevation as well.

Lord Mayor, it is always a little depressing to see the running order on such occasions and see that you are running behind Councillor Harris, Bernard Atha and Councillor Leslie Carter, because it is always very, very difficult to compete, so I am not going to bother. (Laughter)

What we would say with great sincerity is the fact that Councillor Townsley and Councillor Brenda Lancaster have done an excellent job. Certainly from our point of view we have seen them often in Morley. All of us have seen them across the City working very, very hard and doing an excellent job, and we would like to fully support this move of thanks and say quite sincerely, you have done an excellent job. Thanks very much. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR D. BLACKBURN: Lord Mayor, may I share in the congratulations and I have got to tell you, I didn't say nowt about the calendar! If you believe that, you believe anything.

Chris Townsley, I know he has worked very, very hard over the last 12 months, and I know from what he has told me he has really enjoyed himself. I understand later on this week he is going to go have a short holiday, and you deserve a good rest and I am glad you have enjoyed it. And all this business about Castlereagh, you are wrong. I mean, did Leeds Rhinos win three trophies when Castlereagh was around? Did Leeds Rugby Union win Powergens Trophy when Castlereagh was around? No, they didn't. No, they didn't. No.

Chris is unique, and if you saw him yesterday holding the trophy up you would have thought he had won it actually on his own! Anyway, well done, have a good rest and we will see you back here doing some proper work after. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: I now have the honour to present the Lord Mayor's badge to the Retiring Lord Mayor, if we have it here somewhere. Here it is. Do it properly, he says.

(The Lord Mayor presented the Past Lord Mayor's badge to the Retiring Lord Mayor) (Applause)

(The Retiring Lady Mayoress presented the Lady Mayoress with her insignia of office) (Applause)

(The Lady Mayoress presented the Retiring Lady Mayoress with the Past Lady Mayoress's brooch) (Applause)

COUNCILLOR TOWNSLEY: Lord Mayor, Vice Lord Lieutenant, High Sheriff, Honoured Guests, Members of Council, ladies and gentlemen, can I also first congratulate you, Lord Mayor, on your election tonight. It is a great honour to be elected to the position of Lord Mayor, and if you and the Lady Mayoress enjoy the role a quarter as much as Margaret and I have, then you are going to be in for a wonderful time. It is, as the Beatles put it, "A Magical Mystery Tour".

Of course, you cannot undertake this commitment on your own. You need the backing of a great number of people who I would like to thank right now. At the top of my list is my wonderful wife, partner and confidante, Margaret. Without her by my side I honestly think I could not have done the job. They say that a job shared is a job halved; well, I can say that Margaret did more than a half. She spoke to, shared a joke with, and generally put herself around by joining anything that she could. In fact, Mark, it actually wasn't quite true.

In fact, the busiest week of the year by tradition is Christmas week, and the flu bug hit me. I was confined to bed for several days and during that week there were 22 engagements. I actually went to 4, Margaret did 22. So thank you for your brilliant support. We do make a good team.

I must not forget my daughter, Adeline. She also stood in as Lady Mayoress for the occasion on two engagements. Both of them were top professionals. Remember, of course, they were also representing the City. I must also thank my son Eden, mum and dad and our two grandchildren, the youngest of which doesn't recognise me. I have not had much time with her this last year. The same thanks also go to the rest of my family and friends, as Margaret and I have had superb support and encouragement from all of them. Thank you for being so understanding.

I would also like to thank my chaplain, Canon John Holmes. I remember actually when I first approached him he said, "Well, it's not going to be too many things to do, is it?" I said, "Well, no, I think it is just the odd occasion." Well, it wasn't really a lie because I didn't actually realise how

many times I would be calling upon him, but you did a fantastic job, John, thank you.

Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress cannot do the job without the help of office staff, and our thanks therefore are extended to Steven McHugh and Audrey, Barbara, Erica and a couple of stand-ins whilst Erica was on maternity leave. Their job is very demanding and stressful, and was probably not helped by the whims of the Lord Mayor, so thank you once again.

Here in Leeds we are blessed with one of the most respected employees in the Lord Mayor's office, of course referring to our very own Sergeant-at-Mace John Wilson. When it comes to civic protocol, John is the best. When other civic leaders either visit us or we are at a joint engagement and there is any question or inquiry regarding protocol, I can assure you it is John that the other wardens and chauffeurs come to for help. He is truly a top professional at his job, and not a bad tour guide either. You will need him, I promise you. He is good. A huge thanks to you, John. You can see how important this job is because now John has an assistant in Mark, so thanks to both of you.

We would also like to thank the rest of the team for getting us to and from engagements and looking after us whilst we are there and protecting us, or is it the chains and jewels they are protecting. Yes. Anyway, thanks to them, that is to John Gallagher and Steve and Stanley and Allan.

I would also like to thank Crown Cuisine and Diana, Nigel, Anne and the Members lounge team. People often comment on the wonderful banquets we have, and that must be the reason for putting on a little weight. In actual fact, Margaret hasn't put on an ounce, and she eats more than I do. That's not fair.

Let me put the record straight, if we did have a banquet or a decent cooked meal every day, then that would be fine, but the truth is sometimes you get nothing at all. Sometimes you get a buffet and sometimes you can get the opportunity to eat it, but more often the case is that you are introduced to people and don't get a chance to eat anything. On several occasions Margaret and I have called in on the way home for a pizza. Anyway, thanks to Crown Cuisine for keeping us wonderfully fed and watered, certainly whilst we have been in this building.

We would also now like to thank two people without whose help we could not have done as many engagements, and of course

the first two have been mentioned a few times this evening, our deputies Brenda and Ralph Lancaster. We could not have asked for or chosen better people to help us representing the City of Leeds, going about their job in the most professional and dignified manner, and you couldn't have asked for more. They refused nothing. Brenda, Ralph, we are deeply indebted to you both and thank you from the bottom of our hearts for a job well done. Occasionally, it was important to have a short break so when time permitted the four of us would actually take stock and go out for the odd drink and compare notes, because quite honestly nobody else actually understands the job unless you have done it. So thank you very much indeed to both of you.

Two of the most important people I must thank, because without their help and understanding by looking after the shop whilst I was away enjoying myself, the role would have been impossible to do. I would therefore publicly like to thank my ward colleagues Brian Cleasby and Andy Barker. Thanks, guys, I owe you one or two or three.

I was frequently asked what was the best thing we have done and what was the most exciting. Well, this is a most difficult question to answer, but I will try to sum it up this way. I suggested that every Member of Council should become Lord Mayor because it is only through this that you can appreciate the wonderful organisations, groups, societies, clubs, businesses, who exist in this vibrant and exciting City of ours. I always thought I knew the city in which I was born and raised but I only scratched the surface. There really wasn't a best. You could only accept it and appreciate it as a whole.

It has been, however, marvellous to be Lord Mayor during the sporting season, which has already been mentioned, which saw both of our professional rugby clubs which bear the name of the City lift four trophies between them, Leeds Rhinos and Leeds Tykes, of course, not forgetting Morley - we must not forget Morley, and quite rightly so. They won the Intermediate Trophy also at Twickenham.

There are hundreds of organisations and thousands of unsung heroes who volunteer their time and expertise daily to help others. They hardly ever get the recognition which they richly deserve. We visited uniformed organisations including the Sea Cadets, Air Cadets, the Army, Scouts, Guides, many more. The young people rarely receive good press and it

doesn't sell newspapers, but we marvelled in the deeds which were undertaken to obtain the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, for example. There were many, many after-school activities, too numerous to mention, but all worthy of praise.

Leeds is a vibrant, out-reaching, diverse and rapidly expanding city. It has been our delight to have been able to help promote the finest city in the world. By tradition the office of Lord Mayor is non-political, and quite rightly so, and that way you are able to represent everybody. Every two weeks we hold British Citizenship Ceremonies in the Banqueting Suite, welcoming up to 40 on each occasion. As part of my speech I do say to them it is not only them valuing the freedom of speech and defending their right to have their own opinion, but it is the tolerance of other people's beliefs so that we can all work and live and play together in harmony. Each community, whatever their race, creed or colour, adds to the rich diversity and success of this City.

It has been our delight and pleasure to have been given the opportunity to serve the people of Leeds as the City's first citizens. It is something we will always treasure and thank you for having the trust in us and for supporting us. Thank you very much indeed, ladies sand gentlemen. (Applause)

ITEM 3 - DEPUTY LORD MAYOR

THE LORD MAYOR: It is my very great pleasure to move that Councillor Ann Castle be appointed Deputy Lord Mayor of the City of Leeds, to hold office until the date of the Annual Meeting of the Council in 2005, and I call on Councillor Hamilton to second. 2006, I am sorry.

COUNCILLOR M. HAMILTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor, I am delighted to second that motion and, Lord Mayor, when you indicated that the more risky assignments might be carried out by Councillor Castle, I can say the crane is already outside for the first bungee-jump, so good luck. Very best wishes.

(The motion was carried unanimously)

(Councillor Ann Castle made the Declaration of Acceptance of Office) (Applause)

ITEM 4 - ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 4 is Announcements. I have no announcements notified. Chief Executive?

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (Mr. P. Rogerson): There are no announcements, Lord Mayor.

ITEM 5 - MINUTES

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 5, the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 13th April 2005.

COUNCILLOR M. HAMILTON: Lord Mayor, could I move that those minutes be approved.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Second, Lord Mayor.

(The motion was carried)

ITEM 6 - ELECTION OF LEADER

COUNCILLOR M. HAMILTON: Lord Mayor, could I move in the terms of the notice.

COUNCILLOR PROCTER: I second, Lord Mayor.

(The motion was carried)

ITEM 7 - CONSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

COUNCILLOR M. HAMILTON: Lord Mayor, could I move in the terms of the notice.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Second, Lord Mayor.

(The motion was carried)

ITEM (a) - ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMITTEES
AND APPROPRIATE TERMS OF REFERENCE

COUNCILLOR M. HAMILTON: Lord Mayor, I move in the terms of the notice.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: I second, Lord Mayor.

(The motion was carried)

ITEM 8(b)(i) and (ii) and (c)

APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE BODIES

COUNCILLOR M. HAMILTON: Lord Mayor, I move in the terms of the notice.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Second, Lord Mayor.

(The motion was carried)

ITEM 9(a) - EXECUTIVE ARRANGEMENTS

COUNCILLOR M. HAMILTON: Lord Mayor, I move in the terms of the notice.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Yes, second, Lord Mayor.

(The motion was carried)

ITEM 9(b) - LEAD MEMBERS

COUNCILLOR M. HAMILTON: Lord Mayor, I am delighted to move in the terms of the notice.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Same again, Lord Mayor.

(The motion was carried)

ITEM 10 - PROPOSED CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

COUNCILLOR M. HAMILTON: Lord Mayor, I move in the terms of the notice.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: And I second, Lord Mayor.

(The motion was carried)

ITEM 11 - MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME

COUNCILLOR M. HAMILTON: Lord Mayor, for the final time, I move in the terms of the notice.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: And I second, Lord Mayor.

(The motion was carried)

THE LORD MAYOR: That concludes the formal part of the

proceedings for this evening. I hope that everybody will be joining us for a meal down at the Town Hall, and I look forward to seeing you there in about half an hour. There is no need to dash, we are well ahead of schedule, thanks to your very kind co-operation in the conduct of this meeting. It might well mean that the Lord Mayor's allowance has to pay for a few extra drinks, but so what. I will see you down at the Town Hall in half an hour or so. Thank you very much.
(Applause)

(Council rose at 7.20 p.m.)