

VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF LEEDS CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD ON TUESDAY, 1ST NOVEMBER 2005

THE LORD MAYOR (Councillor W. Hyde): Good afternoon, Members of Council, members of the public. Please be seated.

Members of Council, I have just a few announcements to make before we start on today's agenda. I am sure everybody will recall that shortly after the last Council Meeting we heard of the earthquake in South Asia which directly and indirectly affected so many of our Asian origin citizens, and I think Members of Council will know that I launched an appeal for funding to help those affected by the earthquake, and also we started a Book of Condolence.

It has been suggested to me at the start of today's Council Meeting we should observe a moment or two of silence in recognition of those who died in the South Asia earthquake and then invite the leading Members of each of the Party groups to make a short statement on the issue. So that is what I am going to do and now I will invite everybody to join me in standing for a moment's silence.

Thank you very much.

COUNCILLOR HARRIS: Lord Mayor, I should of course begin by once again offering our collective condolences to all those people who have been affected by the tragedy of the earthquake and, of course, it has a particular significance to our City because we have such a large and strong community that has direct family links with the affected area in South Asia.

It has been an appalling year for natural disasters. We can reflect on why this has been the case, but I would like to reflect, if I may, on two particular issues.

The first is, of course, any natural disaster, wherever it may strike, is tragic and appalling for us to witness, but we do see when tragedies of this nature strike in the third world the awful, awful devastating effect on them in particular compared with, however tragic it was, when we see a natural disaster in the developed western world. It is in many ways doubly distressing and frustrating to realise that with modern technology we can witness in our living rooms what is happening and yet we are still, it would seem, unable to properly effect relief and help to so many areas that have suffered in the earthquake and that, it seems to me, is a very difficult issue to grapple with.

I often talk to my children about how fortunate we are not just to live in Leeds but to live in this little island. We occasionally have a puff of wind or a little tremor somewhere in the Midlands. We, sadly, increasingly have floods which of course are terribly distressing when they strike people in this country because we are just not used to it, but nevertheless for the most part we are incredibly fortunate to live in this little island which is, to all intents and purposes, a very, very safe haven and I never cease to reflect on that.

And finally I want to add my voice of praise to those communities of Leeds who have relatives and friends and who have been directly affected by this tragedy. I want to say to them what a testimony it is to them in the way in which they in particular -- of course, the City as a whole has responded, but they in particular have come together as a community and have responded in an almost unbelievable way to send aid and support direct to those areas that have been affected in this disaster, and I take my hat off to them when I hear of the sums that they have raised and the speed with which that money was raised. It says much for them and I am glad if, because they are living in our great City, in some way we have been able to afford assistance and help them in this.

I genuinely pray we won't have to have another one of these pre-Council speeches in the future at all, never mind the near future. I fear that sooner or later we will. God forbid if that happens, I am absolutely certain that this great City of ours in the fourth wealthiest country in the world will, as ever, show its compassion and its heart by responding to any such disaster in the future and extending, quite rightly, a hand of friendship and assistance across the world to wherever that may be necessary. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Lord Mayor, on behalf of the Labour Group I would like to extend our sympathies and condolences to all the families that have suffered from this devastating earthquake on 8th October. I don't think any of us realised on 8th October the kind of scale that it has turned out to be. From an initial figure of 17,000, we are now talking about nearly 3 million people at risk of losing their life - having lost or at risk of losing their lives.

As Councillor Harris has said, this has particular resonance in Leeds when 80% of the Pakistani community are actually from that part of Pakistan, and I know that Councillors here - Mohammed Rafique, Iqbal, Hussain, Javed Akhtar - I can't see him - are all affected directly by families who have suffered as a result of this.

You know, I am also getting letters - I am sure other colleagues are - from other Members whose families are there. I can think of Usef Khan from Shadwell, Mohammed Khan from Street Lane and many others who are praying every day for their families who live in these areas.

I have to say that we ought to, out of this tragedy, express our appreciation for the role of Hilary Benn who happened to be very quick in sending out - or making Britain the first country to send out rescue teams and rescue equipment because at that time it was needed, and within four or five hours a team and helicopters were sent out to that part of Pakistan in order to save lives and, as previously has been said, I also have to pay tribute to the generosity of the Leeds community. When you have been through the African crisis on poverty, the New Orleans and other disasters like the Tsunami, you wonder how much you can keep appealing, and I have to say I think the Leeds communities of all faiths, all

religions, all nationalities have responded magnificently to the plight of these people, and again I want to pay special tribute to the Councillors who have worked for their community particularly hard and raised an extraordinary amount of money.

I think I was at the Islamic Centre when nearly £50,000 was raised in one night. I think that underlines often you get more from the poor than you do from the rich in terms of reaching out to people in a human way.

I am delighted, Lord Mayor, your comments at the start because I think it is appropriate that the Council and yourself should be seen representing us in the City on behalf of these people. It is going to be a long struggle to reconstruct and to rebuild people's lives and villages, and I am sure later on, Lord Mayor, you will have appropriate projects to make sure that we stay in this for the long game on behalf of all those people. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR A. CARTER: Lord Mayor, I would like to associate myself and all the Members of my Group with the sentiments that have been expressed so far. I went to the Islamic Centre last week and I have to say it came as quite a shock to hear the stories from Leeds citizens about relatives who were dead, missing or in some way involved in the aftermath of the earthquake. It comes as quite an eye-opener to realise how many Leeds citizens are actually so directly affected.

I was also very impressed by the amount of work that was going on, the money that was being raised, but the actual physical equipment that was being gathered together to send out to Kashmir.

I think our big challenge now as a country and as a City is to make sure that all the help that we can get together actually gets there in time because, as one of the previous two speakers has already said, what is unfolding in the aftermath of the earthquake is of even more horrific proportions as changes in the climate set in and people are left still without shelter, food, heat. So we have, I think, as a country and as a City to make sure that anything that we are doing actually does get to the people who now need it so very much.

Our hearts should go out to those who have lost relatives, whether they are residents here or residents in Kashmir. Our hearts should go out to those who are left now in such dire circumstances, and I am sure that that is the case, and I would want to make sure that that message goes from us today. It has, as Councillor Harris said, been a very traumatic year. The sadness is that we have had a whole series of natural disasters which have had devastating effects around the world but, as ever, mankind has managed to compound those natural disasters with a few man-made disasters of our own, whether it is in Darfur, Iraq or anywhere else, as if a lot of these people, living in the poorest of situations, haven't enough to cope with. Perhaps we should remember that as the next few years go past and let us hope that there are no more natural or man-made disasters in the balance of this year or indeed the next. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Lord Mayor, I would just like to echo the comments that have been made by the other Leaders and offer my group's deepest condolences to those who have been affected by this tragedy. There is no doubt that this has had a significant impact on Leeds communities.

One of the things that strikes me, taking into account the difficulties that we had with the tsunami, starvation in Africa and now with this particular tragedy is the way that it brings communities together, and that we accept collectively that we do have a responsibility for those other people who live in our global community, and I think the interesting thing and the positive thing that I take from that is that more and more it is the ordinary people that are taking responsibility to resolve these problems and difficulties, more so than governments. Governments often drag behind. Some of them are very reluctant to get involved with contributing to resolving these particular problems, but you can be very sure that the Leeds community, the Morley community, the communities across Great Britain accept that they have a responsibility for their neighbours in this global village, and I think that is a positive.

I think we are in a situation where we ought to say to all of our communities, the Leeds communities that have raised so much money, the Council itself contributing in the way that it has, that we are in a situation where we continue to lead, and I just hope that we take governments - not only our own but others across the world - forward in that positive way. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR D. BLACKBURN: Lord Mayor, it seems far too often that we are in this situation because of a natural disaster or some other disaster that we are having to pay tribute to the people who have died in such circumstances, but it seems, as I say, far too often that we have to do this. It just shows how weak and frail we human-beings are and how when nature decides to play these tricks on us how we can suffer. It should make us realise that, you know, we are not the most important thing on this planet and that we are all human-beings and we all live there and we have got to work together.

I think many things have been done and much money has been raised by individuals and groups, but I think for the future what we have got to do - these events are not going to go away and if we take aside this particular event, one of the things that we will be debating today - climate change - will have an effect on what future disasters might hit this planet and I think as a people of the whole world what we have got to do is we have got to be ready for future events, not reacting after the event but ready when that event happens so we can put people on the ground. Many of our country have put people in but we could do much more. We have got to be ready for that situation. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Blackburn. I am sure all Members of Council will want to be associated with the views expressed by the Party Leaders.

Thank you very much for your contributions.

Can I just refer to a couple of other things. First of all, I have been asked by Councillor Lancaster to tell Council that she, Councillor Blackburn and Councillor Downes took part in the Great North Run and wish to thank everyone for their sponsorship. They are expecting, when all the money is collected, to have raised £2,000, so if you have not paid already please do. £1500 is going to Childline and £500 for NCH, so that is very good news.

The other thing is I would like to thank everybody who supported the Lord Mayor's Civic Ball last weekend. It really was a tremendous success and it is the first time in a number of years that it has in fact been over-subscribed. Perhaps I ought to --- No, I am not going to apologise but those people who left it to the last week thinking that they would be able to get tickets and couldn't, well, tough - you have got to get your bid in earlier next year. It really was a super evening. We all thoroughly enjoyed ourselves, I am sure, and on a more sombre note can I please again remind everybody that we have remembrance Sunday coming up on 13th November and I do hope that Members of Council will be there to support me and various visiting civic dignitaries and Members of Her Majesty's Forces and the judiciary and the universities, and so on, in this annual Remembrance Service. Please make a note of that to be here.

I think with that we can actually move on to item 1 on the Council agenda. Thank you for your forbearance.

#### ITEM 1 - MINUTES OF MEETING ON 14TH SEPTEMBER 2005

COUNCILLOR PROCTER: Lord Mayor, I move the minutes be received.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: I second, Lord Mayor.

(The motion was carried)

THE LORD MAYOR: Just now a couple of things to remind people about. Just in case anybody has any electrical equipment or mobile telephones, the Standing Orders require - the Procedural rules require - that they should be switched off. So if you have any such equipment make sure it is in the "off" position.

#### ITEM 2 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

THE LORD MAYOR: And that the written declarations submitted by Members which is on display in the ante-room, has been circulated to each Member's place in the chamber and if there are any further individual declarations or corrections to the notified list to invite Members to declare that now.

MEMBER OF COUNCIL: On item 13, the same interest as Councillors Lyons, Lewis

and Jarosz, a personal interest as a Member of the West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Authority.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Are there any other declarations?

MEMBER OF COUNCIL: Similarly on item 13, Member of the Passenger Transport Authority.

COUNCILLOR D. BLACKBURN: The same thing as Councillor Downes, on the Passenger Transport Authority.

COUNCILLOR SCHOFIELD: Item 13, my Lord Mayor, personal interest as a Member of the PTA.

COUNCILLOR ANDERSON: I am trying to remember the reference. It is in reference to the reference back from Councillor Wakefield. I am a Director of Leeds North-West Homes and as such we will have to take a view on it.

THE LORD MAYOR: So are you asking whether in fact you should be making a ---

COUNCILLOR ANDERSON: I am declaring a personal interest in it.

THE LORD MAYOR: Can we just clarify the position, Councillor Anderson, please. We want to just make sure we have got the right guidance on your position.

COUNCILLOR ANDERSON: Yes. I am just pointing out I feel I have got a personal interest in the item that has been referred back because the decision about a ballot is something that we in North-West Homes will have a view about and I will have as the chair to take that through my particular Board.

THE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES (Ms. N. Jackson): My advice would be that at this stage I think you only have to declare a personal interest because at the moment it is just talking about a reference back to Exec. Board to consider whether or not there ought to be a ballot, but again it is entirely a matter for Members. But if you are declaring a personal interest you can stay in, you can take part and you can vote.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: My Lord Mayor, could we have a clarification from the Chief Legal Officer about Resolution 13, taking into account that anybody who is over 60, do they have potentially a prejudicial interest in terms of the fact that they may well be --- I mean, as difficult as it may be to believe that our youthful Judith Elliott may be affected by that one and we want to clarify whether anybody over 60 does have anything other than a personal interest or potentially a prejudicial interest.

THE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES: I think because the proposal covers everybody aged over 60 then any Members who are aged 60 or

over are in no better or worse position than other members of the public who are in that age band, so I would advise no declaration need be made.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank goodness for that.

COUNCILLOR PROCTER: Lord Mayor, in relation to item 8 (iv) that Councillor Anderson has just raised, it is right, isn't it, that all ALMO Members need to declare a similar interest?

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: I was just standing up to ---

THE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES: It is for each individual Member to take their own view, but my advice would be a personal interest ought to be declared.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Can we take it, Lord Mayor, all of us who are ALMO directors declare a personal interest at this stage, or are we going to go round the whole room?

THE LORD MAYOR: I am afraid the Chief Legal Officer just made it very clear that it is a matter for individual determination, Councillor Gruen, and therefore if Members are affected in that way and they feel they should declare an interest it is for them to do it, not for a mass register. I can see all the Members of the ALMO wanting to declare an interest.

THE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES: Can I take it that all Members who are ALMO directors are wishing to declare a personal interest on that particular ---

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Yes.

THE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES: Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Just to be quite clear on this, does any ALMO director not wish to declare a personal interest? Right. Okay, we have got everybody.

Are there any other declarations? Okay, thank you for that.

Having taken all those declarations on board, can I now ask Members to show that they have read the list and agree its content in so far as they relate to their own interest together with the additional declarations that we have just made.

Can you please indicate that that is in fact the case by raising your hand. Those understanding, yes? Thank you. Anybody not understanding? So no, nobody. Right, okay. So we are clear now hopefully on the declarations. One of these days hopefully we are going to have a simplified system, but there we are. We seem to have to live with it.

### ITEM 3 - COMMUNICATIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: Can I turn to the Chief Executive now and ask if there are any other communications?

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

### ITEM 4 - DEPUTATIONS

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: There are three deputations, Lord Mayor:  
Representatives of the Youth Council, Friends of Middleton Park and  
Members of the Leeds Chinese Community Association.

COUNCILLOR PROCTER: I move, Lord Mayor, that all deputations be received.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: I second, Lord Mayor.

(The motion was carried)

THE LORD MAYOR: Can we admit the first deputation, please.

(The first deputation entered the chamber)

THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon.

MISS DIBBLE: Good afternoon.

THE LORD MAYOR: In accordance with the Procedure Rules of the Council, you have a period of not more than five minutes in which to address the Council. Would you please start by giving the names of the deputation and the spokesperson.

MISS DIBBLE: My name is Steph Dibble and I am the chairperson of Leeds Youth Council, and this is Chris (?)Hyton, who is the Treasurer.

Good afternoon, Lord Mayor, Councillors. My name is Steph Dibble, I am the chairperson of Leeds Youth Council. Thank you for allowing us to talk to you today.

Leeds Youth Council is an elected body which represents young people of high school age from all over the City. Each high school, and currently one college, holds annual elections in March to elect two Leeds Youth Councillors who hold office for one year.

We have been in existence since 2003 and have grown in number every



year. In 2005, over 75% of all the high schools in Leeds are represented, along with one of the Further Education Colleges.

Our key aims are:

To be the elected voice of young people in Leeds  
To improve life for young people in Leeds, and  
To ensure that Leeds City Council and other decision-making bodies take into account the views of young people when making decisions which affect us all.

Each year, the Youth Council elects four of its Members to serve as Members of the UK Youth Parliament.

We have distributed copies of our 2005-2008 Manifesto to all Councillors today. In our manifesto we are outlining our priorities for the next 3 years, which include our main target of supporting Fairtrade. It is Fairtrade which we are here to talk to you about today.

Fairtrade is a quickly growing movement of consumers, retailers and distributors who want to make sure the original suppliers of items they buy and sell, like coffee, bananas and chocolate, are treated fairly, work in reasonable conditions and are paid reasonable rates.

The Fairtrade movement works by examining the supply chain of products that come from the third world. Where there is a lack of fairness or transparency, the movement seeks to establish new trade relationships that are fairer, more sustainable and transparent.

For the farmers and workers, Fairtrade means a stable price which covers production costs and pays a premium that producer organisations can invest in business development or social and environmental schemes that will benefit the wider community. Too many farmers in the developing world have to contend with fluctuating prices that may not even recover the costs incurred in producing their crops. Fairtrade makes a big impact on their day-to-day life and their families' future.

There are now over 250 products that carry the Fairtrade mark. The product range includes tea, coffee, chocolate, sugar, bananas, fresh fruit, juices, honey, cakes, biscuits, cereal bars, jams, sauces, football and roses.

As you know, on 5th March 2004, Leeds was declared a Fairtrade City by the Fairtrade Foundation in recognition of its commitment to supporting producers in the developing world.

The Time for Change Education Project awarded nine Leeds schools official Fairtrade School Status during Fairtrade fortnight last year. In our manifesto, we set out the ways in which the Youth Council want to see all Leeds schools

supporting Fairtrade. We want to see all Leeds schools

Increase the use of Fairtrade products across all aspects of the school  
Include learning around Fairtrade issues within the school, and  
Sell Fairtrade products to support growers in underdeveloped countries.

In seeking ways to achieve this aim, we are here today to ask Leeds City Council to consider how best to involve Leeds schools in supporting Fairtrade. Thank you for your time. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you for that. It became clear as you started to speak that we had a typographical error in fact on our notice of the item. It did in fact refer to "free trade" instead of "Fairtrade", so I would ask Members of Council to make the necessary alteration, that you are in fact speaking in support of Fairtrade in our schools. You and me both, apparently, for the last month or two. It is certainly a very topical subject. Can I ask Councillor Procter to move.

COUNCILLOR PROCTER: I ask the deputation be referred to the Executive Board of Council, my Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Yes, I second that, Lord Mayor.

(The motion was carried unanimously)

THE LORD MAYOR: That is agreed unanimously, so the subject matter of your deputation will be referred to the Executive Board for consideration and you will be advised of the outcome in due course. Thank you very much. (Applause)

(The first deputation left the chamber and the second was admitted)

THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon.

MS. OXLEY: Hello.

THE LORD MAYOR: In accordance with the Procedure Rules of the Council, you have a period of not more than five minutes to address the Council. Will you please start by giving the names of the deputation and the spokesperson. Thank you.

MS. OXLEY: The deputation is from the Friends of Middleton Park and my name is Jenna Oxley.

My Lord Mayor, Councillors, ladies and gentlemen, may I introduce our delegation from the Friends of Middleton Park. This is Linda Oxley, Middleton resident and member of the Friends, and Nick Rose from the Friends and from Wade's Charity, who own the park. My name is Jenna Oxley and I am the worker for the Friends and currently studying Public Relations at Leeds Metropolitan

University.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today.

Our group was set up with the support of Councillor Jack Dunn when he was Councillor for the Middleton Ward. We meet every month and organise events in the park. This year we have held three gala days, brass band concerts, litter picks and public meetings; we have served teas in the Lakeside Centre every Sunday afternoon over the summer, all with the help and support of Council Officers and our current Ward Councillors Blake, Bruce and Driver.

We were delighted when Councillor John Procter came to our January meeting and expressed his support for our work. Apparently, his grandfather used to take him there when he was little and he has fond memories of the place.

The Council's Parks and Countryside section runs a number of events in the park every year, including a bonfire and fireworks. At our September meeting we had sight of a memo listing the bonfires across the City, including Middleton, and giving the date as 4th November.

You can imagine our shock and disappointment when we heard through the grapevine that the event had been cancelled not across the City but just in Middleton. You will have seen some of the correspondence and articles that have appeared since then in the Yorkshire Evening Post. People across the south of the City are bitterly disappointed and feel let down by the Council. We have had some difficulty in persuading local residents that the cancellation is not the fault of the Friends group.

And what is the reason given for this late and sudden cancellation? We are told that there was trouble at the bonfire last year, although none of us saw it and there is no police record of their involvement. However, we accept that there was some disturbance after the fireworks in a small area of the park and do not want to see parks staff put in a difficult or dangerous situation. But what happens when there is trouble in other parts of the City? There it is a case of making extra security arrangements and fencing with additional staff.

You are sending out the wrong message to the people of South Leeds. Our communities are not no-go areas. We feel safe moving around and enjoying the wonderful area that is Middleton Park and Woods. We want the Council to be sending out the same message and encouraging everyone to come and appreciate the park and ancient woodland and the stunning views across Leeds.

As for the annual bonfire, the Friends are very flexible and happy to enter into discussions about the way the event is organised and even exactly where it is held. The important thing is to have a bonfire in the Middleton area for the south of the City. There is a petition doing the rounds which already has over 1,000

signatures on it and was handed to the Council last Thursday.

We call on the Council to reinstate our bonfire and show confidence in our communities. Thank you, my Lord Mayor. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR PROCTER: Lord Mayor, I move that the deputation be referred to the Executive Board for consideration.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Yes, I second the reference and at least this half of the Council listened to you with great interest.

(The motion was carried)

THE LORD MAYOR: Can I then thank the deputation and indicate that your comments will be referred to the Executive Board and in due course, and I rather suspect it might not be before 5th November, you will be told of the outcome of that deliberation. Thank you for coming this afternoon.

MS. OXLEY: Thank you. (Applause)

(The second deputation left the chamber and the third was admitted)

THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon.

MS. CHENG: Good afternoon.

THE LORD MAYOR: In accordance with the Procedure Rules of the Council, you have a period of not more than 5 minutes in which to address the Council. Would you please start by giving the names of the deputation and the spokesperson. Thank you.

MS. CHENG: Hello everyone. My name is Yimin Cheng. I work for the Leeds Chinese Community Centre. This is our Chairman, Mr. David Lee, our Honorary Chair, Mr. Eddie Chan and our Director Park Chua, and our volunteer, Xiao Youe. We can start now?

Lord Mayor, Leader of Council, Councillors, ladies and gentlemen, we are here representing the Leeds Chinese Community Association, to raise the awareness of urgent needs for local authorities to understand the issues within the local Chinese community and the disparity in funding allocation to our Chinese community groups in comparison with other BME groups in Leeds.

LCCA was established in 1995 as a charitable organisation. Our aims are to improve the lives of the local community, especially people from Chinese origin. We operate at the Leeds Chinese Community Centre on North Street, which is also the base of the Leeds Chinese Elderly Luncheon Club, the Youk Ming

Chinese Opera Society, Leeds Vietnamese Elderly Group and the Leeds Chinese Community School.

Our objectives are to improve the social and health wellbeing of the Chinese community, break the barriers for our community to access public services, address and advocate on any issues within the community, work in partnership with local authorities to achieve their local development agenda, encourage cultural and social integration of the Chinese community into a wider society, help our community to develop basic living and employment skills in order to live a better life.

In the previous years, the average number of our Centre users were approximately 220 people per week. The figure is still increasing due to the fast-growing Chinese population - 67% increase between 1991 to 2001.

With a limited resource in the past, we managed to carry out plenty of valuable work; for instance, we look after the elderly's welfare in partnership with the Leeds Chinese Women's Group, supported by the Social Services Department.

We provide basic skills training with the Learning and Leisure Department. We sit on the steering group of the Chinese Working Group, led by the International Relations of the City Council to promote the friendship between Leeds and China.

We provide Chinese cultural awareness training to local schools, business agencies and other statutory organisations, such as the Probation Services. We are the key player in organising or advising on Chinese cultural events, such as the Chinese New Year Celebrations, China Week 2004 and mid-autumn business dinner.

Unlike other BME communities in Leeds, the Chinese community is widely spread across the City without a geographic focal area. The Chinese Community Centre becomes the only focal point for our members to meet up. Despite our achievements, we are struggling to meet the increasing needs from our community due to the lack of core funding. Most of the work we have been doing with the City Council was not properly funded. In the past 5 years LCCA only received two one-off unrestricted funding in total of £24,000 plus £3,000 restricted annual grant to run the Elderly Luncheon Club. From the information we received, the per capita funding to local Chinese community is one of the lowest. Local authority has the obligation to ensure that each BME group should be treated equally. This lack of core funding has also affected our fund raising process from the regional and national charitable trusts, since they were not persuaded that local authorities were supporting us on an ongoing basis and therefore led to a question whether the centre would be sustainable.

The public has misguided perceptions that Chinese households are doing well in comparison to other BME communities but many urgent problems and issues remain hidden. This was mentioned in a recent research report which was written by Dr. Ian Law, the Director of the Centre of the Racism and Ethnicity Study

of the Leeds University. The research found out that Chinese households in Leeds face significant problems including high levels of violence, poor housing and difficulties in accessing public services. These problems have often gone unacknowledged and awareness of the social services among the community is poor. It was recommended that urgent action should be taken by local Chinese community and authorities. However, without funding support from the local city council nothing can be achieved.

Our Centre is facing a critical moment as, without immediate funding, the Centre will be forced to close down in one month's time. If so, all the work mentioned above will be terminated.

What we are asking here is, first of all, urgent funding of £35,000 to keep our centre running for one year. This is to pay the Centre Manager to keep playing the co-ordinator's role, plus part of our building running costs. Secondly, on-going support from the City Council to carry out work dealing with the urgent issues listed in Ian Law's report. Thirdly, potential opportunities to develop our work through bidding for contracts and helping the City Council and PCTs to improve the access to the public services.

Finally, thanks for giving us this opportunity to speak. We hope that the above issues can be looked into as an urgent need and we will expect to receive your decision in the future. Thank you. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR PROCTER: Lord Mayor, I move that the matter be referred to the Executive Board for consideration.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I would like to just thank you for coming along with the deputation. Oh sorry, I have got to put it to the vote first, just in case somebody is not in agreement.

(The motion was carried)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you very much, I nearly missed that. It is a unanimous request by the Council that the matter be referred to the Executive Board, so thank you for coming along and in due course the Executive Board will consider the submission that you made and will contact you with the results of their deliberations. Thank you very much.

MS. CHENG: Thank you. (Applause)

#### ITEM 5 - REPORTS

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gruen? Those in favour? There are one or two in favour. Anybody against?

(The motion was carried)

COUNCILLOR PROCTER: And he talks about people paying attention!

### ITEM 6 - QUESTIONS

COUNCILLOR CONGREVE: Will the Executive Board Member with responsibility for "narrowing the gap" agree with the importance of physical activities and recreation in contributing to narrowing the gap?

COUNCILLOR D. BLACKBURN: Lord Mayor, the Council has a crucial role in generating the opportunities for all people to be physically active. Together with our colleagues in the health sector, we must work to ensure the population of Leeds is more active in the future.

MEMBERS OF COUNCIL: Can't hear, Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR D. BLACKBURN: The challenge is to increase activity levels by 1% per annum, combined with a healthy diet and positive impact of being active on such issues as childhood obesity, coronary heart disease and mental health. There will be savings in future health costs and stronger, healthier, happier Leeds. The range of services offered by the Council for people to be active are very good and are provided at one of the lowest costs per citizen of any local authority in the country. Whether taking part informally through our parks and open spaces or perhaps engaging in more formal sporting and health pursuits in our leisure centres, we provide much to be proud about. In fact, the satisfaction rate for attendance at our sports centres is the highest of all local authorities in England.

We need to improve the quality of what we have and where possible develop new opportunities. Many of our activities and much of our direct provision is based in and around the most deprived areas of the City. For example, we are heavily involved in targeting health programmes such as cardiac rehabilitation as well as working with partners in the PCTs to deliver activities for older people and younger people.

Our Sports Development Team work with the voluntary sports sector and schools to strengthen and support what they do by assisting with training, accessing grant funding or simply giving clubs the confidence to move on and improve. Voluntary sport is the bedrock of many deprived communities and we will continue to work to help support and develop it.

By way of a final example, the Council's pricing policy in leisure centres

offers excellent value for money across all activities and together with the Breeze Card for young people and the Priority Leeds Card and Leeds Card 60 for the over-60s and those on benefit, offering substantial discounts on all the full rates. There are affordable activities for people from all the areas of the City, whatever their circumstances.

The Council is also keen to invest in sports and fitness facilities in these areas. Work continues to develop our successful PFI schemes, a key focal point being how to best deliver high-quality sports and health services to deprived areas and groups. Furthermore, the biggest single sports capital investment project, the new 50 metre pool, will serve directly the most deprived wards in the south of the City as well as offering opportunities to all the communities of Leeds to come along and use it.

We do however have limited amounts of money and have to think about the massive challenge of renewing and refurbishing our existing stock of leisure centres as well as improving our open spaces and parks. Furthermore, we need to continue to review our programme of activities to ensure that we are delivering our services as cost-effectively as possible. We will continue to work to secure further investment where we can. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR CONGREVE: Lord Mayor, although that was a very comprehensive response from the Officers, by way of a supplement: You may be aware that the Middleton Park bonfire and firework display has been cancelled. I have attended this annual event every year since it was inaugurated and I have never seen any trouble ---

MEMBER OF COUNCIL: Perhaps you have been causing the problem.

COUNCILLOR CONGREVE: I may well have been. However, when there was a problem at Roundhay ---

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: Question, please. Question.

COUNCILLOR CONGREVE: I am coming to the question. This is background information. When there was a problem at Roundhay Park bonfire it was dealt with by additional security measures.

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: This is not a supplementary; it is a comment he is making, Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR CONGREVE: Are you aware that residents from all over South Leeds, Morley and Rothwell attend the event at Middleton Park? Many can manage to travel to Roundhay to the bonfire there, but many families in one of the most deprived areas in the City cannot afford, cannot manage to travel to Roundhay.



As a result of this Machiavellian cost-cutting exercise, many of the most deprived residents in inner South Leeds will be excluded from a bonfire or will be forced to purchase fireworks which they can ill afford and build bonfires in their own gardens ---

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: Is this a question?

COUNCILLOR CONGREVE: -- so as not to disappoint their children, but this will bring about more accidents and injuries, and it was to avoid such things that community bonfires were inaugurated. (Interruptions)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Congreve, can we have a question, please, now.

COUNCILLOR CONGREVE: You can indeed, Lord Mayor. Thank you for your guidance. Will the Executive Board Member tell me how the cancellation of this community event equates with "narrowing the gap"?

COUNCILLOR D. BLACKBURN: The fact is this administration always puts safety first, as has been explained on numerous occasions by Councillor Procter, and will probably be done later this afternoon. The fact is that if this had gone ahead --- Councillor Procter was advised that it should not take place for safety reasons. If it had gone ahead who would have been asking for Councillor Procter's neck? You would. (Interruptions) This is just the kind of typical stuff that is coming from the Labour Group now.

MEMBER OF COUNCIL: Rubbish.

COUNCILLOR TAYLOR: My Lord Mayor, would the Executive Board Member for Leisure care to comment as to which comes first, community safety or an individual event?

COUNCILLOR PROCTER: Lord Mayor, the answer is clear and is brief. It is clearly community safety. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR TAYLOR: By way of supplementary, Lord Mayor, I won't go on like the last speaker. It is quite evident who is coming up for elections but in the case of community safety at Middleton Park bonfire, have the Ward Members ever been approached to assist with the event?

COUNCILLOR PROCTER: Silence. Indeed, Lord Mayor, a request was made in 2002 for the staggering - wait for the answer - for the staggering sum, Lord Mayor of £900 from the Community Involvement Team for that area to support, or should I say to provide stewarding or security staff. Despite having an annual budget of £186,000 - that is £186,000 in case Members didn't hear - and despite an underspend for that particular year of £49,000 - that is £49,000 for those Members

who didn't hear - the Hunslet and Middleton CIT for that year -- I am sorry, the underspend was for that year, the Chair, a certain Councillor Bruce - Councillor Bruce ---

COUNCILLOR A. CARTER: Is that the de-selected Councillor Bruce?

COUNCILLOR PROCTER: Yes, I understand that is the de-selected Councillor Bruce for the Middleton Park ward, I understand a bid is being made for the Rothwell nomination, however by Councillor Bruce. My colleagues from Rothwell are trembling as I speak. Despite that request from the Parks & Countryside Division, the Chair, Councillor Bruce, refused to support that request.

Furthermore, Lord Mayor, we heard from the deputation earlier this afternoon about the potential of relocating the community bonfire; that is something that those in the Friends of Middleton Park are happy to consider. Indeed it was a proposal that was also put to Councillor Bruce and he rejected that also, Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR BALE: Lord Mayor, would the Executive Member responsible for Development please provide an update on the progress of the A65 Quality Bus Corridor?

COUNCILLOR A. CARTER: My Lord Mayor, as Members will be aware, the A65 Quality Bus Corridor is in three sections. The Rawdon Road inbound busway proposals which are on hold pending the review of the ring road, the outer ring road; the Abbey Road inbound bus lane proposals, which are the subject of an Executive Board report due to come up, I think, in November, and hopefully we will get approval, and the major scheme which is the A65 Commercial Road/Kirkstall Road inbound and outbound bus proposals. I am afraid on this section I cannot give you very much positive information at all.

Despite previously agreeing that it was a priority, the Department for Time-Wasting said to us - the Department for Time-Wasting told us in December 2004, "The scheme does not warrant sufficient priority for approval at this stage."

Despite indicating that it may be possible to consider the A65 Quality Bus Initiative as part of the 2005 settlement, they have changed their mind again. It is now included in the schemes to be taken forward to the Regional Transport Board and there is, therefore, little likelihood, because if you believe that the Government have imbued this Regional Transport Board with wonderful localised powers, you would of course be wrong. What they have done is to create the illusion of power coming down to a more local level, but we may well prioritize it, but the Secretary of State Alistair Darling still has all these schemes sent back to him for final approval. There is therefore little chance, in fact there is no chance of us getting a decision on the main part of that bus corridor until at least March.

COUNCILLOR BALE: Lord Mayor, would Councillor Carter agree that the

Department for Transport continues to provide the City with every assistance short of actual help?

COUNCILLOR A. CARTER: My Lord Mayor, I am not quite sure whether to say "Yes" or "No" to that, but I think I have made my views about the Department for Transport very clear and will be shortly making them even more clear. The simple fact is that there is a starvation, there is a tourniquet applied to investment coming north of Birmingham, nay north of London as far as transport infrastructure is concerned and when one hears that a ticket terminal will cost £500 million and we can't get a quality bus initiative through the Department for Transport, I think that comparison speaks for itself. The Government tells us it favours buses. I don't think the Government knows what it favours when it comes to transport infrastructure in the north of England. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Lord Mayor, can the Executive Board Member responsible for Licensing please confirm the costs to local Council taxpayers up to date of implementing the new licensing legislation.

COUNCILLOR HARRIS: Yes, Lord Mayor, the cost to us in 2004/5 was £313,834, that is the additional cost or loss, whichever way you wish to look at it of implementing the new licensing rules and the latest projection, including the costs of Environmental Health and Health & Safety, of administering the new rules in 2005/6 will be a loss of £294,782, which in fact is £26,000 worse than the projection I reported last time I was asked in Council.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: My Lord Mayor, by way of a supplementary, would Councillor Harris comment on a letter from our beloved MP Colin Challon dated 15th September 2004 saying taxpayers will not pay for new licensing laws. Would he also care to comment on a further letter from St. Challon of Morley who comments in his letter of 5th October 2005 that it won't cost a penny by Christmas. Could he also comment on how much financial support was received from central Government, and also comment on whether this money could have been better spent elsewhere.

THE LORD MAYOR: That sounds like four supplementaries to me, Councillor Harris, but I am sure you will deal with them all.

COUNCILLOR HARRIS: Well, to begin with Colin Challon, I can tell Council that the Leaders of the three administration parties do endeavour to meet with our MPs on a fairly regular basis and at the last meeting Colin Challon was there and one of the issues we raised with the MPs was the question of the additional financial burden of implementing the new Licensing Act and I was asked to write to all the MPs setting out what those additional financial burdens were so that they could lobby Ministers on our behalf. What can I say? Perhaps Mr. Challon cannot read or write is all I can say.

With regard to how the money could have been spent, that is a very interesting question, isn't it? What could we have done with £333,000 in the last financial year? Remember this is £333,000 sucked out of this Authority by this Labour Government. It is because they forced these new rules on us that we are having to bear the financial burden without additional support from central Government, and what would it have paid for? Well, it would have paid for over (Interruptions) Don't worry, we will come to China sooner or later. Well, it is petty, because what is more important, me going to China or the fact that 40,000 hours of extra home help could have been provided through Social Services with the £333,000 that your Government has sucked out of our budget. What is more important, 40,000 hours of additional home help care or what is more important, an additional 25 PCSOs on our streets to provide better community safety? Is that more important than your Government sucking £333,000 out of this Authority? I am quite clear what is more important, and I am quite clear that the people of Leeds understand what is more important.

COUNCILLOR ATHA: I am just overcome with a sense of occasion, listening to such outrageous bull from my colleague on the left. The question I would put, though, is does the Executive Board Member - a familiar ring, these words - responsible for "narrowing the gap" agree with the importance of cultural and social activities in helping to narrow that gap?

COUNCILLOR D. BLACKBURN: Yes. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR ATHA: I had a feeling I was going to get a short reply so I didn't sit down, and I thank you for that, to the great relief of us all. Could I ask you then, Mr. Member for "Closing the Gap", would you explain how the following actions contribute to closing that gap: The charging for the first time ever of severely deprived and disabled people for their annual Christmas concert at the Town Hall, or the cancellation of the Middleton bonfire which has been referred to already, whilst retaining one in Roundhay, or the increasing cost of Leisure Services charges for the leisure centres, or of selling off the Art Gallery as proposed, or his Liberal Party colleague's suggestion of an annual sexually erotic festival. Would you please explain, therefore, how these contribute to closing the gap, and in that case what kind of gap might be closed, and does he personally endorse - personally endorse - these decisions and these proposals?

COUNCILLOR D. BLACKBURN: I think that is the most questions I have had all year, that supplemental. Regarding sexually erotic, or whatever you mentioned, no, I think we will keep off that. You know, I don't want to go down that ---

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: Did you say that?

COUNCILLOR D. BLACKBURN: He did. He did. Regarding Yamsen, he's on about - YAMSEN - and the hire of the Town Hall, which I think was a charge of £720 for their carol concert this year, this was discussed with the organisers in

April this year and the organiser (inaudible) and expressed their thanks and satisfaction at that cost. So, I mean, they are not complaining. They are happy with the arrangement.

I have got to say, Bernard, and it is the same with the other question, I do not see any of the supplementals referring to anything to do with narrowing the gap. It should have been -- if you want to ask those questions you should ask them to the Department Exec. Member. (Interruptions)

THE LORD MAYOR: I am afraid not, Councillor Atha. You have already asked four supplementaries.

COUNCILLOR HAMILTON: Lord Mayor, would the Leader of Council care to shed any light on recent allegations in the press regarding cuts?

COUNCILLOR HARRIS: Yes.

COUNCILLOR HAMILTON: Would you not agree --- Lord Mayor, would the Leader of Council not agree that there is a difference between cuts and priorities?

COUNCILLOR HARRIS: Oh, indeed there are, Lord Mayor, and so perhaps Council will bear with me whilst we look at some of the facts.

This administration has spent £45.5 million more on services than the last Labour administration. (Applause) It is £45.5 million. Sorry, nobody believes it, so you are calling your financial officers liars, are you, whoever said that? That must be the implication. £20 million is an increase in Social Services on top of the £12 million that we injected into your last budget in order to keep Social Services going in our first year in power.

Is it a cut - hundreds of thousands of pounds additional funding that we injected into the Area Committees compared to the budget you left us with? That wasn't a cut. Are the millions of pounds that we have injected into dealing with the repairs backlog on roads, is that a cut? No, I don't think that's a cut at all. Are the two PCSOs for every ward in this City over and above anything you funded, is that a cut? No, I don't think that is a cut at all. And priorities, yes, if what you mean is that you run round Leeds promising the people of Leeds absolutely anything, even though it is impossible to deliver it, well, that is what I call cruel. It begins with a "C". It is not a cut, it is cruel, grotesquely cruel. However, Lord Mayor, before I finish I would like to deal with a cut. Now, as part of dealing with this we can have a little question and answer session. I want to ask Council these questions: First of all, with which City in China is Leeds twinned? Is it Hangzhou or Beijing? Hangzhou, not Beijing. Okay, thank you. In what year was the great defender of the Chinese community in Leeds, Councillor Taggart, Lord Mayor? Was it 2002/3, 2003/4 or 2004/5? 2003/4, that is correct. Absolutely correct.

COUNCILLOR ATHA: Is this Brain of Britain? Quite frankly, they are not performing very well.

COUNCILLOR HARRIS: In 2002/3 it is correct that that administration gave a grant of £10,000 to the Chinese community. How much was the grant that they gave to the Chinese community in the year 2003/4? Nil. Nil. That is a cut. Now, here is the final question: What was Councillor Taggart, as the Lord Mayor of this great City, doing in Beijing in 2003/4 and not Hangzhou on an official trip on behalf of this Council? Well, who knows, but judged perhaps ---

COUNCILLOR A. CARTER: We aren't back with the Chinese tailor, are we?

COUNCILLOR HARRIS: Judged perhaps when Councillor Taggart decided to go to Beijing, which is nothing to do with this City, unfortunately the money spent on that trip perhaps resulted in the cut to the funding for the Chinese community. That would be your logic, wouldn't it?

COUNCILLOR LOBLEY: Can the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Housing tell me if there have been any negative effects on homelessness services since the closures of the hostels on July 1st 2005?

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: My Lord Mayor, can I just say our continued focus on preventing homelessness has meant that there are now less householders in temporary accommodation than there were immediately prior to the hostel closures. Are you listening, Councillor Blake? She is asleep.

On 1st June there were 492 householders placed in temporary accommodation. The comparative figure on 1st September, after the closures, was 479. Can I also advise Council that during that period since the closure the number of identified rough sleepers has not increased at all and is still extremely low. The saving (Interruption) Well, I will tell you the figure, if you want to know, 3 or 4 per person. A couple of years ago, under your administration, it was 43. Disgraceful, so don't start telling me.

Now, the saving on supporting people, that's where the money came from for closing these hostels, the savings on supporting people have actually allowed them to commission more services and, for example, the Leeds Supporting People Team are commissioning an expansion of the existing dispersed supporting housing scheme managed by the Leeds Federation of Housing Tenants. That must be something we should all applaud, all round the Council.

This scheme offers self-contained accommodation for homeless household customers. Customers' feedback consistently identified a preference for dispersed self-contained provision.

My Lord Mayor, there has been no negative impact on homeless services

since the closure of the two hostels in July 2005. Thank you. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR LOBLEY: By way of supplementary, please could you confirm if Leeds is still a regional champion for tackling homelessness as awarded by the Office of Deputy Prime Minister?

COUNCILLOR A. CARTER: There is somebody who should be homeless if ever there was one!

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: Lord Mayor, I am delighted, I am pleased to advise all Members of Council that we still have that title, and it is a title which I know upsets the Members opposite. It was their Deputy Prime Minister who gave it to us in recognition of the wonderful work that the Officers of this Council have done so far as homelessness is concerned. Thank you, my Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Well, Members of Council, that brings us to the end of question-time, so the remaining questions will be answered by post.

We now have a supplement to the order paper and I am calling on Councillor Procter to move a suspension of Council Procedure Rules.

COUNCILLOR PROCTER: My apologies, Lord Mayor. The additional piece of paper, can I move in the terms of the notice.

COUNCILLOR HAMILTON: Lord Mayor, I second.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Lord Mayor, can I comment on the proposal that we suspend Council Procedure Rules for this particular White Paper on Leeds Supertram?

We discussed Leeds Supertram at the last Council Meeting and this has been tabled not as part of the White Papers. It was tabled yesterday after the Whips had met, so it must be a real emergency to come forward with less than 12 hours notice to this Council. No attempt has been made to explain to Council or to the Leaders of the different parties what this emergency is. Why is it that we have to have an emergency White Paper today to discuss Supertram at the third or fourth time in as many Council meetings.

This group therefore cannot see the reason why we shouldn't table a normal White Paper in the normal way and have an emergency White Paper at such a late stage and we won't be supporting the call for a suspension of Council Standing Orders.

THE LORD MAYOR: Right, Councillor Gruen. We note what you say on that and I am sure that the mover and seconder will refer to the matter in the main body of the subject on the Leeds Supertram, assuming that is that they succeed in getting the matter debated. So can I at this stage call for the vote on the suspension of

Council Procedure Rules.

COUNCILLOR ATHA: Lord Mayor, could we ask for a legal ruling on whether and on what basis this is an emergency resolution within the current Council Procedure Rules or the Standing Orders. I think we are entitled to know, Lord Mayor, what the legal ruling is.

THE LORD MAYOR: Okay, Councillor Atha, I hear what you say. I am sure that the Procedure Rule 22.1 is clear, but I will ask the Legal Officer to comment on it, since you raise the issue.

THE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES: The Council Procedure Rules themselves don't cover the situation of sort of emergency motions in this sense. However, the legislation, the Local Government Act 1972, does state that the matter to be transacted at a meeting should only be that that is on the summons unless there is an urgent item, and that would be for the Lord Mayor to give a ruling on.

COUNCILLOR ATHA: So the whole meaning of that, my Lord Mayor, depends on the meaning of the word "urgent". Now if in fact we looked at the word "urgent" one would determine in any dictionary that this could not be considered urgent to condemn. Quite frankly, many of us would feel equally strongly as you that the way this Council has been treated has been quite inappropriate and improper, but that does not make it urgent, and if in fact the legal definition advice to the Lord Mayor is that this is urgent then, quite frankly, that is a matter that one would feel appropriate to take up elsewhere because it would imply to me a complete misunderstanding of the word "urgent". In what way is it urgent? Is something going to happen tomorrow, or will it change -- if we didn't pass this today could we not pass it in a week's time, a fortnight's time? There is no urgency in this case and if you wanted us to join with you on this kind of decision then I am sure, had it been done properly and not in this devious manner, we might have agreed.

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: Sit down and listen, Bernard.

COUNCILLOR HARRIS: Lord Mayor, I don't intend to get into the body of the debate which I trust we will shortly have, but the urgency is for a whole variety of reasons but might I cite two in particular? Those who read the front page of the Yorkshire Post last week on Wednesday will have read the headline suggesting that a principal investor in this City wished to withdraw their £2.6 million investment because the Government had not made the decision on the future of Supertram. I regard that as an urgent situation that needs debating and needs clarification. Secondly ---

COUNCILLOR ATHA: If that was a week ago, why didn't you do it a week ago if it was urgent?



COUNCILLOR HARRIS: Secondly --- When we get to the debate we will deal with that. Secondly, on the advice of officers from Metro on 12th October, together with the Chair of Metro, Councillor Hussain, I wrote to the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Derek Twigg, asking or pointing out that it was urgent that we had a meeting and a decision on Supertram within two weeks. I wrote on 12th October. We are now at 1st November. We have not received a reply. The matter is urgent. Officers so advise us that the matter is urgent and it should be debated.

THE LORD MAYOR: Can I just advise Council that I have taken advice on this position and my original view was that it has been the practice of this Council for many years not to have a debate on the suspension of Council Procedure Rules and we make the exception so that in fact the Whips could make their position clear. Now, we have gone one step beyond that. I don't want to go down the road of having a full debate on the procedural matter, particularly since it seems to me to be an issue which must necessarily be addressed by those moving and seconding the resolution itself.

On the question of whether we should be doing it at all, then on the advice I have received the controlling alliance is entitled to raise the issue in this way and they are doing so. So what I would suggest that we do now is take a vote on the suspension of Council Procedures as moved by Councillor Procter and seconded by Councillor Hamilton and then move on to the purpose of doing this, and I ask the speakers to make it very clear in their submission to Council precisely why they feel that it is necessary at this time. So can I ask for those in favour of the suspension of Council Procedure rules to please show.

(The motion was carried)

THE LORD MAYOR: Can we then move on to the main item for debate which is in fact, "That this Council condemns the government for failing to give the decision on the future of the Supertram."

COUNCILLOR HARRIS: Lord Mayor, in order for us to have what I trust is a sensible and important debate, I am taking the extraordinary course of action of circulating to every Member of Council all the relevant correspondence that has taken place on this matter between ourselves and ---

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: We haven't got it.

COUNCILLOR HARRIS: You are getting it now. -- between ourselves as an authority, between Metro ---

COUNCILLOR ATHA: Getting it now? How outrageous. How can we read something like this now? I object, my Lord Mayor. I think this is an abuse of process and in protest I will leave the chamber. I think it is darned disgraceful.

There are certain standards which are observed and whether we agree with you or not, and we would have agreed with you if you had only treated it in half a way reasonably. I think it is a disgrace.

COUNCILLOR HARRIS: Lord Mayor, let it be noted for the record that in a fit of petulance the father of this Council abandoned ---

COUNCILLOR ATHA: I wouldn't be your father.

COUNCILLOR HARRIS: The senior Member of this Council abandoned the Chamber when we were embarking upon a debate of the most serious importance to this City.

COUNCILLOR A. CARTER: My Lord Mayor, a one time senior officer of the Department of Transport to be heckling the Leader of Council ---

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Sit down, I don't work for the Department of Transport, idiot. He's an idiot.

THE LORD MAYOR: Can we just let Councillor Harris finish and then Councillor Leadley has indicated he wants to speak, but we have got to have a seconder before we get to that stage. I will bring you in in a few minutes, Councillor Leadley.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Lord Mayor, I wonder on a point of order if I can request a 10 minute adjournment so that we can read the paper that has been circulated.

COUNCILLOR MINKIN: I second that, Lord Mayor. We would not accept in the meeting circulated documents like this at this late stage which were pertinent to the issue.

THE LORD MAYOR: Okay. Well, again I am advised that that also is an issue for the Council to determine and so if you are moving an adjournment, Councillor Gruen, and that is seconded, then I have to without further debate put that matter to Council. So can I ask all Members of Council ---

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: And I move a recorded vote, please.

THE LORD MAYOR: Just hang on. We need to check the rules about this. Just a minute.

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: Can I raise a further point, that several of these letters are marked "private & confidential" and I notice that members of the public are present. Are we at liberty to refer to the letters in our speeches or are they still private and confidential?

THE LORD MAYOR: Okay. Can we just deal with the recording of the vote to start with.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: Would all Members ensure, please, that they are in their allocated seats ---

COUNCILLOR PROCTER: Lord Mayor, could I be quite clear what the proposal is for?

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: The proposal is a 10 minute adjournment so that those of us who have not seen the correspondence can read it and be better informed for the debate.

THE LORD MAYOR: And that has been seconded and that is in fact what we are having a recorded vote on.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: All Members, please, should refer to their desk units and press the button marked "P".

COUNCILLOR COULSON: Lord Mayor, there have been problems all afternoon about hearing. It is getting worse instead of better. We can't hear a word you are saying. The people behind us say they can't, and I am deaf.

THE LORD MAYOR: We will ask the Chief Executive to speak up.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: Would all Members please press the button marked "P" on their desk unit and those Members in favour of the motion in the name of Councillor Gruen in relation to the adjournment please press the "+" button. Those Members against that motion should please press the "-" button, and any Member wishing to abstain and have that abstention recorded should press the "0" button.

THE LORD MAYOR: By some evil plot, Councillor Gruen, your vote is not being recorded. However, we are making a note.

Well, we appear to have near unanimity that everyone would like 10 minutes to look at the document that is being distributed. Out of 92 present 91 want to have a look at it. Sorry, 93 and 92 because we are forgetting Councillor Gruen's vote didn't come up, but there was one person who was entirely satisfied and who will still get the 10 minutes that the rest of us will get. So we are having a 10 minute adjournment.

(Short adjournment)

THE LORD MAYOR: First of all, Members of Council, can I advise you that I have very carefully looked into the question of confidentiality and I am advised that

it does not arise and that there is not in this particular case an issue concerning confidentiality and therefore the matter can be debated in public, and we are now at the stage where we are about to commence that discussion. So on the substantive motion before us I call on Councillor Harris.

COUNCILLOR HARRIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Now that Council has had the opportunity to study the correspondence, the position in which we find ourselves is clear. You will recall at the last Council meeting we did indeed debate this matter and for those who want to read the motion that was agreed it is there on the minute book. But you will recall that we withdrew from any criticism of the Government in order, according to that motion, that everybody in the City who was concerned in this matter be given the opportunity to lobby the Government both for a decision and a positive decision.

There are those on my side who perhaps think that we should not have stepped back from criticism of the Government at that juncture, but we did in order to allow that process to continue. You will see from the correspondence that extreme efforts have been made to meet the Department for Transport, be it at junior Minister level or at Alistair Darling's level, and to elicit some form of response from them as to the future of the Supertram scheme.

Those requests for meetings have been rejected but, worse still, our calls, our urgent calls, for a definitive decision have been completely ignored. We are just told that a decision will be made in due course. Officers advise us that we are at the point now at which if we do not have a decision the matter will fall in any event because we will lose our CPO powers that expire in March, and without those CPO powers we cannot deliver the scheme, whether we want it or not.

Now, we can debate whether or not we want Supertram. It is not my intention to do that at this juncture, but what I do know is this: We are the second largest local authority in England. We are by every measure a principal economic driver for the Yorkshire and Humber region. It is here in this City that we are meant to create the greatest number of jobs within the region in the next 10 years.

This City has been earmarked as the centre of one of the key city regions which according to the Government are key to the future of the economy of this country, and amidst all of that everybody agrees that the public transport infrastructure and the transport infrastructure both of the City and the City region is a critical part of that decision-making process, and yet we have to go cap in hand, like naughty little boys, asking for central Government to allow us to do what virtually everybody in the City says is imperative for the wellbeing and future of the City.

There is something seriously wrong when a Government rejects both the calls for a decision and the recent calls for a final discussion. There is something seriously wrong when Ministers of Government do just completely reject that out of hand and leave the matter completely in abeyance and in the interim no substantive progress can be made on the issue of transport infrastructure for our

City and our region. That is basically wrong for those - and I know that Morley Independents oppose Supertram - for those in this chamber who support Supertram. Whatever happens you cannot have government by complete indecision, and that is what we have got - government by total indecision. It is wrong. It is dangerous. It is bad for us. It is, if you want to say, it is a terrible insult to the people of this City, never mind to us as elected representatives, for everybody, for the ordinary person in the City, for people who invest in this City, whose money is crucial to the future prosperity and growth of the City and the region. Officers, elected Members, the Chamber of Commerce, the newspapers, everybody with a single voice, virtually without exception, is saying, "You must have a decision" and we have gone past the point at which that decision should reasonably have been given.

If you look at the correspondence our letters and our phone calls go completely unanswered - completely. You would be justified in castigating me if for week after week after week I completely failed to answer questions in letters put to me by Ministers crucial to the future of this City. You would be justified in saying that it was wrong. You would be justified in condemning me if I behaved in the matter so crucial - and we are agreed upon it - so crucial to the future of this City and the City region, and yet every attempt at a substantive answer just falls on deaf ears. The only thing that we appear to get is an argument over who said what about whether a meeting should or should not take place. There is no response on the issue of the decision itself, no indication when we will have that decision, no indication as to what the actual future of investment in public transport in this City might be.

We cannot go on this way. The City says we cannot go on this way. It is incumbent upon us, all of us, to say to the Government once and for all, "We have been patient, we did what McNulty asked of us. He told us not to do a Manchester, to be quiet, to say nothing, not to be critical and we would have a decision." That was in March when he promised us a decision reasonably quickly, and it goes on and on and it falls on deaf ears.

All of us here have a duty to this City. You cannot run a City of this size and importance when central Government treat us with complete disregard and refuse to give us any answer or any indication at all as to what we have got to do about public transport which is crucial whatever type of public transport we want and transport operators are saying they won't make decisions on investment because they don't know what is going to happen. We cannot go on like this, and once and for all let us now speak with a single voice, let us say to the Government, "In their day, when the Tories were in opposition there were times when their Government completely overstepped the mark and they stood up and were counted, and they said to their Government, they joined in in this chamber and said, 'No, it is our Government and their behaviour is unacceptable.'"

There is a point at which our duty, our loyalty to this City overrides anything

else, and that is the point where we are now at. We must send a message, a single clear message, on behalf of the entire City that the Government's behaviour is unacceptable and they must answer now. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR A. CARTER: I second, my Lord Mayor, and reserve the right to speak.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Lord Mayor, you know, when we started this debate a long time ago, I think 1992, we did say that we all shared together the interests of the City, and it was built on all-party consensus and we have maintained that I believe, despite tensions at times, right up to today. I was aware there was an emergency White Paper this morning and I said to the Whip, "We will support that White Paper in substance because they are our arguments and views." What I don't support, and what I think has brought this chamber down, is being ambushed by a stunt of giving us all the papers and no time to do it, and that is highly regrettable because why wasn't we informed? Why wasn't I informed? I am Leader of the biggest party. We deserve at least to be consulted and involved in any arguments to the Government.

I think it is really sad that we have reached the kind of stage that we have today. As I said, I think, although Councillor Lyons had to go, but my predecessors, my own Councillor Lyons and other colleagues have all stood up and come out with very critical arguments against the Government. I know what Councillor Harris is saying. We have done it to our own Government consistently in this chamber about the Supertram, and we will do it again, and come the time when we have got a clear decision we will be in the position, hopefully, on an all-party basis, when everybody is treated as an equal - I don't know about Councillor Blackburn, whether you were involved in this last minute stunt here - but if we are trying to be serious and project ourselves as a united body, we need to move together, shoulder to shoulder, not the kind of thing that I have seen this afternoon. I think it is wrong.

Now, what we need is clarity of correspondence. You have all had the chance to read Councillor Harris's correspondence, and I have to say that the correspondence on 28th October was not the best piece of correspondence I have seen in the world. I will leave you to judge whether that is the right way to present an argument to anybody, any Minister and any Government, but I have also received correspondence - 27th October, since we are sharing, you have, Andrew; so have you, David - and it comes from Scott McPherson, civil servant, and I will read out some of the problems we have with clarity of correspondence and communications, which is why it is important, if you are trying to do it on an all-party basis, you meet and share communications and understanding and so on, but the first time I was aware of it is this: As is normal, the Private Secretary took a detailed note of the conversation which I have to say differs considerably from your recollection. This is, by the way, to Councillor Harris from the Department of Transport. And then it goes on, "On the contrary, Private Secretary said that a

meeting would not be helpful at this stage of the decision-making process. Aside from that, it would, of course, have been very odd indeed for a Private Secretary to a Junior Minister to offer a meeting on behalf of the Secretary of State", and clearly there are differences in views about what has been said and agreed.

Now, you know, we are moving away from the fundamentals. We are moving away from the agreement that we all had that everybody, all the major parties in this chamber, want to see Supertram in this City and have argued endlessly about the benefits and the need to ensure that the Leeds economy continues to grow and deliver the jobs that we said we would, being the capital of this region. Those arguments have been had time and time and time again, and as I say, we have all shared those, we have all put them to various Ministers.

What I didn't like, I have already said: I don't think it is right for this chamber to be demeaned by such behaviour. If there is a clarity of position which means that we have not got the Supertram, we will be as strong as you are, and probably stronger, in the criticism of Government in the treatment of Leeds, but what I hope we do from today, what I sincerely hope we do, is we don't see the behaviour that we have seen from the Leader of Council with a prominent position and that we continue to share with all parties and all partners the need for Supertram in this City. Thank you, my Lord Mayor. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR A. CARTER: My Lord Mayor, let me say at the outset I don't like unusual ways of presenting or debating business, and this is a very unusual way of presenting and debating business. Nevertheless, it is a very unusual set of circumstances.

The next time this Council meets a decision will have been taken by the Government on Supertram. I think that is certain. They will have made a decision, so we would meet either in a special Council meeting or at a normal Council meeting after the event, with the decision taken and publicised. That, I think, is the only reason that justifies this debate now today, and I want to make that very clear.

I also have to say that it was as much news to me as anybody else when I got these when I was passed them in the Council Chamber. I didn't know, and Councillor Harris knows I didn't know, that these were to be circulated. Nevertheless, it probably does aid the debate that you all see what has been written.

I don't intend to comment on private telephone conversations between Councillor Harris and Government Ministers. I wasn't there, I wasn't a party to them so I have no idea who said what to whom, and there is clearly a very great difference of view. However, what I do know is that Members of Parliament from this City met with, apparently, the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Transport and discussed these issues. The contents of that meeting have never

been reported back to me, so when Keith Wakefield says that he is upset that we seem to be departing from an all-party agreement, I think all of us could say that. In this last three weeks far too many things have happened that have seemed to me to be uni-lateral on the part of Members of Parliament, Members of Council or, indeed, members of the business community and, I'll tell you what, I think it is really, really damaging when you read the sort of headlines that we have seen over this past few weeks about investment into this City, because let me say this, and I don't say this to dilute the argument for Supertram at all, you all know my views on that. I do think that those people who are giving us the benefit of their views on the Armageddon scenario are talking out of the backs of their heads from wherever they come.

One thing I can promise this City as a leading member of this administration is that the Government can do its worst but we will do our best, and we will not see - we will not see - investment drained out of this City. We will not see alternatives properly brought together to improve the transport infrastructure. But, my goodness me, wouldn't it be better if the Government just gave us a decision, because there is nobody in this City - nobody - and nobody in this chamber who can possibly believe that it is right that a Government can shilly-shally and play about and let us all pick up rumours, and that is what they are doing. You all know how the Whitehall machine works; you can get a different story from anybody you speak to, but somebody somewhere down there knows the answer and the people of this City have a right to hear that answer, because this City will continue to prosper, it will continue to grow, and I hope that we don't have to have more debates like this. But I hope that you will all, in spite of the irregularities, be big enough to join us in condemning the Government for its lack of ability to take a decision on this major issue, because the publicity that is now generating is having a really damaging effect that some of us on all sides will have to work hard to put right. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Can I invoke 14.4 as a way of personal explanation?  
It might help the last debate. I mean, Andrew, there was not ---

THE LORD MAYOR: Wrong number but, yes, you can.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Sorry, I thought I saw you nod; it must have been  
you were dropping off. Sorry, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Changed my mind, Councillor Wakefield!

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: That means I am going to be ruled out every time  
now I stand up. The MPs have not reported back, Andrew, because (1) Fabian  
Hamilton was rushed into hospital with kidney stone problems over the weekend.  
He was one, and Hilary Benn was obviously out of the country during that time.  
But, as I say, just to emphasise, I have always thought, and we have said it before,  
that if the Government is wrong we will join in with you as strong and probably



stronger than you are in the criticism of the Government, and if there is any communications I will immediately, along with colleagues, share with you that information.

THE LORD MAYOR: Right, that's fine.

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: My Lord Mayor, it is not entirely clear what has changed in the last seven weeks or so since we had the last Council meeting, other than I suppose we are a bit nearer the buffers than we were last time. There have been other final deadlines; I remember the Director General of Metro appearing on television, so there was absolutely no doubt about what he said because he was on television. He claimed that if there wasn't a decision by Easter that the scheme would collapse, and then there were claims that if there wasn't a decision by September the scheme would collapse. Now there are claims that if there isn't a decision by November the scheme would collapse. So, you know, when really does the absolute final deadline come? It is a bit like Gracie Fields' absolute final last performance.

Certainly I have got to agree with Councillor Harris that a decision is long overdue. In fact, whether you believe Supertram is a good idea or not, the main problem, in my opinion, for several years has been the fact that there was no really firm decision. You know, there were indications of money offered but no lines were ever laid, no passengers were ever carried, no serious construction work was ever carried out other than I think a bit of foundation work on Hunslet Road.

There never really has seemed to be all that much push and energy behind actually getting the thing done, as opposed to producing reports and exchanging letters in the press and all the rest of it, and there is a general need to draw a line, and I think we could support Councillor Harris's motion if we can have an absolute assurance that no-one will even by inference or implication try to make out that that means that there is universal support for Supertram in this chamber. That kind of claim has been incorrectly and wrongly made in the past by people who should have known better.

I can remember sitting at a meeting of the Leeds Passenger Consultative Committee in April, I think it was, and Councillor Hyde, as he was then, claimed that there was unanimous support amongst Councillors for Supertram and, you know, he actually said that as he sat next to me. I mean, he was gracious enough to withdraw once the correction was put forward, but I think it does show that some of the debate is getting rather desperate.

There is a further deadline that we have got to look at beyond the compulsory purchase powers running out and that is the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan, for which there is an important deadline at the end of March 2006, and really we need to know what is happening in order to get a really firm transport plan in place. We don't want half-heated parallel versions one with Supertram and

the other one without, or somebody saying, "Well, we are going to back one horse, and it turning out that the other horse actually sneaks through on the finishing straight", or whatever you might say.

So in summary I think we can support this motion, but only if it is made abundantly clear to the Minister that that does not represent support for the Supertram project, and there is one final thing which I think Council Taxpayers might like to be aware of, and this is why I cleared the fact that we can comment on this correspondence, and that is that the City Council seems to be undertaking to underwrite any shortfall if the thing finishes up costing more than the £380 million that is now forecast, so in other words if the costs begin to spiral out of hand, as they often do on this kind of project, it will be the members of the public sitting in the public gallery, and the members of the public not sitting in the public gallery who will be the ones who pay for it, and I think that should be made abundantly clear.

But with those reservations I think, because a decision is obviously so urgently and importantly needed, that we probably can support the motion, but we will listen very carefully to what other people say.

COUNCILLOR D. BLACKBURN: Lord Mayor, just in answer to Councillor Leadley's comment there, I think we might be described as being at five minutes to midnight. I think we are that close, and we need an immediate decision. If the decision is "No", at least that allows us to move on and, you know, look to where we are going, but this City has been stuck in a straitjacket for too long with its public transport because of this situation and I think the Government owe it to us.

I went down with Councillor Carter, Councillor Harris and Councillor Wakefield to see the previous Transport Minister. Councillor Wakefield interestingly said that it was the most positive meeting he had been to, and then we had the General Election, change of Minister, everything changed. Well, you know, you can't work like this. I mean, these are long-term schemes and, you know, either we are going to get the resources to do it or we are not, and we can't faff about like we are doing. It is not a way to run anything, particularly when you are talking about the second largest city in the country, and I think we have waited long enough. We want a decision now. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR HARRIS: Let me first of all deal with Councillor Leadley's comments, and I will deal with the PFI costs first. It is correct that both the public and private sector have offered ways to the Government in which we will bridge what is an affordability gap. That is not unusual in PFI schemes. Every single school in this City has an affordability gap, a gap between the PFI cost that the Government will support and the final PFI bill. So we often get involved in underwriting affordability gaps and, indeed, that is what we have offered on this scheme.

However, the key - and I am no great fan of PFI - but if it has any benefits the great advantage to a PFI scheme is once the contract is signed and the PFI contractor takes the contract away it doesn't matter if the costs are triple, it is the liability of the contractor not us. So when we say we want £355 million from central Government in PFI credits, we will cover another £25 million, if the contractor then signs on the line and says, "Yes, that is the price at which I will deliver", it doesn't matter if it goes up to £700 million, that is their problem. So we are not underwriting an unlimited bill. That is the first thing.

Now, as regards an undertaking, I made it clear, irrespective of what we may think about the relative advantages or disadvantages of Supertram, the issue at hand is that we must have a decision, and I am seeking that Council supports that principle, that we cannot continue with indecision. Indecision is irresponsible, it is harmful, it is no way to run anything. So by supporting this Councillor Leadley and other Members of the Morley Independents, it will not be suggested that you have supported the principle of Supertram but only that a City as important as Leeds must have a final answer immediately on the future of public transport in this City. That is the issue in hand.

I now turn to what Councillor Wakefield said. We could swap insults all night if you wanted to, across the chamber. I know what correspondence you have had, because it is here, so you have seen what has been going on. We could talk for ever about who said what and who went where. It is not the issue in hand. Be critical of me if you want to. The day will come when I am no longer Leader of Council. A day will come when I have disappeared to ashes and it is an irrelevance. That is not the matter at hand, and do not - do not - hide behind a distraction or anger, feigned or otherwise, that the issue is what I have done. The issue here is what the Government has not done. That is the only issue. They will not allow us to plan the future of public transport for this City. They will not answer us about any substantive issue. It cannot continue. If it were my government, whoever's government it is, you cannot behave like this. It is just simply wrong. It is ill-mannered, it is bad government, it is dangerous, it is harmful to the City and let us speak with a single voice once and for all and say to them, "Give us the answer, 'Yes' or 'No'. Give us the answer and let us move on so that we can do the job that we have been put here to do", and that is to do the best possible thing for our City and now our City region. Let us speak with that single voice and tell the Government to make its mind up and let us continue. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: We now come to the vote on the motion in the name of Councillor Harris.

(The motion was carried unanimously)

#### ITEM 7 - RECOMMENDATIONS OF EXECUTIVE BOARD

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

COUNCILLOR A. CARTER: I second, my Lord Mayor.

(The motion was carried)

#### ITEM 8 - MINUTES

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

COUNCILLOR PROCTER: I second, Lord Mayor, and reserve the right to speak.

#### (a) Executive Board: (i) Central & Corporate

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Lord Mayor, it is just to raise concerns there are recurring concerns in terms of the LIFT project and fire safety. As colleagues will know, we will be debating a similar issue later on about fire safety in the Mental Health Trust. We are, or I am led to believe from the Fire Safety Officer who has been helping and assisting us with our particular enquiries that similar concerns may well exist in this particular project, and I just want us to be aware and sensitive to that and make sure that we are hitting higher safety standards than perhaps Leeds Mental Health Trust managed to hit. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR PRYKE: Lord Mayor, this is on No. 105, Leeds Benefit Service Annual Report. I commend to Council the Annual Report of Leeds Benefit Services, especially in the light of new figures on the take-up of Pension Credit which show that between 10,000 and 11,800 pensioners in Leeds are missing out on money that is rightfully theirs. It is a scandal that so many poorer older people are missing out on money they should be getting as of right and for Leeds this scandal represents a loss to the local economy of as much as £540,000 a year.

The establishment of a Joint Visiting Team with the Pension Service to provide a single claim process for older people wishing to claim Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit, Pension Credit, Attendance Allowance and Disability Care Allowance should help. Unfortunately, the Government is about to turn the screw on poorer people in Leeds. Mr. Blunkett has told people on Incapacity Benefit to "get on their bikes" to get off benefit and back into work. Remind you of anyone? Easy to say when you have Prime Ministerial carte blanche to make cock-up after cock-up and get away with it.

COUNCILLOR A. CARTER: For the moment.

COUNCILLOR PRYKE: Now, single parents on benefit in Leeds are to be interviewed twice as often and face a 20% reduction in payments of their already

meagre £56 benefit if they miss them. Sadly, DNA company directorships are not available to them.

I am pleased this Council can help people get benefits they are entitled to and to make a real difference. I only wish the Labour Government would help, too. In the short term, we should encourage everyone who is unsure about their entitlements on Pension Credit to ring the free Pension Service helpline. In the longer term, we need to provide pensioners with a decent pension that is not falling further and further below the poverty line each year. Thank you, Lord Mayor.  
(Applause)

### (ii) Development

COUNCILLOR ILLINGWORTH: Lord Mayor, I rise to speak on Minute 57, page 22 about the future of the Council's portfolio of small industrial units. Lord Mayor, I welcome this decision in principle but urge that the process should be very closely monitored by the relevant Scrutiny Board. I don't want this to delay matters but because these changes will benefit from greater public discussion and debate.

New investment is certainly required, Lord Mayor. The portfolio was recently surveyed. The total repair bill is £2.4 million or £85 per square metre. About 25% of the units are currently vacant with a significant number of unlettable voids and units on long term lease to other Council Departments. The Scrutiny Board should look at this.

There is a considerable variation in repair costs from one estate to the next. The most expensive is at £250 per square metre for Kirkstall Mills and the lowest is £18 per square metre at Barkston House, which is part of the Domestic Street complex. This raises the question of why the Council is investing in the Kirkstall Mills when on the face of things it could achieve a 14 times better return on investment in newer more suitable properties.

Refurbishment of the Domestic Street complex, that is Barkston House, Croyden House and Domestic Street itself, a particularly attractive proposition, Lord Mayor. These units account for half our total industrial floor space and has some of the lowest refurbishment costs in the City. It is important for Scrutiny to verify these figures. The property surveys did not adopt a consistent policy towards the Disability Discrimination Act or towards long-term maintenance. At Abbey Mills, for example, both of these costs were included in the estimates but at other units the DDA was either ignored or considered to be a tenant's responsibility. At the Ida's, near Stourton, no provision has been made for long-term costs, although the surveyors commented that major repairs will be needed in 10 years time.

Lord Mayor, the devil is in the detail. One of my reasons for urging a greater role for the Scrutiny Boards is that detailed examination of recent reports

and (inaudible) on the Department shows up all manner of inconsistencies right across the City. Some Members will already be aware that Kirkstall Councillors recently uncovered some major mistakes in the highway proposals to Abbey Mills, which has opened up a 13 ft. error in the road alignment with a cycle track through the middle of a resident's front room. What disturbs us is not that mistakes occur but the extreme reluctance to acknowledge this error when it was pointed out. Officers claimed that the official maps were wrong, and it was not until the Ordnance Survey had remeasured the area that the Council admitted a mistake.

This is not the only error in relation to small industrial units. Last December the Executive Board received a discounted cash flow analysis requested by Councillor Carter on the costs and benefits of investment in Kirkstall Mills. These figures were allegedly checked by internal audit enquiry. Lord Mayor, subsequent investigations revealed that not only was the raw data copied incorrectly for this analysis and there was a serious catastrophic arithmetic error in the calculations - a credit entered as a debit and vice versa - and one property was under-valued to the point where it promised a 70% annual rate of return on capital invested, but also, Lord Mayor, having created this dog's breakfast of a financial appraisal, the results were incorrectly transcribed back into the published report. The effect, Lord Mayor, was that every single figure in the final report last December was actually wrong, but the Council has taken major investment decisions on the basis of this misinformation.

I will be concerned, Lord Mayor, if these mistakes and discrepancies were confined to Kirkstall Ward, but they are not. Detailed study of the rental income and repair costs of industrial units across the City throws up all manner of questions. We are talking here of property worth upwards of £10 million. We owe it to our citizens to achieve best value for money and to look after these assets very carefully. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR KENDAL: My Lord Mayor, in view of the previous debate, this is quite a minor matter, but we do have to try. Plans are afoot for a high-occupancy vehicle lane on Roundhay Road to share the existing bus lane. For those who know the area, this means it will run from roughly opposite the Fortune River Chinese Restaurant to the Fforde Green junction.

Experience with the bus lane on Stanningley Road makes it worthwhile expanding this scheme. The figures are good, 7% increase in car occupancy and a reduction in journey times of two and a half minutes for vehicles with more than one occupant as well as for buses. The fact is that Roundhay Road is a busy route into the city centre and it needs all the help it can get to keep traffic flowing.

This initiative will make the buses more attractive to passengers and cut down the number of single-occupancy vehicles travelling into the City. It will make sense to share if possible and cut down journey times. This can only be good for the environment. The benefit of reduced fumes from standing traffic will impact on

general health as well. In these days of world-wide weather disasters caused to some extent it is said by global warming, the HOV lane on Roundhay Road will contribute in some small way to acknowledging and reducing pollution.

My fellow Councillors and I are pleased to note that the design work can be done in house with modest cost for the feasibility exercise. This is in line with this administration's approach to sensible economy. Main funding will be from the Integrated Transport Scheme in the 2005/2006 Capital Programme.

We look forward to the implementation of this cost-effective scheme. It will mean minimum disruption to the area and it will bring significant benefits to a part of our ward and to those who travel through it, and I commend it to you.  
(Applause)

COUNCILLOR DUNN: Lord Mayor, I wish to speak on minute 62 on page 23. This land at Copley Lane is an allotment site with a small meadow strip running through it that used to have a railway line, so consequently that piece with the railway line in was classed as brown field. The developer came along and bought the access to it, thinking that he would hold this Council to ransom and try and force or induce the plot-holders to sell up and move on.

This plot of land is in a highly developed area. In fact, that particular point has reached saturation point. There are no amenities, over-subscribed schools and there is very little green space left. Some of these plots have been handed down from family to family and they have stood up and been counted along with the residents to fend off this developer, and I applaud this decision by the Executive to reject this developer's proposals, and I look forward to this piece of land being put permanently classed as green space and taken out of the UDP. Thank you, my Lord Mayor. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: I speak on the same minute, the land at Copley Lane. I would just like to comment as Chair of the Allotments Working Party for the City. I think the reason why the Executive Board was able to come to such an informed decision on this particular piece of land is because of the work that the new administration has done with Council and associated allotment owners over the time that we have been here, because I think they appreciate a new focus that we have been able to give them. We have obviously found an extra £50,000 in terms of funding to ensure that we can start to regenerate some land plots in the City but, more importantly, when it comes to issues such as this, we have been able to form a relationship with bodies such as the Leeds & District Gardeners Federation to ensure that when we do get contentious issues like this coming up that they are secure in the knowledge that they will be consulted and that at the end of the day it is consultation with not just local associations but also with local plot-holders that will inform the information that gets sent to the Executive Board so that these decisions can be taken on a much more informed basis, and through the example of the Copley Lane development we have a much closer working relationship with

the Asset Management Team and also with Parks & Countryside so that Ward Members of course get involved at a very early stage, but also, more importantly, Leeds & District Gardeners Federation and local plot-holders, and we can look forward to keeping our green areas in those areas where they are needed the most, thanks to this decision.

But also it has also given us a hint of realism in our relationship for allotments in the City, Lord Mayor, because there are some areas of high demand and there are some areas of low demand and we have a responsibility as a Council to make sure in those areas of high demand that we are able to produce new plots, and that might come with the co-operation of other plot sites elsewhere where a capital receipt from the reduction of that site would actually help to produce plots in other areas. But that is only done on the relationship we have built up on trust which is based on the fact that this Council is committed to maintaining the number of sites and plots in the City. In fact, if nothing else, we would like to increase them. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Just to support my ward colleague, Councillor Dunn, earlier. The three Ardsley and Robin Hood Councillors did consult widely both with the local residents around Copley Lane and my colleague also spoke with the allotment-holders directly and their federation.

We are delighted with the outcome on this occasion and we do look forward to the defence of green spaces across our ward in particular but, of course, across the rest of the City as well, and also the encouragement of people to take up the opportunities presented through the allotments that this Council holds to gain some fresh air and physical exercise, particularly for those who are old and retired, and also to take up opportunities for inter-generational working which we are hoping we can expand in our ward for young people to gain some of the skills that some of our older residents have and pass it on through the generations. Thank you. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR MINKIN: My comments are on Minute 109, page 37 on the Local Development Frameworks, Draft Statement of Community Involvement.

Councillor Andrew Carter has, I am sure, been briefed by Officers on the most serious and unfortunate mistake made last December and only discovered by me on 2nd September this year whereby an Officer granted planning permission to an application for a detached house in a garden in Kirkstall, despite Councillor Illingworth's objections and request for a site visit before Members take the decision, and my own letter expressing some concerns and asking to be kept informed.

I have accepted now, and I hope with reasonably good grace, though it wasn't that easy, that this was a genuine mistake, and I am glad that the Department has undertaken steps to hopefully prevent it ever happening again.



At this stage I do want to stress I have always had confidence in the officers of the Development Department and have obviously for many years worked very closely with them, and I do acknowledge that there was a thorough investigation carried out into this matter and the seriousness of it was acknowledged. But it has made me re-read this Draft Statement of Community Involvement with new consciousness of the possible culture amongst some Officers too often not understanding the prime role of Members, and I think we need to look in particular at the section on determining planning applications. It is very light. The only mention that has anything to do with us is "Member liaison". That's it, two words.

However, I am also very pleased to note - I received the letter this morning - that there will be a seminar on understanding planning procedure and policy on Thursday, 24th November, and I do hope indeed that there will be a good turn-out from Members, particularly as it says to those who don't sit on plans panels.

However, I would ask Councillor Carter to assure us that he will personally oversee the implementation of the promised new procedures and that the Strategic Review which we will all look forward to will include close examination of these issues. Thank you. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR A. CARTER: My Lord Mayor, if I could first of all thank Councillor Kendal for her very welcome comments about the Roundhay Road High Occupancy Vehicle lane. We intend to try and move forward with speed with this proposal. We are also as a department, in view of the interest expressed by other Members, looking at other bus routes which might lend themselves to be converted into High Occupancy Vehicle lanes as well.

The message is very clear. We want to keep all forms of traffic moving freely, to reduce congestion and to speed times of getting into and out of the city centre.

Councillor Dunn and Councillor Mulherin and this issue of Copley Lane and Matty Lane. I will be a little careful what I say because you probably know we are likely to be challenged about our decision-making process on this piece of land. I am entirely happy that we took everything into consideration. Councillor Golton has made the point about allotments. Let me reiterate it. As an administration we regard allotment land as being very important. It is not just allotment land that is currently entirely occupied, it is allotment land that can be improved so people are encouraged to take up allotment gardening. That is why, for the first time in many years, we put, I think, £100,000 into the security of allotments, and I hope we shall be able to make further investment in the future.

So I am very pleased that you are happy with the decision. We took the representations very seriously, as we always do.

Councillor Minkin, yes, I am more than happy to say to you that I will look

very carefully at the mechanisms of community involvement. I am aware of the case in Kirkstall which you are quite right was a very difficult one and the way that things were progressed put us in a position where there was little we could do except what we ultimately did. But it wasn't very satisfactory.

There have been a number of cases in connection with community involvement, some of which I inherited, some of which I regret to say have happened since this administration took over, which I would like to have seen handled better. It is the nature of the beast. One thing we are looking at in the Strategic Review of Planning is how the Neighbour Notification Scheme works and whether it is wide enough, because one issue I have picked up is that if it is the Council or an affiliated body that is building something adjacent to residential houses, the Neighbour Notification Scheme that you brought in doesn't apply, and that is a ludicrous situation and it has to be altered and Officers are looking at that now.

So, yes, through the Development Plan and through the Strategic Review of Planning we will look very carefully at community involvement but also Elected Member involvement.

Now Councillor Illingworth. Serious and catastrophic. That is Councillor Illingworth. Can I just say, John, I really wish you had taken the interest in the state of the property portfolio of the local authority for the 24 years your Party was in power.

MEMBERS OF COUNCIL: He did!

COUNCILLOR A. CARTER: He did? Well, can I say that I will take as much notice of you as they did. No, that would be unkind. John, I will always listen to you.

I have in front of me the breakdown of repairs. This is what we inherited. This is just the industrial and commercial property portfolio. We have a total of £2.7 million backlog maintenance to our commercial and industrial portfolio. This Authority hasn't got a hope in hell of finding that money on its own, so I am glad at least that you recognise that the way forward is to find a private partner.

Now, let me underline, I made it very clear at the Executive Board this is not the sale of the freehold. I would be extremely concerned and I would not be in favour of the sale of the freehold of this portfolio because I think in years to come, because of government policies, because of your Government's policies, we will need to hang on to this land to make sure there is local employment opportunities around the City and the City Council has a major role to play in that. But we do need to find a private partner if we are to bring the buildings back up to scratch and encourage people to want to be tenants of these buildings.

I find it very difficult, my Lord Mayor, sometimes when I hear Members

opposite because you would think that we had been in power for years and years and years, although we may well be, because we have Councillor Atha, the man who left behind him, amongst other things, £50 million worth of backlog maintenance in our leisure centres. We have the various people who were in charge of Highways who left £60 million backlog in highway maintenance ---

COUNCILLOR ATHA: I left more than that!

COUNCILLOR A. CARTER: And so it rolls on, and John, even in this relatively small area you lot managed to leave £2.7 million backlog maintenance. These are the tabs you left, we are picking up on behalf of the Council Taxpayers. So when you go on about we are spending money here, there and everywhere, just remember what you never said for 20-odd years, and if you don't want to remember, I will continue to remind you. (Applause)

#### (iv) neighbourhoods & housing

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Lord Mayor, I would like to move reference back with my colleagues largely because, for those people who weren't aware of the debate, this is about how we view tenants in our City, how we treat them, how we relate them, how we trust them, and about a democratic right.

Now, let me make it absolutely clear that I have no objections, and neither does my Group, about the need to review ALMOs in terms of the viability and indeed in terms of saving monies through efficiency savings so that it can go back to the tenants. There is no problem with that, absolutely no problem. We would welcome to join in with that debate and discussion, but before we move anywhere near that position we should establish a principle that is important, and that is the right for tenants to have a ballot on the future of their homes and the future of their organisations.

I say that, Les, not because ALMOs have got two stars and they have improved their performance, and that is evidenced; not because ALMOs have got £350 million extra into the City plus so that now we see Council houses having the kind of investment that was neglected for too long under the Tory Government, if you remember; and not because I genuinely believe that tenants now have some more ownership and involvement in their community. It is not huge, there is a long way to go, but we have certainly seen evidence that tenants now have far more ownership about the homes they live in and the communities they share with other people.

Now, if we don't involve them I think it is an actual betrayal of the history of ALMOs. If you remember, three years ago we set up ALMOs - or Plus, isn't it, Richard? - with a ballot of 82% of tenants and all the Party Leaders stood in this

chamber and honoured that ballot and said that we believed that the tenants had a right to choose then and I believe that they have a right to choose now, and I tell you there is a quote here that is probably worth listening to. Councillor Harris, about a ballot in PFI in Little London. Do you remember that debate, that we had a ballot there, we didn't have to have a ballot but we had a ballot and tenants voted, and it was on investment and indeed ownership under PFI, and Councillor Harris said the thought of losing millions of pounds of investment was unpleasant but the sanctity of the ballot result should be observed.

Now, really, Les, he is your leader and what you have to do is accept ---

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: Since when?

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Was he right then or was he wrong? Do you accept (Interruptions) No, this is the Council Leader. He is your leader, Les. He said it.

Now, should you accept what he said then? Because every party now bangs on about the right to empower tenants, to engage tenants, to give them trust, to build up social capital, make sure they have got more confidence in the community, take greater responsibility. Every party is saying that, it is called Localism, and here we have a choice of saying to tenants, "It is your homes, it is your lives, it is your communities and you deserve a say in the future of your homes and their ownership, whatever changes", and if we don't, I think actually we are treating tenants as second-class citizens.

I think now, Les, is your time to agree with your leader now to actually honour that pledge about respecting people's right to have a say in how their homes are organised, and actually show that the Council is right behind tenants in having a ballot on the future of their homes. I move, Lord Mayor. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR R. LEWIS: Lord Mayor, in seconding that, I would just like to say that if we look back at the debate on the setting up of the ALMOs we were very much constrained by what the Audit Commission was saying at the time, by what the Government was saying at the time. I have to say, you know, circumstances have changed since then. We have seen ALMOs that have been set up that are much larger than the ones that we have. It is only right to look at whatever we have and say, "Could you do it in a better way?" But the important thing is do you have a ballot over it?

If you look back at the past 25 years of Council housing you will have seen a real change. One of the last things that the Labour Government did back in 1979 was to change it so that people had security of tenure as Council tenants. Up until then you didn't have. Les reminded me of that the other day when he was talking about a former Chair of Housing saying to a tenant, "And if you don't shut up, we will have you out of your house", which is what they could do prior to '79.

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: 30 years ago, under Labour.

COUNCILLOR R. LEWIS: Yes. You could do that prior to '79. Things have changed since then. We have seen tenants being given more and more say. They have become less and less marginalised. We have seen real battles over what say Council tenants should have, and you saw the infamous, "Pick a landlord" scheme where the Conservatives came up with a very kind of novel view of arithmetic where if you didn't vote for a new landlord -- no, if you didn't vote against a new landlord you were considered to have voted for a new landlord, which is a kind of novel view of democracy.

You saw the Housing Action Trusts. You saw whole kind of battles about how much say tenants should have, and into the '90s I think you saw a real consensus, and that came from all parties, that tenants should be far more involved in decision-making, and it was quite painful, I think, both at a local and national level. You have seen tenant compacts being established. You have seen a real movement to say that tenants' views should be an established part of the process of running Council homes.

Now, where did we go? We got to the point where we said we looked at the situation, we wanted to set up ALMOs and we wanted to go local. We didn't say, "Well, we will take it on trust", as some places did, "We will consult the usual suspects and we will just get on with it." We trusted people. We gave people the vote as to whether they would have ALMOs, whether they would go local and have more local organisations or not. And I think probably the ones of us who were about at that time were sweating a bit, you know. We had campaigns against the whole principle but we thought, "No, we are going to go for this." We trusted people and we got resounding results across the City in favour of ALMOs.

Now, once you have done that, one you have given people that say, once you have allowed them to have a vote on something, you can't then say, "Well, we are going to play around with this arrangement but you are not going to have a proper say then." Just say, for example, at the most extreme, you go back to one organisation, one ALMO City-wide. That would be a huge change in terms of localism, in terms of how those organisations work, because over those 3 or 4 years they have been going they have all changed. They have all changed the way that they deliver services. Leeds North-East ALMO doesn't deliver services in the way that Leeds West ALMO does. It is not simply a matter of putting six pieces of a jigsaw back together. There has been real cultural change between the different organisations, so there is a big decision there for tenants as to quite how they feel about this. You are only doing justice to them if you allow them to have a vote on this.

I say that as somebody who does not believe that every time you have a difficult decision that you put that out to a vote. I have often been somebody who has argued that, you know, on issues like demolition, you shouldn't vote, you

shouldn't give people the deciding power on those issues. You have, as a landlord, not to cop out; you have landlord decisions. This is not a landlord decision. This is a decision about the future of Council housing in this City. It has to go to the tenants and they have to be given a vote, or else you are betraying them. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: My Lord Mayor, may I just bring up one or two points on this question of leaders and no leaders. Councillor Harris is the Leader of this Council and acknowledged as the Leader of this Council.

COUNCILLOR TAGGART: Only for a few weeks.

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: He will be Leader again in 6 months time following that, but he is Leader of this Council at the present time. But it is acknowledged, he is not my Party Leader because we are not a coalition; we are a joint administration. My Party Leader sits next to me. We are a joint administration. (Interruptions)

Now, the views that Councillor Harris - as has been read - that he has expressed are very important, the ones he has expressed in the past on the question of the need for votes. To start with what neither of the two Councillors have said is this question was asked in Policy -- sorry, in Executive Board. The question was asked, "Would you be prepared to support the ballot?" and I said I wouldn't rule it out, it is something that should be considered and will be considered when the options come back. Now, for some reason - for some reason - both Councillor Wakefield and his other Members didn't accept it, but that is what was said in Executive, and I challenge him - I will sit down and challenge him to say it wasn't said. That is exactly the words I said to him at that particular time.

Now, you may be pushing against an open door which is flying round, to be quite honest, but my amendment is no different to yours. But let me just put one thing to you. This is what I have got to be certain of before we say there is a ballot. There are serious financial problems in the future for ALMOs, and if you don't accept that then you don't understand it. You do not understand it. There are serious financial problems. In 2 years time, 3 years time, some £8 million is going to be chopped off their budgets, not by me but by Government in supplementary credits - £8 million. There are other areas which may cause enormous problems.

Now, if when this review is done somebody can sit down and say these companies are still going to be viable companies, then I have something to say to people, this is what you want to go for. If they are not viable companies, what the heck is the point of a vote? You are not listening. What is the point of a vote if these are not viable companies? It would be grossly irresponsible of this Council to say, "Yes, have a vote", to vote for something which may not even be viable.

So what I said in Executive Board, and I still believe it is right and proper, is that when the papers come forward, when the options come forward, when we know what the costings are, when we know what the future of ALMOs are insofar as finance is concerned and the problems we have there, that is the time we can say, "Let's take the decision".

But there is one thing which does worry me about Councillor Wakefield pushing for voting. He knows that if I sit here now, no vote whatsoever, there can be no stock transfer. Now, I am not certain what they want over there. It may well be that Labour want stock transfer. (Interruptions) It may well be that is exactly --- it is alright laughing, that's exactly where your own Government is coming from, and it may be you are the same (Interruptions) However, just to come back onto the question of vote. The resolution which I have put down today is no different to yours. It is to ask the Executive, when the report comes back, to look at the possibility of having a vote, because it acknowledges that I will ask for that to be done.

I am asking for Council to support that, and I think I deserve that support because we are going to look also at all the other problems which are going to occur. It is not going to be looked at in isolation. It is an extremely complex future as far as ALMOs are concerned, an extremely complex debate that has got to take place, but if it isn't right --- I'll tell you what is going to happen if it isn't right: Millions and millions of pounds which should be going to householders, to the people who we are supposed to be looking after, it will not go, it will not in administration. It will go in administration. They will have their homes, their repairs actually not dealt with because it will go in administration.

So, yes, as far as I am concerned that will be on the table, it will be there at the Executive Board when the options are coming forward. I have no doubt, as you have heard, you have quoted Mark Harris who is the Leader of the Liberal Group, Leader of the Council at the present time. He is saying that he likes voting on these things. It may well be that we say exactly the same. There is no argument about that and it could well be a unanimous decision of Council, but just wait. Why are you pushing this now? And I think I know why you are pushing it now. You are trying to build a campaign up, which is not going to work, that we won't accept giving tenants a choice. Well, I can assure you we will give them a choice. It will be a choice better than you have ever given them because it will be a choice for the future for their homes to be repaired and the money not to be wasted. Thank you, my Lord Mayor. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR PROCTER: Second, Lord Mayor. Reserve the right to speak.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Lord Mayor, we haven't really any problems with either of these amendments. We guarantee tenants a ballot on any final decisions that are actually made, but to a degree the concern that we have is the fact that although the ALMOs are working well we are in a situation where we are going

through a particular review at this point, and we are in a situation where we are going through this particular review because more and more Council houses are being sold. We are ultimately drifting towards a target where we will hit the 50,000 mark in terms of the Council houses that we actually own, and until we address the issues of what we are going to do about that, we shall be back in another 3 or 4 years time looking at reviewing ALMOs yet again to see what can be done about 40,000 or 30,000, and we are going to get it to a point where we are going to have severe and significant problems. We have a waiting list that is climbing. We have a waiting list that we can't even at this particular point start to satisfy unless we deal with the issue of Right to Buy and look at what we are going to do about that, we are going to be in a further review in years to come. We are not in a sustainable position at this particular point.

Ultimately, we are comfortable with either of these particular amendments. We would guarantee tenants a ballot on any future directions that the ALMOs are actually going in. We don't think there is anything to be afraid of in terms of the democratic process and as far as we are concerned either of these particular amendments hopefully offer that opportunity.

COUNCILLOR D. BLACKBURN: My Lord Mayor, it seems a bit silly to me to be saying we are going to have a vote on something but we don't know yet what it is going to be. This is a review. It may be the review comes up with what we have got now. I think it is unlikely to do as ---

COUNCILLOR ATHA: Are you in favour or not, though?

COUNCILLOR D. BLACKBURN: It is unlikely to do, but if we are not changing anything there would be not any need for a vote. We would support a vote if there is some significant change but as of yet no change has been made. So Councillor Les Carter has said quite clearly in his statement that that will be considered at the time, and I am quite satisfied with that situation. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR ATHA: So you are not saying you believe in public consultation.

COUNCILLOR HARRIS: Forgive me, Lord Mayor, but on reflection better that what has to be said is said in this particular debate rather than when I wind up at the end, so let us be clear, just so we satisfy any misunderstanding over there. I take responsibility for this administration for so long as I am Leader or Deputy Leader. I accept corporate responsibility. I accept responsibility for what I say and what I do, and I will accept responsibility for what Les Carter says and does, and that is the way it will be.

Now, on the question of a ballot, as usual it is always dangerous when you bring something out of context in an effort to illustrate the argument without dealing with the context in which the point was originally made, so let us be clear. That particular debate was not about the sanctity of having to have a ballot; it was



about the sanctity of the ballot once it has been held. That is the quotation that you are using of mine over the PFI debate on Little London, so let us be clear what the situation was then. You set the terms of the ballot of the PFI project in Little London and you went ahead with it, and you got an answer that said, "No". The residents of Little London said "No", and so you then changed the terms of reference in order to gerrymander the result of the ballot in order to get the "Yes" that you wanted. It was in that context that I said that the sanctity of the ballot that had taken place had to be respected, even though it was unpalatable that we may lose millions of pounds of investment in this City.

I did not say in that particular debate that a ballot must be held no matter what on all issues, so there is the clarification on that particular extract that you have taken out of context from several years ago. However, let me tell you I do believe in such ballots and if it is of any help to you I will argue forcibly within the Cabinet that we should hold such a ballot if it is necessary.

COUNCILLOR ATHA: But you are the Leader.

COUNCILLOR HARRIS: No, let us be clear here, in a Cabinet situation you have a situation where the Cabinet discusses things and it takes corporate responsibility and it is then my responsibility or Andrew's responsibility when it is his turn as Leader to put that matter as the figurehead, as Leader of Council, but we take things that are corporate responsibility as a Cabinet and that is how it should be and that is how it will be, and it may be necessary for us to have a ballot. My preference would be for a ballot if indeed there are to be substantial major changes. We will have that discussion and when we come here on the decision of the Cabinet that is what we will then debate, but do not quote me out of context because if we go down that road we could all start getting the verbatim minutes out and, believe me, because this is the history of things, because you were in control for 24 years, you did far more speaking than anybody else, so there are far bigger verbatim minutes to bring out of the cupboard on what you said compared to what we have ever said.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Lord Mayor, I think one thing we can all agree on is that for us as Members to have to put down two amendments simply to get the Executive Board to reconsider the minutes seems an excessive way, a bureaucratic way of having to deal with this item.

The effect of Councillor Wakefield's amendment is to bring back to the Executive Board a reconsideration of whether or not - and we believe it should happen - tenants will be balloted. Not today, not tomorrow, but an understanding, an unequivocal undertaking, is given that when the choices are available they will be given the right to ballot. That is what we want. We are very clear about that, and there seem to be three different versions at least amongst people on that side.

The J. L. Carter amendment is very interesting, because what he actually

says is, and read it carefully colleagues, "to note the undertaking by the Executive Board Member for Neighbourhoods and Housing to consider the need for a ballot."

So what we are seeing here is, it is not the Executive Board, it is not you, it is not me; it all hinges on whether J. L. Carter decides there should be a need for a ballot or J. L. Carter decides there should not be a need for a ballot. J. L. Carter is the person named in here. Now, that is what it says in writing, "The Executive Board Member for Neighbourhoods and Housing to consider the need for a ballot."

We then heard at the Whips, well, actually Les Carter said there would be a ballot. You know, he said, "Yes, I am in favour of a ballot", one of these throw-away lines that other people who were at the Executive Board - and I wasn't - didn't pick up. It certainly isn't in the minutes that J. L. Carter or anybody else has said there will be a ballot. The version I have heard is that J. L. Carter was very uncomfortable and his body language was very uncomfortable about the very fact there should be a ballot for tenants. It is the last thing the Tories want is to consider a ballot for tenants. Nothing new there, and amazing silence from all the ranks of the LibDems here, all stony-faced. Do you believe in the sanctity of tenants in tenants' relationship with the Council and with the ALMOs having a right to be balloted? Not a grace and favour by J. L. Carter, "Yes, yes, I believe you can have a ballot". Is it not the right of tenants to have a ballot and a say?

And what Officers are saying, when Officers are going round to the ALMOs, what they are briefing on is, "We don't have to have a ballot." They are saying clearly, loudly, unambiguously, "There is no need for us. We have been to ODPM and they have told us we don't have to ballot." The impression is being given up and down this City there will not be a ballot, and this amendment not by me - I haven't spoken on the issue yet, but I will, but I will speak on the issue - and the fact is this amendment I think borders on someone believing that an individual Member, who happens to be yet another Carter - it was the other Carter last time, it is this Carter this time - who believes that they have the power to take individual decisions, and that is what J. L. Carter is saying: "I can decide whether or not tenants will get a ballot", and that is entirely wrong.

I also understand that there is some debate amongst some ALMOs certainly on legal advice they have received about the exercise that has been set up and the terms of reference and how the exercise has been set up, but that will be for another day, as will be the debate about finances, Les, and the arguments you have made which are well understood on this side - well understood.

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: Are you sure?

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Well understood. The point today is not about finances, it is not about other issues; it is about whether or not we are in favour or you are in favour of tenants being given a say through a ballot, and that's it.

COUNCILLOR DOWSON: I was not elected by the ODPM. I wasn't elected by

the ALMOs. I was elected by the people I represent, the people of Leeds, the people who live in some of the council houses we are talking about, and I really am so angry. This is me angry because I can't get over the arrogance of us sitting here discussing this like we are.

COUNCILLOR D. BLACKBURN: We haven't changed owt yet.

COUNCILLOR DOWSON: It is the debate. It is the debate. We are hearing different messages. We are hearing Councillor Carter say one thing and Councillor Harris saying something completely different, and you are the ruling group, and I would like to know who you think you are. Do you really think that you know better than the tenants? You need to give them the information to make a rational decision. Do you think council house tenants are stupid? Do you think they can't be trusted to make decisions about their own homes? Perhaps you think, like Councillor Carter, that they can't look after their finances.

You are talking about people who look after their homes, who pay their bills, who feed their families on less than a lot of us pay to go out for an evening meal. They don't understand. They have no stake in their community and their future if we don't allow them to vote on their homes.

One of the differences between being a council tenant and a private tenant is you feel you have a stake in your own home because in effect you own your own home because you are a tenant of this City. How wrong they are. We have a duty to consult on the most fundamental of human needs, and next time - next time you stand in front of a residents' and a tenants' group where people are actually living in council houses, you stand in front of them, if you make that decision, and tell them that you don't feel that they are informed or clever enough to decide on their own homes. (Interruptions) To these people a council property is not just a house, it is their home. You don't want to give them a choice. You want to tell them what you want. Trust them and let them have a ballot. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR A. CARTER: My Lord Mayor, you just heard a display of why the Labour Party are sitting in opposition and are wholly unfit to govern the City. I am astonished, and I address these comments to Councillor Lewis. Your Leader appears to have allowed Councillor Gruen to take over most of his duties. I hope you aren't going to make the same mistake with the housing portfolio. Our tenants deserve a lot better than the man who contributed to us losing our Education functions.

My Lord Mayor, what we are proposing is a review of the ALMOs. Why are we proposing a review? Because there are serious concerns about the current structure of ALMOs being financially viable. If they are not financially viable it is the tenants of this City or the former staff of this local authority who will suffer - one or the other, or a mixture of both - and this administration is not prepared for that to happen.

We know we have to discuss the structure that you put in place because your director should know and your chairmen should certainly know, and if they don't they are unfit to be chairmen of ALMOs, that the financial indicators all show there is going to be a serious problem, so we are having a review.

When the Officers come back with some proposals, we shall take a decision on whether those proposals are so significant that they warrant a ballot, and if indeed (Interruptions) Well, stop laughing. No, we, we, we - I am afraid, Peter, it is the administration of which you are not a Member - and we will come back to the Executive Board of the Authority with a proposal. But I tell you this, and I agree with Councillor Harris; if what we are proposing is a substantial change, then I will also support a ballot, and so get this right before you start doing what we all know you are going to do, scaring the tenants. You have become so desperate, you are so frightened of the next local elections, you are so sure you are heading for a massive thumping, which you most certainly are, you are prepared to scrape -- you in particular, Councillor Gruen, are prepared to scrape any barrel, get into any gutter, climb through any sewer, just to rake up rubbish. (Interruptions)

THE LORD MAYOR: If you would let Councillor Carter finish, please. Councillor McKenna, Councillor Gruen, please let him finish.

COUNCILLOR A. CARTER: So, my Lord Mayor, let us be crystal clear. If the review indicates a substantial change from what is currently the case, of course the tenants will ballot. Of course they will. You are the ones --- I mean, this is what really sticks in our throat, Brian, isn't it? These are the Little London culprits. The little London culprits. You wanted to foist off a PFI on the tenants there without a ballot. You were dragged kicking and screaming to a ballot. Don't lecture us about democracy. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR HANLEY: My Lord Mayor, I wonder if I could just bring one or two other points into this debate and, of course, I regard it as being a very serious issue because I Chair the Leeds (West) Homes Board. We have many concerns ---

MEMBERS OF COUNCIL: We can't hear you.

COUNCILLOR HANLEY: We have many concerns, and in particular the staff at this particular moment in time are greatly on my mind. We are going through a process in this particular year when the amount we are trying to spend in our Capital Programme is very significant. Our staff are diligent, they are hard-working, they are loyal but they are coming to me and asking me about the future of their jobs and I have to say to them, as the Chair, that unfortunately I don't know the answers because I have not been consulted.

We have had a 10 minute sort of visit from one of the Officers from the

Housing Department. He didn't get the best of receptions from our Board but that is about it. We have had no consultation at all. Now, several Members of my Board have asked me to test the legality of what is going on.

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: I'm sorry, say again?

COUNCILLOR HANLEY: Several Members of my Board have asked me to test the legality of what you are doing. Now, I am delighted to hear that Councillor Harris has said he will be responsible in every way. I hope he is, because what I am advised at this moment in time is that you are not working within the framework of the agreement that exists between us. The Articles of Association and Memoranda are totally clear. You have not consulted my board of directors and you certainly have not consulted me, and I do sincerely hope that the courtesy of a reply from the Director of Housing will be made to a letter I wrote to him a couple of weeks ago.

So if we think about the staff, they are extremely concerned about their jobs in the future. We are not being consulted. The issue of Board Members and being kept in the dark, the consultation, Lord Mayor, the consultation should be with the Boards. It should be with the people who are actually in charge of the ALMOs and we should not be kept in the dark the way we have been.

We are very concerned. I am told that a consultant has been appointed. I have not been told officially but I understand that considerable sums of money, whether it is tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands, is being spent on this review. We would like to know what is going on and I would like you to tell us soon the information I need to put my staff's minds at rest. We have a duty to do that, and I hope we can then go forward and carry on and boost the ALMOs and do the job that we are there to do.

This is a review that may be wanted, I do not know, but we are not consulted and I have grave concerns that what you are doing is not within the framework of the agreements that exist between us. Thank you, Lord Mayor.  
(Applause)

COUNCILLOR ATHA: I will be very brief. (1) I think we ought to point out to our own colleagues that whenever your side is in a mess up gets Andrew Carter and gets abusive, and I would ask you, Andrew, next time, and we don't mind abuse because, quite frankly we have known each other a long time and there is a good deal of give and take and knock-about, but if you read that short spell when you talked about us crawling through the gutter and crawling through a sewer-pipe or whatever, it gets to the point where, quite frankly, it goes just beyond that level which we have tolerated because it has been good fun. So the abuse is unnecessary.

The second point I would make is what you said. You could have amended this amendment, you could have amended it by simply putting in one word, and

that would then have matched what you said you were in favour of, but you didn't do that. You have to stand by what you as a Deputy Leader or your Leader has said in this particular amendment, and that is it gives to one Member the right to make a decision.

Now I thought under our constitution, and the lawyers are there sitting there, I understood that under our constitution one Member of Council is not legally empowered to make that decision. That is what the position says, and two nods from over there, Andrew, will show you just how wrong your amendment is.

And we come to Councillor Blackburn. I don't wish to be offensive, but it does really mean to us politically that what we have are two fairly significant figures and one that will roll after them and do as they are told. It is rather like a dog, "Stand, sit". It won't do because you come from a background which is sufficiently independent for you to say to your colleagues, "I don't know what my Leader is saying there, or my Deputy leader is saying there, but I do believe in going to the people who are most concerned and asking them their opinion", because that is all that Councillor Wakefield is asking for, that the people most concerned should have the right to express a view ---

COUNCILLOR D. BLACKBURN: When you don't know what we are talking about? Do you want a ballot to stop as we are?

COUNCILLOR ATHA: Don't get excited. It is bad for you. I have told you. If you are feeling guilty, I am not surprised. If you are feeling guilty I am pleased because it shows you have a conscience. What I would like to see is you back your principles with a vote. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR ANDERSON: I was not intending saying anything, but when I have just heard what Councillor Hanley has said, I just cannot believe someone who is meant to be a leader within their ALMO, to say that you have done nothing, it is up to you. Your Government is bringing forward changes to ALMOs. Why are you not sitting down with your Chief Officer and discussing the way forward for ALMOs, not just in terms of what we are doing but what your Government are proposing to do.

I have had a briefing. We decided to have an away-day as an ALMO to discuss this and a number of other issues, to which Councillor Illingworth in your group has been invited to come along. We have also set up a group (Interruption) will you shut up for just 2 minutes? (Applause) Every single time I stand up you show your ignorance.

It is up to you to lead. I have had a briefing. Speak to your Chief Officer. There is a Chief Officers Group being set up to look at a possible number of options. Nothing is in, nothing is out, everything is there. If you cannot be bothered to try and lead your ALMO in the form of a discussion --- last night we

did exactly the same in our ALMO. We started to discuss the issues. Why can you not discuss them? Are you scared in case what you might find out, that you might actually be out of step with everybody else, as usual with you? Please, lead your ALMO. We want the best for the tenants in this City, not your version of it. It is what we collectively all want the best for this City, not just your silly little views whenever you think you are important. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: I understand Councillor Lobley is not now speaking.

COUNCILLOR HANLEY: Surely I am allowed to respond to this?

THE LORD MAYOR: Which Standing Order are you speaking on?

COUNCILLOR HANLEY: A personal explanation, Lord Mayor. Lord Mayor, leadership - I most certainly don't need him to tell me about leadership. What he should (Interruptions) do is look at the performance of the Leeds (West) ALMO. He should recognise that we are one of the people who got the two stars first ---

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Hanley, can you please say in what way you think you are being misrepresented in the previous debate.

COUNCILLOR HANLEY: First and foremost ---

THE LORD MAYOR: That is all you are entitled to do on that point of order.

COUNCILLOR HANLEY: First and foremost, Lord Mayor, he said I do not know how to lead.

THE LORD MAYOR: I am sorry, you can't speak twice in a debate just simply because you would like to. Will you please sit down.

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: My Lord Mayor, we do seem to have got very excited about this today. I am quite surprised, actually, because let me just read the important part of Councillor Wakefield's resolution and my amendment. He says, "To consider a ballot of all council tenants prior to a decision being taken." I say on mine, "To consider the need for a ballot." Now, quite honestly, it is semantics, Keith. You are playing with semantics.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Why don't you agree with ours?

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: Well, I'll tell you what, you don't want to thank him as a Chief Whip. My God, we had him and he was useless and he is still --- And I'll tell you why. I'll tell you why. Do you know what he has done to you? Because he thought he was clever, clever. He thought he was clever, clever putting this down. He didn't think it could be amended. He played holy hell, I understand, when he found out it couldn't be amended. But what he has done to you, Keith, if he had put it down as a White Paper you would be stood here now

summing up, not me. The bloke is not worth having. I would get shot of him.

COUNCILLOR A. CARTER: Just like we did, Keith.

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: Let's make absolutely sure that nobody is going out of this chamber to say this lot and that lot there are saying the tenants will not have a vote. There is no way you are going to be able to say that, but I understand - I have been passed a little note here, and it is quite interesting. I am told, Lord Mayor, and I will ask him to get up and deny this, they have already printed a leaflet to scare the tenants which is going round this weekend. Now, deny that. If you can deny it, if there is no one done ---

MEMBER OF COUNCIL: I deny it.

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: You are denying it. Are you all denying it ---

THE LORD MAYOR: I'm sorry, Councillor Carter, you can't ask somebody to deny it. You are summing up. The rules don't allow you to do that.

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: In summing up, my Lord Mayor, as you have been assured by two leaders, the Leader and the Deputy Leader of Council, that if there is a major change there will be a vote. It is right and proper that we should know what we are asking people to vote on. I will not take Councillor Dowson over there talking about how we treat tenants. I will just say to you, young lady, I have had £100 million investment into an area of this City which Gruen tried for four and a half years and couldn't achieve it. In 8 months I had got it, and that is Swarcliffe, so don't start talking about what you have done, what you haven't done. I will not take that from you or anybody else. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR ARMITAGE: At least he consulted with the tenants.

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: But it was no good consulting on something you never got. You never damn well got it. You never got it. Gruen didn't have a clue how to get it. 8 months and we got it.

Right, my Lord Mayor, it is time now to settle down, everybody. The point is I think our amendment is quite clear. Our amendment will lead, I think, to the Executive Board quite rightly considering properly and rightly about a vote for the tenants. It is not J. L. Carter who will decide that, I can assure you. It is more likely --- it will be the Executive Board that will decide that and there are two leaders here who are both saying and giving assurances today that it will be considered properly, right and properly. That should be sufficient for you, Keith. With that I will pack in. Thank you, my Lord Mayor. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: We have two amendments to vote on, the first amendment in the name of Councillor Wakefield and the second amendment in the name of



Councillor Carter, so if we can take the first amendment first, it seems to me to be a logical thing to do. Yes?

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: My Lord Mayor, sorry, I am challenging what you have just said there. The amendment - I have amended his amendment. I am not putting a new amendment in, I am amending his. It is quite clear I am amending his, and the way the procedure works is that a vote on the amendment first, if that fails there would be a vote on the substantive resolution. I'm sorry, Lord Mayor, I can't accept that there are two amendments, there is one amendment to his resolution. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I'm sorry, Councillor Carter, I have taken advice on the matter and it is quite clear on the green paper and also in the wording that it is an amendment and a further amendment. It is described as a second amendment in the green paper.

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: Can I ask, Lord Mayor, through you --- Lord Mayor, can I ask through you, like Councillor Atha does, for an explanation from the Chief Legal Officer who says that when somebody has amended something of another Member of Council that that is separate in some way? Could I please ask for an explanation from the Chief Legal Officer?

THE LORD MAYOR: You can, but it seems to me perfectly clear there are two amendments.

THE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES: I am not sure I understood Councillor Carter's question, but there is a motion before the Council to receive the minutes. There is an amendment in the name of Councillor Wakefield, which is basically a reference back, and then because there is an amendment in there is the ability to have a further amendment in, and that is how I understand what it is we are doing.

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: I'm sorry, if the Chief Legal Officer could read my amendment down there, which was amending Councillor --- it says quite clearly amending Councillor Wakefield's resolution. That is what it says. It cannot stand separately under any circumstances.

THE LORD MAYOR: Just to try to resolve it to your satisfaction, Councillor Carter, I don't really want to rule you out of order, I will just call the Chief Executive to read the appropriate note that covers this.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: Well, whether this clarifies or not remains to be seen, but I agree with the analysis that Miss Jackson has given. We do start here with a basic resolution which is that these minutes be received. Councillor Wakefield has seen fit to propose an amendment to that to suggest a reference back, and that amendment -- there has then been a further amendment in the same matter on the motion and Council Procedure rule 14.8 deals with further amendments and it

specifies quite plainly as I read it, in (a) "If any amendment is lost", and if that were the case with Councillor Wakefield's, "other amendments may be moved on the original motion provided that due notice has been given", which it was in this case.

(b) "if an amendment is carried, the motion as amended takes the place of the original motion upon which any further such amendment may be moved, but this does not prevent any further amendment being moved by reference to the wording of the original motion." I know that sounds complex but essentially you therefore do take them in turn, as has been suggested. Either Councillor Wakefield's amendment will be accepted or no and if it is or it isn't then that specifies what next occurs.

THE LORD MAYOR: Really, I think we have gone far enough with this. You are wanting to say something - Councillor Procter is wanting to say something. I am sure somebody over here will want to say something if we start the debate, so I would like to just take the vote and move on, if Members will accept that.  
(Applause) Okay, thank you.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Recorded vote.

THE LORD MAYOR: Yes, I expected that one. We are going to take a recorded vote and it is going to be on Councillor Wakefield's amendment.

COUNCILLOR PROCTER: In advance of doing so, the position we now find ourselves in leaves us able to vote in favour of both motions, doesn't it?

COUNCILLOR TAGGART: And against both motions.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: Yes. With respect, that is what always occurs. Either the first amendment will be accepted or not and then there is a requirement to go on and consider the further amendment. There is in all cases.

THE LORD MAYOR: You still have to vote on the second amendment whether you vote for or against the first one.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: Would all Members ensure, please, that they are in their allocated seats. Would all Members please refer to their desk units and press the button marked "P".

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: Is this for the first amendment?

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: Yes, those Members in favour of the amendment in the name of Councillor Wakefield should press the "+". Those Members against that amendment should press the "-" button and any Member wishing to abstain and have that abstention recorded should press the "0" button.

COUNCILLOR SCHOFIELD: Lord Mayor, my machine has gone.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: Could I confirm Councillor Schofield and Councillor Hussain both wish to vote "yes".

COUNCILLOR SCHOFIELD: "Yes".

COUNCILLOR HUSSAIN: I voted "yes", Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: That is agreed with 95 Members voting and 95 recording a "yes" vote, so that is agreed unanimously.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Does the amendment then fall, the second amendment?

COUNCILLOR PROCTER: Lord Mayor, a recorded vote, please.

MEMBER OF COUNCIL: Seconded, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I thought we might want a recorded vote on the second amendment, the further amendment, yes. A recorded vote on the further amendment. We will go through the procedure yet again.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: Would those Members who didn't enjoy it sufficiently on the first occasion please ensure that they are in their allocated seats. All Members should refer to their desk unit and press the button marked "P". Those Members in favour of the further amendment in the name of Councillor J. L. Carter should press the "+" button. Those Members wishing to vote against that motion should press the "0" (sic) button and any Member wishing to abstain and have the abstention recorded should press the "0" button.

THE LORD MAYOR: Members of Council will be surprised to hear that that motion is also approved. Those present 95, voting in favour 57, abstaining nil, voting against 38. Therefore the further amendment is carried.

I think, Members of Council, at this stage we will take a break. Back at 6 o'clock, thank you.

(Short adjournment)

THE LORD MAYOR: Welcome back, everybody. We are on inviting comments on the minutes.

COUNCILLOR BRUCE: Lord Mayor, commenting on page 24, Minute 66 on "Narrowing the Gap". That is a subject that is of great interest to constituents of mine in Middleton and Belle Isle and indeed Councillor Congreve asked a question earlier this afternoon about how this administration is actually managing to narrow

the gap when the effect on the ground in Middleton is the cancellation of our bonfire.

I mean, I just wanted to share with you the views of one of the local residents. "I am disgusted that the Tory and LibDem Council has done this to us. I can't afford to buy fireworks for my kids, as a single parent. Why should my children have to do without a bonfire and fireworks because we live in Middleton and not Roundhay. If the Roundhay bonfire was scrapped no doubt people there could afford to put on their own. A community bonfire is much needed in Middleton."

That is just one of the comments from my constituents, but before I go on I should apologise to Councillor Procter. I do owe you an apology, John. I do owe you an apology, John, because I made the mistake of taking you at your word and what I did is I took a look at your Councillor's report on the Council website where it says that "Members' surgeries only provide limited access to elected Members. My constituents demand a more flexible approach and to that end I am available on my home telephone number." Well, I actually thought you meant it, so when people came to me and told me they were upset about the bonfire and they said, "What can I do? Who can I speak to?" I am sorry, I just suggested that they follow the advice that you give in your Councillor's report. If you didn't mean it, I do apologise. I thought you had meant it.

Some of the other comments that people have come to me with, there's quite a lot. There are some good ones here. Let me have a look. I have got one here from a Matthew Guy, "The true colours of the Council's administration are starting to show at the moment, second-hand slogans and mean penny-pinching on bonfires and firework displays. I hope the people of Leeds realise that if they vote for any of these parties they are voting for cutbacks reminiscent of the days of Tory rule in Westminster."

David is not here, but this is one for David Blackburn. "It makes me really angry that the good people vote for the Greens as they care for the environment and they end up with a Tory administration in Leeds."

John also made reference to a decision that we made at our CIT back in 2002. Well, I have got a pretty good recollection of what happened then. (Interruption) I have got a pretty good recollection of what happened in 2002. What happened is that Officers approached us in mid-September about the reported trouble at the bonfire the previous year and requesting I think it was £900 of funding, to which my response is, "Well, I think isn't this a City-wide issue? Do other local bonfires are asked to pay for their security?" I always thought that the CIT funding was actually to bring additional resources into an area and we tended to spend our funding on things like activities for young people, improved security in neighbourhoods, environmental projects, all extra things that could actually happen locally and benefit people. And we also said at the time that we would be quite

willing to talk about what could be done in future years to improve the way that the bonfire is run.

I will finish up with just one more comment. I mean, John has probably seen a lot of those because they have been sent to him. "Hi, John, I understand that you are responsible for the cancellation of Middleton Park bonfire. It has been a tradition for me and my family to attend over the years and enjoy a good night out." This is from a Richard Naylor. "Yours sincerely, never voting Conservative again."

COUNCILLOR PROCTER: Even his own side don't give him a round of applause.

COUNCILLOR TAYLOR: Lord Mayor, can I comment on Minute 91 on page 32, and in particular the second paragraph, Can I, in doing it, make two points? First of all, thank you, Les, for the way in which you have taken seriously local communitiness and in assisting in regenerating local communities.

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: Can I just say you are a star?

COUNCILLOR TAYLOR: Keep talking.

COUNCILLOR LYONS: You sound just like a Catholic priest.

COUNCILLOR TAYLOR: And I am glad that you realise on this occasion certainly in Gipton the importance of community centres for local people. I am also hoping that in the near future there will be even greater things in Gipton area when EASEL comes on board, and I do look forward to that taking place very soon, and I would hope that when that does happen that once again there will be significant investment in South Gipton and in the community centre which is still there, and if EASEL are ready to stand behind that, that would be altogether good.

I just hope that this is the first step towards seeing more regeneration in Gipton as a whole, and I know that the residents of Gipton are looking forward to seeing the Gipton Arts Centre up and running and I do hope that the hiccups that there might have been recently have been ironed out and that project will soon be functioning for the people of Gipton and of East Leeds. Thank you, Lord Mayor.  
(Applause)

COUNCILLOR DUNN: My Lord Mayor, I wish to speak on page 24, Minute 66, to follow up. I did try to catch your attention, Lord Mayor, but you were unsighted.

THE LORD MAYOR: Well, I did have you on the list but I had Councillor Driver first. However, seeing as he has given way to you, do carry on and Councillor Driver to follow.

COUNCILLOR DUNN: Thank you for that, Lord Mayor. Thank you, Councillor

Driver.

Not many people in this chamber, I would imagine, have been to Middleton Park. If you turn left at the top of Middleton ring road near the water tower, turn left you will see about a quarter of a mile of lovely stonework with the remnants of a lovely ornate fence that was taken away for the war effort but never replaced and beyond that is 4 miles of beautiful woodland and parkland. That is Middleton Park, and it was left in trust to Leeds City Council who until the early '50s maintained it, but from then successive Councils have neglected it. It is now in serious neglect. It is in a serious condition. So when we made claims for funding to go into Middleton Park, as we have seen in Roundhay Park, beautiful park, we were told, "form a Friends group". You have heard them this afternoon. Wonderful group. So far nothing has come to fruition except this bonfire. Now, this bonfire now is beginning to be more of a plot than the original in 1605.

We have heard in the press that police vans were overturned last year. The police are denying all knowledge. Prior to that there was one incident that I was witness to, because I lit the fire that year, and it was a serious incident. It was semi-racial. Councillor Procter has already touched on that in the press, that one lad who worked in the park was trying to restrain some travellers - not Middleton people but travellers' children - 13, 14 year old - from getting near to the bonfire and that lad was attached with a bottle. Now, that was serious but there was no police. The police have never made a presence at this bonfire except the first one in 1995 to control the traffic. Never made an appearance.

When the request the following year, the request was to cancel the bonfire. The Parks & Countryside, as Councillor Bruce has rightly outlined, made an application to the CIT and the feeling was by all Members, not just Councillor Bruce, that if it is relevant for Middleton it is relevant for all bonfire parks and we don't think that we should finance the security for a park. That was the reason.

Following that, the Leisure Services set on a private firm of contractors the following year who did a marvellous job. Not one iota of trouble. Last year I understand that there was a minor disturbance by a few school kids after the bonfire, because in most cases people leave the park straight after the firework display with young children to get them home to bed, so there is not a great majority of people in the park. The incident was taken care of by the security people.

Now, I say to you, John, if we are going to let these pond life take over society, then they are going to become society and we will have no events. The thing we should be doing is ensuring that we have the police there and you should be dealing with these Friends of Middleton Park. You have not negotiated with them while the last minute. If there was trouble last year and it wanted ironing out, the multi-agency meetings could have been involved and Friends of the Park could have been involved, Ward Councillors could have been involved and this trouble

now could have been sorted out. You were offering in the press last night to sit down and talk with the future plans for this bonfire. Why didn't you sit down this year and make future plans with them? Why are you leaving it now when it is too late?

As a Member of the Licensing body on this Council, I am fully aware that community safety is paramount and I understand where you are coming from, but if this problem was access to that park now there was access problems before, not just about children fighting, about a major incident, and that park, the access has been the same for 10 or 11 years, so it is no different. So to come with the access problem now is not on, John, and I know there has been some political happy-slapping on the Internet between yourself and another Member, and I know that you have promised to be no longer Mr. Nice Guy about these things, but don't let this spoil the fun.

Let's have a look at this bonfire because it can be sorted out in two days. The bonfire now is erected within two days. The park staff stop overnight with it to stop rogues setting it afire. Now, I tell you, John, there is time to do it. Let's have another look. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR DRIVER: Lord Mayor, the same minute. I just want to use this opportunity to formally hand over to the Council the petition of 1,000 signatures which was collected in just about a week in the Middleton, Belle Isle and South Leeds area generally. What people said to us as we talked to them was, there were three things that they felt very strongly about. One was that it is highly unfair to condemn and fine, if you like, one large section of a community that behaves well at public events for the sins of a few. It is quite clear that we have in every part of the City young people who are out of control and, as Councillor Dunn has indicated, we have known about that for several years.

It was also unfair because so little time was formally given to us to renegotiate what we could do to replace the bonfire, which we clearly would have done had we had the time. We know the police would have talked to us about it. We are clear also that we would have been looking for resources, and I do agree with Stuart Bruce and Jack Dunn that in previous years we had other priorities as well for our budget and when we decided that we couldn't spend £900 on a bonfire it wasn't because we weren't spending money in South Leeds; we were supporting youth projects and all sorts of things that equally justified our money.

What I would be interested in, and I think it is unfair for this reason, too, is that if you like the funding for this year's bonfire has simply been withdrawn from South Leeds so a community which, you know, if you look at it, Councillor Blackburn, from the point of view of fairness to the less fortunate sections of our City, this is clearly not being fair at all, it is being the very opposite. It is trying to destroy people because they already have problems. That doesn't work any more in bonfires than it does in education, and we have got to learn to tackle that.

Finally, I just want to say that between now and next year we have got to get this right. It is absolutely clear that the Friends of Middleton Park are determined there will be a bonfire next year. I determine that the City Council will, with the support of Ward Councillors, get to grips with a problem that, yes, it does exist, but I would like to know, for example, whether when there has been extra problems in other parts of the City, whether money was taken away from them. I doubt it, and why you should start doing it now for one particular case, off the cuff, in the way as happened seems highly unsatisfactory.

I commend these signatures for what they symbolise in terms of dealing with the people of South Leeds in a proper manner. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR RAFIQUE: Lord Mayor, I would like to comment on Minute 63 on page 24, Closure of Rights of Way.

My Lord Mayor, there are in the region of 170 requests from communities and Members of Council from all sides of the political spectrum to look into closing rights of way for the purposes of crime prevention. Despite the best endeavours of the police, and the hard work, crime including anti-social behaviour, drug-dealings and other petty crime is on the increase in the areas where there are ginnels and public rights of way.

This pivotal important issue has been before the Scrutiny Board twice in the last 12 months and, despite the recommendations, no progress has been made to appoint a CROW officer or to set aside a budget. It might look as though nothing will happen until 2006/7, according to the minutes, when the budget will be set aside or will kick in. This shows how much you lot care about community safety, how serious you are, how serious this administration is about crime prevention in the City. Quite honestly, I think this is pathetic and disgraceful. Thank you very much, my Lord Mayor. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: Lord Mayor, I would also like to comment on Minute 66 page 24 on behalf of my constituents in Beeston and Holbeck to express our disgust at the decision to scrap the bonfire at Middleton Park.

I think it is important to emphasise the point that the bonfire is for the people of the whole of inner South Leeds, if not indeed the whole of the south of the City and, as we have heard today, including from Middleton, the Friends of Middleton Park, people are dismayed by the decision that has been taken by this administration.

Along with other colleagues on this side of the chamber, I was at the bonfire last year and was not aware of any trouble taking place. If a serious incident did take place then, of course, we sympathise with those who had to deal with it.



However, I think the question that needs to be answered is, if such a serious incident did take place, why did the administration not have the common courtesy to arrange an immediate briefing for Ward Members and for Members from adjacent wards to inform them of the incident? Why is it that even the police say they are not aware of this serious incident that Councillor Procter is referring to?

Another question that I think needs to be answered is why have they not used the last 12 months since the last bonfire to work with local groups and organisations such as the Friends and with Elected Members from the south to find solutions to any problem that have occurred so that the bonfire could take place again this year.

A further question, what assessment has actually been done on the impact of potentially thousands of people from the south of Leeds travelling across the City to get to other public bonfires, surely in itself a potential hazard, and what advice have you given to residents in South Leeds on what they should do, where they should go and how they should get there. I certainly have not seen any such advice from the administration.

So a brave thing to do, Les, speaking on behalf of John when you stand up, is to admit that you have got it wrong, that the public bonfire in Middleton Park will be reinstated so that the people of South Leeds can once again celebrate Bonfire Night in the same way as residents elsewhere in this City. Thank you.

(Applause)

COUNCILLOR PROCTER: Lord Mayor, let's just get a few things straight, shall we?

I sympathise with Councillor Dunn, actually, and, Jack, it is quite a shame that you are not still an Elected Member for Middleton. I think if you had been we would have had a far more rational debate about this subject, and I have to say that is not faint praise. As I have said before, the beauty of being in control is you get all of the paperwork and so you can actually see what has been going on previously.

The fact of the matter is - the very sad fact of the matter is - that for year upon year upon year Elected Members within the Middleton Ward have been ignoring what has been mounting year on year on year as a very serious problem, a very serious problem.

The most amazing claim of all from Councillor Bruce in the paper was that, "Well, we weren't really aware of any trouble." Well, that is absolutely ridiculous and it is factually, totally and utterly untrue. Councillor Driver knew all about the trouble, didn't you, Councillor Driver, because in 2001, as Chair of the CIT, what did you do? You actually wrote to Superintendent Day, didn't you, demanding to know why there wasn't police presence at the bonfire because of all the trouble. You were quite aware of the problems that were associated with that bonfire.

Councillor Linda Middleton, who lit the bonfire as well in that particular year,

was well aware of all of the problems. She wrote to the Department commending the staff on all of the work that they did in face of the extreme hostility. She concludes her letter with a very telling - a very telling - line, "It makes one wonder whether we should continue to offer entertainment only to have it spoilt in such a way." You know, where have you people been?

In terms of the log of events that took place, it is page after page after page. I won't read all these incidents out, but what you should be aware of is that last year - and Councillor Bruce, again, how you can not be aware of these matters goodness only knows - but there were a gang of 30 youths who were causing mayhem and havoc and caused a lot of distress to a large number of people in the crowd at that event. A number of those people subsequently wrote in to the Department very concerned about the position that they found themselves in.

It is not true to say that the police were not aware of the situation, and it is unfortunate things sometimes appear in the evening paper that aren't quite the case and misquotes appear in the evening paper, as I am only too well aware. The fact of the matter is that the statement put out by the police, the first statement that was reported in the press, was from a police officer that wasn't even in the country. He wasn't here. He never made the statement. The fact of the matter is that the police press office got it wrong. They have now admitted that they actually got it wrong, but they were aware of trouble. It was on their crime log. They do now admit that they were called. They do recognise that they had to disperse a large number of people who were causing trouble. They are in agreement that there were concerns that evening, all of which is detailed here.

Now, I have to say, you know, I find this really bizarre, colleagues, that we are here as an administration and I would have thought that those who left administration not that long ago would recognise that we have a duty of care to the employees of this authority. People who actually are there, police - and I hear Councillor Bruce chuntering away as usual rather than listening to the debate. People who work for this authority who we have a duty of care towards, and when those people are saying, "We are scared of actually attending this event and working this event and policing that event", it is clearly of concern to me.

Lord Mayor, let me now turn my attention briefly to Councillor Bruce, or should I say the PR guru as he styles himself on his own Council website. Well, I have to say, Councillor Bruce, if this is your attempt at PR, God help you. It really is amusing. I mean, Councillor Bruce claims to be the greatest blogger on earth and everybody reads his blog - it is an IT thing, Les - and everyone is so interested in what he has got to say. How many people have responded to his blog on this issue? When I looked to see who responded, three people. He has read out two - part of what two of them have said. I think this was on Sunday when I looked. Part of what two of them have said. What he didn't tell you is what the other person said, which was that effectively, "Councillor Bruce, I think what you have done is absolutely terrible and outrageous and isn't it right that

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THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Procter, you will have to sit down, I am sorry. You have run out of time.

COUNCILLOR PROCTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: I now call Councillor Blake, who was going to speak earlier and put it off. You have just got about 3 minutes left, I think, Councillor Blake as a result of that. Best of luck.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: I will be brief. We have covered a lot of issues. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

I have to say Councillor Procter is styling himself as the Czar of Culture. I have to say I think we actually ought to be referring to him as Councillor Pol Procter, and his ability to try and rewrite history. You heard from the Friends of Middleton Park that they have had no idea that the bonfire was under threat this year. In fact, in September we were talking about press coverage, about them making refreshments, and there was even a memo in the room which clearly listed that the bonfire was taking place on November 4th and it was on the Council website well after the announcement was made to us as Members.

There is a perception in South Leeds, Councillor Procter, that you have taken away an important resource from that part of Leeds which you see for the comments in the press there are all sorts of organisations who are really going to feel the loss of it, particularly those representing families and children.

There was another Councillor there last year, and it was Councillor Barry Anderson. We were furious that you had actually elected Barry to light the bonfire on our behalf and he never mentioned a word of any trouble at all.

Councillor Procter, all three Ward Councillors have made it clear that we do not want to put officers at risk. Neither do we want to expose our communities to risk, and Councillor Carter is off again trying to fluster his way through this. We believe that this should be funded on an equitable basis across the City. Councillor Procter in the paper last night was talking about legions of Officers who had talked to him on this subject - legions. Legions are counted in thousands. I don't think so. But they do have an element of the cavalry in, and do you know what Councillor Procter - if you read the paper you will know what his response to our genuine concerns about community safety in the Middleton area as a result of cancelling this bonfire and what is actually going to take place over the weekend in the absence? He said, "Oh, don't worry, I have spoken to our Parks Watch officers who will keep an eye on the situation." Councillor Procter, if you are worried about Council officers in the park, then I hope you are taking good care of your Parks Watch officers as well.

We do not want to put anyone at risk and I would like to know what you are planning to do to back up the support for them if they are called out on the night. We have had, and I don't know if you are aware of this, at the three Middleton Park Councillors, which has not gone to the Beeston Councillors, I have to say, a full apology from the Director of Leisure and the senior park officers about the way this whole sad and sorry event has been handled. It is simply not good enough to withdraw a facility of this kind a month away from the event itself.

I would hope that as Ward Members locally we could have an apology from Councillor Procter, the Friends of Middleton Park could have an apology from Councillor Procter, so that we can move on and all together sit down and come up with a sensible and rational way that we can actually make sure that the people of the whole of South Leeds have a bonfire that they deserve so that their families and friends can actually go and enjoy the entertainment that is afforded to other parts of the City.

Can I just finish, Lord Mayor, by referring to Councillor Carter's comments earlier in answering questions on the issue of homelessness. I have to say, Councillor Carter ---

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: That isn't on the minutes, Lord Mayor. Which minute are you referring to?

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: I am referring to "Narrowing the Gap" and regeneration and dealing with the most vulnerable people in society. You don't know who you are responsible for, Councillor Carter. I can only say you cannot have talked to people in the voluntary and community sector who are responsible for looking after women fleeing violence who are the greatest cause of homelessness in this City. If you have you would never have made such a complacent answer to a patsy question that was thrown at you. You ought to go out and talk to people who work with women in this City and women who are at risk and vulnerable and who come under your charge, Councillor Carter, as being responsible for community safety in this City. I move, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I am sure that everybody will be as mortified as I am to hear that we are not going to have the benefit of Councillor Carter's response because we have run out of time, so je suis desolait, Councillor Carter. I am advised that we are not able to take your summing up of this section of the minutes.

Unfortunately, there are also a number of other sections of the minute that we are not going to be able to take under the rules and we go right to the end of the next page asking Councillor Harris to exercise the right of final reply.

COUNCILLOR HARRIS: Lord Mayor, thank you. I must begin by just touching on what Judith Blake said. The only thing she is moving is out, actually.

Now, what we have heard, let's just remember that the minutes are the opportunity to discuss the total activities of the combined departments of this Department since the last full Council meeting, whenever that was, in September, a month and a half ago, and we have had tonight an attempt by the Labour Group to construct an argument which has taken up the entire time essentially on three pieces of total fantasy, and that is what we have had to witness.

We began with Councillor Illingworth somehow trying to construct the argument that mistakes on our small industrial units was somehow the fault of this administration when in fact what the minute showed was because you delivered to us a series of buildings and roads in complete decay and collapse, that it is we who are now, after your 24 years of neglect, attempting to put it right. I mean, talk about turning things on its head and constructing an argument from absolutely nowhere.

We then had that debate on the non-ballot on the issue that has not been determined and on the assertion that we somehow want to gerrymander votes and take away the rights of the tenants who live in our houses or the -- managed by the ALMOs, and we actually had the absurd position of Councillor Dowson lecturing us that we must trust the tenants and allow them to determine their own future, and in witness of that, of course, Councillor Wakefield produced the verbatim minute. Well, I have got the verbatim minute as well on that particular debate on PFI of Little London, and if you want to talk about a record of supporting tenants and democracy I suggest you read the entire verbatim debate. Why, for instance, if a ballot is so important, didn't you ballot on the PFI for Swarthmore. Why didn't you, if it is sacrosanct? Well, you chose not to, for whatever reason. What does that say about your credentials?

But I want to read one little extract from the verbatim minute because you have all got collective amnesia. This is what happened. You weren't here for 24 years or, if you were here for 24 years, nothing that happened was your responsibility. At worst the Officers were to blame, not you. And now it is all our fault because we are picking up the pieces. Well, just let me read this to you, "I think calling of a second ballot by the Executive Board was disgraceful and I think the Executive Board should be ashamed of itself", and who said that on the PFI ballot? The late -- not late but the very much lamented departed former Councillor Hall, and what happened to poor old Patrick Hall because he dared to stand up and say that you had gerrymandered the vote on the PFI, you got rid of him. (Applause)

The bad news for you is that you won't get rid of me so easily for speaking out on the facts, but finally - finally - the rest of the meeting has been constructed around the assertion from Labour that somehow, because of the need to cancel the Middleton bonfire, that we are trying to take money away from Middleton and South Leeds, that this is yet another one of our cuts, although you have had all the

evidence stacked up that it was for community safety purposes, you just don't want to listen and you construct this fantasy to mislead the people of that area that somehow we are nasty little pick-pockets taking the money away from poor, defenceless people in Middleton Park, and I am always suspicious, you know. Earlier today you were critical of me for actually making available to you all the correspondence I had on Supertram. What happened when I attempted to take delivery of the petition about the bonfire? Where better to put it except in the political head of the Council if there is any hope of saving it, give the petition to me.

But, oh no, Councillor Driver won't do that. Why not? Because they don't want it saved because it doesn't suit their purposes, because they want to perpetuate a lie that we are taking money out of South Leeds, the nasty Tories who were busy manipulating the poor, pathetic, weak Liberals into being horrible Fagins, and that is your assertion, and you talk about community safety (Interruptions) and you talk about community safety and our attitude to South Leeds.

Well, here is the absolute nail in the coffin of your argument that you say we have cancelled that bonfire simply to take the money away from that part of Leeds.

I commit the administration to put back into Middleton Park within two months whatever has been saved, because unfortunately because of community safety purposes (applause) -- because of community safety concerns unfortunately we have had no choice but to cancel that bonfire. That is not to say that we may not be able to resurrect it in future years if we can sort out the community safety issues, but we will not be accused of robbing money when that is a complete lie, fantasy and distortion. They will have the money. They will have the money for Middleton Park which, by the way, will be in addition to the £50,000 this administration has spent in its first year when in 24 years you didn't spend a penny on it. Now, stick that in your pipe and smoke it. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Okay. Now, we come to the winding up of business on item 8 and I call for a vote on the motion as amended by Councillor J. L. Carter.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Hang on a second, Lord Mayor. Why as amended by J. L. Carter?

THE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES: Because that was the result of the vote.

THE LORD MAYOR: Again, Councillor Gruen, I am advised that that is the appropriate form of words. Can I suggest if you wish to dispute that with the legal officer we do it afterwards. It would help enormously.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: (Inaudible).

THE LORD MAYOR: Well, alright. Argue with him later then. That's fine. Just to take that vote again, those in favour? Suddenly a lot more hands went up, I don't know why. Those against? That is agreed. Thank you very much.

ITEM 9 - WHITE PAPER MOTION -  
INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR OLDER PERSONS 2005

THE LORD MAYOR: I am not sure I shouldn't declare an interest, really, on this one because it particularly talks about those who made the Tea Dance such a resounding success. I think that was me. However, I will be my usual modest self and invite Councillor Harrison to say that.

COUNCILLOR HARRISON: Lord Mayor, the International Day for Older People events were held during September and October this year. I am sure you will agree that it was fantastic publicity for the City of Leeds and Leeds City Council. The events themselves were a celebration of those who have given so much of their lives to this great City.

The major event was the Tea Dance which brought ordinary citizens of Leeds into the Civic Hall to attend what was a superb event. It brought a large number of them into the Civic Hall who had never had the opportunity or experience of the splendour of this public building.

At this point I would like to thank the Lord Mayor for allowing us to use the Civic Hall and for opening the event and for showing us how it is done by having the first dance with the Lady Mayoress. (Applause)

I would also like to formally place on record my thanks to all my fellow Councillors, Officers, Leeds businesses and volunteers who helped make the 55 events so successful. The event throughout the City has left a lasting memory in many people's lives. I would like to ask the Council for their support in holding the event every year by also supporting the Tea Dance as an annual event in the Civic Hall. Thank you. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR HARRAND: My Lord Mayor, I second and perhaps I just echo what Andrea said and thanks to people like Susan Chesters and Jack Anderson and Melanie Zinger who made it a wonderful afternoon. You contributed a bit but --- I don't know if you were there, Lord Mayor, but I am told you could tell where all the dancers came from, what their political allegiance was, because the Morley Independent people just stood in a corner and just danced quietly on their own, the Greens weren't there, they were outside having a cigarette. Where is he? The Liberal Democrats were seen going round looking for partners, "What do you want to dance?" "Valeta" "I'm good at Valeta, it's just my favourite". "What do you want to dance?" "Waltz" "I'm good at waltzes, that's just my favourite". They dance to anybody's tune (Laughter) The Labour Party Members who were there, Lord Mayor, had guidance from London; you can well imagine they couldn't be trusted to dance on their own, and somebody came down from London, stood at the front and gave them instructions: Left, right, left, right, right, right, right, right, right. (Laughter) And, of course, you could tell which were the Tory couples

because ---

COUNCILLOR LYONS: They danced on your grave then, Peter.

COUNCILLOR HARRAND: The Tory couples had to stop every 5 minutes, they couldn't decide who was leading. (Laughter) it was a wonderful afternoon, Lord Mayor. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR ELLIOTT: My Lord Mayor, I whole-heartedly agree with making the Tea Dance a regular event, but I think probably more often than yearly. Tea dances are held weekly in Morley Town Hall which have been running for many years and enjoyed by the many people who participate in them. I believe that events such as this are to be sought and valued and every opportunity should be taken to encourage such activities to give people the chance of socialising which they otherwise may not have. Thank you, my Lord Mayor. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR HARRISON: Lord Mayor, at the end of last year after attending a meeting with Peter as Joint Older People's Champion I was asked to take over this role as the chair of the International Older People's Event and I have to admit at that time I didn't expect to end up with a job as big as what it has. I have got to say that over the week or 10 days event we attended lots and lots of events and they were absolutely excellent. As the Lord Mayor, you attended a number yourself, as did quite a number of the Elected Members.

I attended a Tea Dance with Councillor Wakefield at the White Rose last year and soon realised how much fun and enjoyment is made with the older people attending tea dances and the Steering Group agreed that we should launch the International Older People's event with the tea dance, which was attended by over 200 people.

I have since received many, many requests from the older people of Leeds asking that this is made an annual event for the International Older People's event. I do agree with Councillor Elliott that the tea dances are very, very enjoyable, not just for older people, I enjoyed it and I don't class myself as an older person, and I would ask that Council supports this White Paper. Thank you. (Applause)

(The motion was carried unanimously)

#### ITEM 10 - WHITE PAPER MOTION - PROOF OF AGE SCHEME

COUNCILLOR ANDERSON: Lord Mayor, my fault, I should have declared another interest earlier on. I am a substitute Member on the West Yorkshire Joint Services Committee.

THE LORD MAYOR: Noted, Councillor Anderson, thank you.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: He does come, that's true, and I am also a Member, if



we have to declare personal interests, as one of the agencies. But, there again, we are talking about the police, so if anybody is on the police we have to declare an interest, so I am not sure how far you can extrapolate this logic, can you? It is barmy, you are right, Les.

Now, that is a very hard act to follow, particularly Peter's contribution, but certainly I am sure all of us agree that it was a superb week and we all enjoyed watching people come to the Civic Hall and actually enjoy the Civic Hall for what it is meant for, and that is local people. So congratulations.

But at the last Council I asked the Leader of Council, Councillor Harris, a very straightforward question about the proof of age scheme. I did, and it is there in the verbatim, and he acknowledged that it was an important question. I gave a bit of a history to it and, guess what, I have not heard a jot since. He said that he was going to look into it.

Now, if he criticises Government Ministers and Departments for not corresponding and answering, which I agree with his criticism, then I think he will reflect on his lack of contact and communications with me over this issue because there has been enough time. So, Les, I am appealing to you on this issue because, you know, I know Councillor Harris is extremely busy for all sorts of reasons. Some people think it is about travels, which you never had the opportunity to talk about yourself, but I am beginning to wonder, having read last night's Evening Post, whether it is not too much engagements at these Erotica Festivals. You know, he is looking rather tired lately and I am just wondering if he has been spending a lot of time at Councillor Monaghan's new hobby that we are all intrigued with, having read last night.

But it is a serious issue about under age purchasing of drink, cigarettes and indeed fireworks, and we had a scheme in Leeds which I explained last time was piloted in East Leeds in 2001 and was rolled out in 2003. Yes, Les, it was through CIT money and every CIT bar Wetherby, because in Wetherby there is no problems in under-age drinking, supported the scheme.

Now, the reason why it was done through CIT, because it was the budget cycle and we said that if it proved successful we would mainstream it. In 2004 we know what happened, but every West Yorkshire authority - Bradford, Kirklees, Wakefield, Calderdale - have signed up to this scheme, whatever the political persuasion. It is a good scheme. It is a good scheme dealing with a growing problem of young people being able to purchase strong alcohol at local off licences and shops, and this was a scheme that addressed that, and we all know that when young people - some, not all - get involved in drink there are real problems not only for their health but for anti-social behaviour and, indeed, violent crime.

So we had a scheme and, Robert, your amendment I think is near in support because whatever we say about the licensing laws, and Councillor

Feldman and I have discussed this earlier, whatever we say about the merits, licensing laws and regulations only set the framework and what you really need to do is have responsibility and we have a scheme here, a proof of age scheme, that first of all the police like and West Yorkshire Trading Standards because they can monitor, police and enforce the legislation, and a lot of shops like, particularly Asda and Tesco backed it because they want staff to have responsibility when they are challenging young people, and sadly - and sadly - there are a lot of small shops, not all, that are very opportunist about selling alcohol to under-age people, and this was a scheme that the police and the Trading Standards could actually use to enforce it. And what is more the schools and young people liked it because young people also needed proof of age because sometimes they were above the age limit but were being rejected in various places. So it was a scheme that had community support, it had parental support, it had children's support and it had the police and West Yorkshire Trading support, and dealt with what I think was, as I say, a very important issue. And, Les, for less than £100,000 - for less than £100,000 - we could actually start to address what is a serious problem in our communities about a lot of young people being affluent and being able to afford drinks and all the consequences of that in terms of their own health and, as I say, anti-social behaviour.

So I am not going to drag this debate. It is a simple request. I think we should re-introduce it, Les, whatever funds you talk about. You know, CIT money was mainstream money, so we can play semantics. It is a request to try and get a scheme to support our community, to address anti-social behaviour and give some responsibility for the shops and young people in our City. I move, Lord Mayor, thank you.

COUNCILLOR R. LEWIS: My Lord Mayor, I will keep my comments brief. Basically, this is an oven-ready scheme. It is not a scheme that will be difficult to implement. It is one that is done across the county. How often are we in a position where we can say, "Here is something that already exists that you can use" for what is a minimal amount of money in terms of our overall expenditure?

Do we need such a scheme? Well, I think all of us in our wards see, you know, some of the aspects of under-age binge drinking. You know, we see the crowds gathered, we see the activities in the parks, we see whatever is going on. Just, you know, let us also recall the health issue. It is not so long back we were talking about health and alcohol in relation to St. Annes, and I think everybody there at the meeting was agreed that alcohol is a hugely serious problem. So why aren't we looking at it in relation to young people. I will just give you a very few facts on this one. 13 teenagers are admitted to hospital every day due to binge-drinking. Last year 4,647 under-18s were admitted to hospital with alcohol-related illnesses, including mental and behavioural disorders and alcohol poisoning, compared with 4,173 in '96/97. That is a huge increase.

The number of adults admitted to hospital as a result of alcohol-related

disease in the same period rose by 15% from 35,740 to 41,000-plus. Mean alcohol consumption among adolescents who drink rose from 5 to 10 units a week.

I don't really think --- You know, I could go through loads of these statistics. They all say the same thing. There is a problem out there that we need to deal with. It is not about the licensing legislation, it is about the problem that we have in society, always putting it down to something very simple saying we have got to take one simple step that is available to us to tackle this. I second, Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Lord Mayor, reflecting on this and trying to abdicate the Government's responsibility in terms of what it is doing with the licensing legislation I think is unhelpful. I think what we have tried to do here is to point out that problems that we already had are compounded by the direction that the Government is going into. The suggestion that somehow by extending drinking times you are going to convince people that they are Parisienne or whatever is just not realistic and I think we have to accept that there is some responsibility here.

What we are attempting to try and do is say here this is a good scheme. There is no doubt that other local authorities believe that this is a good scheme and that it is something that we need to perhaps reflect on and reconsider, and what we are suggesting - and we are hoping we are being constructive here - is to acknowledge the problems that we have got with the licensing legislation but to look at ways of moving forward and financing this particular scheme.

It is an excellent scheme. Certainly I am sure that we supported it at the CIT in Morley. I think there is a debate as to who should be responsible for financing it and ultimately central government who are making billions of pounds out of the licensing industry ought to be putting their hands in their pockets and perhaps contributing towards this because their actions are making the problem much worse.

Now, there is no doubt at all that there is a significant problem with under-18s getting stuck in and trying to drink and trying to drink heavily. There is no doubt at all that there is some strange cultural thing that appeals to 13, 14, 15, 16, 17-year olds about getting blathered, and that is almost some sort of peculiar youth passage thing, and we need to do something to at least attempt to try and combat that.

But what we are attempting to do in this amendment is to say, "Let's go back and let's revisit." It is a good scheme. We can argue about who should or who shouldn't be financing it. If it prevents some young people getting the alcohol or getting the tobacco that is significantly going to impact upon their health, then that is something that we need to look at again.

So we are saying, and we are not unhappy with the second half of the further amendment, is that we need to reflect and reconsider if there are ways of financing that. Perhaps we can finance it ourselves and then go back to central government and make our requests to them for additional funds to cover this,

because if at the end of the day they are talking via the PCTs and they are taking via the Health Secretary that we have got to do something about binge-drinking, we have got to do something about the health of our young people, then they ought to be putting their hands in their pockets.

So we would ask, probably without any suggestion that we are going to get the support, but we would ask people to support our amendment, which is a constructive way for approaching what we all accept is a fundamental problem that affects all our communities. I formally move the amendment, Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR ELLIOTT: Lord Mayor, I would like to second Councillor Finnigan's amendment and reserve the right to speak.

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: Lord Mayor, I am a little bit surprised at Councillor Wakefield attacking the Leader of Council on this particular subject, because I felt if he attacked anybody it should have been me personally. Let me just take him back in time. Let me take you back to 12 month ago.

COUNCILLOR HARRIS: You don't need to defend me.

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: I aren't defending you. I am not defending you. I am coming back to Councillor Wakefield. Councillor Wakefield at that time who had just taken over, approached me and asked me about this particular scheme and I said, "Yes, I would have a look at it and we would try and push it forward." Now, believe it or not, I did try and push it forward but I wasn't successful in pushing it forward, but it was tried to be pushed forward in different areas of where the budget could come from.

At the same time, you know, Councillor Wakefield, Councillor Dowson - well, I think she has gone to sleep now - came to me at the same time and she said, "Councillor Carter, there is £100,000 which is in the budget for Chapeltown". I said, "Oh, is there?" She said, "Yes, it's not been paid." I said, "Well, that's wrong, I will get hold of the Officers", and I got hold of the Officers and said, "Why haven't we paid this money?" Well, it wasn't there and I had a major inquiry conducted by the police. What it turned out to be is that Councillor Wakefield and one of his colleagues had gone to a Police Division and said, "You can have 100,000 quid." No budget. No nothing at all in a budget - was not there. So you have got to be very careful, actually, when you start talking about this.

Now, the scheme itself. Let's just go about one or two things. In my resolution I am attacking him in certain areas for actually claiming that we have removed funding for this. You have claimed that we have removed funding. It is on the famous Day view - wherever he has gone - website. He says, "You wouldn't believe it that the Tories and the Liberal Democrats in Leeds have cut funding for the proof of age partnership." That's what he says. And also you told us in the Evening Post, so I went to the Officers and I said "Right ---"

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: I have got my cap (Laughter).

COUNCILLOR A. CARTER: Where is your scarf, Peter?

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: He's not pinching my (inaudible), Lord Mayor. Lord Mayor, I went to the Officers ---

COUNCILLOR CLEASBY: Lord Mayor, I still don't believe it.

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: Order. Lord Mayor, I went then to the Officers and said, "Look, I have been told by these people that we have removed funding for the proof of age scheme. Can you just tell me exactly when the money came and how it came?"

Well, Councillor Wakefield was correct. In June '01/02 there was a pilot project in East Leeds and it was funded by Drug Action Team and various other people and local businesses. In September '03, and I can't find out whether all CITs because some claim they didn't, but the CITs funded it. The last budget - the last budget - set by Councillor Wakefield, if I am right, was 2004/05. It was the budget we inherited. Well, I said, "Can you look into that budget and tell me where Councillor Wakefield had the money for the proof of age scheme?" Well, we looked. We looked, Councillor Carter, but he didn't. He had nothing in it.

Now, we may have not put anything in either, but you can't say we have cut it. How can you cut something that is not there in the first place, and I hope he is big enough to apologise for that because it seems to me that some of his spin people are not really interested in substance or truth, they are only interested in spin, and you have got to be very careful about what they are doing to you.

Now, let's just talk about proof of age schemes. There is the Portman Group scheme which is used a lot in the City, and that is in the city centre, for people and that is for over-18s. There is the one that we are talking about which is the Validate UK card, that is the one that we are referring to. That's its proper name. There is Connection Card and there is also a Citizens Card. Indeed, there are a whole load of these.

Now, there is strength in this one. There is a great strength in this one. It is not really for the alcohol. The alcohol is important, I am not arguing that, but if you do it at 18, if you are going for the 18 one which is the Portman scheme, it does not catch children who are smoking cigarettes, and I think, you know, that is a great merit for having this particular scheme, so I am not arguing against the scheme. I said to Keith before, I think it is a good scheme, but I can't suddenly say to the Leaders of Council automatically, "Stick 75,000 quid in the budget." I am hoping they might, but they have got enormous pressures when they are looking at these budgets that are taking place and if they can I will go with it with

great pleasure.

If you also look at the youth matters green paper, I suppose we have all read that. Have you not read it? Well, I haven't, but it was brought to me, but it is quite clear from that that the Ministers themselves are trying to sort out a scheme across the country which is a genuine scheme and one which is acceptable. People are asking questions to the Minister at the present time saying, "Look, can you tell us a scheme which is right? How will it run? What will we do?" It is not there yet. The Minister is talking about pilot areas and once we know the pilot areas we will be clear about which card we need to work with and build on.

In fact, to be quite honest, the more I read of this, I thought this is ideal for Scrutiny to look at before the budget, actually, whether we have got the right one or whether we haven't got the right one.

However, having said all that, my resolution today could mean that if the Leaders can do it we can go forward and we can get it. Yours doesn't, Keith. Yours will do nothing. If yours was passed today you have simply condemned the ruling administration, and I would go home in tears, for failing to fund the proof of age scheme. You would simply do that and it wouldn't do anything. Yours does. Yours does. Yours does attempt to do exactly the same as what mine does, except what I put in mine is that I do think it is wrong for people opposite to be saying that things are removed from budgets which aren't, and they shouldn't do that, and I also recognise there are pressures on the Leaders of Council when they are setting it. But with those few words I move that, my Lord Mayor, and I hope you will support my amendment. Thank you. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR SHELBROOKE: My Lord Mayor, well, I am seconding everything that Councillor Carter says. I think it opens up a whole new area that we need to look at. Fundamentally the falsehoods which are being claimed on an almost daily basis in this City by the Opposition, falsehoods which quite frankly strike fear into the vulnerable in our society, and it is not good enough. It really isn't. You were in power for 24 years in this City. You should have a responsibility. The Leader of the Opposition was Leader of this Council. How would he have felt if people had said to him he wasn't taking things responsibly?

You know, it doesn't stop there. We hear about the cuts all the time, cuts on this, cuts on that. Which administration had to find the £18 million hole in Social Services when we took over? Which administration has put an extra £1.5 million into Social Services above their Government's recommendations? It is not this side which is causing the cuts. No, it isn't. And who closed the day centres in the first place? It wasn't on this side, it was you.

We have had it all afternoon about the Middleton bonfire. Are you seriously saying that you would like to see Officers of this Council possibly go to prison just to try and satisfy a few people? Is that what you are saying? (Interruptions) If

you are not every week putting falsehoods into the paper then at best you have got hypocrisy going on over there. Keith Wakefield was the first man in the Yorkshire Evening Post talking about how funding should have gone to the Harehills area when he knew it was being funded through Yorkshire Forward for Park Square. Okay, he knew it was going through Yorkshire Forward for Park Square and this comes from the lot who spent millions on Millennium Square, City Square, Landmark Leeds, the South Leeds Stadium and then turned around and said that the potholes weren't important.

Now, I second Councillor Carter's amendment to this paper and I think it is about time that you started showing some responsibility on those benches and stopped playing on the fears of the people who are most vulnerable in this City. Thank you, my Lord Mayor. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR HARRIS: The poor old weary Leader of Council, but not for much longer, is on his feet and you are quite right I am a bit tired. The pressures of the office are great but I will soon be handing over to Andy, but I am a bit worried, looking at him, but nevertheless. Keith, I really have to concede that life actually would be much, much brighter if I was involved in some sort of Erotica Festival. I am going to have a -- that might put a spring in my step as opposed to burden me, but just a word of advice. Be careful of guilt by association from Members of your Group. Just remember that, because when it comes to issues regarding the "S" word, but anyway ---

We do have a very clear pattern now, don't we, and I have said many times, I mean, it has been a revelation being in charge. I spent 22 years in Opposition and as much as I did try to find out what was going on and do things responsibly it was extremely difficult, but that is not a defence you can possibly have because you were here for 24 years and you know exactly how the system works, and it really is fantastic - and I use the word advisedly - fantastic that you suppose that by asking a question at one Council meeting to which I give a decent and honest answer that within (Interruption) Well, it was. It was. You know, I remember the claptrap you used to give us when you used to answer questions. You were never, ever able to say, "yes" in a straight way. You were never able to concede you may have done anything wrong.

Keith asked me at the last meeting. I openly said, "sounds alright to me. We will look at it", because I have to say it didn't ring a bell. I do try to remember some of these things that we are supposed to have cut, and the reason I can't remember them is because of course we haven't cut anything - but I try. I try my best to get into fantasy land with you lot and remember these cuts, but for the life of me I couldn't remember this cut, and we know why - it never existed in the first place, and this really is what you have sunk to in 3 seconds flat in opposition. You are just living in Alice in Wonderland and, yes, I admit I am a bit tired and a bit weary. Of course, that never applied to you because you lot just used to flit around the Civic Hall without any cares in the world because you didn't know what

was going on and you weren't interested in finding out. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Actually, I thought we were doing very well, Leslie, until the last two contributions, if you don't mind me saying. I actually agree with Councillor Finnigan. I think what you were aiming at is the right area. I mean, we could debate about whether licensing laws create binge cultures or binge cultures create licensing laws, and I think that is an interesting philosophical debate to have later on. What we are looking at was the mechanism for this, but until the new Cameron of the Tory Party stood up we were getting on nicely. With his braces bending out, yes, and let me just for his sake read out a list, and then we can get back to a serious debate.

Can anybody remember the Otley warden, what happened to that? Was that a cut? It was. Rhythms in the City? A cut. The night bus which was really important for women working in there - gone, a cut. The homeless shelter - a cut. Your mate at the back started this, a ridiculous --- the Detox Centre? Cut. The day centres? Cut. Wardens? Cut, and I can go on and on all through the night. (Interruptions) Middleton fire? Cut.

So, you know, Alec, before you stand up have a think and let's try and get back to --- Sorry, I have insulted you. Have a think. Just reflect on what we are trying to do. I did say, Les, at the start that the budget was through CIT and therefore it did need mainstreaming. Now, you can either take my word or not my word and it is entirely up to people whether it will be mainstream or not. I am not listening to you. I wouldn't take your word for anything. You can either do that and say it could or you can say what is really important is, is this scheme worth supporting? I think you have said it. I am surprised at you not having your way with your Leaders because (Interruptions) No, it is perfectly legal, because, you know, I have just seen you out there with the Officers because you didn't get your way here before so I am amazed. Didn't we see it? I am amazed you didn't, but it is on a serious issue, Councillor Finnigan and others that have stuck to this debate, which is what is right, and yourself, Les, are right about this scheme. Potentially it has got the right mechanisms to get that responsibility and accountability in the community where, as I say, this is a real, serious issue for all of us, and all I would say is -- I accept some of your criticisms of the White Paper, by the way, but if you say to us, and we take your word, that you are going to have a look at it and you will drive it in this budget's proposals, you know, I am half-reassured about that because I think what we are all saying is this is a good scheme. Let's try and get it implemented, if we have got the money. We all benefit, including particularly the people we represent who have to put up with a lot of anti-social behaviour as a result of excessive drink. I move, Lord Mayor. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: So we move to the votes, and can I draw the attention of everybody, particularly Councillor J. L. Carter and Councillor Gruen, to the wording at the top of the page, possibly couple that with a plea not to shoot the messenger.



If you wish to argue the legal points then again, as I said at the end of the last White Paper, perhaps you could do it afterwards with these advisers on my left and right.

We take first of all the first amendment in the name of Councillor Finnigan.

(Councillor Finnigan's amendment was lost)

(Councillor J. L. Carter's amendment was carried)

(The substantive motion was carried)

### ITEM 11 - WHITE PAPER MOTION - PPG3

COUNCILLOR A. CARTER: My Lord Mayor, you sometimes can't understand what you see, really, but, anyway, in moving this resolution I will very quickly, because I am sure I am out of order, say I can assure you that we will look at financing the Proof of Age Scheme in the next budget, despite the fact you all voted against it, but never mind.

My Lord Mayor, can I just go on to the serious planning issues around PPG3. It is not just because, you know, we took over the Council 18 months ago that these issues are ones which are really, I suppose, upsetting us at the moment. Members were writing objecting to planning applications caused by the implementation and the rigidity of PPG3 ever since it was brought in. Of course it has some good points, particularly the protection of the Green Belt that it affords, and nobody would want to see that diminished, but there is not a Member of this Council - or certainly very few Members of this Council - who have not written and objected to a planning application because it wasn't over-intensive or/and didn't have sufficient on-site car parking, or because it was so dense the design was so poor. Very few, Members of this Council.

Most Members of the Council have, of course, done the opposite and bombarded the Planning Department with letters of objection, as have their constituents, local residents, etc. Interestingly, so have the Members of Parliament, the people who actually owed Mr. Prescott to bring in PPG3 with all its good points camouflaging its very seriously bad points, and the seriously bad points are these. They do encourage - the guidance does encourage - bad design. There is no doubt about that, because its emphasis is on density. It does discourage family housing because the emphasis is on density. It does encourage, by its very nature, a transient population to move into settled community areas, and I accept that there has to be some of that. We have a much more mobile workforce than we used to have, and so there are going to be a lot more occasions when there are population changes. But what we are seeing in a lot of our established areas now is just a field or rather a row of "To let" or "For sale" signs, usually two per small garden because they are for two flats, changing

the character dramatically of the area.

Now, I know there are some people here, and Councillor Minkin has said this before, you have to accept it, things are changing. It is the market. Well, it isn't the market. It isn't the market. If you talk to house builders which we as a department are doing all the time, and tomorrow I am launching a design workshop, the first of its sort for a long time, at Leeds Metropolitan University where we are going to have Planning Members and we are going to have house builders there to talk about the problems around PPG3, to try and get better design, to try and get a bigger emphasis back onto family housing. If you talk to those people you know that they actually agree with us. Of course, they are in business, the developers; they are going to try to get the maximum numbers of properties possible, and we to some degree on some sites will want to see that achieved as well, particularly in the city centre on flat development there, but it becomes very frightening when you are told a statistic like this one: That in the last 5 years 60% of residential approvals outside the city centre - outside the city centre - have been for apartments, and that is down entirely to PPG3, and it is changing the nature of sustainable communities, and if taken to excess, and I believe 60% is to excess, whilst accepting there has to be some, if you accept that is to excess, what you are doing is making settled, historic, local communities unstable. You are doing that through the planning process and the person responsible for that is somebody who seems not to care at all about sustainable communities, and that is the Deputy Prime Minister.

The rigidity with which he expects us to apply on-site parking requirements is in itself environmentally damaging. It turns small, over-crowded modern estates into car parks because, because he says you should only have one and a quarter car parking spaces per unit does not mean that a two-car family could get rid of three-quarters of one of the cars, or means that you would actually achieve what he said. What it means is they will have the same number of cars but they will park them on the pavement, or they will park them out on the street, or they will block the junction with another road and generate loads of phone calls to the Ward Councillors saying, "What the hell is going on here", and that is happening to all of us. We are all getting phone calls like that. So when I see Councillor Blake's amendment, I wonder what world she is living in, really, because the first part of her amendment is completely in cloud cuckoo land. Her own Members can't possibly agree with her. You know, I could produce letter after letter from Members opposite complaining about density, the effects of PPG3, and all the things I am saying, and yet once again over there they try to stick up for this Government that is doing so much damage in so many ways.

The Members of Parliament, who I briefly touched on, and I will conclude on them. You know, now more and more we see them writing and objecting on all the grounds I have just said, and yet there they sat for 8 years letting it happen. The particular scheme in Guiseley and Rawdon, Silver Cross, the Member of Parliament there, Paul Truswell, rattles on virtually every week about this over-

intense development. The developer would tell you it was designed absolutely to the guidelines provided by John Prescott that Paul Truswell supported, that John Battle supported and all the rest of them supported. They really cannot go on being allowed to vote for one thing in Whitehall, or not be there, or abstain - never vote against - down there, come back here and tell the constituents, "Oh, this is terrible", or "It's the Planning Department on Leeds City Council." It is an utter nonsense. With these people, it is really time they were revealed for what they are, and what they are is not particularly complimentary because they don't do much to help this City, as we have already heard earlier today.

PPG3 in principle has some very good effects; in practise it is doing exactly what the Deputy Prime Minister wants it to do; it is cramming development onto sites to achieve housing numbers that in many areas are not necessary, and when Councillor Blake refers to the upcoming revision of the UDP, well, I think we shall have that in the public domain very soon and I wouldn't hold out too many hopes that is going to be a great deal of help to anybody. I move, my Lord Mayor.  
(Applause)

COUNCILLOR JENNINGS: I second formally, Lord Mayor, and reserve the right to speak.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Lord Mayor, I am pleased to move the amendment on the order paper concerning Planning Policy Guidance Note 3.

Lord Mayor, PPG3 was introduced into the planning framework to address the challenges facing us with regard to the need for a major house building programme to provide the homes desperately needed in the country, whilst recognising the shortage of land available and the desire to protect Green Belt where possible, with the principles of sustainable development determining the design, location and quality of new residential and mixed-use development.

The reality is, Lord Mayor, that when the Labour Government came in in 1997 it had to deal with the worst excesses of the previous Government that had led to an explosion of out-of-town shopping centres which decimated our district and town centres, a massive increase in the amount of car-dependent new housing development consisting of little boxes gobbling up large areas of Green Belt land with no regard to transport infrastructure or local amenities, and this set against a background of the chaos caused to our public transport system by deregulation of buses and privatisation of the railways.

The introduction of PPG3 has led to a massive increase in the amount of land developed on brownfield sites rather than greenfield sites, and I am pleased to say that Leeds has been at the forefront of these developments. The increase in development within the city centre has been unprecedented, enabled by changes in legislation and guidance, developments that have contributed to the regeneration of our city centre and hopefully will lead to a further reduction of

pressure on existing family housing in areas such as Headingley and Weetwood as more purpose-built student accommodation now gives the opportunity to start to regain balance in those communities.

Lord Mayor, I have looked forward to discussing these issues with Councillor Carter since I moved back to Development after May. The changes in the planning framework with the move to local development frameworks and the requirement for much greater community engagements present enormous challenges and opportunities to us all. Evidence is now overwhelming that lack of affordable housing, whether for rent or to buy, is proving to be one of the key contributory factors to poverty and ill health in our City. Provision of good quality, affordable housing must be at the top of the agenda for any authority that is really serious about the Narrowing the Gap agenda, and I just want to point out to you, Councillor Carter, that the fastest growing pressure for housing is coming from those living on their own, and actually the fit with your statistics is quite neat, although I am not sure if I agree with the figures you actually gave, but by 2021 over 35% of all households are expected to be people living alone. At this present moment over 10% of 22-44 year-olds now live alone, compare to only 2% in 1973.

We have to do something to address this change in trend, and from those whose circumstances have put them at risk of poverty who are far less likely to own their own cars and who need to live near their families with accessible public transport and local amenities on hand - all issues that PPG3 is there to address.

All these issues, and I accept what you are saying, need constant updating and discussion, and I acknowledge the controversy that has raged around some of the sites that you referred to, but through your leadership we should be moving towards a sensitive site by site interpretation of PPG3 as outlined by the Government in their guidance to serve the different needs of our communities, interpretation that includes looking at design and density and car parking within our own local frameworks and increasingly within the area action planning process that legislation in 2004 has given us the opportunity to implement.

I have to say I am disappointed, Councillor Carter, that you don't attend the Development Plan meetings - certainly you have not been to any of the ones I have been to - and that, for whatever reason, you send substitutes to the regional meetings discussing these meetings.

I had also looked forward to the discussions between key players in the City in the meetings set up by Councillor Minkin under the umbrella of LADDY. I now discover that LADDY has only met twice since you took over the role of the Development Department. I am disappointed that we do not know your vision for the future and I am disappointed also that it appears that many of the key players in the City do not know what your vision is either.

Lord Mayor, we have seen tremendous progress in this City over the past 15 years or so. On this side we are determined that progress should continue but

particularly continue to benefit the people who live and work here. You are in control of the Council now, Councillor Carter, and people are looking to you to take control instead of trying to hide behind the Government legislation as you have done in this White Paper. It would be a great help to know that you are fully signed up to the principles of sustainable development for our communities and that you are prepared to take the tough decisions necessary to achieve it. Thank you. I move, Lord Mayor. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR MINKIN: I did try and consider what this White Paper is really about, and I think Andrew Carter has given a good exposition of the thinking behind it, but I did take it at face value and thought that what is behind it is that you can only want more traditional family housing to be built in this City, and I thought, "What is a traditional family house?" Presumably it is a semi (Interruption) Well, a traditional family house in those terms, right, will be a semi-detached or a detached with a bit of a garden and with a drive and with a garage, and who would it be for? Well, presumably for a traditional kind of family who would be, you know, dad goes out to work, mam is at home looking after the children, there is one boy and one girl, though perhaps there should be a 0.4 somewhere as well, I think. But I am wondering whether this is really what Leeds is short of at the moment. Certainly there still seems to be plenty being built; 40%, I think it is, according to Andrew's figure, and I am not sure that this is really where the pressure is.

Certainly looking at my own ward, Kirkstall, the fact is that in our ward we have got plenty of traditional family houses, but increasingly they are not home to traditional families but to firstly students and it would seem to be optimistic that that is going to be less of a pressure, less of a fact, because organisations like Unite are coming and building purpose-built accommodation close to the centre which, as Judith has pointed out, and I think to be fair you did, too, is because of PPG3.

Secondly, by young workers who can't afford to buy a property but neither can they afford to rent on their own because of the prices that are going. They certainly these days will not live in digs, so they share a house and, of course, the market is there then, and we are all subject to it. There is no way of controlling anybody buying a house to rent it out. Many of these landlords are now actually individuals who see it as a protection for their own future, but increasing numbers I think will be attracted by this kind of mailing that came through my front door just the other day, "Invitation" - it looks very attractive, and it says, "Free. How you can give up work and be a property millionaire instead. Start from scratch. Live on Easy Street instead of struggling for a living." You can see that this is increasingly becoming the case.

And thirdly it is older people living in these traditional family homes, who have lived there for many, many years and who can't move on because there isn't the choice in the area where they want to stay to be able to move on.

At this point I would also comment on the question of density. Kirkstall, as you know, is a very mixed ward and we have plenty of back-to-backs and I recently asked Martin Sellars, "What is the density of back-to-back housing as compared with some of the new housing we are giving permission to?" I tell you, back-to-back housing is much, much denser and yet we in Kirkstall have lived very happily with that back-to-back housing and it works well so long as you have got that range of choice.

As Judith has pointed out, the demographics and the patterns of living are changing. I am sure you all saw, whether it was in the Guardian or whether it was in the Evening Post Homes Section, the reports on the IPPR policy research which does demonstrate the numbers of people who are increasingly wanting to, or, because of the increasing break-up of families, are having to, live alone, but this report interestingly shows that this does not undermine family and community life but can lead to better family and friend relationships, and they are not necessarily transient because they have got the range available, so people wanting to live in Kirkstall, having to share a house but wanting to stay in Kirkstall. I want to have that range of housing accommodation available so for all your areas you all need a range of accommodation.

I would not want to see Calverley, for instance, having no place for the young, the old and the single, but I am glad to note that tomorrow you will be following up the Neighbourhoods for Living document and having a day at looking at what is good design in new housing development. Of course, developers are going to try and maximize the return. It is up to us to have a robust response, robust policy.

And, LibDems, how can you vote for this, because you know that this is the impact on the Green Belt. If you are going to build at that lower density you are going to have to accommodate the people who want to live in the City, who need to live in the City, by going in the Green Belt, and here you are, "I am going to war on Green Belt gamblers" says your very own MP, Greg Mulholland, and yet you are voting with a Green Belt gambler on this White Paper.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Minkin, you have reached the end of your time.

COUNCILLOR MINKIN: Thank you. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR McARDLE: First of all, I would just like to begin, I wanted to say this earlier, I would just like to thank Councillor Carter for his generosity of spirit on 26th October. I know how important that was for the Conservative Party and I would like to thank him for that generosity regarding Mr. and Mrs. Shipley and their daughter Bethany. Thank you very much.

Last year when I was a Morley Borough Independent I sat on Plans Panel East and I still do it now, and it is a marathon session. It lasts probably around 10

hours, including site visits, and two of the most contentious issues are relating to good traditional family homes being desecrated by being turned into houses of multiple occupation and parking.

Like Councillor Carter, I think the 125%, 130% or 145% parking policy is an absolute nonsense. I am pleased to see that the redoubtable Ed King of the RAC is actually advocating that in terms of car parking provision that should be a tacit acceptance that it is 200% parking. Generally speaking, most new houses or people have two cars.

But there are some wonderful old buildings, mansion types like Bramham Lodge, etc., that are rightly being turned into houses of multiple occupation simply and purely because they are unsustainable to maintain. They have to be turned. Again, I think that is a tacit acceptance. But I also think there are lots of good traditional family homes, possibly three, four and five bedroomed houses, that are really, really being desecrated, and I don't think this is quite acceptable.

I think in terms of PPG3 West Leeds and South Leeds, particularly Morley and probably Pudsey, we have borne 80% plus of the development in Leeds since 1986 and there is a sustainable problem. In terms of planning guidance, we can only accept a planning application on its own merit but so many times recently we have actually questioned the cumulative effect of 100 houses there, 50 houses there, 20 there. In an area like Sharpe Lane, which is possibly going to end up with possibly 2,000-plus houses, there is a sustainability factor and myself and Councillor Finnigan have (inaudible) various places in our ward historically, and what you have got here now in our own ward, you are building the slums of the 21st century. That's what it is. You are building the slums of the 21st century simply, purely because of density, and I accept what Councillor Minkin says about the back-to-backs. 40 years ago, 45 years ago we got rid of the majority of them. Why? Because they were not of sufficient standard, and again that is a tacit acceptance. They were got rid of, you know, in the same lines as Lord Beeching got rid of the railways, and again that has had disastrous consequences for travel and traffic in this country, so I shall be supporting Councillor Carter's amendment. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR BALE: Lord Mayor, I am pleased to support Councillor Carter's motion because I am in no doubt that PPG is indeed militating against the building of family homes for people who want those family homes. I don't deny the demographic changes that have been referred to, and I repeat PPG3 is militating against the building of family homes for people who want them.

Lord Mayor, in order to look forward it is sometimes useful to glance back - sounds like a bad political slogan, doesn't it? So before rereading PPG3 I decided to have a look at a much brighter report on housing that was published quite a long time ago in 1961 when I was studying for my Higher National Certificate in Building Studies, the Parker Morris report of 1961, "Homes for Today and Tomorrow". I

am sure Councillors who have been here quite a long time will remember references to the Parker Morris report, published by a Conservative Government in 1961.

It was quite revolutionary stuff and it was talking about the way in which things had changed since the Second World War. It said one household in three now has a car, one household in five has a refrigerator, and so the world has changed since then. But the Parker Morris report became a benchmark for housing policy in the post-war period.

The Parker Morris report looked to the future and it identified two priorities very specifically, space and heating - not space heating - space and heating. I won't reminisce about how cold houses were in those days and how we couldn't afford it put wood on bonfires because we had to burn it in the grate. Suffice to say that to a large extent the problem of cold houses, but not for everyone, has been solved. The problem of space hasn't.

The problem of space hasn't, and it is worth repeating some of the things that the Parker Morris report 44 years ago said about space. Additional space is an important long-term investment. Homes are being built at the present time, it said, which are not only too small to provide adequately for family life but are also too small to hold possessions in which so much of the new affluence is expressed, and so space it said is important. Homes need to be larger.

Compare that with the dismal language of PPG3 2000, which does not talk about space but talks about units of accommodation and the fact that there shouldn't be more than 30 of them per hectare. There is danger here of being extremely hypocritical. How many of us, when we are tramping the streets at election time, come across families who have lived in the same home for a very long time? How many people in this room have lived in the same home for a very long time, have brought up children in those homes, have had granny to stay, have converted a bedroom into a study? Yes, there are social changes, but some of those family aspirations do not change, and we ought to recognise that those family aspirations do not change, some of them are enduring things.

And then there is talk about car parking. Remember I said that Parker Morris was saying, "Aren't we affluent today because one in three households had a car", and so it said, "therefore how much parking should we provide?", and it said, "Well, it is very expensive in terms of space, but we come undoubtedly to the conclusion that for every new home built in the future there should be space for a car." That was in 1961 when one household in three had a car.

PPG3, as we have heard, is suggesting that we should be just a little bit more generous than that. We can go to one and a quarter parking spaces per car or, if we really push it, we can go to one and a half spaces per car. This is pure socialist theory and, like all socialist theory, it is pure nonsense. Members



opposite have spent 8 years disagreeing in their heart with everything this Government has done, every time it has spurned all their long-held beliefs. Surely they can disagree with it when it talks such blatant nonsense as this. (Applause)

The high density living which this Government is trying to foist on our suburbs and outer City areas may appeal to Whitehall bureaucrats and champagne socialists, but it is not what people want.

THE LORD MAYOR: I'm afraid you have run out of time, Councillor Bale.

COUNCILLOR BALE: What people want is homes for today and tomorrow, Lord Mayor. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR CLEASBY: Lord Mayor, well, what a day for selective amnesia. We have had selective amnesia from the massed Labour ranks opposite and we have had reminders of the selective amnesia of our Members of Parliament. I think Post Offices were mentioned. How many of them came back to their constituencies having voted for modernising the Post Offices, which meant closing some of them, came back and boasted they were going to save their Post Offices. They were going to save your Post Offices as well. That is just one thing.

What about the licensing law? They voted for them, and what chaos. We have heard from a Leader of the Council the financial plight of our City now and how we will have to find money from one budget to pay for that because that money has already been spent, but not a penny of that is coming from the MPs and the authorities that are backing the Government, I mean the businesses that are backing the Government. How wonderful that selective amnesia is, Councillor Minkin, Councillor Blake. You put down an amendment that says, "which allows for construction of traditional family homes". Where are my ward colleagues? They are about somewhere, I have seen them earlier. Yes. So we can call St. Gabriel's "traditional family homes", can we? Do you remember what happened? Do you remember? It was thrown out by the Panel and said to the officers, "Go away and come back with the reasons to turn down these flats because something else is required", because I know because I was on site with Malcolm Bedford who was Chair of the Plans Panel then, and my residents turned to me after the visit and said, "What a wonderful man" because he said to them, "Look, you know, it is not an option not to have any development on this site. It is going to happen", and they said, "Councillor Bedford, we know", and he said, "What you need here is some nice houses" and they said, "Councillor Bedford, yes." So what happened when he left the Council and Councillor Moxon took over as Chair, they came back and you lot drove through flats, right? So so much for selective amnesia when you talk about PPG providing family homes.

What PPG provides, Council, is the opportunity to developers to develop postcodes. Mine is a desirable postcode and they want to develop in my wards. Now, look at some of your postcodes around this City, and we represent some of

those postcodes that are not desirable postcodes and they don't get the development that they ought to. And what is wrong with PPG3, it doesn't allow things like the wonderful urban renaissance projects and the wonderful things that, yes, you did help to start, Councillor Minkin, in this City, to really get going to drive the future planning and the present planning of the City.

Lord Mayor, I have no hesitation but to say to everybody, do not vote for the amendment but certainly vote for Councillor Carter's White Paper.

COUNCILLOR LATTY: Lord Mayor, I am not a natural speaker in this chamber because I am not a natural speaker, so I very rarely rise to my feet, but when Councillor Blake started talking about interpreting PPG3 I really got the urge, first of all, to go and --- No, I won't say (Interruptions)

COUNCILLOR A. CARTER: We all know how you feel, Graham.

COUNCILLOR LATTY: I won't say it, but I thought, well, I will replace that by saying something.

Now, how she could say that interpretation could be applied to PPG3 when the administration that she was part of, under that administration PPG3 was not guidance, it was government edict, and under that edict wards like mine, that meant where development meant replacing factories and schools with houses, that meant that every time something was going to be developed you were looking at between 200 and 300 homes, and this completely and utterly changing an area. You have just no idea what is happening with that sort of development. But when you think that only one development, when it is finished, will produce a new small town on the edge of Guiseley, all thanks to PPG3. When you look -- Councillor Carter mentioned silver Cross. The jamming in of so many houses on that site because it fits with PPG3 and it meant that the developer, knowing he could do that, probably paid a bit too much for the site and therefore is having problems, but this is the sort of thing which has happened and, as a result, we are utterly and totally swamped with apartment development.

If anybody who lived in what we still like to think of as Aireborough went away 15 years ago and came back, they just could not recognise the place. It is totally changed. Had we not been so slavish in following this guidance - guidance, wonderful word that. Had we built some houses, not apartments, not flats, not rows of town houses, we would have had, I personally feel, a much more user-friendly area in which to live and one which people would want to come to all these houses, but it escapes me why we need so many in my ward. We just don't. I mean, we are always saying that we need more employment. Okay, well, let's not knock a factory down, let's find somebody to work in it.

The other point I would like to make, you take a ward like mine where most of the property is old property, built before cars became a part of every family. As

a result, there is no car parking built into those houses. Okay, you then get street parking. If the new developments do not provide enough parking on site, you exacerbate that problem. We have, as we like to say in Guiseley and Rawdon, we do have a traffic problem but we have a much bigger car parking problem and this sort of development is just exacerbating it. So I 100% will support Councillor Carter's amendment. Thank you, my Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Andrew, please don't get up. You can speak from your seat, if you wish.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW: I think it is alright, thank you, my Lord Mayor.

I just want to say a few things. First of all, I welcome this White Paper. It is certainly something that constituents of mine would be delighted to see. We are not saying that we don't want any flats at all. Of course we are not saying that, but what we are saying is we want a difference in the shift. It is clear that the heavy emphasis at the moment is on apartments, particularly in some of the outer areas where it is obviously a new concept.

Now, my area has suffered quite a bit by PPG3, and let us not forget that your Government did increase the amount up to 50 per hectare and, because this is only a guidance, we find ourselves time and time again faced by developers who try it on and, yes, we have to be strong as Members of the Plans Panel, but it is not easy, and it is not easy for the certainty and the future of sites that are existing in our wards, and we have seen this with a classic example that is going on in my ward at the moment.

But the other point as well, paragraph 42(a) of PPG3 talking about employment land. This Government are really keen on seeing these factories being knocked down and suddenly, you know, houses being built on them. I don't believe that enough time is being given for us to try and find alternative uses for that other than housing, because if we did get a new employment usage for that land then we wouldn't have the effect that we have today, and that is more people having to travel further to their employment.

Now, the developments in my area have seen a significant increase in the number of flats, but what we see more of, and what Councillor Carter was talking about, are more "To let" signs and "For Sale" signs constantly going up. Now, I know that there are other areas in this City that suffer that a lot more than we do, but I don't want us to accept it as something that will happen in the future for us.

And when we talk about affordable housing, may I point out that actually, you know, this administration's policy has increased affordable housing from 15% to 25%, so we don't need any lectures, thank you very much, Councillor Blake. But I do think that it would be good for us to be able to look at each site individually, but unfortunately your Government won't let us do that, and when we try and do that we often lose at appeal.

So the point is that we are seeing our communities being crammed with these houses bringing new estates which are basically seeing, as Councillor Carter said, a turnover of people living there and communities like Guiseley, Yeadon and Rawdon, which have had very strong community links, are seeing those slowly eroded because there are new people all the time coming in.

And then when we talk about parking, well, we all know the issues of parking. The policy is an absolute disgrace when it comes to that and the only thing it brings is the problem of displaced parking on other residential streets. But, frankly, to conclude, what really sticks in my throat is reading in the paper Paul Truswell complaining about us and the planning applications. I know it is not a pleasant thought, but really he should go and see John Prescott and tell him what he thinks. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR TAGGART: I think Councillor Andrew is a lovely lad, I really do, and I wish him well. We know he has got something wrong with him and it is very generous of you, Lord Mayor, to suggest he didn't have to stand to speak, and we hope he makes a rapid recovery, but I do think, Stuart, you are sort of living in the past. You talked about the character of areas like Guiseley and Yeadon and Rawdon, and Councillor Latty, of course, referred to the grand old days of Aireborough Urban District, all long since gone, and the employment character of the area has changed completely. Historically, as we all know, people very often worked locally in the mills. The mills have all gone. Do you really want industry back on the Silver Cross site, contaminating the land? I don't think we do.

So societies do change. I was talking to someone who had left Britain 20 years ago. Lived in Leeds, gone to live in America, had come back to Leeds city centre and he walked round and he was getting lost because it had changed, and the reality is all of our communities change, and I am sorry, Parker Morris '61 isn't terribly valid now because there are even more single member households now than there were certainly in '61, and we know in which direction the statistics are taking us.

If we continue merely to concentrate on building what is called traditional family houses, as Liz said it is semi or detached, three bedrooms, we are not looking after the people as a whole. You talk to young people in this City, young people starting or attempting to start on the property ladder. Remember, they can't get a council house now. They might have been able to 20 or 30 years ago. The chances of finding a council house are slim unless you have got people who you are responsible for, like children or people you care for. The rented market is hugely expensive and young people trudge around. We have got so much money and the multiplication that the money-lenders allow now on housing is phenomenal compared to what it was when I left university, but despite that the price of housing has rocketed up. For most young people in this City, they can't buy anything anywhere, and if we just continue to say, "Well, the answer is more traditional

housing because that maintains characters" - I doesn't maintain characters. I tell you what it does. It creates ghettos of middle-aged and elderly people whose children have moved away, often out of the town or village in my part of the City, because they can't afford to live there, and that affects Council services, so we end up with no children, or not enough children. We end up closing schools.

We should be about sustainable communities and that means providing housing for everybody, for the old, young, couples and the rest of it, and that is what PPG3 is about. That is what PPG3 is about, and don't let's get scared at these systems. The Tories had PPGs and most of them were excellent, I have to say, and they are really good guides - guidance for local planning authorities, and we all know that at planning appeals they are all used, and often sensibly written and, of course, we have got the new PPS system, and on the whole it makes sense. The revised PPG3 on the whole makes sense. It stresses quite a lot about sustainable communities, so issues of transport are important. There is a whole lot shoved in there about design.

Now, I sit on the Planning Panel for West Leeds and I sub on the others and endlessly we are dealing with apartment applications, as Members know. We say, "We like the scheme but the design isn't good enough. Go back and redesign it." We agree you don't have to accept poor design, and PPG3 stresses the emphasis of having quality, and that is what we should be about. We should learn from our mistakes in the past. The history of Sir Keith Joseph is an interesting one. When he was Housing Minister he said, "Vote Conservative" in that General Election "because we will build more council houses." In the '50s both parties said, "Vote for us and we will build more", and they had these crazy subsidy systems which meant the higher you went in your high-rise, the greater the subsidy from central Government and, of course, we have the legacy today in places like East Leeds with people living in the sky, and that is not where they wanted to be.

But PPG3 is better than all of that. We shouldn't live in the past. We need to look to the future. Let's think about our young people. This is a great City. Let's help them find somewhere to live. Thank you very much. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR PROCTER: My Lord Mayor, under Council Procedure Rule 22.1 can I move that Procedure Rule 3.2 be suspended to allow the remainder of the White Papers to be heard.

COUNCILLOR HAMILTON: I second that, Lord Mayor.

(The motion was carried)

COUNCILLOR JENNINGS: My Lord Mayor, the first thing I am going to say is maybe an apology to Councillor Minkin about what I am first going to say, which is that a couple of meetings ago after Plans West we much to our surprise agreed that after 18 months on Plans West together we agreed more than we disagreed. In fact, very strongly agreed on many things. That is why I have apologised first.

I don't want to be the nail in your political coffin. I didn't hear that, thank God, Councillor Taggart. And I nearly agree with everything you said in your speech this evening. I, of course, will slightly challenge what you said about the Liberal Democrats at the end of it, and certainly if my recollection is right a couple of meetings ago, the first time I have ever in the 6 years I have been on the Plans West Board, a member of that Board actually voted to build a house in a greenfield in the Green Belt. Luckily the other 12 members of the Board voted against it. That is the first time I have ever seen any Member of this Council vote for such an outrageous application.

I was very surprised, as has already been said by a number of people who have spoken this evening, about this amendment that Councillor Blake has proposed. I have been on Plans West now for six and a half years and I don't think there is a single member of that Panel over the years of all political parties that have not at one time or another argued against something in PPG3.

We are not in this White Paper - Councillor Carter is not proposing that we just build twee little four-bedroomed houses with roses growing round the gates (Interruptions) or whoever. We allow to be built (Interruptions) Please don't be so pedantic, Councillor McKenna. I wasn't going to do this, but I think ---

MEMBER OF COUNCIL: He thought you said "three".

COUNCILLOR JENNINGS: Oh, three. I said, "twee", "twee". My apologies.

Every single member of Plans West, and I am sure Plans East, has at some stage criticised an application over PPG3. I always thought the word "guidance", and many people will have heard me say this at Plans West, guidance is guidance.

Oh no, with this Government and sometimes with this Council, guidance is rules and rules cannot be broken - unless, of course, it is a Labour Member who wants to break them. If I am about to misrepresent your position on this, Councillor Blake, I will cease and I will give way to you. I seem to remember in your - what is the right word to describe them - death throes as a Councillor in Weetwood before you started the long trek south, argued quite rightly, as did both Councillor Golton and I, against the density proposed by the developers of the Otley Road Filter Bed Scheme, which was initially something like 58 or 60 units per hectare. We all argued against that. In fact they then brought it down. They brought it within PPG3 guidance rules. We still carried on arguing it, all of us, not just Councillor Golton and I, but Councillor Blake as well. Quite rightly. It was inappropriate. Some of the guidance that is written in Whitehall is not appropriate for the situations on the ground in Weetwood or in Yeadon or in Aireborough. So how you can argue against this White Paper in Councillor Carter's name I really do not know.

Another thing that is in PPG3 and you mentioned in your speech, Councillor Blake, an important part of it depends upon the transport infrastructure. I don't

want to reopen a debate we had a few hours ago, but I seem to remember that just about every single planning paper I have ever seen involves a development in Weetwood or other wards on the A660 corridor have included the word "Supertram", and that is one of the reasons why in many cases developments were allowed to be of a certain density, because of the excellent public transport, which we don't seem to have had delivered.

I can assure you, Liz, just to answer your point, we as Liberal Democrats will fight any developments in the Green Belt, but we do not believe that PPG3 does not mean that we cannot build decent developments of the right sort appropriate for every area in this City and to meet the needs of every person within our community. I second.

COUNCILLOR A. CARTER: My Lord Mayor, I just remind Members opposite, first of all, the first words of the White Paper, "This Council, whilst recognising the spirit, guidelines and application of PPG3". We are not saying we want to see one type or two types or three types of dwelling. We are saying we want to see choice and choice in the right balance across every part of the City. That includes the need for affordable housing and, as Councillor Andrew has pointed out, this administration has increased the percentage of affordable housing on sites. Not your former administration - this administration - and let me remind you of a particular planning application, which I still have not fully got to the bottom of. Killingbeck Hospital - a site that lent itself to affordable housing, on excellent public transport routes, an excellent site for regeneration purposes and for a real mix of dwellings; yes, flats, yes family houses, yes town houses and what did we inherit from you? Yes, you. Planning - a development brief that allowed for no affordable housing at all.

It was this administration who negotiated through our Chief Officers with the developer to get some affordable housing. We didn't get anywhere near enough but we got some. We wouldn't have got any if we had stuck by the agreement that you lot signed up to. I still would like to know why.

My Lord Mayor, we have in Leeds the largest brownfield development area in the country, just about, 350 hectares. On that there will be industry, there will be commerce, there will be leisure, there will be housing. Why can't we start it? Because your Government will not fund the measly £4 million extra it takes to put the East Leeds link in. £4 million of extra cost that they have forced this Authority to incur. Don't talk to us about vision. Don't talk to us about developing brownfield sites because we have got the vision, we have got the sites. All we need is a government who allow us to get on with it. (Applause)

My Lord Mayor, the hypocrisy is oozing out from over there. Let's just take three of the Councillors from one of the wards who will undoubtedly vote with Councillor Blake. Yes, Mick, I am coming to you. You are a nice man. And yet there they go, Councillors Lewis, Jarosz and Coulson. Their ward is being

swamped with development, swamped with it, but every time they are there arguing for lowering the density, more family houses - exactly what we are saying, but they will have the hypocrisy --- Well, I don't know which way the hypocrisy works. Is it that you are kidding your constituents or is it that you are kidding your party? But you must be kidding one or the other, you can't have it both ways. So we will see how you vote tonight, and I watched Richard nodding with Councillor Blake all the way through her comments, so I think we know which way it will go.

My Lord Mayor, I wish we could convince the Secretary of State to let us apply PPG3 on a site by site basis. It was us who pressed in the revision of our UDP to relax the strictures of the car parking policy and to deal with that site by site and hopefully because of the robust nature of the Plans panels that is what we are doing. In my view, you must look at site by site, you must look at car parking as it affects every individual site because otherwise you are going to make the lives of your constituents a misery, and it is up to you to make sure that that doesn't happen, and I would always back Members who seek to make sure that within the letter and practise of the law they make sure that they get the best for their constituents out of a planning application, and developers expect that.

And as for talking to developers and to partners in the public and private sector we are doing it all the time. That is why we are having the session tomorrow, which will be very valuable. It is why we have the discussions with developers, with senior officers pre-planning application discussions because we are trying to get across what is our vision - a vision that means that we are bringing family housing nearer to the edge of the city centre. That has some very, very important effects. (1) It means that we can keep more inner city schools open. (2) It means that people can travel to work in the city centre more easily. A whole raft of reasons.

We are also looking at creating real dynamic public space around the new development sites in the city centre and that will mean negotiating for funding from the developers, and that may well mean looking at the level of affordable housing there is there, because that development will have to be funded. That special, that first-class open space will have to be paid for somehow, so there is a vision, and the vision is that we have a mix of properties available to all sections of the community in all parts of the City, and the vision is that we make sure we develop brownfield sites and not greenfield sites, that we make sure we have got a proper transport infrastructure to serve those areas, and that we make sure we have initiatives for low cost home ownership which you never had - which you never had. My Lord Mayor, I only wish we had a government that would support us in our vision and our objectives. (Applause)

(Councillor Blake's amendment was lost)

(The motion was carried)



ITEM 12 - WHITE PAPER MOTION -  
FIRE SAFETY ISSUES WITHIN LEEDS MENTAL HEALTH TRUST

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Lord Mayor, Members will remember that we have visited this particular area before and the first thing that we would say is to congratulate the work of the Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Board on their approach to this particular matter and it being able to establish some - some - of the truth of this particular matter. They have worked hard. They have worked furiously to get to the bottom of what exactly has happened in Leeds Mental Health Trust, and what this resolution does is to try and provide a little bit more help and a little bit more support because there is clearly something rotten in the state of Leeds Mental Health Trust, and of that there is no doubt.

Now, we are in a situation where Leeds Mental Health Trust have been aware of these problems in terms of fire safety in these particular buildings since 2002. Documentary evidence exists that shows that fire officers were raising those concerns all the way through 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005. No doubt whatsoever about that.

Now, Leeds Mental Health Trust will tell you there is nothing really to worry about in any shape, way or form, because they have this marvellous Fire Safety Plan, and we are in a situation where the Leeds Mental Health Trust are quite happy to try and fob us all off with a suggestion that they are addressing this particular matter quickly and appropriately, but the truth is somewhat different. Of that there is no doubt, and the reason that I think we need to reconfirm our call for a public inquiry is to make sure we get to the absolute bottom of this, that we get some transparency in this whole process, because there is no doubt at all that people knew there was a problem in 2002. No doubt whatsoever.

There is no doubt at all that there was a cunning redefinition of hospitals to the redefinition that they were given in terms of patient hotels. We need to explore why that definition change, why those lower standards were the ones that Leeds Mental Health Trust were prepared to go along with.

We need to be in a situation where we examine the whole process of the PFI applications that went through that led to this lowering of standards, because the same approach is being adopted to the LIFT scheme at this particular point, and that is going to impact on many of the projects that the Council is actually involved in.

We also need to get to the bottom of the fact that at a point where people have fought hard within the Trust to try and get some honest discussion and debate about this, that they suddenly find themselves suspended. We need to get to the bottom of a point where an employer is telling an employee that he is not fit or healthy enough to be attending work - a whole new way of approaching a suspension. "We will tell you that you are not fit enough to work" - a whole new way of approaching things.

We need to get to the bottom of the fact where the Leeds Mental Health Trust's fire officer is there trying to make sure that there is an open and honest debate, he is suspended as well. You are in a situation where we need to explore why people who are working in the best interests of these people who are using these accommodations, these people who are the most vulnerable within our society, at a point where people are trying to raise those safety concerns quite legitimately, that all sorts of actions are taken against them to try and suppress the truth coming out, and the whole aim of a public inquiry is to make sure that the Mental Health Trust cannot pick and choose who will or who won't give evidence, can't pick and choose what documents they will and what documents they won't release. It needs a full judicial process that looks fully and totally at the whole picture, what has happened from 2002, and can insist that people turn up and give evidence, can insist that all paperwork on this is released and that we get some transparency into this particular process.

Now, as I understand it, and I am sure I will be corrected if I am wrong, most Leeds MPs - I will be very, very careful what I am saying in this - don't seem particularly keen or enthusiastic about having this brought out into the open and having it debated by a public inquiry, and I understand there is one MP - I don't want to tell you who he is, but he is not Labour - who seems to be somebody who is interested in having this whole process put out for public scrutiny.

Now, Brenda is doing an excellent job; there's no two ways about it, but we are limited as a Council as to who we can call to give evidence, or who we can make come in front of us to provide evidence, and how we can insist on documents coming into the public domain. I think we need to reconfirm our commitment towards a full public inquiry and get to the bottom of it, because we don't only owe this to those people who were courageous enough to whistle-blow and who were prepared to put their jobs at stake for defending the safety of others, but we also need to consider that the people who are in these particular buildings are some of the most vulnerable within our society. They deserve a fair deal. They deserve to be given the answers to the questions that need to be answered, and I would ask you to fully support this resolution. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR ELLIOTT: Lord Mayor, I would like to second Councillor Finnigan's resolution and reserve the right to speak.

COUNCILLOR MINKIN: I move this amendment because I don't understand the timing of this White Paper from Councillor Finnigan, when there is a scrutiny examination going on. He has paid glowing compliments to Councillor Lancaster's work and yet seems to be expressing doubt that the work of that Board is actually going to deal with the issue, and from the way you applauded it would seem that you are going to support this White Paper. Now, you would have to explain to me why you are doing that.

I had understood that we were trying to give the work of Scrutiny on this Council the respect and the acknowledged authority that the CPA said it should have. If that is the case, you should allow that Scrutiny Board to undertake the investigation that it is doing in all thoroughness, and I hope Councillor Finnigan is contributing to that.

It may indeed come to the conclusion that a public inquiry is necessary. Who knows? That work is being pursued. It just seems to me completely out of order, the wrong order, to say at this point that a public inquiry is necessary, when you have got Scrutiny looking at it. Otherwise, just refer it all to the public inquiry and say, "Stop the Scrutiny". Now, Councillor Lancaster, as I understand from my conversation with her pretty recently, is actually making sure that this is moving fast, so why this White Paper at this Council? It does not give Scrutiny the respect and the authority it needs to have in this City.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: I second and reserve my right to speak.

COUNCILLOR HARRAND: My Lord Mayor, when I saw this White Paper I thought, "Well, this won't take long, this is not controversial, nobody can argue with this." And then we had this amendment, and that amendment sums up the big difference between the two sides. Liz doesn't understand the timing and the respect for the Scrutiny Board. It is a balance between respect for the Scrutiny Board and the safety of people which cannot wait. The evidence is there. The evidence is in these documents, if you care to read them, about serious deficiencies, poor design, poor construction, inadequate fire stopping. We cannot await the process for a working party report, into a Scrutiny Board, reporting to Council, recommending some actions. It is weeks, it is months. This cannot wait.

COUNCILLOR MINKIN: (Inaudible).

COUNCILLOR HARRAND: The best way to do it is to get somebody outside with full authority, as Councillor Finnigan said, to summon people and ask questions. It is too much respect for the process and not enough respect for the real world of getting on with things. If we leave it as long as you want to, it will be next year before anything happens. Something could happen within three months if we did all this.

COUNCILLOR MINKIN: Can I just, on a point of personal explanation, please, that has been entirely misinterpreted. I was not saying anything about having ---

COUNCILLOR HARRAND: My impression is that it will be next year. We are a long way from a decision.

THE LORD MAYOR: Just hang on a moment, just let Councillor Minkin make her point of personal explanation.

COUNCILLOR MINKIN: What I do not understand and what you were claiming that I should understand, and I see no reason why I should understand it so I will ask you please to explain it. I was not saying there should be longer delay. I was saying that we have given the job to Scrutiny to do and I had understood that Councillor Lancaster was getting on with it. If you are saying, and Councillor Lancaster confirms, that that work should stop, it should go straight to public inquiry, then we do it. We don't wait for a White Paper ---

COUNCILLOR HARRAND: Is this a personal explanation or another speech, Lord Mayor? I am not saying that at all. What I am saying is that the process that we have in the Council will take longer than setting up a public inquiry and these things cannot wait. Months matter. You think the process more important than the safety of people, I don't. Indisputably it is going to take longer doing it your way than it is doing it Councillor Finnigan's way. We should be supporting this in the interests of our constituents, the people who are living in those places today.

COUNCILLOR KIRKLAND: Lord Mayor, this is a right old mess, to be honest. It was brought about because the opportunity to do a cheap job existed in the way that the new Building Regulations were drafted, which put forward a different set of rules for hospitals and a different set of rules again for hotels - patient hotels - but there is no doubt about it, and it has been expressed already in this debate, that there is a clear and present danger to the residents should there be an unfortunate fire, and the roadmap for a solution is far from clear and it needs to be sorted out quickly. Neither way, in my opinion, is earth-shattering but it is quite clear that the public inquiry is necessary.

Now, that means that you have got to have a Chairman with an open mind and a brief that everybody knows about, and you have also got to tell him that he has got to produce an answer very quickly. Public inquiries don't always produce the result you think they are going to produce. We have seen two big examples recently of -- well, let's just say the Iraq war and the death of somebody before then, but choose your chairman correctly and you will get the right answer very quickly. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: I just want to come in on the procedural aspect that Councillor Minkin raised, because I think yet again we are in danger of setting a precedent in terms of Scrutiny. It is not so much about what the White Paper says or that I disagree with it, but I do want to have an understanding from somebody on this side about the scrutiny process.

You have adopted these changes and told us they came as a result of criticisms, and we discussed them at Corporate Governance and Audit Committee at some length, and that has been a convention in the past 2 or 3 years that while there is a live scrutiny inquiry ongoing we should not debate this further here or take it further.

Now, I understand and I have no objection at all to the principles underlying what Robert is talking about, but some of us actually live in East Leeds and say the same thing about flooding. Now, we have another inquiry about East Leeds flooding. We have had one inquiry already and actually there are people in Seacroft and Killingbeck Ward who are sick and tired of waiting for any action to be taken about the flooding problems. So what is so different about these people? Why shouldn't their flooding problems be solved? Forget the inquiry by Scrutiny Board - taking far too long, aren't they? Let's get out there and do something for the people who are suffering from flooding. But, no, we don't. We get told, "Hang on a second. Play the game by the rules. Go through Scrutiny". So that is a key point I want to have some answers to, because either we have a scrutiny process we all sign up to or we don't, and if we don't, fine, we will go away from the scrutiny process and we will do as we choose when we want to as well, but there is no understanding about the process.

COUNCILLOR LANCASTER: Lord Mayor, I have to say I was expecting to speak on the Scrutiny minute so you would have already had this information. I note Councillor Finnigan's concerns and obviously Councillor Harrand's, but I just wanted to take this opportunity to inform Council Members that tomorrow, the 2nd of November, the Scrutiny Board (Health & Wellbeing) Working Group begins its inquiry, starting with visits to the three centres. Then on November 11th we will be interviewing key witnesses for the inquiry.

In view of the urgency of this matter I will be recommending to Scrutiny Board Members that we call an additional meeting to sign off a final report. That should be before the end of November. Our next Scrutiny Board meeting is 21st November and we felt for all the final interviews and that would be on the 11th. We just want to make sure that that final report is right, to give that bit of space, so we were hoping at the Scrutiny Board meeting on 21st to suggest to Members that we had this additional meeting to sign it off before the end of November.

So I thank you for the compliment. We are trying to do our best. The working group is up for it. We have got a lot of information. We have got the fire regulations from the Fire Department as well as the ones that was from the Fire Officer, and other evidence. Obviously, everybody will get a report of who we have spoken to, who has agreed to come, and then I hope that you will make your judgment on that. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Lord Mayor, let's see if we can try and explain things a little better. Let's deal with Peter's first about the flooding inquiry. This particular process the Mental Health Trust has gone through I think has been especially suspect. I think with flooding, we accept that flooding occurs, we need to take the matter seriously and go through the Scrutiny process, but I think serious questions need to be asked in this particular process to try and understand why three years have gone past with a significant safety problem occurring and nobody has reacted until such point that this information was put into the public domain.

Now, we are in a situation where, with the best will in the world, the Council cannot insist on who it wants to interview. Now, Brenda will do an excellent job and she will get, I am absolutely sure, a list of people and a list of papers she wants to actually see. There are no guarantees ultimately that she will find co-operation from the Mental Health Trust. Indeed, the co-operation of the Mental Health Trust has been something that has been sadly lacking through this whole particular process. They seem very desperate not to release papers. They seem very desperate not to allow some of its employees to speak to Scrutiny Board (Health) and I think we are in a situation where we need to consider and reflect that.

One of the things that is puzzling, perhaps, is that the Labour Group supported a call for a public inquiry previously and at this particular point I am a little confused, but I would be, as to why they have gone lukewarm on that particular commitment or agreement that they made previously. As I understand it from reliable sources at the Scrutiny Board when they were debating the issue, several of the Labour Members were calling quite vigorously at that particular point for a public inquiry.

The fact of the matter is, and with the best will in the world, we are in a situation when we cannot necessarily get the full picture from the Mental Health Trust because we cannot insist that they release all their papers, we can't insist that people turn up and answer specific questions on concerns that we actually have. Ultimately, we are only going to be in a situation when that can be dealt with at a full public inquiry which is just restating the position that we all signed up to previously.

I don't think there is anything confusing. I don't think there is anything wrong with adopting that particular position. I suspect at a point where we do reconfirm our position the lack of support from most of our MPs will be something that we will be hearing about. I suspect that the Health Authority will yet again turn down our request for a full public inquiry, but we need a head of steam because by the time the Scrutiny Board has finished, taking what Councillor Minkin is saying, that they will probably come to the same confirmations anyway, we will have lost some time in terms of trying to make this section of vulnerable people safer and we will be still in the same situation but more time will have passed, and the potential (Interruptions) I am going to finish the point. You have had your opportunities. You have had your opportunities. If I can actually finish off what I am actually saying. I am saying that at this particular stage we move as quickly as possible, unlike Leeds Mental Health Trust who in my view have buried this for the last 3 years. We move as quickly as possible to make sure that this is looked at in the vigorous way that it needs to be done.

Ultimately, Scrutiny will do the best job they can do but they are not in a situation where they can demand that people turn up in front of them and answer

questions, they can demand that papers are actually released to this whole particular process. Let us not prevaricate. Let's not kick it into the long grass. Let's not bring it back at some later meeting. Let's make sure that we put the concerns of this particular vulnerable group of people first and we reconfirm our commitment that we all agreed, all-party support, our commitment to call for a full public inquiry.

(Councillor Minkin's amendment was lost)

(The motion was carried)

### ITEM 13 - WHITE PAPER MOTION - FREE BUS TRAVEL FOR PEOPLE AGED 60 AND OVER

COUNCILLOR DOWNES: Lord Mayor, whilst I welcome the Government's decision to provide free off-peak local bus travel for the over-60s after 9.30 a.m. weekdays and all day at the weekend, I am concerned about the way this will be funded and the effect it will have on the Council Tax.

When free concessionary fares were introduced in Scotland and Wales, the estimated cost was way out, up to 200% in some areas. This is because when you offer free travel there are more people likely to make use of it. Not a problem in itself, but it does make estimating the cost very difficult.

As far as I can see, there is no provision for funding any shortfall so it will have to be taken from the levy retrospectively, which could produce a double whammy for Leeds after the first year.

The problem is exacerbated by the distribution system of the funding which is through the Councils based on assessment of needs, yet when the PTA claim it back through the levy this can only be done per head of population. This will mean that in West Yorkshire some District Councils will benefit and others lose out.

The implications for Leeds are not good. The prediction is that we will lose out by a 6-figure sum. The actual amount has not yet officially been released but we will once again be penalised as a City by this Government.

Local Councils are responsible for carrying out policies decided at national level. Currently we are put into a situation where we will have to raise Council Tax in order to fill the funding gap between the Government grant and the actual cost of making free bus travel a reality. For example, in Oldham a Band D council house would have to take 28 or more free bus journeys before they were better off, i.e. paying less in extra Council Tax for the concessionary fares based on their current 50p flat fare. It would be far better and much more fairer to fund free concessionary bus travel through the PTA, not the council levy system, and this is not impossible, since this is the way that rail funding is dealt with. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR WADSWORTH: My Lord Mayor, fellow Members of Council, I am pleased to second this White Paper motion in Councillor Downes's name. This scheme for free bus travel for the over-60s as introduced in the budget statement in 2005, due to start in April 2006, at first value seems a wonderful scheme for people who are over 60 and rely on bus travel to get around West Yorkshire. However, when you look into the detail further there are some problems which cause me concern.

The Chancellor has estimated he will give £16.9 million to fund the scheme, which I believe will not be enough as we cannot possibly know how many people will take up the scheme and will travel by bus instead of train. I also have concerns over how this money has been allocated across West Yorkshire. The £16.9 million will be given to the five District Councils on the basis of deprivation and not per head of population. However, the PTA who operate the scheme will need to raise a levy which will be added to the Council Tax bill and the cost will be recovered by the PTA, which will mean that this Council will probably have to fund more to the PTA than it will receive from central government.

There are still some ambiguities surrounding the exact terms of the proposal specified in the wording "local" as described by "a free local bus". How will this affect journeys straddling city and town boundaries? How does local in a journey have its entire journey become free? The burden will fall onto the Council Taxpayer and the very same pensioner who over the past 8 years has seen income fall and taxes rise seems to have been thrown a lifeline by free bus travel. However, this will be wiped out by higher Council Tax bills.

I hope that all Members of Council will think carefully about what is best for the pensioners in their ward and therefore support Councillor Downes in his White Paper motion. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR J. LEWIS: Lord Mayor, I welcome the opportunity provided by Councillor Downes and Councillor Wadsworth to both praise the Government for something good they are doing in this City and also it brings to light something bad that the Conservatives and Liberals did to our older people, and I think Councillor Wadsworth makes some valid points about older people's incomes, but why was it that his colleagues on Metro last year voted for an increase - an increase, not a cut - an increase in the cost of concessionary travel for older and disabled people? And they were doing this at a time when the money was in Metro, money that council taxpayers had already paid for public transport in this City and the Council.

That money was already in Metro and they were dishing it out left, right and centre.

So first of all I think it is worthwhile pointing out that this thing they are complaining against in actual fact reverses another one of their not fantasies but realities, another one of their bad things that they have done.



Also I think it is useful looking at what the Government have done, in that they have fully funded the cost of this in West Yorkshire, and Councillor Downes does make some points about the accountancy matter. It would be simple for everybody if it was paid directly to the PTAs in those six parts of the country who have PTAs. No-one is arguing with that. That is in my amendment.

So here we have it. We have a good government programme supporting our elderly people, reversing another unfair charge on elderly people brought around by this lot and I hope that Council agrees with it. I think everybody agrees on this minor administrative change that would make it simpler for everybody and I hope we can all support this and move on. Thanks very much, Council.  
(Applause)

COUNCILLOR LYONS: Lord Mayor, it comes not as a shock to me but I sometimes wonder what the people in charge over there want, because what we have got is --- Listen. I had to listen to you all bloody afternoon. It is quarter to nine now. So as far as I can see, Lord Mayor, what we have got is a Labour Government that has put £350 million so that the people can travel free when they are over 60 at the hours stated in the amendment.

So what happens? They dash up here, somebody -- how long has he been on the PTA? Five months or summat, and he dashes up here and he says it will fall on the ratepayers of Leeds. The Government are paying the full amount in. Check your figures. They are paying the full amount in to cover the whole of West Yorkshire which is, as he said, £16.9 million across the five districts. Listen to what I am saying. To get the money out from districts has always been a terrible job. You can't get it district by district. Government has given us the money. What do they expect them to do? Give them extra money, or summat like that, you know, for these lot to go on their holidays or go other places? They are paying for this travel over 60 right across the districts, and if you want to bet any money on it, I am a few bob short. Look into it. You know and I know - you had a 15 minute briefing so you should know - on this, the money is being put into districts.

The trouble is, as we all know, it is getting it back out of districts and how you levy to get it back out. The simplest way - and Rick is right, and so is James - the simplest way to do it is to do it like the Government did it for the railways: Pay direct to the PTA or, if they don't trust the present Government, some of the PTAs, you know, they are Liberal and all kinds of things, then they can, they can pay it direct to the bus companies or whoever is doing it. It is a simple matter. It is a simple matter for Government to --- You know, Lord Mayor, I have sat here most of the afternoon. I had two hours off to go talk to the Catholics and I thought I had got a break when I came back, like, you know, and all I am hearing, they are not listening to what the figures are because they have took Ricky's figure and Ricky's figures are wrong.

This Labour Government is paying for this. What more do you want? What we are saying is this, is that if they paid it in a direct manner then it would not affect any person in Leeds whatsoever, so we are calling for the amendment to say pay direct, like you do, and if you had got your figures right we would have voted with you, but you didn't. You tried to mislead as if to say that this Government wasn't paying. This Government is paying and they are paying for everything, £16.5 million, nearly £17 million. It worked out at just short of £16 million. You know what they are worried about? I'll tell you what they are worried about. James was right. They taxed our old people last time to give people £1 million on each of the districts. They are frightened that they have nowhere to put any increases. They can't increase concessionary fares because the Labour Government are paying for them, so they will have to start working and using public transport properly.

Please examine the figures. What I am saying is that the money is there. Let it be put to be paid off directly to the PTAs. Nobody has nowt to worry about. No argument, but you have saw a little chance of getting in and kick the Labour Government for giving you £16.9 million. What do you want us to do? God Almighty, I don't know what's up with you.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Lord Mayor, we think this is a fairly innocuous resolution. We don't really have a significant problem on this one. I mean, all it basically says is that if the Government are going to introduce it then they ought to finance it. Now, some of us are slightly sceptical about whether the Labour Government will finance things appropriately.

Now, you may remember earlier on in the afternoon - anybody remember this one? - "Taxpayers will not pay for the new licensing laws". That is the sort of assurance that we were given back in 2004 from our own beloved MP, and what we are basically saying in this resolution as far as I can actually see is that, fair enough, we trust the Government, they are going to put the money in, but we want to actually make sure they don't renege on a deal like they have done over the licensing legislation.

Now, turning to the Labour Party's amendment, people may remember several months ago that we raised the issue of Dorothy Saunders in Morley. People remember it? Dorothy Saunders. Dorothy Saunders is somebody who wrote in to the Morley papers basically saying, "It is outrageous what the Liberals and the Conservatives have done on the PTA, putting up the price of concessionary fares", and all those other sorts of issues. I thought, "Well, you know, they might have a point here, let's find out what the issues are."

Now, as I understand it, talking to my very good colleague Councillor Leadley who was on the Passenger Transport Executive at the actual time, there was an increase from 30, up 5p to 35p, and for that, as I understood it, they got the

concessionary fare all the way through the day after half past nine or 10 o'clock, or whatever it was, which I thought was remarkably good value. But Dorothy Saunders was strident in saying how outrageous it is, attacking elderly people, all those other sorts of issues and, as you will remember, this turns out to be one of these bogus individuals who does not exist. We checked on the electoral register, we checked in the phone book, we knocked on doors. She doesn't actually exist.

Now, we are in a situation here where we need an open and honest discussion. Is 5p extra worth it for that extra concession that they get into the evening? Certainly a lot of pensioners have come up to me and said, "Yes, quite frankly we think that that is a very positive step forward. We are paying a little extra but we are getting a lot more for our actual money."

What I would say finally concluding on this particular one, my colleague Councillor Leadley, who has had to go to Morley, does point out the fact that in Scotland where they introduced this particular scheme the take-up was much higher than was predicted and the costs that were associated with that were much higher than was predicted. Now, all we are asking for is that if that is the case and, you know, maybe it interests this Government, maybe not, but if that is the case ultimately that they are going to make sure that they finance the bill, because we have often had these sensational announcements from central Government where they pass the finance on for somebody else to deal with. The licensing law is a good example.

I think what we are saying with this particular resolution is, okay, it is a good idea, we all support it, but we want to make sure that central Government, not local taxpayers, end up financing it.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Harris?

COUNCILLOR HARRIS: Well, Councillor Finnigan has just said it, actually, so it is okay.

COUNCILLOR SHEL BROOKE: My Lord Mayor, just a couple of brief comments, as I am sure we all want to go home.

THE LORD MAYOR: Members of Council, please listen to the speaker. He has only got 5 minutes. You don't have to agree with him, you just have to listen to him. Okay, thank you.

COUNCILLOR SHEL BROOKE: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. Really we are looking at --- Everybody agrees this is a great concession for people over 60, etc., but there are issues, and some of those issues are the times which the buses actually arrive. I would just like to make the comment to you, Council, that it is all very well having a free bus pass after 9.30 a.m. but if the bus comes at 9.26 and you have got to wait till 10.26 for the next one to get in, it is not servicing the people it is supposed to be servicing.

Now, I want to be careful what I say. I am speaking in general terms because this is a part of an ongoing Scrutiny inquiry chaired by Councillor Grahame, but early indications do appear that Metro etc. have very little influence over what the bus services put on, and I have listened to what you said, Mick, and it seems fair enough, but if you just give the money directly to the bus companies what influence do you have to control, because Metro gives 20% of their budget to them and they don't seem to have any ---

COUNCILLOR LYONS: Bus contracts.

COUNCILLOR SHELBROOKE: Well, we would all like to move there Mick, but it's not happening, is it? So I would just like to say, Council, just be aware of --- Yes, we do welcome the fact that pensioners are getting free bus travel, but it is not always as good as it seems and some pensioners are having difficulties in using those buses within the set time frames to get to hospital appointments and to get to the shops and are sometimes having to pay the fare and just miss out. Thank you, my Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR A. CARTER: My Lord Mayor, the first point is that my father here wants me to ask whether he ought to declare an interest, and if he accepts the concessionary fares does he lose his winter fuel allowance?

But on a more serious note I have here the figures about the money that the Government is giving and the ODPM's figures that it is going to give are as follows: Bradford, £4.1 million; Calderdale, £1.5 million; Kirklees £2.9 million; Leeds £5.3 million; Wakefield, £3.1 million. However, those are the ODPM's figures on which the money is being given, Councillor Lyons, as I think you well know, so I presume you also know, and if you confirm it then why have you misled the Council, that if the money was being paid on population Bradford would receive £3.9 million; therefore, they are making a surplus of £200,000. Calderdale would receive £1.6 million and would therefore be minus £100,000. Kirklees would receive £3.2 million so they are minus a third of a million. Wakefield would receive £2.6 million, so they are going to have half a million pounds to the good. Leeds would receive £5.8 million. So, Councillor Lyons, the Labour Government is costing the Council Taxpayers of Leeds half a million pounds because they are not fully funding this scheme. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR LYONS: I said the Labour Government ---

THE LORD MAYOR: Is it a personal explanation, Councillor?

COUNCILLOR LYONS: It is, that I have been misinterpreted with those figures and what I said was quite plain, that the Labour Government were putting the money in to West Yorkshire and they are putting the money in to West Yorkshire.

COUNCILLOR A. CARTER: Weasel words.

THE LORD MAYOR: I think we note your correction and thank you for making it. You did --- I think the verbatim record will show that what you said was it was being fully funded. You are now saying that it is not. Okay, thank you, we note that. Can we then move on to Councillor Downes to sum up the debate before we take the vote.

COUNCILLOR DOWNES: First of all, the Lord Mayor referred to the fact that people were not listening to Councillor Shelbrooke because other people were talking, and I wonder whether Councillor Lyons heard the first part of what I had to say because people were talking when I stood up, because I did mention that one of the reasons behind the White Paper that I put here is the fact that if the assessments that have been done as to the take-up on the travel fall short and more people take up on it, then it may cost the country more than £350 million and the Government are putting £350 million in. They are fully funding it on their figures, but if their figures don't add up and it is more, then who is to pay?

There is nothing in the paper that I can see that says the Government will fund the addition, which is what I am calling for. If you actually read it, that is what it says on the White Paper. When I say, "... therefore calls upon the Government to fully fund", I am talking about any additional costs that may be incurred due to shortfall because of over-use. That is what I meant.

The other thing is you said that my figures did not add up. The interesting thing was I didn't quote any figures because I had been asked by the PTA not to mention figures at this stage because they are still in negotiations with the bus companies, so how could I have misrepresented that?

As to the 35p concessionary fare, the additional 5p that we voted on last year, from the consultations that we had it indicated that concessionary householders were finding difficulties with the half-fare element of the scheme. This is the report. They were finding the difficulties during the evening peak period. Therefore we removed the evening peak period and made it a flat rate so that it was easy for everyone, and that way we were offering more of a service and that was why we felt that the 5p increase was right and proper because it would then fully fund the scheme.

And finally, the fact that we have concessionary fares, one thought: If the Government were to actually put pensions up by the right amount we wouldn't need them. (Applause)

(Councillor J. Lewis's amendment was lost)

(The motion was carried)

## ITEM 14 - WHITE PAPER MOTION - CLIMATE CHANGE

COUNCILLOR D. BLACKBURN: I am noticing that Councillor J. L. Carter is moving. He has been nearly hitting me in the face all afternoon, so I have got a bit of room now.

Hopefully this motion will not be as controversial as some we had this afternoon and hopefully nobody will mention anything to do with bonfires, because I don't think it is really applicable with climate change.

Coming on to this, today Tony Blair was addressing Energy Ministers from around the world about tackling climate change. I have got an interesting article here, "For too long politicians of all parties have treated the environment as an after-thought, something they need to pay lip service to and can safely ignore. This has to change", and that happens to be their possible next Leader, David Cameron. So I have got to say there seems to be full party support across the board for moving forward on climate change.

My motion asks that the Executive Board consider signing up to the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change. There are currently 96 Councils that are signed up to this document and it calls upon us to work at a local level to delivery the UK climate change programme, prepare a plan with local communities to address the causes and effects of climate change and secure the maximum benefits, and by so doing Leeds City Council declaring publicly its commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions from its activities, also encouraging all the sectors of our community to publicly declare their commitment to reducing greenhouse gases as well.

What are the facts on CO2 emissions? In 2004 the UK CO2 emissions were just 4.2% below 1990 levels. By 2010 we expect UK CO2 emissions to be 12.75% below the 1990 levels. The DTI figures for gas and electric show 19.5% increase in the consumption between 1990 and 2003, and at the same time there has been a fall of 16.5% in CO2 emissions which is largely attributed to the switch from coal to gas at power stations and the switch from electricity to gas in domestic heating. There has been a 15.6% increase in gas and electricity consumed by the domestic sector in Leeds. Nationally emissions from transport have risen by 10% since 1970.

This means, therefore, that our demand for energy is increasing and reductions that have been achieved so far have been from easy wins that do not require change in behaviour. If we are to achieve the Government targets it will be necessary to reduce our demand for energy.

So far in Leeds City Council we have achieved the following; the Climate Change Working Group which I chair was established in February 2005 to develop a draft strategy and action plan that aims to meet the Government's emission

targets and adapt to climate change. The group has identified a number of key areas, planning and regulation, energy use in buildings, transport, waste, adaption, procurement, natural habitats and education and awareness.

The group has established what has been achieved so far as a result of LCC activities in each of these areas. Examples are in 2002 Leeds City Centre was 25 cm away from flooding. A new section on the development of flood risk has been added to the UDP review and a corporate water management plan has been developed. In 2004/5 LCC reduced CO2 emissions from its own buildings by 30%. This was due to purchase of renewable energy for electricity. There was no reduction in energy use. LCC has developed and are currently implementing a carbon management action plan which has the object to reduce energy consumption by a minimum of 10% by April 2008. Car use at morning peak has reduced from 64% in 1998 to 58% in 2004. Bus patronage has increased by 4% and trains by 0.5% in the same period.

A significant number of planning policies and initiatives have been introduced to encourage the use of public transport. Leeds Household Waste achieved a recycling rate of 19.5% in 2004/5 and the target for 2010 is 33%. 88% of the City has green bins on its doorstep collection and a number of other initiatives have been also introduced.

Corporate Procurement have developed a number of framework contracts but materials bought off contract do not always meet specifications to buy either recycled or local materials.

Signing the Declaration is therefore important for several reasons. It reinforces the commitment made in the Corporate Plan to develop and support a City-wide climate change strategy. It raises the profile of climate change in the authority and demonstrates political commitment to achieve Leeds City Council targets and actions, especially for initiatives that have not previously been seen as important. It confirms Leeds City Council's commitment to achieve Government targets for CO2 and for greenhouse gas emissions. It supports the Carbon Management Action Plan and need to change individual behaviour to achieve energy and cost savings. It reinforces commitment made in the local Council Plan to focus on the most important environment issues such as climate change and to reduce CO2 emissions from households and Council buildings.

In short, it is my belief that Leeds City Council has to sign up to the Nottingham Declaration. It shows our commitment. It shows that we are prepared to take the necessary actions that are required in the coming years.

Before closing, I would just also like to mention there is a bill going through Parliament at the moment, Climate Change and Sustainable Energy Bill and the Management of Energy in Buildings, which I understand it has its second reading on Friday, 11th November. There are several local MPs. I won't embarrass the

ones that have not signed it by telling you, but I will bet you guess what party they come from, over there, you know, but what I would ask everybody who is present today: Talk to your MPs, ask them to support this Bill and ask them to be there on Friday, because our kids and our grandkids need this. Thank you, Lord Mayor, I move. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you for that short but no doubt invaluable data, Councillor Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Lord Mayor, I second and reserve the right to speak.

COUNCILLOR HARRINGTON: My Lord Mayor; and then shall come that terrible day, that day of wrath - dies irae, dies illa - when the earth shall rise up and take vengeance on the human-race, take vengeance on that extravagantly profligate human-race that has despoiled the forests, poisoned the oceans, sullied the air with gas after destructive gas and the people of Leeds behold on Christmas Day 2105 shall be sitting down to their turkey-flavoured soya bean, relaxing in the heat of 45 degrees sunlight around the famous South Leeds open air swimming pool, and they shall hear a rumour of a wave 1 km wide and 60m high racing towards the City of Hull and they shall hear that the City of Hull has been destroyed and they shall rejoice, because the City of Hull has beaten them in the Rugby League Challenge Cup final the week before yet again. But the wave will become closer and ---

Well, of course, that's just ludicrous, isn't it? That's just the scenario for another way over the top disaster movie. It couldn't happen, could it? Well, it seems there is some dispute about facts. Scientists come up with different things.

Some people say all the various disasters we have had recently, earthquakes, tsunamis, etc., show a distinct change in the weather. Others say not so, there have always been such things. Snow disappearing on the top of Mount Kilimanjaro - climate warming? Not so say some scientists; it is just because the trees have gone. Grow more trees and there will be more snow.

However, scientists, you may say, are behaving like Renaissance painters, they just deliver what their patrons ask, so there is a need for objective research. But one thing that does seem to be objectively clear is that the climate is getting warmer, that over the last 100 years the hottest years have been the 1990s, that the climate has been reasonably stable since the last ice age 10,000 years ago, but now it has definitely increased? So something must be done.

We welcome what the Government is trying to do. We welcome what the Council is trying to do. We welcome the Nottingham Declaration which follows on from the Government policy, and we welcome very certainly this motion. Our amendment simply wishes to say that we need to be as specific as possible about what actually is done, who is going to do what and how is it going to be paid for? Do we need, for example, a specialist energy officer, which is what other councils



have employed? It is an attempt to try and be as specific as possible when we know that there are hugely complicated issues: How we are going to deal with waste, how we are going to have a sustainable, environmentally sound transport policy, etc., etc.

I will finish with a wonderful quote from King Lear when the Duke of Kent says to the daughters who are giving wonderful speeches about their love and affection for their father, he says, "Your large speeches may your deeds approve that good effects may spring." Our motion is an attempt to try and be as specific as possible about this issue so that good effects do spring. Thank you very much.  
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: So you are moving the amendment in the terms of the notice, Councillor Harrington, I take it?

COUNCILLOR HARRINGTON: I am moving the amendment.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: I just second and reserve the right to speak.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Lord Mayor, I have to say I do appreciate the support from Councillor Harrington and the rest of the Labour Group. I did think it was a little bit unfortunate they couldn't quite bring themselves to support the entire motion by alluding to the issue of money, implying that we are all words and no action. What I can say is I have all of a sudden realised now why the budget was in such a parlous state: Because whenever an issue confronted the Labour Group they thought that the only way of solving it was to throw money at it, and if there wasn't any money to throw at it, maybe they can just ignore it, because (Interruptions) that's why everything looks like cuts, whereas in fact there is plenty more you can do just by thinking creatively.

Lord Mayor, one of the ways we have been able to think a bit more creatively is that some of the bodies that the Labour Group did set up themselves were partnership organisations across the City. One of them was Leeds Initiative and I think one of the most fruitful bodies that Leeds Initiative actually set up was the Leeds Environment City Partnership.

Our environment team, yes, they do have a limited budget but, I'll tell you what, they do a fantastic job with the money that they have got, and what they are very good at isn't complaining and saying, "Oh, we are not getting this amount of money or that amount of money", what they actually do is they go out and work within the partnerships that they have and they actually build capacity within those partnerships. So, Lord Mayor, when we go into the Leeds Environment City Partnership, through partnership with people like businesses, universities and colleges, health service, developers, manufacturers, tenants and residents, we can

actually achieve a lot more than we can do as a Council. It is not just about us saying, "We have got this money and we are going to spend it on that", it is a matter of going to our partners and saying, "What can we all do as a City to achieve a greater goal?" and I think that is exemplified more so in things like microgeneration.

Microgeneration is not going to happen because the Council all of a sudden say, "We are going to spend £2,000 on a microgeneration initiative." What is going to make it happen is that individual householders out there get to know what it is all about and actually choose to put it in their homes. We can actually encourage them through education. Now, education does not necessarily have to cost more money. We already have a fantastic education system.

I can think of plenty of examples in our schools where it is governing bodies who have taken the lead to teach their children about the environmental agenda and there is no reason why they can't lead on this, too.

Also at our disposal, I have to say, are things like the Leeds newspaper, which I understand is called something else now. It is New Leeds, is it? I will tell you what, it is a vast improvement on the old one and it has a lot more pages and it has a lot more capacity to talk to our citizens and let them know what the issues are that face the Council and how they can help the Council without it costing them more money through council tax.

Lord Mayor, our motion is quite simple. I would really appreciate if we don't sully it with some kind of cynicism that the Labour amendment does actually seek to add to it. Please vote for the single motion of my colleague, Councillor Blackburn. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: My Lord Mayor, I will make myself popular and pass on this one. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: I knew you would finish with some Brownie points somehow or other.

COUNCILLOR ANDERSON: I will be quick, I promise. On behalf of the Conservative Group, we really do fully support this. There is a growing consensus throughout all political parties now that global warming and climate change is probably the most important challenge in front of us, with the possible exception of world poverty. Apart from that, I would think that there is a growing consensus in every single party as to how we go about it. (Interruption) Yes, you are correct, one does feed off the other.

Now, I don't want to try and break the consensus that we have got within here, but I do think that the Government need to do a bit more in terms of what we are doing. Margaret Beckett - this is not coming from me, Margaret Beckett has

said it herself in December 2004, that there is every possibility that we might not meet the targets that we have got.

Now, in this case it is not just the Government that are at fault. We are all at fault within this particular chamber and within this City. What are you all doing to try and promote climate change and energy efficiency within your own households? How many of you actively complete the form that gets sent out from Liz's Environment Energy Team every year? How many of you actually get your residents to complete it and get a copy of the report back that will come up with some constructive help for people to do? Things that your administration started, I accept that, but we are moving them forward as well in terms of giving people advice on better loft insulation, turning your heating down by 1 degree and the effect that that will have in terms of the savings of CO2. How many of you go to bed at night and do not switch your television off and leave it on standby? You know, but loads of people do. That is one way of saving energy.

But the final thing I would like to say, and, yes, it is very critical of the Government in terms of renewable energy. This Government seem to think that there is only one way you can solve it - that is by wind power. Now, fine, if they had been here today there is enough wind to blow around generators, but we need to look at biomass, we need to look at photovoltaic cells. We also - and I do accept that this is contentious but as an administration we have got -- as a country we have got to have debates on two serious things: One is energy from waste - is that something that we support? We are going to have it to discuss, we are going to get energy from waste, and we also need to have a debate around the future, if there is a future - and I do accept that the Green Party may not always agree - but is there a future for nuclear energy to try and help these things?

As a Council we can do more because most of you at the beginning when I declared the interest that I am an ALMO Director, a lot of you did that. How many of you have asked your ALMO what they are doing in terms of their SAT rating this year? I can tell you that there is not one ALMO, including the ALMO chaired by myself, that have met the targets that have been set for improving energy efficiency and reducing fuel poverty in the council houses.

We heard a lot from across there this afternoon about the importance of council housing. What are you doing as ALMOs to actually do that? I know, because I have asked all of you to come in and speak to me, and I have heard nothing in terms of positive ways forward. I have asked what innovative schemes have you tried to introduce. The answer is "None". We, and you will enjoy the next Executive Board meeting because my colleague Councillor Carter will be announcing some great news as far as this City is concerned in terms of what we are doing, so I look forward to hearing it. What we must do (Interruptions) You are rambling. All across there you are going on. It just shows you how you try and pretend to be the Green party. Tony Blair said he would make your party --- You can hassle as much as you like. You try and pretend that you have a green

outlook on life. Not one of you have sat there and listened because  
--- Well, okay, I will excuse one person who is directly in my line who has  
acknowledged ---

MEMBER OF COUNCIL: What do you want us to do? We will do it! (Laughter)

COUNCILLOR ANDERSON: What I want you to do is stop talking a lot of hot air,  
stop waffling, get out there and actually do something for the areas that you try and  
pretend that you represent and try and do something to improve them.  
(Interruptions)

THE LORD MAYOR: I am sorry, Councillor Anderson, you have run out of time.  
Please sit down. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR A. CARTER: My Lord Mayor, as the Executive Board Member  
responsible for almost everything it seems sometimes, in the hope that the Party  
opposite will drop their amendment and vote with the motion as proposed by  
Councillor Blackburn, let me make a few points.

The first is that a report will come to the Executive Board, a positive report,  
which as the Executive Board Member responsible I shall recommend that we  
accept and we sign the Nottingham Declaration. We will, of course, as we always  
do, look at budgetary implications. I am not going to make promises. I am not  
going to wander round areas of Leeds making promises about lumps of money that  
may or may not then land in budgets. However, it is a very serious issue and I  
have to say that I compliment Councillor Blackburn on the enthusiasm with which  
he has taken up the Chair of the Climate Change Working Group. Actually, I have  
listened to you laughing and it is perhaps one of the most serious things we have  
discussed today. It doesn't do you any credit to sit there giggling, because  
Councillor Blackburn ---

COUNCILLOR ATHA: (Inaudible).

COUNCILLOR A. CARTER: Shut up, Bernard. Councillor Blackburn has taken on  
this particular challenge with great enthusiasm and the Officers of the Authority  
who are involved are equally enthusiastic about tackling some of these serious  
issues. Councillor Anderson similarly in the Development Department and  
through his Scrutiny Committee, he is working really hard, along with another team  
of Officers. I just wish some of you would give a little bit more constructive  
support and a little less of the giggling and poking fun. This is serious stuff.  
Roger Harrington knows it is and one or two more of you know it is, I can see by  
your faces. The rest of you, it is time you went home.

My Lord Mayor, I hope you will withdraw your amendment and support the  
resolution.

COUNCILLOR BLACKBURN: I think we all want to get home now, we have had a long day. I just ask you to support the motion and I would say to Members opposite, please remove the amendment and let's all support this one resolution about moving forward. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Actually I want to move a recorded vote on the amendment.

THE LORD MAYOR: I thought you were going to say that you accepted the withdrawal of the amendment. Right, Councillor Gruen has called for a recorded vote. Is that seconded? We will wait while everybody gets back into their seats.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: For possibly the last time this afternoon, would Members ensure, please, they are in their allocated seats and please refer to their desk units and press the button marked "P". Those Members in favour of the amendment in the name of Councillor Harrington should please press the "+" button, those Members against the motion please press the "-" button and any Member wishing to abstain and have the abstention recorded please press the "0" button.

THE LORD MAYOR: Right, we have a result, Members of Council. Of 83 Members present, 34 voted in favour of the amendment, 49 voted against and there were no abstentions. Therefore the amendment falls and we now take the vote on the motion.

(The motion was carried unanimously)

THE LORD MAYOR: A very harmonious note on which to end the Council meeting. Can I thank you for your co-operation and

wish you a safe journey home.

(Council rose at 9.30 p.m.)