

COUNCIL

28TH MARCH 2018

VERBATIM RECORD

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LEEDS CITY COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Held on

Wednesday, 28th March, 2018

At

THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
CIVIC HALL,
LEEDS

In the Chair:

THE LORD MAYOR
(COUNCILLOR J DOWSON)

VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

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VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF LEEDS CITY COUNCIL
ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 28th MARCH, 2018

THE LORD MAYOR: If you are ready, we shall begin what is, as you probably know, my very, very last full Council meeting as Lord Mayor of Leeds. I know - it should be an exciting one anyway because we have lots and lots to talk about and lots to do.

The first thing I would like to advise Members of is to turn your mobile phone ring off, please. Somebody's has gone off regularly at meetings so it would be quite nice if we could learn how to turn it off. Also, the meeting is to be webcast and you have got the four cameras up here, so if you can be aware of that also, please.

Children and Young People's Plan. I have agreed to the consideration of the Children and Young People's Plan as a late item and this has been circulated to all Members and is listed on the Order Paper at Item 5.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE LORD MAYOR: We now have some announcements. As this, as I say, will be my last Council meeting as Lord Mayor, I also know it will be the last Council meeting for several of our colleagues here in the Chamber, so I thought it would be really nice to say a few words about them, as they will not be here for the next meeting.

We have got a calculator out and we have calculated that between them their length of service is 305 years. 305 years – I knew you would be surprised at that because that is quite a lot of experience that we will be losing for the next Council session. I would just like to run through the Members who have informed me that they are leaving.

Firstly, and I know she is not here and well at the moment, is Sue Bentley. She has represented Weetwood ward for 14 years, has been Lead Member for Children's Services and as Chair of the Children and Family Scrutiny Board I know she has taken particular pride in raising the profile of children with special educational needs and disabilities, children's centres and child poverty. Thank you for that 14 years, Sue. *(Applause)*

In a double whammy for Weetwood we are also losing Councillor Judith Chapman. She has been a Weetwood Councillor since 2006 and was Lord Mayor 2015/16. During that time she helped to raise the awareness of autism and most famously creating a gigantic Leeds crest made entirely out of Lego. I think they are still finding bits of Lego in corners all over Civic Hall, but that was an amazing achievement. Judith unfortunately cannot be with us here today, she is in hospital. However, I have been assured by her daughter that she will be watching all the proceedings on the webcam. Thank you, Judith. *(Applause)*

Councillor Brian Cleasby, 23 years' service. He was Lord Mayor 2007/08 and he is particularly grateful to have served Horsforth continually, Horsforth and Rawdon, for such a long time. Thank you, Brian. *(Applause)*

David Congreve, 28 years' service. Yes, that is amazing. David has served the residents of Beeston since 1990 and he was the 121st Lord Mayor of Leeds, and I am sure that he would agree that possibly the highlight of his time was waving the starting flag at the Grand Départ for the Tour de France in 2014. *(Applause)*

Patrick Davey has served for 16 years, first elected to represent City and Holbeck ward which then became City and Hunslet. One of Patrick's claims to fame is that he was the very, very last Deputy Lord Mayor in 2010. Thank you for your service, Patrick. *(Applause)*

Councillor Ghulam Hussain. Councillor Hussain has served for eight years. He was elected to represent the Roundhay ward and during that time has chaired Corporate Governance and Audit, he has also sat on Adult Health Scrutiny and has been a very valuable member of those Scrutiny Boards. Thank you, Ghulam. *(Applause)*

Councillor Graham Hyde – where are you Graham? 26 years' service, Councillor Hyde served Seacroft ward which then became Killingbeck and Seacroft since 1992. He has done an extraordinary amount of work as our Armed Forces Champion leading on Armed Forces Day and the Armed Forces Covenant here in Leeds. Thank you, Graham. *(Applause)*

Councillor Josie Jarosz. I have got to tell you Councillor Jarosz is a very popular Councillor and she was first elected to represent residents in Pudsey in 1993 and she has been an excellent Community Committee Chair in the Outer West and she also sits on the Police and Crime Panel. Thank you for all your service, Josie. *(Applause)*

Councillor Christine Macniven, who has served for seven years and we are very lucky she has come today because she also is injured, she has got quite a poorly foot. Christine has served the Roundhay ward since 2011 and has been the Lead Member for Adult Social Care. I know that she takes particular pride in having worked with the local community on restoring the Oakwood clock to its former glory. Thank you, Christine. *(Applause)*

Councillor Stuart McKenna. Stuart has represented Garforth and Swillington since 2014 and as a former amateur rugby player has enthusiastically taken on the role as Trustee of the Leeds Rhinos Foundation. Thank you, Stuart. *(Applause)*

Then we come to Councillor Adam Ogilvie. Adam has served the residents of Beeston since 1999 and has held Executive Board portfolios for both Adults, Health and Leisure as well as being the Chief Whip. He is a real champion for all Leeds residents with learning difficulties and as co-chair has supported the Leeds Learning Disability Partnership. Adam is also one of the team of Councillors who joined me in the Great North Swim in Lake Windermere, which I remember very fondly, it was a

very cold day, where we raised money for St Gemma's and Wheatfields Hospital. You will be missed, thank you very much, Councillor Ogilvie. *(Applause)*

Councillor John Procter. Councillor John Procter has served Wetherby for 26 years. He has held the Leisure portfolio as an Exec Board Member and is currently the Deputy Leader of the Conservative Group. He was very involved in the redevelopment of the Grand Theatre and City Varieties and re-established one of the city's museums and our really great numerous successful Chelsea Flower Show entries, which we can all see now in Roundhay Park, they have been recreated there. Thank you so much, John, thank you. *(Applause)*

Rachel Procter is also retiring and has represented the people of Harewood for 14 years, campaigning on planning matters in Outer North East as well as environmental projects, with tree planting being a particular focus. Thank you, Rachel. *(Applause)*

That brings us to Councillor Brian Selby. Brian has been a passionate Councillor for his community in Leeds and has served a staggering 30 years in total, having been first elected in 1972. 1972 – I am looking at some of the younger Councillors thinking you were not born in 1972! Brian has done an absolutely amazing job and is, I think, perhaps best known for the wonderful work that he has actually done with our museums and galleries as the Lead Member. Thank you so much, Brian. *(Applause)*

Alex Sobel, six years. Always passionate about environmental issues, Alex represented Leeds in 2015 at the United Nations Climate Change Conference on behalf of Leeds when they agreed the Paris Climate Change Treaty. More recently he was elected as the Member of Parliament for Leeds North West which is where he is now, in Parliament. *(Applause)*

Christine Towler. Christine has represented the Hyde Park and Woodhouse ward since 2012 and she sat on numerous committees including Plans Panel South and West. Thank you, Christine. *(Applause)*

That brings me to another former Lord Mayor, Chris Townsley. Chris has served the people of Horsforth ward for 25 years and I know that one of his highlights was representing the city as our 111th Lord Mayor back in 2004/05, raising an amazing amount for Leeds Children's Holiday Camp and Parkinson's UK in that year. Thank you, Chris. *(Applause)*

Then we have got Shirley Varley. Shirley has been heavily involved with the Morley Elderly Action, as an Elder at St Mary's Church in Morley where she helps run the dementia club. Shirley has also been a member of Morley Town Council, where she was Mayor a few years ago. Thank you, Shirley. *(Applause)*

Terry Wilford. Terry has served the Farnley and Wortley ward since 2012 and as a former manager of a day centre for people suffering from Alzheimer's and dementia, Terry has been particularly keen to support people with mental health issues. Thank you, Terry. *(Applause)*

That brings me, finally, to Councillor Lucinda Yeadon. It helps having an initial that is later on in the alphabet some times. Lucinda has been an elected Member representing Kirkstall for ten years and she is currently Deputy Leader of the Council. Most famously, she led community efforts to clean up after the Storm Eva floods over Christmas 2015, galvanising hundreds of local residents from Leeds and further field to don wellingtons and pick up a brush and shovel to help clean up the area.

Most recently I joined her at the opening of the Wildlife World at Lotherton Hall where we named two penguins – one Stanley (a lady named Stanley after her grandfather in a competition that they ran) but we named another penguin in honour of the person who had actually pushed the project forward, and the other penguin was named Lucinda. *(Applause)*

Now I am afraid I have got some sadder news. Firstly, I would like to report that Mike Davenport, who was Head of Facilities Management for over 20 years before he retired has passed away after a short battle with cancer. I am sure elected Members will remember him for his bright dickey bow ties, his matching braces and he was always a great friend to many in this Council Chamber.

I have also learned that Lieutenant Colonel Arnaud Beltrame, who worked with us here in Yorkshire on the Grand Départ in 2014, has died in the French terror attack last Friday. He selflessly volunteered to take the place of hostages knowing that he was putting himself in danger. His sacrifice and courage will never be forgotten and I am sure you all join me in sending our condolences to his family, friends and colleagues, and I would be grateful if you would all join me now in standing for one minute's silence.

(Silent tribute)

ITEM 1 – MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 21st FEBRUARY 2018

THE LORD MAYOR: Right, we move to the Minutes of the meeting held on the 21st February. Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: I move that the Minutes be approved, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I second that, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: If we can move to the vote. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

ITEM 2 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

THE LORD MAYOR: Declarations of Interest. I would like to invite any Members to declare any discloseable pecuniary interests now. *(None)*

ITEM 3 – COMMUNICATIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. We move to Item 3, Communications. Chief Executive.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: No communications, Lord Mayor.

ITEM 4 – DEPUTATIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, which means we move to Item 4 which is Deputations.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: To report there are four Deputations: a group regarding the location of the Arthur Louis Aaron statue; a group campaigning for Fair Access to Local Schools Group; a group regarding the West Yorkshire Pension Fund Investment Strategies; and a group in respect of the Leeds Poverty Truth Commissions.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: I move that all the Deputations be received, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I second that, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: If I can call for the vote, please. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED, thank you.

DEPUTATION 1 – THE STATUE OF ARTHUR LOUIS AARON

THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon and welcome to today's Council meeting. Please now make your speech to Council which should be no longer than five minutes, and if you could please begin by introducing the people in your Deputation.

DR S MANNING: I will let them introduce themselves. My name is Dr Stewart Manning. I am the leader of the deputation.

MR M MANNING: I am Michael Manning, Dr Manning's brother and a supporter of the deputation.

MR D PEARCE: I am David Pearce, I am a former Head of History at Roundhay School and a senior leader at Roundhay School.

MR M FOX: I am Michael Fox, a local Roundhay resident and a governor at Roundhay High School.

MR I MACNIVEN: I am Iain Macniven, a member of Oakwood Traders and Residents Association.

DR S MANNING: My Lord Mayor, Councillors, my name is Dr Stewart Manning. The title of my presentation today is Education, History and Art, a legacy for the people of Leeds, the Bring Him Home campaign.

I am here today to put forward the case for moving the statue of Arthur Louis Aaron VC and Distinguished Flying Medal, from its present unsuitable location at Eastgate to a new and historic location at Oakwood, opposite the recently refurbished clock. I was born in Leeds, attending Roundhay School from 1961 to 1967. Like many former pupils the story of Arthur Aaron's heroism is deeply ingrained in my psyche. I practised as a GP in Leeds for over 35 years and was Assistant Doctor at Leeds United for over 12 of them.

There are good reasons that we believe now is the right time to relocate the statue and start a new legacy.

Since the statue was placed in the area it is at Eastgate in 2001, the whole area has been redeveloped. There is now the Victoria Gate, John Lewis and the car park and soon the modernised West Yorkshire Playhouse will be there, all dwarfing the statue. I have spent a considerable amount of time observing in the roundabout at Eastgate and most pedestrians do not even notice the statue, and when they cross the road most appear unaware of the statue and its significance. It was hoped in 2000 that the statue would trigger Eastgate as a centrepiece for local art. 18 years later, this has not happened.

The statue should be located in an area of Leeds with more historic significance. Arthur Louis Aaron was born and grew up in Roundhay, his parents lived in Roundhay, he attended Roundhay School and went on to study at the Leeds School of Architecture. He volunteered to join the RAF in 1940. He passed away in 1943; he was only 21 years old.

This is where the battalions at Roundhay mustered before coming to fight in the First World War. From 1914 the Leeds born aviation pioneer, Robert Blackburn, built aircraft only half a mile away down the road from where we propose to put the statue at Oakwood and test flights were carried out on Soldiers Fields. This was also the site of the Roundhay aerodrome and the first scheduled air services in Britain went from Soldiers Fields.

The three children that form the integral part of the sculptor represent the period from 1950 to the Millennium. The young girl topping the statue is releasing the dove of peace. The children symbolise the freedom that Arthur Louis's sacrifice gave for the people of Leeds. There is therefore relevance in relocating the statue to Oakwood near several schools, including Roundhay where he was a pupil. Roundhay Park was the site of the Leeds Children's Day for over 40 years.

2018 is an important year. It marks the centenary of the Royal Air Force and the end of the Great War in which so many like Arthur did not return and are buried in some foreign field. I have a heartfelt reason for my passionate support for this campaign. My father was a friend of Arthur Louis Aaron and sat next to him at school. My uncle was a pupil at the school during the war and he told me he was in the assembly when the posthumous VC citation was announced. The Headmaster, who was a really hard character, was seen to shed a tear that day.

Without the sacrifice of Arthur Louis Aaron and people like him in the services, I would not have the freedom to stand up and talk to you today.

The famous war epitaph states:

“When you go home tell them of us and say, for your tomorrow we gave our today.”

There is growing support for the Bring Him Home campaign including Roundhay School, former pupils, the Oakwood traders and residents associated with the area. I have also contacted the three parties associated with the Millennium Campaign – Martin Wainwright, Martin Hamilton and Graham Ibbotson, the sculptor, have all said they will respect the decision of Leeds City Council should there be a change of location.

I would now like to read you Arthur’s citation, the one that came with his posthumous VC:

“In appalling conditions Arthur Louis Aaron showed the greatest qualities of courage, determination and leadership and, though wounded and dying, set an example of devotion to duty which has seldom been equalled and never surpassed.”

We want to create a worthwhile legacy for Arthur. We want to put it in a location already visited by thousands of people every year and school children every day. Our proposal entails the new site being an active educational resource, a focal point, a source of inspiration, new scholarships and a charitable trust. This is your opportunity, Lord Mayor and Councillors, to create a legacy for the future, something of which all Leeds can be proud.

Finally, we will deliver this to you at no cost. We will fund it ourselves.
(*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: I move that the matter be referred to the Director of City Development for consideration in consultation with the relevant Executive Member.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I second that, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I would like to call for the vote on that, please. (*A vote was taken*) That is CARRIED.

Thank you for coming to today's meeting. Officers from the relevant Department will be in contact with you in due course. Thank you so much for giving your deputation.

DR S MANNING: Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon. (*Applause*)

DEPUTATION 2 – FAIR ACCESS TO LOCAL SCHOOLS GROUP

THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon and welcome to today's Council meeting. Please now make your speech to Council which should be no longer than five minutes, and if you could please start by introducing the people you have brought with you in your Deputation. Thank you.

MR D NICHOLLS: Thank you. My name is Damian Nicholls, this is Lisa Clements and Lynn Maindonald.

Lord Mayor, Councillors, thank you for the opportunity to speak today. We are the parents of Roundhay children who have no reliable access to a local primary school. We are here because the Council has been unable to address the ongoing need for 60 additional primary school places in Roundhay, the area referred to as the black hole.

The current solution being proposed to expand Moor Allerton Hall primary school is not a long term solution. It will only provide 30 places, is outside the area of need, most children will not be able to walk to it and children currently unable to get into Talbot Primary will only be able to access it if it remains relatively undesirable compared to other schools nearby. In 2017 only 34% of children living in the Moor Allerton Hall catchment area chose to go to the school. The majority of parents living here with the luxury of choice sent their children elsewhere.

Over time, should Moor Allerton Hall become a more popular option, those living closer to it will have priority over those living further away. Like in 2015, children living in the black hole will be scattered across the nearest under subscribed primary schools. These are likely to be poorer performing schools and may be several miles away. This does not demonstrate to us that anyone is striving to give our children the best possible start in life.

What is the business case and justification for this proposal? How can it be justified when there is already proof that when places are created in a non-targeted fashion, it fails to solve the problem? The shortage of primary school places in Roundhay was used to justify the money spend on Roundhay Through School

Primary Campus and the expansion at Gledhow Primary School, yet there still remains an exceptional need for more school places in the Talbot catchment area.

It seems to us that when officers model future school place allocations, is it based on an expectation that Moor Allerton Hall will remain a relatively less desirable option so it can act as a mop for the black hole. What does this say about aspirations for the school, a school that is currently rated “requires improvement”?

The children in the black hole will remain disadvantaged by the allocation of places in Roundhay unless more are provided in the actual area of need. We are told that the obstacles to creating a two form entry single school solution have proven to be insurmountable with barriers outside of the control of the Local Authority. We question this statement and feel there has been a lack of transparency in the decision making. The response to the free school bid lacked any urgency and caused delays, and ultimately 21 months after the Trust and ESFA were encouraged to pursue the Roundhay Park Lane site, Council prevarication caused the DfE to declare that the project had run out of time and advised the team to withdraw or face cancellation.

We have been told to build on the golf course practice ground would require very special circumstances. What are these if not very special circumstances? We ask the Lord Mayor and Councillors that this is properly and openly defined. It makes no sense to agree to consult on a site and then to use reasons previously voiced not to progress it any further.

We feel that the public were misled to believe this site would be properly considered and we question the validity of the consultation. There was very little public objection to building on the edge of the park, further backed up by our 1400 signature petition supporting the use of the land.

In the report to the Executive Board officers stated that, “The risk of not providing the additional places in an area of such high need outweighs some of the concerns shared during the consultation”. Why can’t this view be applied in order to get a new school where it is actually needed?

Council, the local community are not being listened to, the very people that you were elected to represent. There is a well supported collective will locally for a school on the golf course practice ground. We need a school, the community needs a community centre, the Friends of Roundhay Park have agreed to work with us and it could be delivered with no loss of amenity in the local area – quite the opposite, in fact.

We have offered to help you to help make it happen, as our democratically elected representatives, and do so again. Please do not condemn our children and generations of children to come to a substandard education and a fragmented community. Demonstrate that you are child friendly Leeds and make this happen.

We would like to submit a series of questions to the Children’s Scrutiny Board to formally look into the concerns we have raised. We would also like a meeting to take place between parent representatives in the area of need and the relevant Executive Members to work together to look at the obstacles and opportunities

relating to the creation of a new school in the right location in Roundhay. This should happen before any further decisions are made.

We came here today as parents and as parents one of our most important jobs is to make sure that our children get a good education. Please, do not make us fail our children. Thank you for your time and consideration. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: I move that the matter be referred to the Director of Children and Families for consideration, in consultation with the relevant Executive Member.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I second that, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: If I could call for the vote please. *(A vote was taken)*
That is CARRIED.

I would like to thank you for coming to today's meeting. Officers from the relevant department will be in contact with you in due course. Thank you and good afternoon. *(Applause)*

DEPUTATION 3 – WEST YORKSHIRE PENSION FUND INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon and welcome to today's Council meeting. Please now make your speech, which should be no more than five minutes, and if you could please begin by introducing us to the members of your Deputation.

SPEAKER: Thank you. Lord Mayor and Members of Council, thank you for seeing us. We are a deputation from Fossil Free West Yorkshire Pension Fund.

Climate change, and the resulting negative impacts that it is having on the world, is one of the single greatest threats facing humanity. 170 countries agree that action is urgent. The 2015 Paris Climate Agreement was to hold global warming to well below 2 degrees, and to aim to limit the increase to 1.5 degrees.

The UK Government have said 70-75% of known fossil fuels would have to be left in the ground in order to have a 50% chance of limiting global temperature rise to below 2°C, and the Governor of the Bank of England has said that the action needed to keep to a 2 degree rise would render the vast majority of existing reserves stranded – that is to say oil, gas and coal that will be literally unburnable.

Throughout the world there are already many deaths resulting from climate change through things such as drought and flooding. The World Health Organisation has stated that between 2030 and 2050 there is likely to be an expected rise in approximately 250,000 additional deaths per year from malnutrition, malaria,

diarrhoea and heat stress. Hundreds of thousands of people are already dying from climate change.

Warming of above 2 degrees would threaten millions of lives, causing a refugee crisis far in excess of what we experience now, and yet the fossil fuel giants are still drilling for new reserves, which is completely incompatible with staying within a 2 degree rise. Analysis states that Shell's current business model, for example, is consistent with 3-5 degree rise in global warming, an outcome which is unacceptable and highly risky to Shell's investors.

For those of us living in Leeds it is highly heartening to see the action which Leeds Council is taking on climate change - establishing the Leeds Climate Commission, lowering CO₂ emissions from Council buildings, increasing use of low emissions vehicles and an LED lighting scheme for schools are all ways in which Leeds Council has shown its commitment to act.

However, the value of these efforts is diminished by continued support for the fossil fuel industry by the Council's pension provider, West Yorkshire Pension Fund. For some years members of the pension fund, like those stood before you now, have been telling West Yorkshire Pension Fund they wish them to divest to no avail, and this is why I am here to speak to you today.

There are both ethical and financial reasons for divestment. Financially speaking, fossil fuel investment is becoming increasingly risky. Investment experts Mercers have described climate change as "a new investment risk that demands action by investors." Pension fund trustees who fail to consider climate risk could be exposing themselves to legal challenge.

There are also many alternatives that West Yorkshire Pension Fund could invest in, not least the new fossil-fuel free indices. Legal and General, for example, has set up a new low carbon index, the Future World Fund, which HSBC have invested £1.8bn in.

811 institutions globally have already made divestment commitments including six UK Local Government Pension Funds. By divesting from fossil fuel investment, West Yorkshire Pension Fund would be joining with these forward thinking institutions who have all seen the potential risk of continued investment in fossil fuels and have all committed to tackling this head on.

Secondly, there is a strong moral argument for West Yorkshire Pension Fund to divest. Pension funds fundamentally are there to provide future security for their members. It is entirely incompatible for them to pursue this objective whilst, at the same time, investing in companies whose actions are posing the single greatest threat to that security. Morally we have a duty to limit that threat.

We are here today to ask the Council to demand from West Yorkshire Pension Fund a formal and binding divestment strategy, with a reasonable time frame that reflects the urgency of the climate change crisis we are facing. These demands are as follows.

- For West Yorkshire Pension Fund to reduce carbon exposure to at least the level set by the Environment Agency Pension Fund;
- For West Yorkshire Pension Fund to shift its engagement on climate change into sectors where there is a better chance of success, for example the automotive and utility sectors;
- Finally, for the Pension Fund to sell 50% of its fossil fuel holdings, with a full commitment to full divestment if meaningful progress is not made by 2020

Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: I move that the matter be referred to the Director of Resources and Housing for consideration in consultation with the relevant Executive Member.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I second that, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: If I can call for the vote on that, please. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

I would like to thank you for coming to today's meeting. Officers from the relevant Department will be in contact with you in due course. Thank you so much, thank you. *(Applause)*

DEPUTATION 4 – THE LEEDS POVERTY TRUTH COMMISSION

THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon and welcome to today's Council meeting. If you would please now make your speech, which should be no more than five minutes, and if you could like to start by just introducing the other members of your Deputation.

MARIA: Yes, we are from the Leeds Poverty Truth Commission and there is Amina, Geoff, Andrea and James, and I am Maria.

Lord Mayor and Members of the Council, poverty dehumanises. It is not just the constant struggle to buy enough food to feed the kids, or having to walk everywhere because you cannot afford the bus fare, paying more for your electricity and gas because you do not have the credit history for direct debit – it is tough but it is more than that.

When you are experiencing poverty, what really grinds you down is the way other people perceive you. The media often portray low income families in unsympathetic and sometimes insulting terms – feckless, scroungers, skivers and this leads the public to think that the hard up have only themselves to blame, and they treat them with disdain. Attempts to get help with money, benefits, housing and other basic essentials can sometimes be frustrating, complicated and bureaucratic. This reinforces the impression that anyone who is experiencing poverty is a problem.

Even people who are not on a low income can be affected by the dehumanising effects of poverty in our city. People who deliver services to the low paid often have to use systems that get in the way of treating their customers as real people with real lives and real stories. No-one wants to make life harder for folk. Blaming the ‘suits’ does not make things better and any society is weaker when some of its members are excluded. Poverty dehumanises us all.

We are the Leeds Poverty Truth Commission and we believe that everyone can play a part in creating a fairer, more human society by changing these attitudes. Our Commissioners come from different backgrounds. Crucially, many of us have experienced or are experiencing poverty. By sharing our stories and listening to each other we have come up with some simple ways of changing our society for the better.

We offer three ways to re-humanise Leeds.

Number 1. We know that in our wonderful city of Leeds there are many initiatives aimed at reducing the effects of poverty. These include some businesses doing things a bit differently to help alleviate poverty, voluntary and public sector initiatives and the simple acts of caring neighbours. These are welcome, but to strengthen any initiatives those planning them should include people who are experiencing poverty in the leadership of these programmes.

Number 2. Anyone writing or speaking about poverty should take care to use language that portrays those experiencing poverty in respectful, human terms. They should listen to those on the sharp end of this issue and learn from their stories.

Number 3. Poverty creates isolation. Those experiencing poverty often feel isolated from the rest of their community, and this can lead to physical and mental distress. By reaching out to other people who might be feeling isolated and alone, the people of Leeds can help to build stronger, more resilient communities.

Through the commission we have learnt the importance of working together by building relationships with one another. There are no longer them and us - just us. In the first meeting I spoke about a 14-page letter that I had recently received. It outlined changes as to how my Council Tax and Housing Benefit was to be delivered. I struggled to understand it and it caused me great stress. Fellow commissioners Lee Hemsworth, James Rogers and Councillor Lucinda Yeadon organised a workshop with front line Council workers. By listening to one another, we recognised key ways in which things could be done more humanly. Now, changes as to how this service communicates to its customers, including the letters like the one I received, are being made. This helps to make Leeds a more compassionate city.

The commission has enabled leaders of organisations to recognise how the wisdom of people with direct experience enables better understanding of poverty.

THE LORD MAYOR: I am so sorry but you have gone way over your five minutes. If you could just bring it to maybe a final conclusion, please.

SPEAKER: Sorry. We ask you as a Council to hold workshops across departments to enable those who deliver services to explore their work together with those who currently experience poverty. Building upon the experience of the workshop with customer services and the Council Tax and Benefits teams we believe this creates a generative environment that enables more human and compassionate delivery of services.

THE LORD MAYOR: That is lovely, thank you. *(Standing ovation)*

Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: I move that the matter be referred to the Director of Communities and Environment for consideration in consultation with the relevant Executive Member.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I heartily second that Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Latty. If I could please move now to the vote on what Councillor Ogilvie said. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED

I would like to thank you very much for coming to today's meeting and officers from the relevant Department will be in contact with you in due course. Thank you very much. Good afternoon. *(Applause)*

ADDITIONAL ITEM – MEMBERS NOT SEEKING RE-ELECTION AT THE ELECTIONS IN MAY

THE LORD MAYOR: We now have an additional item. In recognition of the large numbers of Members not seeking re-election in May, I would like to invite the Members listed below to move a vote of thanks to the retiring Members of Council.

Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can I thank you for your contribution earlier and it has actually, I think for all of us as Leaders, probably reduced slightly what we are going to say because you have gone into real individual detail about all of the Members who are retiring, so thank you for that. I think that last Deputation, actually didn't that just encapsulate how important our role is working with the most vulnerable out in our communities and it was a real privilege to hear that Deputation and recognise our role.

It is absolutely staggering to reflect on the extraordinary commitment of all of the Members who are retiring from Council in just a matter of weeks' time. We know, as we have heard, that they represent all parts of our extraordinary diverse city.

I think one of the aspects that we have to explain to so many people, so many visitors who come to Leeds from London in particular, is just what a different Authority area we are. We have got Members representing the inner city, we have got Members representing small villages, we have got Members representing market towns – incredible diversity. Of course, we have got Members here who go way back to the way that we formerly organised Council, who I think Brian was describing to me his first role in connection with the great Housing Committee that we used to have. So many of you have seen so many changes.

Lord Mayor, you outlined some of the responsibilities that Members of this Council have within here and, as you said quite rightly, former Lord Mayors, representatives on West Yorkshire Pensions, Governance and Audit. Most have sat on Scrutiny Boards in their times and, as you heard, Graham with his role with the Armed Forces. Look at all of our role in Planning, Licensing, indeed duties within the Whips' office, Exec Members, all of the possible contributions that you can think have been represented by all the individuals that the Lord Mayor spoke about earlier and, of course, our very own Deputy Leader of Council sitting next to me. You will notice that we have made her work doubly hard in the Council meeting today to make sure that she leaves her mark indelibly on Council meetings.

You know, I think many people out in our communities do not fully understand just how committed Members are to their own communities and you just think of all of the different layers and layers and layers of different community contributions that all the Members retiring have made, whether it is through Community Forums, tenants and residents meetings, school governing bodies.

It gives me enormous pleasure to stand here and thank each and every one of you for the contribution that you have made. Really, I think each and every one of you represents public service ethos at its best and a really profound and sincere thank you from all of us to all of you for what you have done.

If you think you are going to disappear into the sunset have another think, because we look forward to you still continuing in your roles as school governors and active in your communities, and I am sure many of you will be quite active in writing in to us and expressing your views on some of the services delivered at the moment. An enormous thank you and well done to each and every one of you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Andrew Carter.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Yes, thank you, my Lord Mayor, and first of all can I associate myself and all Members of my Group with your comments when you opened the meeting. I do not intend to go through the list name by name, you did that absolutely perfectly so thank you very much for that.

Over the years Council work has changed beyond measure. A lot of the Members who are retiring will know exactly what I mean by that. It certainly has not got easier, it has certainly got more complicated. A record of service 300-plus years amongst the totality gives you an idea of the sort of level of service that actually the city will be losing at least within this Chamber. Everybody in the city and everybody

in the wards affected I think owes a debt of gratitude to everyone who is on this list and who will not be seeking re-election on May 3rd.

It is, as I said, a much more complicated job being a Member of the Council now, and if anybody thinks that we just come along to meetings like this, my view is that actually this is probably one of the less important meetings that Councillors attend every day of the week. We all attend ones where we really do get down to the nitty gritty of trying to improve services for our constituents.

It is not a five day a week job, it is not a 40 hour a week job. When you stand for election and become a Member of Leeds City Council you are committing yourself to 24/7 and I suspect that many of the Councillors who are in this Chamber over the years they have served here have had phone calls and knocks on the door seven days a week, holidays, Christmas – Council tenants, boiler breaks down on Christmas Day, the gas is disconnected, you name it, we have all been there but we enjoy doing the job. It is more complicated and that is why it is doubly important to thank all those Members who are retiring from Council service and thank them for the service they have given to our great city and to their communities.

I will just mention a couple of names. You would expect me to thank my Deputy, friend and colleague John Procter, who has been alongside me for 20...

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Too many years!

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Don't say that! John has been a great servant to our Party but also I believe to the city as well, particularly during the time when we were in administration with the Liberal Democrats, the Morley Borough Independents and the Greens.

I also want to pay tribute to Josie Jarosz, who has been a colleague of mine in the old Borough of Pudsey for many years and actually, despite our spats in here from time to time, particularly one of the Councillor Lewises and myself, we get on pretty well in the Pudsey area. The Labour Councillors, the Conservative Councillors and the Green Councillors have worked very closely together to, I think, improve the areas which we serve. I do pay tribute to Councillor Jarosz, she and I have always got on very well, I think it is fair to say.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Too well, Andrew! *(laughter)*

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Listen, we were all young once, weren't we, Josie! *(laughter)*

Just digressing slightly, when I sat down here I saw *this*, it is a little black book *(laughter)* and I thought who has got hold of that? I started looking for them in here and crossing them out – every Leader should have a little black book. I certainly have!

Anyway, to get back to the point, I do endorse entirely what Councillor Blake has said and say a heartfelt thank you to every one of you for all the service you have given to our city. I wish you, I was going to say a long and happy retirement –

certainly long, certainly happy, I am not sure it will be retirement. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. You highlighted the length of service that many of our Members have and Councillor Carter has also pointed out that actually working across the Chamber is just as important as working within our own Groups and I will be saying goodbye to some very good friends on that side of the Chamber that I have shared a lot of experiences with and quite a few laughs as well as some good old-fashioned arguing over the floor.

I am going to concentrate on another aspect of it though, because we have talked about how people come to public service and the people who are leaving have put a whole load of years into that public service. I want to point out the variety of where people come from and how the variety of that actually provides a much richer diversity within this Chamber and even better experience.

I am looking through my own Group. As has been mentioned by the Lord Mayor, there are actually three ex-Lord Mayors, which always makes it worse for the Whip, I have to say, after their Mayoral year, and people who have held quite high ranking positions but how they worked within that role, though, reflects where they came from.

I know, for instance, that Brian Cleasby – you might not know this – came from a media background. He was a television cameraman and he always knew the value of getting the right story across and following that story, and he has turned into a right terrier over the years in terms of never letting anything go.

Now then, Chris Townsley as well. Chris Townsley was an insurance salesman and that means, actually, he was really good at listening and talking to people and he became a very effective community politician because listening is the biggest skill going. I have to say, of the four people on these Benches who are retiring, I do not think any of them are really grandstanders. As you see, I get to talk quite a lot for my Group and that is genuinely because quite a lot of them are shy. They are more interested in actually making a difference on the ground.

For instance, Judith was a teacher and her experience of having a daughter with autism means that she wanted to make sure that in Children's Services, when she was Scrutiny Chair or whatever, that actually we made sure that it was not just one size fits all and following with the Child Friendly Leeds, we really did follow through for wrapping services around each individual child.

Then, of course, Sue trained as a social worker and worked for Children's Services in Cardiff and then for a charity in London and then brought that experience to Leeds and made her commitment specifically around children looked after and young carers. I hope that the new intake that we have that the baton will be passed on to, will have just as varied a background and the people out there that might think, "How do you get on the Council?" might not actually think, "Oh well, I am not really important enough, I do not have a qualification in politics or anything like that."

Actually, step up and do it because we all have a contribution to make and the people who are leaving this year have made a really big contribution to the city. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Finnigan.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can I just support what other colleagues have already said. Being a Councillor in my view is under valued and under appreciated by a lot of the communities that we serve and people from across the political spectrum work hard seven days a week and that is often not reflected in the attitudes and the views that we have of some of our constituents who I think do not appreciate the commitment that it takes from all of us to undertake this particular role.

We will be mentioning specifically some colleagues we have worked closely with in the past but it is clearly down to me to pass on my thanks to Councillor Shirley Varley, who has worked with us for many, many years. Shirley is a fine example of an accidental Councillor. In 2007 she was asked by my eloquent colleague, Councillor Judith Elliot, to stand for the Town Council on the understanding that she would not get elected. *(laughter)* “No chance of getting elected, Shirley. No chance of you getting elected, just put your name on the ballot paper and you will not get elected and thanks very much for your help and support.”

Clearly, the great electorate at Morley came to an entirely different conclusion and elected Shirley on to the Town Council in 2007. Subsequent to that Shirley was a brilliant Mayor of Morley and in 2010 we said to Shirley, “Do you fancy standing for Leeds City Council?” We were not offering the same assurances we were offering before. She stood in 2010 and was elected to Leeds City Council.

During this period from 2010 to the present Shirley has been our Adult Social Care Champion. She has sat on Adult Social Care Scrutiny bodies and made sure that Morley’s voice came through. Certainly she was one of the leading campaigners that resulted in us being able to retain Knowle Manor and was a great supporter of Siegen Manor notwithstanding that that got closed, but is again working hard to produce something new and positive in terms of Adult Social Care on that site.

She has worked very hard for the people of Morley, she clearly is associated very closely with Morley Elderly Action, making sure that that organisation is vibrant and sustainable and is doing excellent work and is pushing the boundaries of the work that it actually undertakes.

Shirley has also been involved in making sure that Morley becomes a place that is more dementia friendly and has set clearly a programme of work for us all to make sure that we achieve greater things at that particular point.

Certainly Morley residents are very proud of what Shirley has achieved and I know that we as a Group on the Town Council and City Council are very proud of what Shirley has achieved. I know that her family are very proud of that and Derek, if he was still around, would also be very proud of that. We pass on our great thanks to Shirley for the work that she has undertaken in Morley over the years.

Just a few words about some of the other colleagues that we worked with. Brian Selby I have known in this place and in another place for many, many years and I know he is committed and hard working and it has been a pleasure working with him.

Brian Cleasby is one of the few Councillors who is more foul mouthed than I am, and that is saying a great deal! *(laughter)* He is a pleasure to be with. He is a political pit bull and I think that that brings more colour to the Chamber and it has been a pleasure and a delight working with him over the years.

John Procter brought a new sports centre to Morley along with the previous administration. We are eternally grateful. We know that he battled hard for that and we have always got a warm corner of our hearts for Councillor Procter. Certainly if he feels like he wants to have another go or another seat in Morley we are always welcome to run with you there! *(laughter)* There's an opportunity!

Finally, just to say a few words about Lucinda Yeadon, who has worked very closely with us, helped us to save Knowle Manor and we are grateful for that; I think has positively impacted on Adult Social Care not only in Morley but across Leeds and done a fabulous job there. I know she has built up a very close relationship with Councillor Bob Gettings with the new work, the new Executive position that she is in at this particular point, and we wish her every success for the future.

I will conclude on that, Lord Mayor. All these Councillors who are retiring have committed themselves to working hard. Leeds is a lesser place because of their retirement. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor David Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can I join other Leaders in thanking those people who are retiring for the service that they have put in. There are quite a number of them over the years we have either worked against or with sometimes on the same side, but they are good colleagues and good friends.

My own colleague, Terry Wilford, who sadly is standing down – I say sadly, he seems to be like a yo-yo, going down to Doncaster one day, up to Harrogate another day because his mother is in Harrogate and his mother-in-law in Doncaster who are both very ill, so he has been a yo-yo going backwards and forwards and coming here and, I have got to say, had a fairly difficult last few months. We hope both your mother and mother-in-law improve their condition and that you can cope with that situation.

As for the rest of them, I think was it a week last Monday at Rodley Nature Reserve in my capacity as the last Chairman of Green Leeds because we are winding it up in April, we thought we would go out with a splash so we told the Green Leeds Board to go to Rodley Nature Reserve and I cut the ribbon for a hide there. Sue was there and Sue managed to get there and others did not. We went through the snow, didn't we, to get there. Like Sue and a number of other Members and Josie up in Pudsey, we worked closely together on the committees we have been on and I will

miss their company. While we do not always agree, I think that there is much more we agree on than disagree on.

As for Councillor Cleasby, I will tell you summat here, I have kept this secret for years but when Councillor Cleasby was Lord Mayor he upset the Conservatives, he upset Labour, he upset his own Group. There was this big photo of him in the Evening Post about uproar because the Lord Mayor had done this. We put it up on our notice board and we put “Our hero” because you did not upset us, Brian!

I hope you all have a nice retirement and I will probably see you around, but well done. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Catherine Dobson.

COUNCILLOR C DOBSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I really do not intend to speak for very long this afternoon but I really do not want to let this occasion pass without saying thank you to everybody for all the efforts they have put in on behalf of the city and for their individual wards and really just that I wish everybody well for the future. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Mark Dobson.

COUNCILLOR M DOBSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Just to echo some of the comments this afternoon about public service being a grind and a toil at times and anybody who enters it and sticks at it gets our admiration and thanks for their service.

However, there are a few people over the years who do leave a special impact in people’s lives and I thought I would pick out somebody from each particular Group who is leaving us. First of all, my old friend Lucinda, who I had a genuine pleasure working with for five years when we were Exec Members at the same time. Seeing as she is going and seeing as I really do not care, I am going to talk about when the pair of us in long Cabinet meetings used to plan Cabinet Bingo. What Cabinet Bingo was, we have all got stock phrases that we tend to roll out over and over again, so we used to play Cabinet Bingo, didn’t we? Don’t deny it!

The other thing we did, we spent five years basically trying to make one another laugh inappropriately just before the other one was about to get up to speak in Council. Not big, not clever but quite a lot of fun. I will miss you for those laughs, Lucinda, and for being a very decent person and a good friend.

On the Liberal Benches, my first Scrutiny Chair when I came on as a rookie eleven years ago was Sue Bentley. Sue has never been anything other than the kindest, most generous person to me personally while I have been in this Chamber. Through good times and bad I have had a cheery word and a hug and I will tell you what, I think in life that counts for a lot – just decent people being decent to one another. There is a lot to be said for it. Thank you, Sue.

On the Morley Benches and the Greens, thank you to Shirley and to Terry because they have both been involved in a deep and significant way in an issue that is becoming more a personal passion of mine in later life which is round people with

Alzheimer's and living with dementia. Thank you. Terry, I have found out since Garforth (plug for Garforth) has got the first public Peace Flame in England. I have realised what a close supporting Group the Greens have been in that process and Terry has been there every step of the way, so thank you and all the best for the future.

Last but my no means least, Councillor John Procter. What can you say about John Procter except I have always had a deep admiration for John. We have clashed at times and on other times we have been on the same page about things, which I think is probably right. When I got Parks I very quickly realised I was walking in some quite big shoes, because if you have got the officers on side you know you have done a good job and when I went into Parks it was Councillor Procter this, Councillor Procter that. I thought hang on a minute, who is running the blooming show?

COUNCILLOR: Him!

COUNCILLOR M DOBSON: Probably, John! What really came across is the Chelsea Parks work for me and those Chelsea golds. I understand you once got yourself in a four by four and went up to Scotland with some officers to source the material for the wheel – going above and beyond. I think when officers speak well of you it says it all.

When I used to stand over *there*, sometimes in a debate you would think we have got the best of this one, we have got the better of this one, we are doing all right today, it is going to be a good day and then you would look down the Order Paper and think, oh God, John is going to stand up now. It is either going to be incisive, aggressive, pantomime-esque, or probably all three rolled into three or four minutes.

You will be missed because actually the reality is outside this place you are a lot of fun and you are a good chap to have a drink with so good luck for the future.

Finally, good luck to everybody who is going and I hope you have long, happy, successful future careers in whatever you choose to do. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: If I could call on Councillor Blake to sum up, please.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I was not expecting to have to sum up really, because I think everyone has encapsulated the extraordinary contribution that everyone has made.

The point that I would like to make is that we have all got particular stories. I think Councillor Carter alluded to this, about all of the different Members that we have worked with, so at some point someone is going to make an effort to write some of this stuff down, but I think thinking back to when I first came on and there are Members stepping down today who this applies to, who from day one just came up and said whatever you come across come and talk to me, come and see us through, there are some really tough difficult stuff that we have to deal with and I will always be eternally grateful for that support from other Members. I think Members working

together to support each other in the good times and the difficult times is real credit to the roles that we play.

Thank you, everyone and again, I think we should ask each of the Members here who are retiring to stand up so we can show our appreciation properly.

THE LORD MAYOR: Please stand up, retiring Members.

(Retiring Members stood to applause from the Chamber)

THE LORD MAYOR: Although one does suspect that whilst they are retiring from politics they will actually be very active still within their own communities in the many voluntary roles that they hold and will hold in the future.

I would now like to call for a vote on the vote of thanks for the Retiring Members. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED. Thank you.

ITEM 5 – RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD – CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE’S PLAN

THE LORD MAYOR: We move on to Item 5, Recommendations of the Executive Board, Children and Young People’s Plan, Councillor Mulherin.

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am delighted to be moving the Refresh of the Children and Young People’s Plan as it underlines our continuing commitment to deliver our ambition to be the best city for children and young people to grow up in.

Councils across the country are under financial pressure and I have no doubt we will be hearing more about that later this afternoon, but families are also coming under increased pressure as austerity measures continue to bite.

We have heard from the Deputation from the Leeds Poverty Truth Commission this afternoon, but what impact is austerity having on children and families and their outcomes? The Children’s Commissioner for England published her Growing Up in the North Report earlier this week. Anne Longfield says that children from poorer homes face an education gap that starts before they start school and that widens over time. She has called for greater investment for struggling families and a scheme to boost teacher recruitment in the north. There are some concerning statistics within her report which, is the product of twelve months of research conducted with children, schools, businesses, Councils, health professionals and charities across the country.

One such statistic is that a child on free school meals in Hackney is three times more likely to go to university than a child in receipt of free school meals in Hartlepool. Moreover, children in London on free school meals are 40% more likely to achieve good GCSEs in maths and English than children in the north. There are 35,000 children living in poverty here in Leeds alone and we are determined to do all that we can locally to mitigate the continuing impact of Government austerity

measures. That is why we have put tackling child poverty at the heart of how we will deliver the new Children and Young People's Plan.

I have established a new Child Poverty Outcomes Group which will work across existing strategic boards here in Leeds, holding them to account for the contribution that they will make to tackling child poverty in our city. We will be using the learning from the Leeds Poverty Truth Commission to inform that process. When presented with the findings of the Children's Commissioner's Report, the Government said that five of the twelve disadvantaged areas selected as so-called Opportunity Areas to receive additional Government funding are in the north. That is five out of twelve, so less than half of them, the other seven, therefore, being in the south so I am not sure that they have grasped the point that the report is making.

Reference is often made to the London Challenge and the incredible turn around in results that that achieved. It needs to be underlined that schools in London receive on average £1,300 per pupil more than schools in the north to deliver their education. No wonder prospects are better there when schools can afford the teaching and support staff, the tools and equipment that they need.

In Leeds we are working extremely hard to ensure children and young people in this city have every opportunity to fulfil their potential. This report shows both what we are doing, what is working, the difference we are making and also the areas where we know we need to do more. We have refocused the attendance obsession to reflect the need to improve both achievement and attainment, building on the success to date. The Refresh Plan also includes a new priority that came from children themselves around reliable and affordable transport. This is just one example of how you are putting the voice and influence of children and young people at the heart of decision-making, but becoming a child friendly city is about more than academic qualifications and I would just like to take one moment to mention the event I was at last night.

It was the annual Golden Owl awards, which is the equivalent of the Oscars in Leeds and children from across the city are invited to submit their entry for a short film. The ceremony was a fantastic display of the talents we have in our city. The standard of entries was extremely high and everyone should feel very proud of the work that they put in. It is events such as this that contribute to making Leeds the best city for children to grow up in. Lord Mayor, I am delighted to move the report.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Hayden.

COUNCILLOR HAYDEN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am delighted to be speaking under the Children and Young People's Plan and I would like to take this opportunity to draw Council's attention to the outcome of the recent focused Ofsted inspection of our social work services.

Leeds was one of the first Local Authorities to be inspected under the new Ofsted Inspection Framework and so the visit earlier this year was a bit of an unknown to us. I am therefore pleased to be able to report to Council that the Inspector's findings were extremely positive and said that Leeds had created an environment where social work is flourishing, social workers take pride in what they do, they know their children and their practice is child centred. The letter also states that the Local Authority takes its responsibilities as a corporate parent very seriously, which is really pleasing to hear and read.

That is not to say there are not areas for improvement, learning outcomes for children looked after being one, but one in which the Inspectors commented that appropriate action is being taken to address the issue.

I think what the outcome letter is is a validation of everything that Councillor Mulherin and we as an administration have been saying and working for. I hope it provides some reassurance of the validity and efficacy of our policies and plans for children and young people.

The Inspectors went on to say that the Local Authority has invested wisely and well in recruitment and retention, staff turnover is at an all-time low and that reliance on agency staff is negligible. They also said that we understand our strengths and areas for development, our commitment to continuous improvement is tangible and there is no sense of complacency.

This is all very positive and reinforces what we have been saying. We know that we have been accused of letting things slip but I hope now that everyone can see that we have had it from an independent source that we are well aware of what needs to improve but we are doing well. We work hard to keep our children in Leeds safe and we have plans in place to make the improvement of what is needed in some areas.

We have a lot to be proud of in Leeds and I would like to take this opportunity to offer my thanks, the thanks of Councillor Mulherin and the whole Labour Group to the hard working officers of Children's Services, all our social workers and the people who support them, our foster carers and people working in residential homes who are making a real positive difference to the lives of children looked after in Leeds. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ritchie.

COUNCILLOR RITCHIE: Thank you, Chair. Just before I start, can I just say it is fantastic to see Councillor Neil Dawson back in the Chamber, so welcome back, Neil. (*Applause*)

My Lord Mayor, as we are talking about the Refresh of the Children and Young People's Plan and how we ensure Leeds is the best place for children to grow up in, have the best start in life and what we can do as a city to help them succeed, I thought it was an appropriate time to comment on something the Conservative Government did earlier this month. That something was the scandalous removal of free school meals for one million disadvantaged children across most of the UK. I say

“most” as there is a very important exception to this removal, and that is Northern Ireland, which I will return to later.

What the Government has done is introduced a new rule saying that children will only be eligible for free school meals if their parents earn less than £7,400. This new rule only applies to new applicants to Universal Credit, so while the Government is technically correct in saying no child who currently receives a free school meal will lose it, what they have done is prevent one million children in the future who would have been eligible from receiving those meals. I am sure you will agree with me that this is morally abhorrent when we have just heard about the devastating impact the Government’s austerity measures have already had on children and families – a Tory double whammy for you.

It is effectively a cruel school dinner cap which will leave thousands of families with the choice of cutting their hours or their children’s meals. That is because the £7,400 threshold is a cliff edge. Earn a pound less and your child gets free school meals all year; earn a pound more and they get nothing.

£7,410, whatever, is not a great deal of money and once you factor in the cost of school meals over the course of a year for two children, which is £726, they then actually fall below the income threshold but obviously are not entitled to the money back. These are families who can ill afford to lose their entitlement to those meals and it is the children who will suffer.

We have heard many times before in this Chamber about how families are forced to choose between food and heating, food and rent and those free school meals may well be the only hot meal those children have each day.

The cliff edge that the Government has introduced also does something else. It provides a disincentive for people to work. The old adage we keep hearing about work paying does not seem to ring true in this case. If you work you will be penalised.

I mentioned earlier Northern Ireland and I will go back to that briefly. We already know that Theresa May gave the DUP £1bn to prop up her Government but it seems there is still more to pay. Children in Northern Ireland will not lose their free school meals unless their parents earn over £12,000 a year - that is £4,600 more than families in the rest of the UK - with no clear reason why other than the Tories need those votes. On the way in Theresa May ducked a question in Parliament as well.

THE LORD MAYOR: Final sentence, please.

COUNCILLOR RITCHIE: Good luck to the Members opposite explaining that disparity on the doorstep. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Heselwood, please.

COUNCILLOR HESELWOOD: Lord Mayor, comrades. I am also commenting under the Children and Young People’s Plan and I would like to draw on the tackling the impact of child poverty strand of the plan. In particular I would like

to say how damning it is that in this day and age and in one of the world's biggest economies we are standing here discussing a plan that includes how we can mitigate the impact of poverty on children. It is something we simply should not have to be doing, so why are we?

We are having to do it because of the devastating impact continued austerity measures imposed by your Government are having on families and children across our country. We have had a Deputation today from the Leeds Poverty Truth Commission, who, and I quote their own words, "poverty dehumanises people" and that is a damning statement to make but unfortunately one that is still true, because of your Government's austerity measures.

Last week the Equality and Human Rights Commission published their paper, *The Cumulative Impact of Tax and Welfare Reforms*, and I would encourage you all to read it, although I do accept that Members on the Benches opposite may find that some uncomfortable reading for bedtime this evening, but please feel free to do that.

There are a number of points in the report that I would like to draw Council's attention to and I would like to quote directly from the paper, if I can. First one:

"Changes to taxes, benefits, tax credits and Universal Credit since 2010 had the biggest impact on those with lower incomes. Around one-and-a-half million more children are forecast to be living in households below the relative poverty line as a result of those reforms. Disproportionate impact on several protected groups, including people with disabilities, certain ethnic minorities and women. A household with one disabled adult and one disabled child will face an average loss of just over £6,500, over 13% of the average net income. Bangladeshi households will see a reduction in income of around £4,400 a year on average and women will lose considerably more than men"

(which I have spoken about before in this Chamber)

"Women will lose around £400 per year on average with men losing around £30."

Remember these are not my words, comrades, you can read them for yourselves in the report. It is quite a legacy to be leaving from the Government of the elected Members opposite and why we and other Councils up and down the country are doing everything we can to mitigate the impact of poverty on children. That is why we are in this position and that is why millions of children are facing a future with poorer outcomes than they deserve.

The blame for this lies firmly with this unfeeling and uncaring Conservative Government and every single Member of that Government and every single Member of you on the Opposition Benches over there should be thoroughly ashamed of yourselves. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jonathan Pryor.

COUNCILLOR PRYOR: Lord Mayor, the Children and Young People's Plan outlines our ambition for Leeds to be a child friendly city and the best city for children and young people to grow up in. To that end we have ensured that children and young people are at the heart of decisions we make and that we are continually asking ourselves what it is like to grow up in Leeds and how can we improve that for our children and young people.

We are determined that Leeds is seen as a beacon of good practice and a city where families want to live. We believe in investing in future generations to ensure the long-term prosperity of our city.

It is unfortunate, however, that the Tory Government does not share our commitment to children and young people as they have continued to slash funding for Children's Services over and over again. Since 2010 Leeds has seen a £43m reduction in Government funding for Children's Services. What kind of message does that send to our children, young people and their families?

To me it says that the Government does not believe that they are worth investing in, that their futures are of no consequence to Tory Ministers who have no idea what it is like being a child living through austerity. While here in Leeds I am so proud that we have managed to protect our children's centres, across the country children's centres are being forced to close. What do those Tory Ministers care if those closures have led to feelings of isolation and hopelessness among mothers? What do those Tory Ministers care if the closure of those centres has made it impossible for parents to work? What do they care if those closures have led to an increase – an increase – in the numbers of children living in poverty here in the UK? The simple answer must be that they do not care, just like they do not care about investing in early intervention services to help reduce the numbers of children coming into Local Authority care; just like they do not care about properly funding post-16 education for young people with special educational needs; just like they do not care about slashing school budgets to such a degree that schools are cutting courses and losing staff.

The fact is that our ambitions to be the best city and a child friendly city are at constant threat of being undermined by a Government that places no value on Leeds or the people and children within it.

As a Labour administration we are determined to continue to do all that we can to work towards our ambitions as we do value the people of Leeds and we believe that they deserve the very best. It is a shame that that cannot be said of this current Tory Government. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Paulene Grahame.

COUNCILLOR P GRAHAME: Thank you, Lord Mayor. The Children and Young People's Plan is one of the central policy documents of this Council to help us achieve the ambitions we have for our city. Fundamental to this is ensuring that we have sufficient funds to meet our aspirations. Many of you will know the interest that my Scrutiny Board and the Governance and Audit Committee before it have given to

business rates. Increasingly, business rates is becoming a direct locally generated source of our funding. With this comes risks which we need to make financial provision for in our budget – risks arising from appeals and risks arising from variations in the strength of the economy and those uncertainties are increased further with Brexit on the horizon.

Making these budget provisions diverts much needed funds from front line services to our most vulnerable. During the year my Scrutiny Board and I have delved deeper into business rates, we have looked in depth at the work of the Valuation Office Agency, looked at the basis on which appeals are lodged and have attended Valuation Appeal Tribunal hearings to see how appeal decisions are taken. Our work has made a real impact. The Tribunal Chair we met commented positively about our interest and senior Valuation Office Agency staff have now had democratic scrutiny of their work.

I am pleased to report that outstanding business rate appeals in Leeds are now much reduced and that to date no new appeals have been lodged under the 2017 Ratings List. I am also pleased to report that the Business Rates Team are now providing even greater focus on ensuring that we maximise the number of properties on the Ratings List and maximise the resources available to the Council to meet the needs of the citizens. The original amount set aside for appeals in the reserve budget has been cut, freeing funds for our most important budget, such as Children's Services, I am pleased to report.

However, it is my view that Local Government needs to have certainty and greater local control over this source of finance in the future. It cannot be good governance to have the potential for the financing of our crucial Council services to be held hostage by often speculative appeals or any unexpected change in the economy that are often out of our direct control, or that there is no correlation between local service need and the resources that are put to Council's disposal.

Our work in Scrutiny will continue and I am also hopeful that the 100% business rate pilot will also be able to closely examine those factors and make recommendations to Government.

I would like to thank all the Board Members because it has been an all-Board Member inquiry this and every Member has taken part to make sure that we save money for our most important services. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dan Cohen.

COUNCILLOR COHEN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I have to say I was going to simply stand up and welcome huge amounts of the Children and Young People's Plan, particularly the recognition of adding in achievements into the things we are looking at in terms of attainment achievement and attendance, those three together.

However, I have to say, listening to some of the Labour contributions, you would think there was an election coming up! You would honestly believe that there was no such thing as poverty under any Labour administration, that suddenly it appeared magically when the Conservatives took power. There was poverty as we

had to endure, the Labour Government's, poverty that frankly you took very little effort to attack and deal with. There is still poverty (*interruption*) there is still poverty and everyone accepts there is much to do about it, but to suggest it magically appeared as we took power is frankly ridiculous.

COUNCILLOR: It did.

COUNCILLOR COHEN: Councillor Ritchie is clearly not a fan of Channel 4 because if he were he would know that the Channel 4 Fact Checker would have told you that essentially everything you told us was nonsense. All Key Stage 1 children will still get free school meals. All families receiving Universal Credit will still get free school meals. 50,000 more children will be receiving free school meals. There are more children in good and outstanding schools now than at any time under any Labour administration in Government. It is utter nonsense to suggest otherwise, utter nonsense and, frankly, you do yourselves a disservice. You really do.

The Children and Young People's Plan has within it, in the Refresh, some really important proposals, some really important things to look at. I really welcome the fact that we took forward what young people told us about the importance of improving access to affordable, safe, reliable and connected transport for young people; that we put that front and centre in the plan is really important, I think, that we listen to young people was a real mark of respect to those young voices.

I think it is going to be a real challenge how we monitor that and I think that is something that I know we have left as a place holder in the plan and I know it is something that we are working through our various cross-party boards to find a sensible way of measuring and marking that. Let us not devalue what is an important plan with cheap political point scoring. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Stewart Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Following on from that theme, Lord Mayor, I actually do have the Channel 4 Fact Checker here and the title on it says, "Labour are not telling the full story about free school meals." Just to confirm what Councillor Cohen said, at the back, the fact check verdict:

"There is some respectable maths behind Labour's claim that a million children will lose out on free school meals after the Government introduces a means test but they have not mentioned two key points.

Number one – no-one who is currently eligible for free school meals under Universal Credit will lose their entitlement (*interruption*) and number two, comrade, in fact under Universal Credit 50,000 more children will receive school meals by 2022 than would have done under the previous benefits system.

If you stopped being so selective with the truth you might actually be more effective guardians of Children's Services in this city. We had a glorious celebration of the fact that Ofsted had been and had given us another good health check. Well,

congratulations, it is good that the city has those good standards, but I have to say, you are increasingly becoming a one trick pony ever since Councillor Blake left the leadership of Children's Services because if you remember, when they were inspecting the city before they covered social care and they also covered education. You are very lucky that they no longer cover education because you are singularly unsuccessful at actually standing up for the needs of the poorest children in this city.

You talk about how there is more money going down to the south for those poorer children and isn't it terrible and if only we had the money we would make a better difference. Lord Mayor, the truth is that actually we are the worst in the north, so it is not just a matter of everybody in the north is actually performing at the same rate. This city is the worst performing in terms of attainment for its poorer children compared to its neighbours, compared to Doncaster, compared to Bradford.

Did we hear any of that in the Refresh of the Children's Service Plan? Actually, it does mention it in there and the reason why you have got attainment included as a new priority for the Children's Services Plan is because there is a problem, but you will never hear it expressed from the people who are supposed to be in charge of it and making a difference in it, because all they want to do is blame somebody else. Do you know what, you are in control, you are paid to be in control - now get control. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Mulherin to sum up, please.

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Thank you to colleagues around the Chamber for your mostly well thought out comments. I would like to thank Councillor Hayden for drawing the Council's attention to the recent focused Ofsted inspection and its outcome. It does indeed validate what we have been saying and doing. Our political decisions and priorities have been correct; more than that, Ofsted recognised that we know where we need to improve and our plans for doing so are appropriate.

Councillor Ritchie highlighted the scandal which is this Government's denying free school meals to one million children in need in the future unless, of course, they live in Northern Ireland. There can be no defence for that outrageous decision, it is not about the welfare of children, it is not about helping families who are struggling to get by, as we have heard in this Council Chamber, directly from people living in poverty here in Leeds today. It is about shoring up Theresa May's Government and it is completely indefensible and a total disgrace.

Councillor Heselwood outlined the recent paper by the Equality and Human Rights Commission and their analysis of the impact of austerity measures on children, disadvantaged families and protected groups such as those with disabilities, women and certain ethnic minorities. She encouraged you all to read that report and I have got a copy here if anyone would like to take up her offer. It may be illuminating, particularly for Members opposite.

I would like to thank Councillor Grahame for the work of her Scrutiny Board and the money they have saved for this Council, as the money is clearly needed to offset Government funding cuts. Councillor Pryor I think summed up pretty much

what we are all thinking. We have a Government that simply does not care about the impact of its policies on children and families, either the immediate impact or the long-term effects of its slash and burn approach to budgets.

Councillor Cohen, seemingly wilfully ignorant of his Government's abolition of the Child Poverty Targets and the consequences of his Government's policies on children and families in this city which, I would tell you, is doing you and your party a disservice.

Educational attainment in this city is an area that we have recognised needs improvement. It is one that we have written into the new Children and Young People's Plan but we need to be cognisant of the fact that we have to have the funding in which to do so. We have the second lowest per pupil funding in the region, we have lost £43m in Government grants, a £14m loss to the Education Services Grant, which is the money that we would use to help support schools to improve – money that was there previously under previous Governments to drive up support and standards in our schools.

The new National Funding Formula with its cap that sees Leeds children losing £7m that the Government recognises they needed to support children with special educational needs in this city, and £8m less in the schools block. I have written to the Government to ask them to remove that cap so that Leeds children get the money that they need and deserve to get the education they should be able to receive with the right teaching support, the right support staff in schools and the tools and equipment that we need here to get the standards that we all want to see, something that has not been done by this Government. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: I would now like to call for the vote to approve the Children and Young People's Plan. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED. Thank you.

ITEM 6 – RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE – APPOINTMENTS TO THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now moving on to Item 6, Recommendations of the General Purposes Committee and Appointments to the Independent Remuneration Panel. Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Can I move in terms of the Notice, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: I second, Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Councillor Leadley.

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: My Lord Mayor, Sir Rodney Brooke has been Chairman of the Leeds City Council Independent Remuneration Panel for about 20 years, a length of service which should not pass without a note of thanks. IRP is one

of those almost silent bodies which work deep within the bowels of the City Council. It would draw attention to itself only if something went wrong. Sir Rodney had had an illustrious career in Local Government which began with Morley Borough Council, so he could not have had a better training ground.

In those days the Town Clerk was an Irishman, Mr E V Finnigan, whose name still gains votes for my colleague, Councillor Robert Finnigan, from those who believe he is probably the old Town Clerk's grandson, though in fact they are not related at all. E V Finnigan's real son, John Finnigan, practised for many years as a solicitor in Morley and retired as a governor of Westerton Primary Academy only on Monday this week, the day before yesterday, after about 30 years' service.

Sir Rodney went on to be Chief Executive of the London Borough of Westminster when Dame Shirley Porter was the Tory Leader of Council. Allegedly Sir Rodney gave sound, urgent and timely advice on a number of important matters which allegedly was not always digested quite as well as it might have been.

He retired to Ilkley and has given Leeds City Council the benefit of his insight into the workings of Local Government, overseeing the application of simplified and modernised remuneration for Councillors which replaced the complicated and sometimes chaotic system in which multitudes of small claims were made for out of pocket expenses and attendances at individual meetings.

From time to time IRP has reviewed and reappraised the cash value of Councillors' work, which must call for judgement finely balanced between the economisers and right-wing red-necks who believe that all Councillors should be unpaid volunteers, and the reality that even at a time of austerity it would be impractical and undemocratic for major public bodies to be run only by those who could afford to do it for nothing.

I understand that Sir Rodney has agreed to advise the three incoming IRP Members during a time of transition to ensure that his knowledge and experience are passed on. Meanwhile we should record our thanks for his services and wish him many further years of retirement. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Can I thank Councillor Leadley for that background, and I think we are all very grateful to that particular local dimension he has given, but many of us know Sir Rodney for his many roles of contribution that he has made to the city of Leeds. Can I suggest, and with the support of Council, that we actually write to Sir Rodney and express our appreciation for the way that he has looked after the processes, as we know, around remuneration.

Just to point out that we have three new members who have come forward – Kevin Emsley, Chris Jelley and Dr Kate Hill – and I think we are very grateful for such a richness of people who are willing to serve on such an important body.

With all of your support, if we could issue a real vote of thanks to Sir Rodney for the selfless time that he has given us over many years. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, and I would like to now call for the vote on this. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

ITEM 7 – RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
– COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW – FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR LEDSTON PARISH COUNCIL

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now moving on to Item 7, Recommendations of the General Purposes Committee. Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Can I move in terms of the Notice, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Once again I would like to call for the vote. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

ITEM 8 – RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
– APPROVAL OF THE 2018/19 PAY POLICY STATEMENT

THE LORD MAYOR: We now move on to Item 8, Recommendations of the General Purposes Committee – Approval of the 2018/19 Pay Policy Statement. Councillor Blake.

THE LORD MAYOR: Can I move in terms of the Notice, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Finnigan – who is not here. Councillor Robinson.

COUNCILLOR ROBINSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I rise to speak on Item 8, the recommendations of the Pay Approval Committee, because I note within the documentation that there is no mention of the gender pay gap and inequalities in gender pay. I have asked questions on numerous occasions in this Council and written questions have been submitted to Exec Board Members on this matter.

I welcome the Government's release of information on the gender pay gap and that Councils will have to publish that data. I think it is something that every Member in this Chamber would welcome as well, and that this Council and the Government should be encouraging organisations outside of Local Authority control to also make sure that they release that data including organisations that Local Authorities in Central Government contract with as well. One of the best ways to make sure that we

highlight this issue is transparency and accountability on it, as is noted within the report under item 3.1.4.

What I would ask is that on numerous occasions I have asked about the Council going even further in publishing this data and under Question 31 today I have asked the Executive Board Members what steps will be taken to address the disparities. This would be an ideal opportunity for the Exec Board Members to rise and say what they will be doing within their departments to make sure that these disparities are tackled.

I do not intend to go on much further at the risk of mansplaining the issue but what I would say is that Leeds has an 8.6 gap per hour in favour of men across this Council. Far more needs to be done to address this issue, it needs to be highlighted, we need to encourage transparency and we need to step forward as leaders if we want to make sure that women in work and their role is highlighted with just as much importance as men in work going forward. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor James Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I welcome Councillor Robinson joining the battle for equality. Maybe it will be Comrade Robinson fairly soon!

I just wanted to, I notice the red light came on at the end of his contribution so he obviously missed some important figures out from his contribution. First of all, that in terms of the highest quarter of staff for this organisation, the majority of the highest paid staff in this organisation, 58% are women and I think that is something that is great credit to this organisation. What he also missed out – and I am sure he was going to come on to it as well – was that when we look at the similar figures for Whitehall, where his lot run down there, actually the gender pay gap is far bigger down there than it is up here for this organisation...

COUNCILLOR ROBINSON: We have a woman Prime Minister.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: ... and I am sure you were going to come on to say that, Councillor Robinson, but I will say it for you.

The other thing I am sure you were going to come on to say as well is what are we going to do about it. I will tell you what this Labour administration has done about it. We will pay our lowest paid staff the National Living Wage Foundation living wage. (*Applause*) Had we stuck to the Conservatives' pay freeze and pay cap for public servants, we would have seen our lowest paid staff dropping 20% below inflation over the last seven years and I am proud to say this Labour administration, you asked what we were doing and I am telling you, this Labour administration means that the lowest paid staff working for this Council, their wages have stuck with inflation, not the 20% cut that the Tories wanted them to have but stuck with the inflation and that is because of what we are doing about low pay.

I am sure there are plenty of other things that many Members around certainly the Labour side will want to say what we are doing about this but I have to say I do

welcome the support for the work we are doing on it, I do welcome the recognition which I think was there as well that we publish this information as a Council well ahead of the date we have done it. Councillor Robinson is absolutely right, transparency is the key to this and I am sure we will all continue – I am sorry, I keep being interrupted here, it is very rude (*laughter*).

We heard earlier from the Poverty Truth Commission that actually they talked about what the impact of poverty was. I think that is a far more powerful message on this very, very important issue than some interruptions down from that end of the Council Chamber.

I will finish there. I know we have done a lot on this but I know we have a lot more to do and we are committed to follow up our record and achieve it. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake to sum up, please.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Councillor Lewis, for highlighting the work that we are doing and I just think we should also expect Councillor Robinson and his Group to come and join us in our attempt to decrease the gender pay gap across all of paid work, and the private sector in particular. When you actually look at the FTSE 100, the average mean pay gap is 59% compared to 8.6% in Leeds. PWC 33%; HSBC 60%. That is going in the wrong direction.

We welcome your interest. Councillor Lewis has made it very clear that we take this matter very seriously, supported by Councillor Lowe working tirelessly on this agenda. Let us be open and honest but let us also not forget the impact of austerity on women as we have discussed in this Council. Men will have borne just 14% of the burden of welfare cuts compared to 86% for women and the total cost of the cuts is estimated to be £79bn for women since 2010, compared to £13bn for men, so when you give us your words of advice and wisdom, can you bear that in mind and join us in lobbying your Government to make sure we make amends in these matters. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Now I would like to call for the vote on the approval of the 2018/19 Pay Policy Statement. (*A vote was taken*) That is CARRIED.

ITEM 9 – REPORT ON LICENSING ANNUAL REPORT

THE LORD MAYOR: We now move on to Agenda Item 9, Report on Licensing Annual Reports. Councillor Selby.

COUNCILLOR SELBY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. First of all may I move that Council receive the Annual Report of the Licensing Committee. Can I take this opportunity to thank all those in the department for all their very hard work, often working unsocial hours to make sure that everybody using our taxis, private hire vehicles, pubs, clubs, betting shops, casinos and other licensed premises are entitled and able to do safely and without incident.

This report highlights what we have done in the last year. Some of the work is proactive, some is reactive.

Can I thank also all Members of the Licensing Committee for their commitment to work together harmoniously, unlike other debates that we have had in this Council Chamber in the past.

We have much to do, not only in committee but in the panels dealing with the applications for licensed premises and the working parties reviewing the policies affecting both licensed premises and taxi and private hire trade. Where there are problems we try and look for solutions.

Leeds is a thriving city and the night-time economy attracts many visitors, providing employment and encouraging other investments into the city. Anybody going to look at Leeds City station on Saturday night at nine o'clock, ten o'clock, sees the trains coming in full of people wanting to enjoy the night life, people are coming to the taxis, about 100,000 people at a weekend coming to enjoy themselves.

Members have gone out on Friday and Saturday nights with officers and the police to see how busy the city centre is, to see the work that is being done to ensure that those who come to Leeds have a safe and enjoyable time. We need to thank them for that.

During the course of the year we have responded to the consultation about fixed betting terminals, urging that the maximum amount to be staked was no more than £2 but unfortunately the Government have accepted the bookmakers' lobby instead.

As far as taxis and private hire is concerned, Leeds leads the way in seeing that there is passenger safety and safeguarding is a high priority. Other Councils are looking to us for guidance and support and we are working with our colleagues in West Yorkshire and York to see to it that we actually get the best for the people of Leeds.

In Leeds our standards are some of the most rigorous in the country so far as taxis are concerned. Our aim is to ensure that anybody using a taxi or private hire car in Leeds gets into it, they know they are going to get home safely, they are going to get to their appointment safely and without any trouble. We do have a major problem, it has been raised in committee, and that is the issue of cross-border traffic, particularly from those organisations using apps who do not have drivers coming in who do not meet our high standards. We are trying to work on that. We have raised that with Government, I have met with the Minister. We seemed to be making some progress with it – he got sacked. Whether that is because he met me I do not know!
(laughter)

I would like to pay tribute again to the taxi and private hire companies and drivers who in the recent bad weather played an important role in seeing to it that when the railways were not working or the buses were not operating they went out of their way to ensure that people were able to get to work, to hospital, to other appointments when those problems occurred.

Can I take this opportunity finally, Lord Mayor, of thanking you and other Members of Council for the very kind words that you have said both to myself and to others. I am sure those of us who are retiring will offer our experience and guidance to the new Members. I have volunteered one particular task. I will show the new Members where the light switch is! *(laughter and applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: You certainly did manage to turn the lights out in this Chamber on at least one occasion, Councillor Selby, and yes, Tom has just pointed out that he did get the blame so I would just keep quiet about it, nobody heard you say that! Councillor James Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I second and reserve the right to speak but I do not think anybody else wants to speak.

THE LORD MAYOR: I would now like to call for the vote to note the Licensing Annual Report. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED, thank you.

ITEM 10 – REPORT OF THE STANDARDS AND CONDUCT COMMITTEE

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 10, Report of the Standards and Conduct Committee, Councillor Elizabeth Nash.

COUNCILLOR NASH: My Lord Mayor, I am sure that all Members here will have thoroughly read this report from cover to cover. *(laughter)* In case not I should like to highlight three points which I think are important.

The report refers to the Code of Conduct and one of the items in it asks Members to report any discloseable pecuniary interests which they or their spouses or civil partners may have. These include employment, office, trade, profession or vocations, sponsorship, contracts, land, licensing, corporate tenancies and securities. This last item, securities, refers to interest in businesses situated within the city. This does not refer to building society or bank saving accounts. Failure to register any of these DPIs is a criminal offence and has to be reported immediately to the police.

Colleagues who are retiring at this election may think that this does not apply to them. However, the record of DPIs is held for two years after leaving so I do recommend that my colleagues make sure that their DPIs are registered before they leave.

We had a discussion about declaration of gifts and hospitality. In the Localism Act of 2011 the Government asked all Councils to set a limit for this but did not indicate how much this should be. In the absence of legislation, Leeds set the limit in line with the Representation of the People Act 1983 when the gifts of finance in an election campaign is £50 before it is declared. Some Councils set a lower limit and some a higher limit. This limit does not apply to invitations and hospitality given by the Council. Indeed, it is in the Council's interest if Members attend as many events as possible to monitor what the Council is providing, and it is also in the Council's interests if Members do accept invitations to events from outside bodies,

especially if that body receives a considerable Council grant, so that Members may see that the Council is getting value for money. If the tickets amount to less than £50 this does not have to be declared, but must be if over £50. It is surprising how little £50 is when tickets are involved.

In this last year there have been ten complaints about City Council Members. Eight were invalid complaints but two were valid complaints and referred to in the appropriate use of social media. One complaint was resolved at Stage 1 of the Standards Procedure and the other at Stage 2 to the satisfaction of the complainants. Guidance is frequently sent to Members on the use of social media and training will be given to all new Members within a two month induction course.

There was just one recent complaint against a Town Councillor and this is being dealt with at the moment.

My Lord Mayor, I should like to end with what Gordon Tollefson, the independent person who attends our committee meetings and advises Councillors on procedure, said of Leeds:

“As the independent person I think it is absolutely remarkable when you look at the Annual Report at the number of complaints. Most of them were not even substantiated and for a Council the size of Leeds with 99 Councillors I think it pays tremendous tribute to Councillors across the city in the way they have performed their duties and I just wanted to add that in the Annual Report.”

My Lord Mayor, on that happy note I move the report. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Selby.

COUNCILLOR SELBY: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I would now like to call for the vote to consider and note the matters set out in the Annual Report. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

ITEM 11 - QUESTIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: We move on to Questions where for a period of 30 minutes Members of Council can ask questions and if we could start please with Amanda Carter, Councillor Carter.

COUNCILLOR AMANDA CARTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Is the Executive Board Member for Communities satisfied that the managed area in Holbeck is now being managed more effectively, to the satisfaction of business and local residents?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Coupar.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to thank Councillor Carter for bringing this question forward and giving me the opportunity to update Council on this particular issue. I do know that Councillor Carter is absolutely well briefed on this issue as she works, I know, alongside us on Safer Leeds Executive and the Crime and Police Panel.

I would like to start by acknowledging that last summer there were some issues in the running of the managed approach and it was important that steps were taken to ensure that this was managed more effectively. A number of changes have been made in recent months to improve and enhance the support and services linked to the managed approach. Following a public meeting in October 2017 a number of things were put in place. A dedicated police team to tackle any soliciting, kerb crawling and sex working taking place in residential areas; tackling breaches of the rules and providing a visible presence and reassurance to the community. Enforcement activity has increased with action taken against both kerb crawlers and sex workers. Enforcement of the rules is done on a daily basis.

A dedicated cleansing team provided to respond quickly to the sex or drug waste reported by the community. They have built up good links with the community and worked with them to identify and respond to areas of concern. Additionally, intensive resource to sex workers providing support to some of the most complex and vulnerable women in the city. Changes to the way that drug and alcohol services are delivered to sex workers and, importantly, we have also worked alongside a number of community organisations and groups in Holbeck. A Community Reference Group has now been formed and significant progress is being made in working together, building trust to identify joint solutions to this issue. I would like to take this opportunity to thank local ward Members for all the work that they have done before October and, indeed, since.

Since November Safer Leeds have also been providing a weekly update to a range of community organisations detailing work undertaken and current issues. Communication with businesses is also being undertaken on a regular basis through City Development and a weekly update is also shared. We are committed to continuing this level of engagement with residents and businesses in the area and whilst I recognise there is more to be done to tackle this very long-standing issue, progress has definitely been made.

THE LORD MAYOR: Supplementary, Councillor Carter?

COUNCILLOR AMANDA CARTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Yes, you must be aware that there are local businesses and residents in a particular area that are particularly affected by this. Will the Exec Board Member be prepared to meet with those businesses and residents to discuss what can be done to improve matters?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Coupar.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Yes, thanks, Councillor Carter, again. I actually attended the meeting back in October and I have been there several times since. I have also offered to meet local residents individually or indeed in the Reference Group which I have attended as well. There are also business leaders on that

Reference Group and it is a small area of the city that is being impacted by it and we are determined to deal with it in the right way so that those residents and businesses are not impacted adversely by it. I am more than happy to continue to meet with those residents and businesses. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jonathan Bentley.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can the Executive Member explain why the consultation on bus improvement measures on the A660 will not commence until June despite consultation having already commenced on schemes for other less congested bus routes?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Richard Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: The Executive Board formally approved the Outline Schedule for the Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme in June 2017. Since then a Development Panel has been appointed and undertaken pre-feasibility work along five key bus routes and the city centre improvements.

It was not possible to undertake consultation on all the projects in a single phase. As more engineering and feasibility work was required for both the Woodhouse Lane City Centre Gateway proposals and the Lawnswood Roundabout proposals before consultation, it was decided it would be better to put the entire corridor from Adel to Leeds into Phase 1B which will take place in June.

THE LORD MAYOR: Supplementary, Councillor Bentley.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am grateful to Councillor Lewis for that answer but as the A660 route is going to be the last in the queue for consultation and firm proposals, could he tell Council how he is going to ensure that it gets a sufficient share of funds as befits its status as the most congested route in the city, despite the head start being offered to other routes.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Money is not allocated on a first up best dressed basis. It will be allocated according to the requirements of the corridor, so those schemes in the first tranche do not get the funding and leave all the others begging, so I do not think Councillor Bentley needs to be over worried on that respect. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ghulam Hussain.

COUNCILLOR G HUSSAIN: Please can the Executive Member comment on the recent findings from the independent What Works Centre for Wellbeing? Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Charlwood.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Thank you, Councillor Hussain and I pay tribute to Councillor Hussain as well for stepping down and all the work he has done in his time in the Council. I apologise to Council for my voice. I am losing it rather so I might have quite short answers today in my speeches but I will do my best.

I think it is really important to put on record and discuss when we are recognised as a city for the positive as well as the negative. I think this was a really great thing to find and see that the What Works Centre for Wellbeing, who had used data from Public Health England and the Office for National Statistics, very well regarded data sources, to look at a range of data findings that go beyond traditional measures such as employment and material wealth, to get a deeper insight into where people are in the city across the different areas of the nation, where they are thriving in every day life and where they are struggling.

They measured real world quality of life using local wellbeing indicators and they included happiness, feeling worthwhile, anxiety, employment and job quality, material deprivation, learning, children's wellbeing, healthy behaviour, overall health, democracy, crime, security, green space, housing and infrastructure, local environment culture, volunteering, community cohesion and inequalities for dance and physical activity which I am sure many of you will recognise as very much the wider determinants of health. They certainly called them Wellbeing Indicators.

Across the core cities in the UK, of which I think there are seven, we came top so we are all proud of our city, we are all proud representatives of our communities and our wards and I think that is something to really celebrate, that we are doing something right as local place leaders with our partners, with our voluntary sector organisations, with our communities, with our health sector, with our Council employees, with our schools and many others to create a vibrant, healthier city using these measures.

It is an independent report and, of course, the picture is not all rosy everywhere. Later on in the agenda, if we get to it, we will look at the Director of Public Health's Annual Report. That shows some worrying trends that are actually national trends as well and I would say directly linked to poverty. Things like life expectancy and other issues like drug and alcohol misuse. These wider determinants of health paint a better picture for Leeds, so we are doing something right and I think that needs to be celebrated.

I am really grateful to Councillor Hussain for bringing that up and I hope you will all share with me in congratulating everyone who has had something to do with that. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Supplementary Councillor Hussain? Thank you. Councillor Catherine Dobson.

COUNCILLOR C DOBSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can the Executive Member confirm that the proposals to establish an academy (free school) on the protected site at Fearnville are permanently off the table?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lisa Mulherin.

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Yes, thank you, I can.

THE LORD MAYOR: Supplementary, Councillor Dobson?

COUNCILLOR C DOBSON: Thank you very much, that is the first time we have had that actually acknowledged. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Mulherin.

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Thank you and I would just like to pay tribute to the local Labour Councillors in Killingbeck and Seacroft and Gipton and Harehills for putting forward alternative site solutions. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dave Nagle.

COUNCILLOR D NAGLE: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. Can the Exec Member please update Council on the efforts of Leeds City Council staff and partners in engaging with rough sleepers during the recent extreme cold weather?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Coupar.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Thank you, Lord Mayor, and thank you Councillor Nagle for raising this important issue in Council. The Council activated its cold weather arrangements for homeless people between Thursday 22nd February and Monday 5th March. This was the longest period of cold weather since the protocol was introduced. Essentially, during cold weather, a temperature of zero degrees or below, every homeless person, irrespective of a legal duty to accommodate, is offered emergency housing. Additional bed spaces were provided at St George's Crypt and at different services in the Beacon Supported Housing Service. The Street Outreach team provided by CGL carried out street sweeps on every night of the cold weather period to find rough sleepers and encourage them to take up offers of accommodation.

A street sweep was carried out in the blizzard conditions on Wednesday 28th by staff from both CGL and Leeds Housing Options. The on-call officer from Leeds Housing Options took over 150 calls, predominantly from members of the public concerned about people on the night of the 28th, before coming into work the following day to help provide the Housing Options Service. Staff from Leeds Housing Options Service got into work and provided a full service despite the travel difficulties and I would like to take the opportunity to pay tribute to all the staff that worked in those really serious bad weather conditions and for all the help and support they gave to homeless people and rough sleepers over the city in that cold period.

Every person was offered accommodation and we always had enough bed spaces. The Crypt, as ever, were extremely flexible in access to their service. Around eight people per night still slept rough during the cold weather despite the offers of accommodation and the life-threatening weather conditions. I would like to make this commitment in Council, actually, that services will continue to help people until we have ended rough sleeping in this city. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Supplementary, Councillor Nagle? Thank you. Councillor Dan Cohen.

COUNCILLOR COHEN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Does the Executive Member for Regeneration, Transport and Planning agree with me that referring to the Connecting Leeds Consultation events as “Transforming the Bus Network” was misleading?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Richard Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Not really. *(laughter)* The project title emanates from the 2016 Interim Leeds Transport Strategy and the subsequent Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme Strategic Outline Case, as a result of which the Department for Transport approved both the concept of transforming the bus network and the funding necessary to achieve the concept.

The overwhelming majority of the funding, and the partner funding, is directed at this transformation and further approval from both WYCA and the DfT will be dependent on developing projects befitting this transformation.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Cohen, supplementary?

COUNCILLOR COHEN: I might just, yes. Does the Executive Member agree with me...

COUNCILLOR: No!

COUNCILLOR COHEN: We will see in a minute, won't we? Does he agree with me that Labour's proposal to radically alter the road network in North Leeds, such as the A61 is going to be single carriageway on both sides from Alwoodley all the way into Leeds for private cars to facilitate a bus lane, is an unremittingly daft idea that is going to bring absolute chaos to the roads and to residents of Harewood, of Alwoodley and, of course, Moortown?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thanks, Lord Mayor. If that were what we were proposing perhaps it would be, but that is not what we have been talking about. We have just been talking about bus priority. We have not said that we are going to have a single lane of bus lane in both directions. These were discussion points, not proposals in the way that you are suggesting they are.

Look Dan, I know you have been busy putting up your stakes down the A61 and trying to scare people to death, as I would expect you to do at this time of the year, but you are rather prone, as some of your colleagues equally are, to mislead people about what our proposals are.

If we are talking about transforming bus services, well, actually it was 1986 when you did your best to transform bus services and we are still trying to recover

from the damage that you did and the damage you did to the city. Let us be honest, we are keen to see people use public transport – in fact, it is essential if this city is to keep moving.

I was reading in, I think it was the Daily Telegraph on Saturday, projections for the speed of traffic within cities and by 2027 the suggestion was that a bike will be travelling faster than a private car. That is the problem we have got to sort out and trying to scare people to death (Dan, there is no need to make all these strange gestures) does not really help. This is a problem that we all have to be part of solving and where we have been working in a cross-party group has been about your Members, all Members understanding that this is a problem that is bigger than one that just this Group can consult and that has been our problem probably over the past 30 years, that whenever there has been a difficult decision on transport people have agreed it up until a few people have started to say “Well, we don’t like that” and then you have gone running off saying, “Well, we don’t agree with it either.”

You cannot run a city on that basis. You have got to have consensus, we have got to come to some conclusions together that we have to change the world, and one of those things is about giving improved priority to buses. Quite what form it takes I do not know yet and there certainly are not any concrete proposals at this stage. It is about talking to people and taking people on that journey of exploration together.

Dan, take your stakes down, stop worrying people and let us get on with actually providing a solution for the people of Leeds. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can the Chair of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority Transport Committee detail the action he has taken to address the recent changes to the Hallam Line that have resulted in cuts to services in Woodlesford and fewer carriages?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Wakefield.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am still recovering from the confession from Councillor Lewis saying he read the Daily Telegraph! *(laughter)* Far too left wing for him so I have no idea what he was doing!

Right, to answer our new macho Councillor Golton, I can confirm that the Transport Committee Members have been expressing concern about the Hallam Line since July 2017 when a proposed new timetable by Northern was put out. We also expressed concerns about the risks to other proposals which go to places like Bradford, Harrogate, Horsforth, Headingley, Burley and Kirkstall. You should read the consultation, it is actually a good read.

Furthermore, in our July 2017 response we expressed our disappointment that on some corridors Northern were not proposing to go beyond what was mandated in the original franchise specification and we asked them to reconsider. However, on the Hallam Line which goes to Sheffield there were no proposals to reduce the service.

In response to the second issue you raised, the number of carriages, our Leader and other representatives have continually stressed the importance of sufficient train carriages and we have emphasised that this should be a priority. These messages have been repeated at regular consultation and meetings with Northern and Transpennine and with colleagues on a regular basis. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Supplementary, Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: I am grateful to Councillor Wakefield's full response there. By way of supplementary, would he also outline what role he intends to play in identifying more parking and the reopening of Methley station to relieve the pressure on Woodlesford station?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Wakefield.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: I am not going to answer that question because he knows very well, he has had the answers, but I will talk about my concern for Councillor Golton. I have often heard how Councillor Bruce and Councillor Nagle have to carry him through the ward on big issues.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Shame!

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: You know, this guy is the Leader of a major Opposition Party. This Member has actually stood for Parliament – has actually stood for Parliament. He never got past Rothwell boundaries, we never saw him in Kippax, but he has stood, so all of us would conclude that this person, if he was genuinely concerned about the service, would write to Rail North because the Transport Committee is not a co-signatory. If you are concerned about services you would write to Rail North, who have a statutory responsibility for monitoring, and share your concern.

I have tried to help him. I phoned up Rail North and said, "Have you had any correspondence from Councillor Golton?" "No." So I thought, well, I will ask somebody else, let's phone Northern themselves. "Have you had any correspondence from Councillor Golton?" "No", and so I can only conclude that Councillor Golton was not really serious. You see, the only correspondence I have had expressing concern about this issue has been from Councillor Bruce and Councillor Nagle.

I will tell you what this is all about, why he is actually trying to put a smokescreen, because his Party when they were in Government actually cut the services and he is trying to dodge responsibility for where the train service is now, and what we should be actually talking about and what we should be supporting is actually calling on Grayling to support the upgrading of the Transpennine, the East Coast Mainline and all the network of the north because actually we are slipping behind and our economy of the north and the people of the north are at risk because this Government has neglected investment in the north of this country. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor James McKenna.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: James, oh wow! Only my mum called me that! Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can the Executive Member provide an update to Council on the efforts of the Highways and Transportation Service in response to the recent inclement weather?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Richard Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thanks, Lord Mayor. For the team in Highways and Transportation this winter started with their first grits on 5th November. Since then there has not been a single week when some form of gritting-related activity has not taken place. The senior team of officers who continually monitor the weather forecasts and decide on the timing of each gritting treatment have worked on a 24/7 basis throughout the winter in their efforts to keep the roads of Leeds as safe as possible.

As we are all aware, since mid-January there has been a series of cold weather events, often accompanied by snowy conditions. These have at times pushed the boundaries of what have been achieved by gritting the roads with salt. So far this winter we have carried out a total of 123 gritting runs and used approximate 27,000 tons of salt. This level of activity exceeds anything we have done for the past 20 years.

All this work is carried out by the Council's own internal resources, working tirelessly at all times of the day and night for the benefit of all those who drive on our roads. The team in Highways and Transportation have been very well supported by colleagues in Fleet Maintenance, who have prioritised repairs to the gritting vehicles to ensure that gritting operations can be carried out effectively at all times. Colleagues from the Communities and Environments Directorates have also provided tractor ploughs and additional resources to help deal with lying snow.

Dealing with these conditions does place a strain on all those involved but I am very pleased to say that through good planning, effective deployment of resources and a much focused team effort, the Council has fulfilled its duty to keep our roads as safe as possible in what has been a very long winter. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Supplementary, Councillor McKenna? Councillor Ann Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can the relevant Executive Member inform me if all the Councillors who are landlords are members of the Leeds Rental Standard and, if not, name the ones that are not?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Coupar.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Yes, thank you Lord Mayor. I would like to point out again to Councillor Blackburn that the Leeds Rental Standard is just one strand of the work that we are doing at Leeds City Council to tackle poor quality accommodation in the private rented sector. I have to tell Councillor Blackburn, and I would have assumed that you might have read your brief a bit better, Councillor Blackburn, that the Leeds Rental Standard is about self regulation. It is jointly

administered by the National Landlord Association, the Resident Landlord Association and Unipol. Leeds City Council supports the functioning of the initiative but does not operate it.

Under Data Protection law a data request must be made to the Data Controllers, which are the NLA and RLA and Unipol. I would suggest that this data request is made to the scheme operators.

THE LORD MAYOR: Supplementary, Councillor Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: Yes. I did actually ask this question before the Leeds Rental Standard began as a supplementary, roughly two years ago and I received nothing then, but certainly if I know have to go to these other bodies I certainly will do. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Coupar.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Yes, thank you, Lord Mayor. You know, I am surprised at Ann's question because, as she says, she raised it by the way as a supplementary question and not the first question that she asked of me, I think it was about a year ago, and I gave her lots of information at the time about the work that we were doing in the private rented sector. I have to say, however, Councillor Blackburn that since that time you have never contacted myself or my office to ask for a briefing on this issue.

Might I also suggest that a more pertinent question that you might have asked would have been what is being done to address poor quality private rented sector accommodation that is in Farnley and Wortley ward, as the Leeds Rental Standard is just one element of a comprehensive approach to raising standards in the private rented sector. If you would like such a briefing, Councillor Blackburn, or you would like to contact me on this issue, I would like you to do so. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Robinson.

COUNCILLOR M ROBINSON: Thank you. Question 11, Lord Mayor. [Will the Executive Board Member for Environment and Sustainability say what land the Council has identified within its ownership to support and use to help deliver the hugely welcome Northern Forest scheme?]

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Richard Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Lord Mayor, the Northern Forest will link four existing community forests from Liverpool to Hull, including the White Rose Forest in the Leeds City Region. As a lead partner within the White Rose Forest, we have set up a new White Rose Forest Leeds steering group which has been tasked with the creation of a vision statement and a delivery plan that describes how Leeds will contribute to the evolution of the Northern Forest.

A draft White Forest Plan was agreed on Monday during a meeting of the Leeds City Region White Rose Forest steering group. This describes how the

expansion of tree cover in the River Aire Catchment will be at the forefront of the new Northern Forest. Delivery of the plan should commence next year.

Work continues in partnership with the University of Leeds, United Bank of Carbon and the Woodland Trust to identify land areas where strategic tree planting and woodland creation will provide most benefit across a number of areas, including mitigating flood risk and air pollution. In addition, current projects such as the Flood Alleviation Scheme Phase 2 and Green Streets, which is focused on the highways environment, have been identified as major drivers for implementation of major tree canopy increases across the region. Flood Alleviation Scheme modelling, for example, has identified the potential to increase the current 7% canopy cover of the Upper Aire Catchment to 15%, with advanced natural flood management work being explored in the Kirkstall and Calverley areas.

Green Streets principles have been embraced for the East Leeds Orbital Road with initial advanced projects to improve outer ring road junctions currently being developed. This will involve substantial tree planting as schemes near completion, including at the Park Land and Moortown A61 junctions, with in excess of 4,500 trees planted, including one hectare of new wet woodland at the Roundhay Park Lane junction.

Councillor Robinson may also be pleased to hear that on average three hectares of new woodland, equating to 13,500 new trees, are being planted by the Council each year.

THE LORD MAYOR: Supplementary, Councillor Robinson.

COUNCILLOR ROBINSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am pleased to hear that and that is excellent news. The Northern Forest offers potentially £2.5bn worth of positive benefits to the North of England in terms of environmental impact. Would the Executive Board Member please publish sites on line as they become available and will he today rule out Leeds becoming in the mess that Sheffield has got itself in when it comes to cutting trees down and making sure that we protect our environment here in this great city.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: I am more than happy that we publish as soon as we know what the situation is and where the sites are. I am not going to comment on any situation in Sheffield and I am surprised that you brought it to the attention of this Council.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. That bring us to the end of Question time but I just have one comment to make. The Whips have an agreement that because we are webcast and so on, all questions are actually read through, so if everybody could just take that on board instead of just saying the number, we do need the question reading through, just going forward, just a note for you.

COUNCILLOR ROBINSON: Lord Mayor, my apologies, I was doing it just in the sense of brevity.

THE LORD MAYOR: I know you wanted to save time and I know you probably did not know, but that is fine. In future, please read the questions.

ITEM 12 – MINUTES OF THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD AND THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now moving on to Item 12, Minutes of the Health and Wellbeing Board. To receive and comment up on the Minutes of the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Executive Board. I would like to call on Councillor Blake, please.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, can I move in terms of the Notice, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Consideration of comments on the Health and Wellbeing Board Minutes will be for a period of up to 20 minutes. If we could start with Councillor Dawson. *(Applause)*

COUNCILLOR DAWSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor, fellow Councillors. It is really good to be back in the Council Chamber. I have been away for six months. It is good to see everybody on all sides of the Chamber.

Lord Mayor, I am speaking on Minute 54 on page 116 of the Health and Wellbeing Board. The 2017/18 report highlights the successful working relationships we have with our partners and communities. Two of our key partners are Leeds Teaching Hospitals Trust and Leeds Community Healthcare Trust. I am now in a position to give a personal account of how they are working together.

Over the last six months I have needed their care and support and they have given it. I have also been helped by our own Assisted Living Centre in Leeds. I would like to briefly share my experience with you.

In early October last year I had two medical emergencies and I needed immediate help from the ambulance service and then at the Accident & Emergency at Leeds General Infirmary. The response to this crisis to save my life was brilliant on both occasions. Each time within hours of my heart attack and then again my stroke I was operated on by a medical team who were there in my time of need when I was at my most vulnerable and weakest. Both times they saved my life. They were magnificent. In fact, on the first occasion, which happened at nine o'clock in the morning, having been to an event at the park earlier that morning, the first thing I can remember is actually waking up in the LGI on ward 21 and being asked what I would like for my lunch. That was about 20 past twelve. That is how quick the whole experience was. The teams were brilliant.

In November I transferred to Chapel Allerton Hospital where my rehabilitation and my fight back began. I was given hope as well as expert therapy. Chapel Allerton is a small hospital with a big reputation and is known as a national centre of excellence. They do superb work on rehabilitating people who have had major trauma. I was in Chapel Allerton Hospital for five months. In fact I was there so long that I became a Patient Representative on interviewing panels (*laughter*) which I enjoyed and thought I was giving something back. I have now recruited a clinical psychologist and a physiotherapist to Chapel Allerton Hospital, which has been very good. I hope they do well. It is a tremendous hospital and a credit to the Teaching Hospital Trust.

It was great to be visited by yourself, Lord Mayor, in Chapel Allerton and other Chapel Allerton Members as well. It was great.

More recently I have transferred into the care of the Leeds Community Health Trust – fairly seamless really and one good thing has been the notes, six months of notes built up in the hospital have now been transferred to the Community Healthcare Team and they are aware of my background and the illnesses that I have had, so it has actually been good and the care I have received since I came home two weeks ago has been superb in the community care teams coming to help me, therapy and personal and social care. As I say, there has been a seamless transition for me.

My conclusion is that our partners are working really well and they are benefiting patients like me and others in the city who have been through major trauma.

What I would like to say as well is that when you are in hospital a long time you get the benefit of being able to catch up on some reading. I am very grateful to Councillor Wakefield for the loan of some books – nothing to do with transport, I should add – regarding the city of Leeds, particularly books written by Anthony Clavane, an author and journalist from the city. Absolutely brilliant, thanks, Keith.

The other reading, a lot of reading that I did was on the life and times of Charlie Chaplin. If you will allow me I would just like to give three quotes, because Chaplin was the person who made everybody laugh, he was also a brilliant musician and composer and as well as being a very successful businessman with his company United Artists.

I would like to give you three quotes from Chaplin which sum up some of his philosophy which I found gave me a bit of hope and inspiration.

Firstly, it is:

“Everybody likes to help each other. That is the thing about human beings, they like to share in each other’s happiness, not in each other’s misery”

which I thought was a great saying.

The second one which is very pertinent, I think, “A day without laughter is a day wasted.”

The third one is actually not a quotation but an excerpt from a song that was composed by Charlie Chaplin for his 1936 film Modern Times. The title of the song was “Smile” and very pertinent to anybody who has had a stroke because I am told by the consultant that actually smiling is a brilliant exercise which reconnects the neurological pathway from your brain through to the limbs that are suffering, so it is a really good exercise to smile. This is the words from the song that Chaplin composed:

“Smile, though your heart is aching,
Smile even though it’s breaking.
When there are clouds in the sky you’ll get by
If you smile through your fear and sorrow,
Smile and maybe tomorrow
You’ll see the sun come shining through for you.

Smile what’s the use of crying,
You’ll find that life is still worthwhile
If you just smile.”

Thank you, everyone.

(Standing ovation)

THE LORD MAYOR: You all know I wear my heart on my sleeve so I am going to try smiling because I am ready to cry. Neil, it is so lovely to see you back in the Chamber and I thank you so much for giving us that wonderful speech. Thank you.

Health and Wellbeing Board

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Eileen Taylor.

COUNCILLOR TAYLOR: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Instead of smile I feel like crying at this moment! Thank you, Neil.

Lord Mayor, I am speaking on Minute 54 page 116. Let us reflect on the last twelve months of the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board and the strategy of the partnership work across Leeds city. There is much to be proud of of what the Board achieve. In 2017/18 we have seen the Health and Wellbeing Board exert its focus on the wider and social matter of health while emphasising its role in local challenging the future of the healthcare service. It acted strongly and become a space where health and care leaders come together to have important and sometimes challenging conversation which has result in influence a diverse range of initiatives.

Focusing on one of the twelve priority areas set in Health and Wellbeing strategies, in strong, engaged and well connected communities, we have certainly seen key highlights over the last twelve months which has a significant impact on the

diverse community that we have in Leeds. Take, for example, the Better Together service, community based health and wellbeing activities which focus on the 10% deprived areas in Leeds. In partnership with the Third Sector this has engaged over 7,000 people, a fantastic achievement and one which highlights the commitment of our strategy to improve the health and wellbeing of the poorest faster.

The partners have also played a key role with 70 grants across 50 Third Sector organisations researching 20,000 people living in Leeds through the Leeds CCG Third Sector Health Grant Programme. It is an example how collectively working together we can reach communities across the city we need to support.

Lord Mayor, while these achievements are incredibly important, we must also recognise that the challenge we face still remains and it is vital that we continue to work together so that we can continue to strengthen our partnership to achieve consistently high quality care for everyone, respond to demographic changes and achieve long term finances across the healthcare system.

This does mean that we have to work differently but has also seen rise to the challenges. We must build on this and I know, Lord Mayor, despite the lack of focus national, we in Leeds will continue to do the best we can to improve lives of people in Leeds and continue to pursue our ambition to be the best city for health and wellbeing. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Taylor. Councillor Christine Macniven.

COUNCILLOR MACNIVEN: Lord Mayor, I wish to speak on the Health and Wellbeing Board minutes reviewing the year 2017 to 2018, page 116, Minute 54.

The appendix to this report reviews the activity of the Health and Wellbeing Board over the last twelve months focusing on partnership activity, summarising the self assessment workshop held with Board Members in January 2018, updating the indicators of Leeds Health and Wellbeing Strategy, and reviewing progress towards its achievement.

Nationally we have an ageing population and increasing numbers of people with long-term conditions. As a consequence of our emphasis on developing community based solutions and empowering people to take control of their health, we ensure that they are healthier for longer. There has been significant progress over the last twelve months in the case of distinct health and care resource challenges for partners, staff and citizens.

Our primary objective is to build on this progress, to achieve our vision to improve the health of the poorest the fastest. Leeds ranks highest amongst the core cities according to the recently released analysis from the What Works Centre for Wellbeing. Leeds's position as one of the top cities specifies areas in which we perform highly. As alluded to by Councillor Charlwood earlier with regard to Health and Wellbeing, three of our highly performing areas particularly resonated with me – self reported happiness; life satisfaction; measures to address income deprivation affecting older people.

We want Leeds to be the best city in the UK to grow old in. Being an age friendly city means promoting ageing positively and maximising opportunities for older people to contribute to the life of the city. We must build on the strengths of older people, recognising their roles as employer, employees, volunteers, investors and consumers. Over the last twelve months there have been considerable investments in older people in this city. We recognise the importance of self care with more people managing their own conditions. Long term conditions account for most of our health and care spending. It is important to support people to maintain independence and wellbeing within their local communities. In these scenarios they are enabled to become more involved in decision making but it is vital that person-centred care is co-ordinated with and around individuals.

The importance of these approaches has been highlighted over many years by many Governments. I await the full revelation of the Secretary of State Jeremy Hunt's brave new health and social care world with interest, tempered with a degree of world weary cynicism. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Stewart Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. The speakers who have gone before me on Minute 54 have done an excellent job in summarising what the work programme was for the year, so I will not comment on that. I am going to concentrate instead, if you will allow me, on the pharmacy needs assessment, which is on page 119, Minute 57.

This summary that appears here in these papers would actually offer us quite a rosy view of pharmacies in the city as it says it does not identify any gaps in the market and that there should be sufficient provision for future demand. However, it is only sufficient provision for future demand if we are unambitious about how we use our community pharmacies.

What is not mentioned within it, and I have checked it out several times, is a comment that was made by one of our CCG colleagues, who said he was considerably concerned about the number of community pharmacies that were giving notice that they were quitting, and that he had understood that there were at least three that had done so in the past month and that was on 19th February, so you can imagine how many might have done so since then.

We have a commitment as a Council – and it was a White Paper that was brought by this Group and it was backed by the administration – that we would try and strengthen wherever we could community pharmacies and their role within the city. In the Budget amendment that we put forward we actually advocated that if community pharmacies were below a certain size, then we should consider giving them rate relief and in response to that that those pharmacies could therefore commit to being carer hubs in the city where they would actually be more accessible and have better opening hours, for instance, than a lot of our doctors' surgeries. Unfortunately that was not taken up during the budget debate but I am going to mention it again because it is a common sense approach that the administration can take on board at whatever point it sees fit to do so because we do need to support our pharmacies and

it is not just good enough saying that we like them and we want to keep them; you have got to do stuff to actually make it happen. Unfortunately what we have done recently is actually detrimental because we took our smoking cessation contract out of pharmacies, which actually undermined their economics.

If we can support them, please, we might make sure that less of them will close and the reason why our CCG colleague was so keen to have them was that they tend to be very much more community focused, very much more flexible and they offer delivery services to people out of hours that are not usually offered by the bigger names, so if we can actually have that mentioned here and assurances given by the Lead Member that will be very welcome. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Robert Finnigan.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can I begin by welcoming back my colleague, Councillor Dawson – it is great to see him back in the Council Chamber.

Very, very briefly, I am talking at pages 120, Minute 58, about the Clinical Commissioning Groups, our concerns about their capacity to be able to cope with the overwhelming new build that we are certainly seeing across the Morley and East Ardsley area at this particular point.

It will come as no surprise to most colleagues to know that places like Lea View are struggling to cope with the level of demand that they have got at this particular point. We know Churwell surgery has similar problems, I understand that Fountain Street Medical Centre has closed its lists because its demands are somewhat significant.

The point that we are trying to put across at this particular point is that it is OK agreeing to 2,000 extra homes mainly on green field sites across the wider Morley area but until you develop the infrastructure to cope with such level of development, then you are always going to get problems and difficulties and the community that already lives in those areas is likely to find that there are significant problems.

The same goes for schools, the same goes for roads. It is clear and patently obvious to us that what you need to do is put the infrastructure in first before you put the development in. Trying to retro-fit things does not work and all that does means that you put the patients who are already in the system and being supported by these health centres under a greater degree of pressure; indeed you are waiting long periods to get an appointment with your doctor. It does mean that children are likely to be educated in portacabins if they can get a place locally because the schools are not in a position where they can expand to cope with the additional demand that is placed upon them.

The point where we will be debating clean air and other such things, increasing the levels of congestion certainly for those of us who are close to the M62 is an unwise move if you are hoping that you will get clean air and that it will not impact on residents in a negative way.

We are talking about more joined-up thinking that the Clinical Commissioning Groups need to be very clear about the fact that they have a role in resolving the problems and challenges that they face with the significant levels of development that are happening in Morley and other places across Leeds. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Charlwood to sum up, please.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: Thank you very much. Again a caveat about my voice, I will try my best to get through it. Hopefully I will not have a Theresa May moment, although I have got sweets and water so hopefully I will be fine.

If I could just join colleagues in welcoming Neil Dawson back to the Chamber and it is wonderful to hear a personal account of all the services that we have so often talked about in very strategic and broad terms in the city. We hear about numbers of patients on trolleys, we hear about delays, we hear about waits and what we do not often get is a personal story about what it is like. Neil, being my Deputy Executive Member for Health and Social Care, wonderful to have that direct personal experience. It brings it home that actually even in the most difficult times when funding is stretched and we are all conscious of that, the difficulty that they are all facing, he has had from his own account a really good, caring, very expert service that saved his life and got him back to us today, so I would just like to say congratulations and well done to Neil and thank him for that. *(Applause)*

Eileen and Christine – I am sorry, Councillor Taylor and Councillor Macniven – thank you for reflecting on the last twelve months' report. I am really pleased that we managed to do this piece of work which is about saying look at the Health and Wellbeing Strategy that you created together, and Councillor Mulherin when she was chairing the Board brought that through. Now let us look at the indicators and all the outcomes that we set ourselves, look at the last year of work that we have done and pull together what has happened as a result, and are we achieving the aims of our Health and Wellbeing Strategy, which is the whole point of putting the strategy together.

That brought forward from self-assessment from each individual organisation an enormous amount of individual actions and huge strategic work that has happened in the city as a result of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and as a result of the Health and Wellbeing Board and our time and effort that we put into it. It really was great to see we have moved so far and done so much work together. I think it really shows that actually when we speak together as a system we are all much stronger for it.

We have got a very cohesive system, good partners, we all work together during difficult times and we do not always agree and we do fall out and we do have our moments, but actually we are really strong when we pull together so we are really grateful for that.

We have had some excellent workshops in private session on some really difficult issues like migrant health, so really, really vulnerable groups of people in the

city that are potentially very vulnerable. How do we put a safety net under those people so they do not fall through the net? There are plenty of other groups as well that we are looking at – we have had a mental health one, we have had a young person one as well. There has been some really excellent work and thank you for raising that.

There are significant challenges, as Councillor Taylor mentioned, in financial sustainability and in workforce sustainability that together we are tackling and it is cross-party, you know, we are all in it together and I am really grateful for that.

I would like to pay tribute to Councillor Macniven for her work in the Council and in Roundhay, we are really going to miss you, and for bringing forward the ageing population issue and how we are championing our older population. We are trying to be the best city for growing older in, for it to be the nicest place to grow old in in the country and we are doing really well at that. Thanks to everyone for that.

Just quickly on the pharmacy paper Councillor Golton mentioned. The paper that comes to Health and Wellbeing Board, the statutory function of the Health and Wellbeing Board is actually a paper that is designed entirely for NHS England to use, whenever a pharmacy is applying to open NHS England will look at that document. That document is not about how we use, as a system in Leeds, our community pharmacies. However, we did mention at the Health and Wellbeing Board that the place for that is in the Leeds Health and Care Plan, the left shift, how we are putting more in the community, that it will be taken up, the role of community pharmacies will be strengthened within that because we all agree there is much more that we can do. I have run out of time. *(Applause)*

Executive Board

(i) Employment, Skills and Opportunity

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Charlwood. We are now going to consider and comment on the Executive Board Minutes. It will be heard until 4.10 at which point the relevant Executive Member will sum up followed by the Leader of Council. Councillor Cohen.

COUNCILLOR COHEN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am talking to Minute 169 from the extra pack which refers to the adoption of the Leeds Talent and Skills Plan. Members will be aware that within this plan there are a number of challenges that have been adopted now. The very first of those talks about putting children at the heart of the Talent and Skills Plan and making a more explicit recognition of the importance that this Council and this Labour administration attaches to the attainment of children from different backgrounds.

Well, Lord Mayor, tell that to that delegation of Roundhay parents who felt compelled to come and speak to us today about the North Leeds Primary Schools black hole. How on earth we can claim to be attaching real importance to the attainment of young children when this Labour administration is getting the basics so badly wrong. Horrendous mismanagement, seeing a funded needed free school in Roundhay cancelled; sites kyboshed despite your own now retiring Councillors

supporting them; Roundhay, Moortown and Alwoodley residents badly let down; failing to listen to concerns about primary schools in Calverley and Farsley resulting in a disastrous Ofsted; failing over years to deal with the needs of schools in Wetherby and Boston Spa, meaning in the end schools had to take matters into their own hands.

I could go on, Lord Mayor, but I will not because the facts speak for themselves. This Labour administration has failed this city in terms of education. It is paying lip service I am afraid within this report to this notion of attainment. It is massively disappointing in that regard, my Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Alan Lamb.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can I just say from this side of the Chamber as well how good it is to see Councillor Dawson back as well. We are really pleased to see you.

Lord Mayor, also speaking on Minute 169 in the extra pack around the Talent and Skills Plan. I would particularly like to focus on the importance of good careers advice and encourage Members to look at the report our Scrutiny Board is about to release around the importance of good information advice and guidance which we have done in conjunction with the Children's Services Board with the support of Councillor Bentley.

One of the key stats that really highlights the importance of getting this right is Members may not be aware that of all young people who start a university degree in this country, 50% - 50 – five-oh per cent – do not complete it. 50%, which is staggering and it really brings home the importance of getting the advice right in the first place.

I would encourage everyone here who is a governor, who is involved in any school, to really look at the recommendations in the report and also urge the schools in your communities that you are governors of, that are in your wards, to really, really concentrate at primary and secondary level on giving good advice and guidance. One of the key points that I hope the administration will take on board is the importance of actually getting the branding of this right and making parents realise the importance of them giving good advice, because while there are some fantastic experiences of people giving great advice and guidance in our city, often it is not taken up and sometimes it is because the parents perhaps have unrealistic expectations or perhaps do not understand all of the issues and take advantage of the things that are on offer. I would really encourage all Members to take that on board.

I hope you do not mind, Lord Mayor, I would like to associate myself with all the comments about retiring Members. You have all done a fantastic job but I would particularly like to pay tribute to my friend and colleague Councillor John Procter. He has served my home town of Wetherby and the villages beyond for I think 26 years. He is going to be sorely lost to the whole city.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Why did you get rid of him then? *(laughter)*
Answer the question. And Rachel.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: I should point out following on from the Lord Mayor's comments earlier when Councillor Selby joined the Council I was not born. *(laughter)*

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: That is not an answer.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Councillor Procter has served our community with distinction, he has served our city with distinction. His knowledge and experience is going to be a huge loss to this Council and to this city.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: We love you, John.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: He is a huge loss to our community and I cannot tell you how desperately sad I am that he will not be my ward colleague after May. I will miss him dearly. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

COUNCILLOR: Why didn't the Tories pick him, then?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Buckley.

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. If I can just associate myself with the comments just made by Councillor Lamb about Councillor Procter and also Councillor Dawson. It is very good to see him. I was also glad to see that Councillor Richard Lewis reads the Daily Telegraph and I was going to just suggest that he will obviously be familiar now with something I am just about to say, because figures in the Telegraph which he will have perused over the last few days show that the number of people employed by the public sector has now hit a 20 year low and the proportion of those employed in the private sector is at an all time high. Indeed, self employment is set to surpass public sector employment very shortly. All these statistics are a good thing for the United Kingdom and a good thing for the city of Leeds.

Talking about the Talent and Skills Plan, it is therefore entirely right that the administration is working with all stakeholders to ensure that Leeds remains at the forefront of all the skills and talents which are required in these modern sectors and that children and young people should be at the very centre of all this.

Now, it is a changing world. Modern Leeds has never been dependent upon single industries, single heavy industries in the same way that cities like Sheffield were, for example, in the past. Our economy here has always been more diverse and we actually should be quite grateful in many respects for that, but future growth is likely to be nearly all private sector driven and in sectors like financial services, digital development of all sorts, the creative sector with 2023 coming along and beyond that, architecture, wealth management, all these are growing sectors.

The big nationalised unionised lumbering giants of the past are in the past. The future is private enterprise with nimble entrepreneurs, comrade. *(laughter)*

We welcome efforts to help young people to thrive in this changing world and also encourage them to stay here and make their lives in Leeds and make things better for us in the future. Now, monitoring and measuring all this is the key to the whole thing and the Best Council Plan indicators might not quite be the best way in which to do that, so I would just say in conclusion, Lord Mayor, that if I can ask the Executive Board Member to describe how more progress can be made on this to ensure that goals are monitored accurately. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: I would now like to call on the Exec Board Member for Employment Skills and Opportunity, Councillor Mohammed Rafique, to sum up, please.

COUNCILLOR RAFIQUE: Thank you, Chair, and can I thank all those who have spoken on the Leeds Talent and Skills Plan. It is unfortunate that we have run out of time because we had some really excellent contributions, had we had some more time on this very pertinent and important issue around talent and skills, Lord Mayor.

If I can just respond to Councillor Cohen about the challenges, about the attainment of young people and the shortage of school places. I am not sure the shortage of school places is relevant to attainment and skills in the context you have actually put it. I do not think the shortage of school places we as a Council are to blame given that the Government does not actually give us – we have not got the right to build new schools. We are reliant on academies and free schools to do that. Had we had those powers we would not be having those conversations, Councillor Cohen, in this Chamber.

In terms of attainment I think compared to the other Core Cities, compared to the Region, as a city we do really well and Councillor Mulherin actually in the past and today earlier on when she spoke has put that really well, so I do not want to repeat what she has actually said on that.

What is actually important, and this is referring to the other contributions of Councillor Lamb and Councillor Buckley, is how fragmented and outdated our education system is. Councillor Lamb, you are quite right when you mention about the quality of careers information and guidance given to young people not just when they leave school but at an appropriate time. I think it starts too late in the day and can I thank all the Scrutiny Board Members who will be having an extended Scrutiny inquiry for your input and I look forward obviously to the recommendations which will come out.

The problem is, we start too late in the day. It should be starting, if you look at other countries like Germany and Japan and all that, they start very early, even at primary stage. Jobs which exist today, young people who actually enter the education system today, by the time they leave the education system those jobs or skills will not exist, so we need to be thinking about the Leeds sectors, in the sectors where the growth will be and then young people should be taught about those, about the world of work and that will actually in terms of attainment that will actually raise their attainment, raise their motivation, raise their aspirations as to where they want to be when they leave the education system.

Sadly, it is not the IAG, which is Information, Advice and Guidance, it is not embedded in our curriculum system. It is outdated. It needs to be put right and only Government can do that, we cannot do that. What we do in Leeds, I think we do it really well and I think we need to do more as Councillors who sit on school governing bodies, we could make our contributions individually as well.

Moving on to some other contributions which our colleagues would have made, and Councillor Groves would have talked about ambition for an inclusive economy and being a compassionate city where everyone within the city, people who need help are targeted, those who face the most disadvantaged, those with health conditions and those from poorer backgrounds are our care leavers.

Councillor Grahame would have talked about our apprenticeship fair. I am pleased to say we have got here in Leeds one of the most talked about events in the city, one of the best and if not the biggest apprenticeship fairs in the country where we had 126 exhibitors attending with 70% of those who are actually employers, some of the most and the best private sector companies who were represented there.

I would like to thank all the colleagues who actually attended the fair and gave some really positive feedback. I know several of you, including your good self, Lord Mayor, who had taken the time out of your busy and hectic schedule to attend with our Chief Executive, so thank you all.

Also, our team staff members within the Employment and Skills Team who actually put an excellent effort to make this I would say one of the key events in our annual calendar now.

Councillor Iqbal would have talked about the low pay and the issue of that. As a Council and as an employer we are committed to tackling low pay and you will remember from last month's budget that Councillor Blake committed to all Leeds City Council staff being paid, including our apprentices, the national living wage which is £8.75 per hour minimum rate – something I think we should all be very proud and pleased to support.

The Talent and Skills Plan that everyone spoke on so far underlines our firm commitment to inclusive growth, enabling everyone to benefit from the growing strength of our economy through the development of the skills and talent that business and our city needs.

Following a very extensive consultation with our stakeholders, and without exception, there has been a strong welcome, Lord Mayor, for the Council recognition that talent and skills are an issue of real importance and that deserves a specific focus.

I am proud of the Council Employment and Skills team will be the plan's custodian while it will be owned collectively by the stakeholders from across the city. Before I finish, because I am running out of time, I would like to welcome Neil back into the Chamber but also thank all the retiring colleagues who have worked a lot of time, so all the best for your future. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Judith Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor and can I just say welcome back, Neil. It has not been right on this side of the Chamber looking over there and you not being in the chair and coming to visit you, I think you caused quite a stir actually in Chapel Allerton, all the different visitors you had. I think I came just after Ed Balls had been one time and there was a lot of talk about whether he would go down the ward doing his gangnam style rendition to cheer everyone up and certainly bring a smile, but it is great to have you back. Your grit and determination just demonstrates to us why you are such a blooming good Councillor in Morley South, and long may it continue. *(Applause)*

Obviously because of circumstances today we have not had chance to have a very good airing of all of the different issues that have come to Executive Board. I just would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you, every Member of Council, for the incredible work that we have done over the last year coming up, which is reflected in the reports coming through to Executive Board obviously, but, you know, we could not take the report through Executive Board without the work that each and every one of you does in Scrutiny, all of the work that the different Panels do, the Community Committees and absolutely crucial to the work that we do. As Councillor Charlwood said we are getting recognition nationally on so many issues for the work that we do in this city and particular on behalf of the most vulnerable people in our city, be they children or adults.

I think that is a record that we are proud to stand up on and go out and tell the people of Leeds in spite of everything that is being thrown at us from National Government, we have got our priorities right. We are focusing on the things that really do matter to people and what a sad day yesterday when you actually heard in the House of Commons the disgrace of Northamptonshire County Council unfolding in front of us. A Tory flagship Council having all of its powers stripped away and Commissioners going in and the scale of mismanagement that has gone on in there is something to behold. We are sick and tired of having it thrown at us that Labour administrations cannot manage. We can manage and we are proving that we can manage in spite of the horrendous cuts that we have had, £240m a year gone from our budget. We must never forget how we are dealing against all the odds with some incredibly difficult circumstances.

Just to pick up on the three contributions that we have had on the Executive Board today. I think Dan Cohen must be one of the masters of the art of giving selective little snippets to us. How he selectively forgets about the increasing, massively increasing numbers of children in our city who are in good or outstanding schools; how he forgets about the four sites that were there for the Roundhay free school – maybe there was another one – three of them on the other side of the ring road. Where was your overwhelming support for the sites that were identified in your wards, Councillor Cohen? Can you just remind us that the Trust actually walked away from the free school application on the advice of the Government and let us never forget that dreadful moment when officials from your Government turned up at Fir Tree and broke the locks on one of our schools and took possession when we had it earmarked for the special needs children in our school. What a scandal is that, so do not come in this Chamber and give us lectures about school provision. *(Applause)*

Councillor Lamb, he was actually quite magnanimous today.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Leadership bid.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Yes, a change but again I just want to remind them over there, sitting there, how they have completely and utterly destroyed the careers guidance service that this city used to have and was a matter of pride where we had whole teams of people going out to our schools, working individually with young people. Now the situation is there are some great pockets of practice in some of our schools but against the odds. It is not joined up and what we know, if we are talking about the plan and skills, what we know is we cannot run these services from Whitehall. For goodness sake work with us to get the devolution deal we need to show that we can actually deliver the skills that we need for the city going forward. We have evidence from all over the country but particularly here in Leeds when we have the money and the powers to run our own skills service including information and guidance, we knock the spots of the Government led schemes.

Do you know, running through all of this is you are just ignoring why kids in our city and across the north are failing to thrive. I recommend that you read the Education and Skills Plan of the Northern Powerhouse Partnership. I really recommend that you read the report of the Children's Commissioner Growing Up in the North that was launched in Leeds on Monday. It highlights everything that we know causes so many barriers to kids thriving, performing, attaining. It is about poverty, it is about hunger, kids not being able to eat and how many schools in this city went above and beyond to get their kids into school in the snow because the headteachers and the teachers know that if they do not get their free school meal at lunchtime, they probably will not get any hot food that day at all.

You have completely misinterpreted what Councillor Ritchie said. I thought he gave a really great presentation of the situation that is facing us with free school meals. Obviously it is clear current claimants will not be affected but what you are failing to acknowledge is that new claimants are going to be means tested. That is exactly the point that Councillor Ritchie was making, and why is it that families are going to be allowed to earn £4,600 a year more and still be eligible for free school meals compared to families in Leeds? Well, look at the political reality. We know that the DUP would have kicked off big style if they had had the cuts that we are facing on us. This is the real political reality of what we are talking about.

Let us look at things in the round. Let us work together to deal with those issues facing our young people. Neil, I could not hear everything you were saying, I am sorry, but what you have to understand about students is that many of them choose to go away to university and to college. That is the nature of the system. What you failed to say is that Leeds is such an attractive place that 70% of those young people who go away to study actually come back here because they recognise the quality of life, the lifestyle that we have here and they do want to come back and pay something back into our communities.

Please, let us have no more of your attempts to deflect attention away from the reality of what is facing so many families in this city. How many children are

growing up in poverty that have at least one parent in work? The scandal of in-work poverty. These are the factors that we need to be addressing, these are the factors that we are addressing as a Council. We are up against it with this Government but we will do everything we possibly can to protect families and make sure that our young people have the opportunity to take advantage of all the opportunities we are creating in our great city. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Right, I would now like to call for the vote on the motion to receive the Minutes. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

I understand we have got some international visitors over lunch, so please make them feel welcome, I am sure you will. Looking at the clock, I think I will be very nice today and if you could all be back in the Chamber ready to return to the debates at five o'clock, please.

(Short break)

ITEM 13 - REPORT ON DEVOLVED MATTERS

THE LORD MAYOR: Right, if you are all ready, we shall move on to the Report on Devolved Matters for a period of up to 30 minutes. Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I think the main update I want to give Council today on this report is just information about the meeting we had with the Secretary of State for Housing and Local Government with regard to Yorkshire devolution. You will all recall that we have been trying to get a meeting with him for several months. The meeting actually took place the Tuesday after the last Council meeting. I think there are actually 19 Councils represented at the meeting in London, although it remains at 18 signatories on the letter favouring a One Yorkshire option.

At the meeting as well there was a very good representation from MPs, it was held in Westminster. The Trade Union Congress (TUC) from Yorkshire and the Humber, several business leaders had come and representatives from the voluntary sector. Together we put forward a very compelling case to the Secretary of State and I am pleased to say there has been significant movement. The Minister for the Northern Powerhouse has in the past said there would never be any consideration of the Yorkshire wide devolution model but the Secretary of State actually acknowledged the strength of feeling in the room and that the people in the room were representing a lot of strong feeling from Yorkshire as a whole, and he asked us to put a proposal together for him to consider. What he had not been informed by his Minister was that we have already got a proposal so we were able to go back to the Yorkshire Leaders' meeting the following Monday and agree to sign off the proposal that we have got in the papers in front of you and get it down to his office and we are now urgently seeking meetings to progress that way forward.

Obviously there is going to be an election in South Yorkshire but there is a very strong view that the Government can allow any willing Authority within that South Yorkshire area to leave that area after the election and join up with the One Yorkshire proposal. In an ideal scenario, obviously subject to going out across

Yorkshire to wider consultation, it is quite realistic and feasible to talk about having arrangements put in place in 2020 which would bring us into line with the other Mayoral areas, with Manchester, Birmingham, Liverpool. Newcastle is actually going for an elected Mayor next year, in 2019, and their term will be for an extra year so they get into the cycle of the elections.

Progress has been made and the report will inform you of other activity that is taking place at the Combined Authority linking very closely with the LEP, driving investment but real focus on the Inclusive Growth Agenda, making sure that everything we do brings benefit to people across the wider region.

With that, Lord Mayor, I will leave my remarks and hear what other contributors have to say. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: I would like now to ask Councillor James Lewis to speak.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am just going to second and reserve the right to speak.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor John Procter.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I think the history is where we should perhaps look to at this moment in time. Councillor Blake sounds to me to be saying almost effectively it is a done deal. I cannot help but think of a famous politician who came off an aeroplane waving a piece of paper in his hand saying "Peace in our time." Unfortunately Councillor Blake should bear in mind the saying of this Prime Minister we currently have, "Nothing is agreed until everything is agreed."

I understand that some of those who may have signed a piece of paper supporting a position that she believes they have agreed to are having second thoughts, and so I would not quite count all of your chickens just yet. There is a long way to go in relation to any devolution arrangements here in Yorkshire.

I have seen the papers and the documents that Councillor Blake refers to and I have to say, I think whilst there are some good points, there is a lack of ambition. There is far more that could be done.

Whilst it is OK talking about the numbers, the monetary numbers and what may be able to be achieved in certain areas, as I did try to tell colleagues opposite, you really should wake up and smell the coffee. Look around your city, look around and see the condition that it is in, the problems that are there, the issues that need addressing. Before you say "Oh, we need more money", it is not to do with the money, it is to do with the ambition, it is to do with the thought process, it is to do with having a series of steps that will achieve certain goals. Where is your vision for something like the Arena? Where is your vision for a series of new sports centres? Where is your delivery for the people of Leeds? It is lacking, Lord Mayor. It just is not there.

There needs to be, Lord Mayor, a radical vision that delivers on behalf of people of this city and of this region and if you think you are going to get a devolution deal with it, think again. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor David Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I welcome the progress that has been made with devolution apart from one thing, and I think from the outset I have always said that we do not believe in having elected Mayors. We want to see an Assembly for Yorkshire.

What has to be has to be, I suppose, and if we are making progress in that direction to some devolved set up, that is encouraging but, as I say, our view is an elected Mayor is not what we need; we need an Assembly. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: If only I could be that succinct, Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Oh try, just for a treat!

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: We too would like an Assembly, Councillor Blackburn, so we are in agreement there. However, when Assemblies were discussed not so long back with good old John Prescott leading that call, it was wholeheartedly rejected through a popular vote and I think we need to think about that when we are putting this forward. I think that this document is really ambitious and it is a very serious document and I think it is something that Government needs to take seriously because actually I have been quite impressed how Councillor Blake and her colleagues have actually built this, I would not call it a Colossus but actually getting 18 Councils to all agree and think the same way and present themselves in a coherent fashion is significant. I think for once this region is actually making the weather on this issue.

However, I could not read this and go “Yay!” and I do not think we are going to be able to get our electors to do that either. I think we need to have a parallel narrative where people can actually feel what devolution means for them.

I will sort of agree a little bit with Councillor Procter in terms of where is the ambition, where is the absolute things you are going to get and do. Actually I do not think you do not need to be as detailed as his but to actually say this is the step change that this agreement will mean, that devolved power will mean for our region, and actually maybe start getting some of that popular imagery going as well.

Part of the reason why Scottish devolution ended up being something that could not be stopped is because the popular imagination went with it and there were symbols around which people could coalesce. I think Yorkshire devolution is just as easily culturally cohesive and we need to make sure that that kind of – I do not want to call it branding but certainly those symbolic things that we can actually coalesce around and actually make sure that the public is asking for this, because when the public asks for it, it really is something that the politicians cannot ignore. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: I do not know quite how to stand up and respond to Councillor Procter's contribution. I think he has been asked to step in very late on in the day and perhaps is not up to speed with some of the debates that we have been having. How negative - how negative can you get? It just fills me with despair but it just fits the pattern. We know, it is on record, Simon Cooke, Tory Group Leader in Bradford as I said last time, has put out that his greatest achievement was stopping devolution in West Yorkshire. We know from Lord Jim O'Neill, he has gone on public record that the reason we did not get Leeds City Region devolution moved forward was because of the Tory MPs from West Yorkshire and North Yorkshire, and here we have got our very own, for a little bit longer, Deputy Leader of our Opposition pouring cold water. I give Andrew his due, he actually is quite upbeat and positive about the reasons why we are doing it.

I have to say, Stewart, I completely agree, the document has to go in to the civil servants and that is part of the issue in terms of preparing for negotiations to start, and this is the whole point. This is the stage that we are at, John. You know, we are actually having taken months to get agreement from the Secretary of State to actually meet us, come on, let us be more ambitious ourselves in terms of actually collectively, all of us, putting pressure on them to do something to get more money and resources and powers out of London, out of Whitehall, down to us in Yorkshire.

We have heard how we are being held back on Education, on Skills, on Transport, on so many issues where funding is so woefully out of kilter and rebalancing the economy, that is what we have to do. I would talk about a brand, I think Yorkshire is a very, very strong brand. People understand it. They do not understand when we go out and say, "Will you support our Combined Authority or our Leeds City Region LEP?", they glaze over, but they get Yorkshire and there is a passion about it. If you want to join and help to put that together you are very, very welcome. I think it is exactly what we need to do.

David, I think there are many people who have a lot of sympathy with you but that is the game in town at the moment and we really want to move forward, as I say, to get what is ours, what we deserve, so that we can actually work together to move our communities forward. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: I would now like to call for the vote to receive the Report on Devolution. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

WHITE PAPERS

THE LORD MAYOR: We now move to the final segment of the meeting, White Papers. The debate on each White Paper will last no longer than 45 minutes and will conclude with votes on the motion and any amendments.

ITEM 14 – WHITE PAPER MOTION – WASTE AND RECYCLING STRATEGY

THE LORD MAYOR: White Paper one, Waste and Recycling Strategy, Councillor Barry Anderson.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. In proposing this White Paper today we would just like to remind Council that we are asking it to consider building on the legacy that we left when we came out of power when the Liberals, the Conservatives and the Greens and Morley Boroughs all worked together and Councillor Smith at the time went through a heck of a lot of problems in order to try and get us back on target again because for a number of years we had lost the target that we were trying to get to.

As a number of us had at school, me included, where your school card said you can do better, you can do a lot, lot better than you currently are at the moment.

The administration have taken their eye off the ball but I actually exclude Councillor Yeadon from that purely on the grounds that she is passionate about this. I just think she has been sidelined a bit, she has probably been arguing very vociferously in Cabinet to try and get more done because she does genuinely believe in improving waste and recycling in the city, but we are not meeting our recycling aims. We are not going to meet the 2020 target set by the Government of 50%, never mind any other challenging targets that might be put.

Before we go on, we would make it clear, the Group on this side were going to accept Councillor Bentley's amendment. I wish I had thought of putting that at the bottom myself, to be quite honest, because we do agree with you, so we do think you are right to bring this in because the million pounds would go a long way to fund a lot of the initiatives that we have put in this White Paper today.

The residents of this city want more action on waste and recycling. We need to utilise that enthusiasm at the moment. How many other times have you been able to tap in properly to the enthusiasm of the residents out there? How many times do I and a number of other people stand up and say you are not reading the population out there well enough? This time there is ambition. This time there is a political consensus around here because you want to do something, a lot of people on the Labour Benches who actually really do want something done about this and want something done about it tomorrow. Others do not, but so be it.

So, what would we do to match the ambitions of the city? We would introduce brown bins twelve months a year to those parts of the city that want it and need it. You have shown recently a number of other initiatives that you do not necessarily need to have a one size fits all on a number of the initiatives that you have done. You have turned round parts of Headingley, parts of Burmantofts in terms of the way that they were not necessarily going along with the strategy at the time but you have now come up with a workable strategy that shows that you have listened to your residents and that you have come up with a way of trying to help people. You have come up with a different strategy of how to deal with high rise blocks, so it shows that you are able to come up with it when it suits you.

We would like to introduce kerbside glass collections. Why is that? Because a lot of people do not have access to cars to be able to go down to the centre. There is

nobody reminds us of that more than yourself because you are always going on about every time someone comes up with an initiative you say well, what about those people who do not have access to it? That is your argument, that is not my argument all the time. You are the ones that keep saying that all the time, so let us deliver on what you are saying.

Food waste options – what are your food waste options? That is the one biggest problem we have got in our black bins at the moment is the amount of food waste that is going into it.

We also need to look at using third party, for example development of biocoal. How can we get money? We could go after the developers. We could ask the developers to start paying some contributions to introducing these things throughout the city. They are the ones again at Plans Panel who keep shouting about the 20% returns that they get. How about us arguing, how about saying to the Chief Planning Officer, “Go out there and get some money back from us from these developers so that we can invest in what we are doing.” You are the ones that come forward with these arguments all the time.

You have not sorted out the rationalisation, as we were saying, and that is leaving some areas, particularly my area and the Council estates are getting the bins that they need and want because you are not grasping the nettle and sorting it out.

Just to finish, what I would say is, please put some funding behind this White Paper. We do all agree and let us do something for the good of the city. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Paul Wadsworth.

COUNCILLOR WADSWORTH: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I have pleasure in seconding Councillor Anderson’s amendment. I am concerned about the lack of ambition in the recycling target of 50% is our target and we are currently at 38.5% and we have dropped back from 43.7%, so we are going the wrong way with everything on recycling.

I was at a meeting a few months ago when Councillor Illingworth was there. That is a man with vision, Councillor Illingworth. He sits there on the back benches, he is normally very quiet but at this particular meeting he made this thing. He said, “Why can’t we just have clean in the green and wet and mucky in the black?” Officers followed that up with a lengthy statement about why it could not happen – it could not happen for this reason, it could not happen for that reason. I thought, it does seem a sensible solution. If we put everything clean in the green it could then be sorted and recycled.

I was approached by the Chairman of the local Tenants Association who previously has run a recycling scheme at HMP Leeds when he worked for them. He said, “I am sure, Paul, we could do more with recycling”, so we went along to Martins, who process our green bin waste, and we spoke to them at length about their process and we went and did a tour and I said, the plastics issue is a big issue. We only can recycle 1, 2 and 4. The lady there said, “Well, that is all you send to us. We

could recycle all plastics, and we do recycle all plastics that go in the green bin. We class them as tubs, pots and trays.” I said to her, “Well, I wash all my tubs, pots and trays and put them in the green” and she said, “And we sort them, and paint buckets, and coleslaw pots and plant pots all go away and are used for making garden furniture and things like that, so we can recycle them.” I said, “So why doesn’t Leeds take them?” She said, “Well, it is just a contractual reason. You are not contracted in your contract to take them so we cannot advertise and Leeds cannot advertise that they take them.” It is just a lack of vision, is that. Councillor Yeadon is frowning but it is not about money, it is just about getting it in place and then it can happen.

The same thing was talked about with scrap metal. I said, “So what happens to old pots and pans, small scrap items?” She said, “Well, we recycle them, they go away for scrap but yet again it is a contractual thing with Leeds, they cannot be advertised that they go in the green bin.”

Then we just passed a room and she said, “I will just show you this” and there was a big washing machine and a big drying machine. She said, “Any old clothes that end up in the green bin we put them in this room and we wash them and dry them and we send them away to people, they send them on to the third world because they are not any good for charity shops and things like that but they are good for other countries.” I said, “So why doesn’t Leeds advertise that they take them?” She said, “It is a contractual problem, we just need to sort the contract out with Leeds and then we could advertise that we take them.”

It is not about having an awful lot of money. It is just about getting the contracts right. All we really need to do or we decide to do, you decide to do as an administration, is just bring in charges for disposing of household waste with inert waste charges, and it is a negative view. Instead of sorting out the big issue around plastics, you just bring in charges. Obviously as Councillor Anderson alludes to, our budget amendment did have vision and obviously we want to bring in a twelve month garden collection, a roll out glass collection and remove charges for household waste.

The Government have vision – in fact today they have announced that they are going to bring in a scheme for recycling plastic bottles which actually are the sort of plastics that you take in the green bin, so effectively if that scheme comes in and there is a deposit system, your recycling rate will go down because those plastic bottles will no longer be in the green bin, they will be recycled through a deposit scheme.

I come on to Councillor Yeadon and your legacy because I know you are leaving us today and I am disappointed you cannot go with – it is your last Council meeting, your last opportunity to have a legacy. Your legacy really is that the strategy has gone the wrong way, the percentages have gone the wrong way, you are not collecting any more products...

COUNCILLOR YEADON: I think I have got plenty of legacy.

THE LORD MAYOR: Your last sentence, please, Councillor Wadsworth.

COUNCILLOR WADSWORTH: As I say, I am disappointed, Lucinda, that we could not have done better and you could not have gone away with better. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jonathan Bentley.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to move my amendment.

Lord Mayor, when the White Papers first came out last week there were only two published, if you recall, one from the administration on the police and this one from Councillor Anderson on recycling.

We thought the Green Party was going to put one in, that is why we did not put one in, but they did not and we missed the deadline, but we need not really have worried because the Tories have put in a Lib Dem White Paper. *(laughter)* Many thanks for that. It is either that or it is Councillor Anderson's application to join us!

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: No.

COUNCILLOR: He got selected.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: There is nothing we disagree with in this White Paper but it is a shame that in previous budget amendments in 2016 and 2017 when we put forward similar proposals, these were either voted against by the Conservative Group or they abstained – they did not get the support. When we put a Reference Back in 2016 asking the administration to look at its recycling policy, the Conservative Group voted against it. Welcome to our policy, you are very welcome to join us but do not start saying that this is a legacy that you have been wanting to have for years and years. We understand what you are doing.

Your policy, your proposals could have come straight out of our manifesto which we launched last week, which shows all our policies and if you look on page 3 of *this (showing manifesto)* you will see our Environment, our Vision for Leeds, city wide food waste, glass collection, anaerobic digester, reversal of bulky waste collection charges and the Leeds do it yourself tax. Thank you very much for your support on that.

We know there is an election coming and we are quite used to Tories stealing our clothes.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: They would not fit us!

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: No, our shoes would be too big for you, John. *(laughter)* We agree with all the proposals being put forward by Councillor Anderson and by Paul and we are disappointed with the administration's amendment to this and the comeback from Councillor Yeadon. It is always well, we would love to do it but we do not have the resources, financial pressures, Government cuts, same old story. That is why we put in our amendment, to be helpful, to show you where the resources can be found.

I do not know how long the administration has been saying we are going to rationalise bin routes, get more work out of the existing crews, save over a million pounds, and as for briefing on this, I asked for a briefing, how does this productivity saving work and I was told well, the crews do not work their whole shift that they are paid for, once they have finished the task they were given they can go home.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: I see another strike coming.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: The bin route rationalisation will add about an hour to each round and that will then come out of the time that they are currently not working but are being paid for – a big increase in productivity, millions of pounds saved.

So confident were the administration that this would be achieved that they put it in the budget for this year. I thought I would look a bit further and I put in a Freedom of Information request, and I said what is the average finish time for a refuse collection crew, and this revealed that most crews, the average finishing time for most crews was around 1.00pm. 1.00pm, even though they are paid and contracted to work until 4.00pm. These are the administration's figures presented and verified to me by an officer.

What this means is on an average day 600 hours of paid work are not worked, the equivalent of having 75 members of staff being paid to do nothing.

THE LORD MAYOR: Final sentence, Jonathan.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: I am not blaming or criticising the refuse collection crews, they do a hard job and have performed particularly well but who would not go home early if the boss said it is OK.

THE LORD MAYOR: Right, shall we finish it there, thank you.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: What I am blaming is the administration for taking no leadership.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you very much for your comments, Jonathan, it is very kind of you but you have got a red light, so if you would like to sit down.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Stewart Golton.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lucinda Yeadon.

COUNCILLOR YEADON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Thank you, Councillor Anderson, for giving me the opportunity to move a Labour amendment in my final

Council meeting. It is very kind of you to give me this opportunity to talk about the Waste Strategy Review and I do appreciate the comments, unlike I think the rather mean spirited comments that Councillor Wadsworth made. I am very proud of the legacy that I will be leaving this Council with and I am sure when you have decided what your legacy is, we will find out. *(laughter)*

The Opposition's White Paper seems to be somewhat premature. This is a process that is already happening at the present. They will be glad to hear that we are already looking at exploring options for kerbside glass recycling and expanded food waste provision and I have repeatedly said that we share this ambition, yet we wish to find an efficient and sustainable way of delivering this which the review should provide.

I must say, however, that the suggestion that we should collect brown bins for twelve months of the year is just a little bit silly. To continue to have crews out collecting garden waste at a time when there is very little to collect would be an incredible irresponsible waste of resources.

The context. During the peak month of June we collect around 5,000 tons of garden waste and when the service has previously continued to operate throughout the winter, they only collect a few tons per day. I totally take on board the comments you make regarding the food and glass but I am not on the same page for twelve months of the year for brown bins.

We have received very few complaints from residents in the past eight years since we had the winter close down of the service and our household waste sites are still available for the relatively small number of green thumbs who carry on between December and February. However, we do receive correspondence from residents requesting a brown bin, so I am extremely pleased that all feasible properties in the city will now receive free garden waste collections with the roll out that is starting over the next few weeks.

Just touching on Councillor Bentley's comments. I think I said this at the Council Budget meeting that I am really reluctant to take industrial strategy advice from the Liberal Democrats. We all know what happened when you tried to change the way the service worked, and that was one of the longest bin strikes that this Council has seen. If you do not mind, just leave that to us and we will continue to work with the trade unions and the service to be able to get to an agreement.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Whatever happened to Councillor Brett?

COUNCILLOR YEADON: Waste management and recycling are fundamental public services that allow Leeds to function as a city and a place to live and thanks to David Attenborough there is a sharp focus on the damage that plastics and poor waste management practices are causing.

I am pleased to say that the work we are undertaking for the review will help to comprehensively update our waste and recycling strategy in Leeds for first time in over a decade and as this process the Council successfully secured funding from Government to look at what we can do differently. I also want to note that when this

report was taken to Executive Board it had cross party support, so it is a bit of a surprise that the Opposition have decided to focus upon this in a White Paper a few weeks before an election.

The Opposition have stated that they would like to see a more ambitious waste strategy put in place and this is exactly why we are undertaking this review. What the Opposition must understand is that it is a significant wholesale review that must be properly planned and costed if we are to get it right. It is simply not about making throwaway statements through a White Paper at full Council but, in acknowledgement of this shared consensus which Barry has acknowledged...

THE LORD MAYOR: Final sentence, please.

COUNCILLOR YEADON: ...which Barry has stated, the administration will be seeking to form a cross party working group so that we can again have cross party consensus throughout the whole Chamber in how we will deliver this significant ambition and transformational waste management improvements for our residents.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Garthwaite.

COUNCILLOR GARTHWAITE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am supporting Councillor Yeadon's amendment and in particular focusing on recycling in the city. As many of you know, this is a subject really close to my heart. You may have seen the installation on Woodhouse Moor and some of the associated publicity which I worked on with Leeds Beckett University, HW Martin, Hescos and other partners to promote recycling especially among students.

Early indications show that the outcomes are successful. This is going to be there for a couple more weeks and then going on Burmantofts and Richmond Hill and then other places round the city. I hope it will be pretty successful.

So, the recycling rate in Leeds. It has increased by over 15% over the last ten years and our current level does represent a huge improvement on the efforts of the previous administration. In fact, we are still the second best core city in terms of our recycling rate.

We used to send over 133,000 tons of waste to landfill each year but since the development of the Recycling and Energy Recovery Facility, the RERF, we now only send about 10% of this amount to landfill.

Moving to recycling infrastructure, there has been a fall in the amount we recycle since the high point of 2014, but a lot of this is because international pressures have affected the amount of materials that are possible to recycle. For example, we used to send a lot to China but they will not take it any more. It has exposed the lack of infrastructure investment in our own country. If we are to see an improvement in Leeds recycling rates, there must be investment from Central Government into infrastructure across the country.

Of course, I rejoice that Michael Gove has proposed a deposit scheme on single use glass and plastic and cans. It should help a lot, like the five pence charge on plastic bags. At the moment 13 billion plastic bottles are produced a year and more than three billion are not recycled.

Looking back a few years though, I will remind you that environmental levies on energy companies were scrapped in 2013. The Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution, which was a respected independent body, was disbanded as part of austerity and there was general consternation by environment bodies and the Labour Party at the time. Funding cuts to the Environment Agency and Natural England have also taken their toll in general and to this day I have to say that the Conservative MPs anyway do appear to me to be internally divided on this issue and very much inclined to support producer interests.

In terms of Leeds, I would say that we should all join, the Opposition should join in calling on Government to invest in this infrastructure if they are serious about increasing the amount we recycle. We will be piloting kerbside collections of food waste and glass. This will help the recycling rate but, of course, this will cost us money and demand increased in revenue funding. We must see more onus placed on producers of waste to cover the costs of its disposal, the costs of treating unrecyclable plastics, those that are not 1, 2 and 4, fall on Local Authorities rather than those who are creating the waste.

Of course, while improving the amount we recycle is important we cannot just focus on recycling rates. We must move towards reducing the overall amount of waste we produce as a society. I want to raise a glass to the Lord Mayor for introducing glasses so that we no longer have single use plastic in this Council Chamber. I think that is brilliant, thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Garthwaite, and you have run out of time with that, I am so sorry. (*Applause*) What a nice way to finish, too! Thank you very much. Councillor David Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I think firstly, if the Government goes ahead and introduces deposits, which I must have written to about five different Governments over the years suggesting a mandatory introduction of deposits on drinks containers, you have had two goes at this and never done it...

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Third time lucky.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: ...of various varieties and they never acted on that. Certainly when we were doing the Waste Strategy originally, one of the points I made both in Cabinet and outside was that we have to do things to reduce it. Recycling is all right; recycling is not the answer. We have got to re-use, that is what we should be doing and I have got to say that is something that Leeds City Council cannot do, that is something that Central Government has got to do, whatever party is in power, and the sooner they do it, the better.

I have got to say as well, if they do that, that impacts on our recycling rate but I have never actually considered that we should be increasing, if that happens, our

recycling rate. We should be reaching the proportion of waste that is recycled, not necessarily the amount. What we should be looking for, we should be looking to re-use and not use at all the stuff we do not need. That is getting rid of packaging that is not required etc, etc, a lot of which is happening at the moment. It is a long, long time this has needed to be done and we have been waiting for a long time.

I have got to say, the Waste Strategy was based upon a situation where waste would increase and a bigger proportion of it would be recycled. It needs reducing.

On the issue of how we are doing in the circumstances, I have got to say it is disappointing to find that recycling rates are going down. I think some of this is about education. How many times do you go about your wards and I remember in my ward a few weeks ago somebody had had a really good party - they had not invited me, mind you – and there were all these, there must have been about 30 or 40 plastic bottles full of this white lager (obviously the lager had been drunk!) that had been dumped instead of being put in a green bin and recycled.

There is some education needed but the fact is, we have got to go ahead and do things in budgets and stuff that actually encourage people to recycle or to dispose of their rubbish in a way that is acceptable and I do not think at the moment we are introducing charges on bulky waste and inert waste, we are doing that, we are just giving people an option, “Oh, let’s dump it.”

I am happy to support in principle what Councillor Anderson is putting forward in his motion. I think a lot of that is right but that is not the whole story. We can do much more and Central Government has got to create that situation so we as a Council can react to it, and they are not doing that and that does not matter whether it is this Government, the previous one or the previous one to that. None of them have over the years. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Caroline Anderson.

COUNCILLOR C ANDERSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am pleased to support the White Paper in the name of Councillor Barry Anderson. Recycling is close to my heart and I am afraid to say that this administration is not making it easy for residents to recycle all the time. Recycling rates are down. We need to get the rates increased and we need to make it as easy as possible for people to recycle. By waiting so long to give brown bins to newly built properties you have been unequal and you have disadvantaged people who are, do not forget this, paying Council tax for that service.

The Conservative Group in coalition with the Lib Dems introduced an innovation by having a food waste collection. That was probably more than ten years ago now and nothing has changed. No other wards in this city have been added to that food waste collection. That is absolutely disgraceful in this day and age of recycling innovation.

I would like to welcome the consultation the Government is about to do with regard to deposits on drinks bottles. Whatever comes out of that consultation, at least we are going to have that debate. When I was a young girl there were no bottles left

in the street or in bins or in the back of your cupboards – that was the glass ones – because people took them back to the corner shop. It worked then and it should work again. We used to quite like finding an empty bottle in the street because we could take it back to the shop and with the money that they gave you we could buy some sweets. We used to get about two pence, if I am not mistaken, but you could get quite a lot for two pence in those days.

That leads me on to glass recycling. There are many glass collection and recycling facilities but not everybody has a car or access to a car to take their glass bottles and jars, and they are heavy. Therefore, I support our Group's position to push for kerbside glass recycling. Lots of other Councils can manage to do it. I do not believe that this cannot be achieved. If you do not think you can manage it, come and see us and we will work with you to bring it in.

You will cite costs but how much will it cost in landfill charges if you do nothing? The charges for inert waste disposal, the DIY tax, is not helpful and will lead to increased fly tipping and we are already seeing this. Please think again on that. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Nagle.

COUNCILLOR NAGLE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to speak in support of Councillor Yeadon's amendment and talk about some of the improvements made to waste management services since taking over from the calamitous Coalition administration.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Tell them how it is!

COUNCILLOR NAGLE: Reducing the amount of household waste produced in the city and increasing the amount that we recycle is essential if we are to protect our natural environment from further degradation. I am glad that we are undertaking the first comprehensive review of our Waste and Recycling Strategy since 2005. Reviewing our kerbside waste collections, including looking into food and glass collections, will form part of our review process and I am glad that the Opposition share our desire to see a more ambitious strategy put in place.

Something that has already been agreed that Members in this Chamber should be proud of, is that we are rolling out garden waste collections to all feasible properties in the city. A significant proportion of the amount recycled in Leeds comes through our brown bin garden waste collections and the amount we currently collect contributes over 25% to our recycling rate.

Once the roll out is completed over the next weeks, 7,000 extra properties will be covered by garden waste collections. This is the type of change that will make a real difference to the lives of our residents and help to significantly improve the sustainability of our city moving forwards.

The suggestion by the Tories that our garden waste collections should also be twelve monthly, however, is ridiculous. I need not remind the Opposition that we are operating in austere times. With the waste service having been subject to a budget cut

of over £4m since 2010, to then therefore propose that we continue to operate during the winter when garden waste would be a level one third of that collected during the summer shows how detached from reality they are.

Indeed, the Opposition's waste management record while they were in administration was woeful, and that is putting it lightly. Thirteen weeks of bin strikes due to their mismanagement and complete disregard for our employees' rights, a recycling rate of half of what it is today. These things were happening at a time when the funding was still in place to carry out the extensions you are now calling for. As such, we could be forgiven for laughing at any suggestion the Opposition have regarding waste out of the room. We are, however, a progressive administration who will always seek to do what is in the best interests of the residents of our city. That is why we are happy to work collaboratively on our Waste Strategy Review and why we will continue to provide waste services the city reveres. Thank you, my Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Stewart Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Oh, Thank you, Lord Mayor. Councillor Nagle, "We are a progressive administration" – define progress because you have gone backwards. You have gone backwards on your recycling. You have just talked about the difference between the Opposition and yourselves and "you had 13 weeks of a bin strike" – we had 13 weeks of a bin strike and we still managed to recycle more than you do! *(laughter)* That was with 13 weeks of nothing being collected. Outrageous.

One thing, Lord Mayor, that has been missed out of this debate is the word "energy" because all the time that you talk about, what was it, you are exploring options and you are thinking about doing things and you have having discussions with people and you want an all-party group to talk about how is the best way to do it. Once again, I have to remind you, you are in charge and you have been in charge on your own since, what was it, 2010? 2011 when your fig leaf dropped off, yes! You have done nothing with recycling.

I have to remind the Tories, actually, when we were in joint administration we talked about food waste and wanted a pilot. Andrew Carter was very kind and said, "You have it in Rothwell and see how the residents do not like fortnightly collections" and it was a risk but we are the kind of party that does not mind taking risks when we know that actually it is what the people really want. What is different now is, people are used to fortnightly collections. In fact if you miss your bin it is a monthly collection, but people get on with it because actually they realise that what is in their black bin is getting smaller and smaller and smaller and they want to recycle more. We should be matching that ambition and nothing has happened under this administration to actually match that ambition.

If you actually collected your food waste and you put it through anaerobic digestion, you not only help to get more recycling happening, you actually have a fuel source. You have a fuel source that can create gas. That gas can then be used to generate electricity, or it can be sold back into the general gas supply. You would actually have a revenue earner so, Councillor Nagle, once again, you talk about austere times. Actually we should be thinking more about how we can make money

as a Council and not just spend it as a Council, and this is a wholesale opportunity that we have not grasped as yet.

The incinerator. The incinerator was something which was brought in by the Joint Administration as well and I seem to remember that this side over here campaigned against it vociferously and I remember Councillor Bruce telling us we were all going to die in our beds from the poisonous fumes that were going to come off it and, in fact, it seemed to pop up in every part of the city. It was going to be built in Kirkstall, it was going to get built in Alwoodley – it ended up being where it is.

The thing is, that incinerator now means that this Council spends £7m a year less on its waste costs because it no longer has to put its waste into landfill, and how much of that £7m a year have you lot actually reinvested into the waste services? How much have you reinvested into recycling?

As for the bit about our amendment and specifically about the bin group rationalisation, you included it in your budget. £1m of savings were supposed to be made by that bin route rationalisation - £1m that could be spent on anything you liked. We would like it to go on recycling but it could help in Children's, it could help in Social Care...

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: You can only spend it once.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: ...and because you have not had the energy and you have not had the gumption to actually challenge the trade unions that you subsidise up to half a million pounds a year, you have not made that saving and therefore you have been dishonest in your own budget.

You either say you are going to do it or actually take it out of it altogether.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Peter Gruen.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: Lord Mayor, fellow Councillors and empty seats where the East Leeds Independents and the Garforth Independents should be, but as part-time absentees they are never here. Two of them, you are quite right.

Can I just say that Members do not survive long in here if they do not understand the most important things we do is offer a bin service and to tackle dog dirt. Those are the two most important things that our residents look to us to solve. I think it is actually, when we are talking of the regularity and the quality of emptying our bins day in and day out, 365 days a year, we ought to actually thank the people who do it. They work very hard and it is wrong for you to insinuate that they do not and that somehow we are subsidising them because they are trade unionists who are irrelevant. They work very hard and it is a damned hard job. Most people in the city are totally satisfied with the job that they do. (Applause)

Can I also say, it is probably one of the toughest portfolios to manage because of the very test that you have day in and day out. You have to monitor, watch

carefully and provide that kind of oversight, that passion and that enthusiasm. I think we should thank Councillor Yeadon for doing that because she has done it superbly. *(hear, hear) (Applause)*

During the tea interval I was talking to colleagues and said I am waiting for some inspiration of what I am going to say this evening, and I knew I had a secret weapon – Jonathan Bentley. *(laughter)* I knew he was going to come up trumps for me in moving his amendment.

First of all, we know it is an election when the Tories and the Lib Dems start arguing amongst themselves. Be my guest, fight over your seats – we will get on with the real election in the meantime.

The second thing I think is it really almost beggars belief but the people who want us now to sort out the bin routes were the very people who caused a 13 week strike because they could not sort out the bin routes themselves and now they are saying to us, “Go ahead and sort them out.”

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: It is in your own budget so go ahead and do it.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: We will and it is being done, and I have to tell you, there has never been less trouble, less problems, better quality, better regularity in that service than there is now. Than there is now – otherwise you would have come forward with more White Papers before now.

Can I also tell you in terms of the brown bins, there is a process, we all know how it works in this Council. Councillor Yeadon and I have been corresponding for some time, officers have been involved about brown bins and we have lobbied. We have said we need to expand the brown bin service and Councillor Yeadon has said as soon as we can find the resources, that is what we will do. It is now being done.

COUNCILLOR CLEASBY: We found the resources.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: As David Nagle said, 7,000 rising to 10,000 houses will have a new brown bin service *(applause)* and that is fantastic news for most of the residents in this city.

I just think you ought to actually congratulate the administration for the service they are running and how they are preserving the value for money because there have been cuts, let us make no doubt about it, there have been cuts to the value of money, the quality of service and thank you, Councillor Yeadon, for all you have done. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: I would now like to invite Councillor Barry Anderson to sum up, please.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: Actually, it was not too bad a debate at the end of the day. *(laughter)* It surprised me, believe you me, it did. Apart from the usual criticism of me but that is my role in Council is to be criticised all the time, isn't it?

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: No, Barry! No.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Quite right!

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: Seriously, can I thank the contributions that were made and the comments that various people made. Paul Wadsworth pointing out about the clean in the green and the dirty in the black. I think that is an important thing that should be a fundamental for anything that is coming forward. It is a good way of trying to get the message out there to people because people can understand those types of message, so I think that is good.

It is also good that the good work that Councillor Wadsworth has done by going out to Martins and getting the information and passing it on to us today so say that if the Council can come up with a revised contract, Martins are willing to do their part if the Council can do theirs, so I think that is a good bit of positive work being done by Councillor Wadsworth.

Also, as Councillor Procter reminded me when he was looking into the Energy from Waste plant and visited out there with his Scrutiny Board at the time, and I have no doubt some of you would be there, one of the major issues that they mentioned was the clothing that was actually causing the problems and that if a way could be found to take that out of the waste stream, it would improve their productivity and everybody would gain, so I think again a good positive contribution from what Councillor Wadsworth said.

Councillor Bentley. It was meant to be one that we could try and work together. Why you could not just stick to your amendment. You have got to go about – it is no wonder you get comments about people falling out when you fall into the trap.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: I love it when they fall out.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: It just was not the most sensible bit of politics that you have ever done.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Well said, Barry. Well said.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: It was just an excuse to wave about the Liberal Democrat manifesto. It did not add anything else, it was “You did not want to do that and you do not want to do that.” Is it not better that people actually now agree to move forward together rather than finger pointing and saying “You never believed in this, you never believed in that.” We do agree.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Go on, Barry, wind them up!

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: You are the one that picked on us!

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Councillor Procter will get our leaflets later.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: As the person who has promoted this, when have I argued against the brown bins? When have I argued against the glass kerb recycling? When have I argued against food waste?

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Your own Group. *(laughter)*

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: A lot of the people here were not present when we were in power beforehand. A lot of them are new Councillors here who come with fresh minds because we know what our residents want. We speak for our residents in everything that we say and do.

Quickly then, because we have gone on to amber...

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: You will be on red soon, Barry!

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: What I do think is right, what I do think came through more than anything else was one the revisionist way that people tried to go back to Pol Pot as if things began again in 2010, which they did not, but we do need to re-use and reduce more. Very few contributors actually pointed that out, that if we re-use and reduce more we would be able – some people did, yes, I accept that, as did Councillor Garthwaite as well, I am not saying that, but the other contributors did not make the same points and I think that is to be criticised.

If I can just finish, please, by pointing out...

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: You will only insult the Lib Dems again!

THE LORD MAYOR: Let him finish his final sentence, please.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: You have got £7m that you have been able to get. You took it off of Neil Evans, you put it into your budget elsewhere. If you had reinvested it where it could have been we would have been in a far better position today. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you Councillor Anderson. Thank you.

I would now like to call for the vote on this White Paper. Firstly I would like to call for a vote for the amendment in the name of Councillor Jonathan Bentley. Recorded vote.

(A recorded vote was held on the amendment in the name of Councillor J Bentley)

THE LORD MAYOR: We have got 82 people present, for 30, abstentions one and against 51, so that is LOST.

We are now going to call for a vote on the second amendment in the name of Councillor Yeadon. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

That therefore now becomes the substantive motion, so we are now voting on the substantive motion in the name of Councillor Yeadon. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

ITEM 15 – WHITE PAPER MOTION – WEST YORKSHIRE POLICE FUNDING

THE LORD MAYOR: We now move to the next White Paper Motion, West Yorkshire Police Funding. Councillor Coupar, please.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can I first of all start out by saying it gives me no pleasure to be bringing this matter to Council today about this main police funding across the country.

Since 2010 West Yorkshire Police have had their budget cut by £140m, over a third, at the cost of over 2,000 police jobs. 20% of the total workforce is gone. In spite of this a Labour Council working with a Labour Police and Crime Commissioner has ensured that here in Leeds we have protected the number of PCSOs. These PCSOs do a phenomenal job in making sure our communities are safe and feel safe. Through reinvestment in Neighbourhood Policing and focusing on partnership working, we have been able to ensure more police officers and PCSOs are out on the beat, more police officers and PCSOs preventing crime, intervening to change lives, protecting the vulnerable and providing support to victims.

We reached a three year agreement last year and we are entering the second year of that agreement to maintain PCSOs in Leeds at the level of 239. This is being match funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner, with no adverse impact on other Safer Leeds Initiatives.

The announcement by Philip Hammond in November's Budget Statement was extremely disappointing on many parts, I have to say, not just this. Instead of providing any new Government money, costs were passed on to Council Tax payers through the precept in a settlement which still amounts to a further real terms cut. The precept across West Yorkshire will generate something in the region of £4.5m. The 1% pay bonus will cost around £4m. The pay bonus almost cancels out the precept, which leaves, at best, a flat cash settlement. This is before you take into account inflationary and cost pressures.

It is worth taking a moment to consider how we got to this position where police funding is becoming such a central issue. In Theresa May's stint as Home Secretary, 21,000 police officers were cut from the Force nationally, with a total of £2.3bn cut from police budgets. This picture has not improved under Amber Rudd, I have got to say. The six months from March to September saw a nationwide fall of 1,213 police officers.

In addition to the 21,000 fewer police officers, nationally there are 17,000 fewer police staff and 6,000 fewer PCSOs. In this context, maintaining our own numbers of PCSOs has to be a real achievement.

I know that the Tories used to call PCSOs plastic policemen when they were first introduced by a Labour Government, but I am sure even the Tories would now acknowledge what an excellent job they do. Let no-one tell you that Theresa May did not have a choice when forcing through these cuts. Looking across Europe, only Lithuania and Iceland have cut front line policing by proportionality more than the UK over the last ten years. Theresa May had a choice and she chose – she chose to slash and burn. Police cuts are compounded by the cuts the Tory Government have made to other public services delivered by Local Authorities and the NHS which have further increased demand on our police force across the country.

Sadly, the inevitable consequences of these actions is that crime goes up. The worrying pattern of rising crime that we have seen in recent years can come as no surprise. The most recent published crime figures show 14% year on year increase in recorded crime across England and Wales. This includes 21% rise in knife crime; 20% rise in gun crime; and 32% rise in domestic burglary.

At a time of danger such as the threat of terrorism and the rise in cyber crime, offering forces a flat cash settlement is not good enough. For the talk of extra funding in November we have received not a single penny from Central Government for local police forces. There is no change in the size of the grant each police force is receiving from Central Government. Instead the burden is placed on the Council taxpayer – a desperately unfair move.

It is worth noting that Theresa May has been criticised by her own statistics watchdog for implying that extra money was being provided for Central Government when, in fact, it is the Council taxpayer that is paying.

So let us not have any more nonsense about no magic money tree. We know that money can be found for really important things like political deals with the DUP. Policing needs funding. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Alison Lowe.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Stewart Golton.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Not again!

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Again! Thank you, Lord Mayor. I have been out door-knocking recently, surprisingly enough, and one of the longest conversations that I had on the doorstep was with a police officer and he was frankly quite cynical about the political process and that had been coloured by his experience in the job and about how political parties can use the police service as a political football. It is one of the primary reasons why we amended this White Paper in the manner that we have because...

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Because you don't want to pay taxes.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: ...actually we all do agree in this Chamber that the police do a very good job in very difficult circumstances.

That is something that has been a constant ever since the police service was set up, and ever since the police have been set up there have been complaints that the police service is not sufficiently funded because there is always something else that the police can do better if they had more resources.

Unfortunately, the responsibility of being in charge is that you have to manage with the money that you have got and that is the reason why we elect people to politically accountable positions to do that, and for the police that is for our area a Police and Crime Commissioner. Actually, I would have liked it if there had been a little bit more in this White Paper which was about the performance of the Police and Crime Commissioner than it has about the performance of Central Government.

I noted that Councillor Coupar talked about how expecting the Council taxpayer to pay for policing is unfair but I have to point out to her that even when you get money from Central Government, their money is paid for by taxpayers, so whether your tax comes from your income or from your VAT or from your Council Tax, it is still taxpayers' money and the point is that actually when it comes into the police budget it comes under the Police and Crime Commissioner's budget and he is paid a whole lot of money to actually be accountable for how that money is spread out.

Now, you talk about how you are so proud that we have protected the number of PCSOs by the amazing deal that you have done with your Police and Crime Commissioner. It does not look so amazing for many of the Councillors in this Chamber because under the old rules when the Joint Administration were in charge we actually made sure that there was equal dispensation for everybody...

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Crime is not equal across the city, Stewart.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: ...and that everybody got five PCSOs because we appreciated that PCSOs were there to provide reassurance and a visible presence on the streets and that matters throughout the city, it does not just matter in the inner city and unfortunately in the marvellous deal that you have done with the Police and Crime Commissioner, your PCSOs are far more skewed towards inner city areas.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Where the demand is.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: What you did not mention, actually, Councillor Coupar, was actually what about protecting the number of police officers because actually your Police and Crime Commissioner has had a terrible record in terms of the number of police officers that are on the streets of West Yorkshire and I remember being in the Police and Crime Commissioner election where I was one of the candidates and he got pilloried for the amount of money that he had sat on...

COUNCILLOR LOWE: He still beat you.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: ...that he had sat on in anticipation of Government cuts that he did not want to spend on actually recruiting police officers, and then all of a sudden at the beginning of the election campaign for his re-election, he talked about all this money that he had available all of a sudden, that he was going to do a recruitment drive and they are going to get police on the ground.

Well, surprising enough those police did not get on the ground very quickly because it takes a long time to train a police officer. Actually, the experienced police officers are worth even more. Actually, his mismanagement of it has meant that we have less police officers on our streets and your White Paper should be less self-congratulatory. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Golton. Councillor Campbell.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Amanda Carter to move a second amendment.

COUNCILLOR AMANDA CARTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Firstly, Lord Mayor, I would like to make it clear that we on this side of the Chamber appreciate the work that West Yorkshire Police do across the country and, indeed, in our city. They put their lives on the line every day they go out, protecting and serving our communities. I would not like this to be overlooked in this debate.

I would just like to remind Council also that, following a survey put out by the Police and Crime Commissioner, the majority of responses were in favour of a precept increase. Councillor Golton is right that there is always demand for more money, ever since the modern police service was set up by Sir Robert Peel (wasn't he a Conservative? Yes, he was.) Councillor Coupar and her colleagues have chosen to misrepresent the situation on police funding. Yes, there have been reductions. Yes, we know that and yes, we have been presented with a challenge to the Force in order to modernise its approach and to make necessary changes that have saved money but also made operational sense.

What Councillor Coupar has overlooked are the staggering levels of reserve held by the Police and Crime Commissioner. Until recently he sat on reserves of over £103m of usable reserves. Of course, I understand that some reserves need to be kept back for emergencies but Members of Council should realise that this is five times the level of reserves this city holds and Leeds is the second biggest Authority outside of London in this country.

Police reserves amount to about a quarter of the police budget. When did he have this level of reserves? As recently as 2016. Rather than prioritising front line policing, the Police and Crime Commissioner has been building up his reserves to quite an astonishing level and he has been in post since 2012 and was in the Chair of the Police Authority before that, so he has always been in a position of influence.

What is more concerning is the admission in the Police and Crime Commissioner's budget papers of March 2016 pointing out that the following relating to police operational strength, West Yorkshire has fewer police officers per thousand population than similar police forces. We would need an additional 566 officers to reach the same level per head as Greater Manchester police, so whilst sitting on reserves it was also a known fact that we needed more officers to have the same Force strength as other major police forces. What on earth was he playing at?

It is all right, Councillor Coupar, coming here and pointing the finger of blame at the Government. There is nothing new there, but at least some of her points are much closer to home. Her party colleague, Mark Burns-Williamson, holding this disgraceful amount of reserves at a time when we are crying out for more front line investment. We accept now that he is spending these reserves and Force numbers are going up by an extra 206 officers in this current financial year and more to come in 2018, and of course we welcome this, but it should have happened sooner. You cannot on one hand complain about funding cuts and on the other hand have a Police and Crime Commissioner who is racking up a monumental amount of reserves when he should have been investing in more police.

My Lord Mayor, Councillor Coupar's motion raised a number of issues. She claims that recorded crime is at a record level yet when this is raised at the Police and Crime Panel, the Police and Crime Commissioner waves away these comments because he says it is all about reporting and recording crime. Well, it is either an increase in crime, in which case the Police and Crime Commissioner is culpable for sitting on these reserves, or it is an increase brought about by a change in recording methods. Which is it?

West Yorkshire police budget for 2018/19 has gone up by £15.5m which is above the rate of inflation. The Government is also putting more resources into counter terrorism, which will find its way to West Yorkshire's police budget.

THE LORD MAYOR: Final sentence, please.

COUNCILLOR AMANDA CARTER: My Lord Mayor, it is this administration, as Councillor Golton pointed out, that supported and brought about the PCSOs in all of our wards and that is what we have always said and done. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Buckley to second, please.

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am seconding Councillor Carter's amendment and I have to say that this White Paper motion is a very poor affair. The first thing we should do, as I think all contributors have done so far, is to confirm what I think we all think as to the kind of excellent job that the police do every single day. The policemen and women who keep us all safe and we should all thank them because they do do a tremendous job.

Looking at the White Paper motion, you only have to read a few sentences of Councillor Coupar's motion to come across the word again, "appalling, "appalling" and then the word "2010", so the cat is out of the bag. It is nothing to do with a

debate about police funding and police numbers, it is just a crude piece of blatant electioneering just before the local elections.

Instead of putting down this tendentious paper, they would have been far better off in spending the time coming forward with half sensible proposals about how to fix the shortage of school places in North Leeds, or some kind of plan to fix the roads or fill in all the potholes, but no, we have this incoherent White Paper and she cannot even get her first facts right on the front of the White Paper. We do not have a Conservative-led Government, we have a Conservative Government. Please get the facts right, you were wrong.

Then, of course, the reference to 2010. This reference to 2010 has a kind of nostalgic pull for all those people over there because it is the last year when they had a foothold in any kind of power at all and, let me say, it will be a very long time before they get any power back nationally again.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Dream on!

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: Especially with Mr Corbyn as Leader. We all know what a fantastic supporter he is of the forces of law and order and the police.

Now, let us start again with this 2010. After 13 years of Labour Government the country was drowning in debt and was very nearly bankrupt. There was no money left, as their own people now admit. As Councillor Carter has pointed out, the reserves at the disposal of the Police Commissioner were allowed to balloon to £103m. This appalling mismanagement represented a quarter of his entire annual budget. That has got to have contributed to an increase in the crime rate.

What do we have here? We have a Government – our Government – which rescued Britain from catastrophe. *(laughter)* Oh yes! Be under no illusions, Gordon Brown was a catastrophe and he would have bankrupted the country. We have a Labour Commissioner who hoarded £103m of reserves and under-recruited by at least 500 officers, if not more.

There is now more money being put into counter terrorism, 200 more officers, and I have great pleasure in seconding this amendment. *(Applause)*

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Bring on Rees-Mogg.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Alison Lowe.

COUNCILLOR LOWE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am just laughing, talking about nostalgia from Councillor Buckley, we are not talking about Sir Robert Peel or a time when there was no Labour Party and women could not even vote, so that is nostalgia and living in the past.

Lord Mayor, I am speaking to second the White Paper in the name of Councillor Coupar. Councillor Coupar set out very clearly the case for more money for policing in this county and described the appalling – yes, appalling – record of Central Government who have deprived our police forces of much-needed resources

since 2010 – and I will say it again, since 2010 (I am allowed to say whatever I like to them!) resulting in the loss of over 2,000 police jobs within West Yorkshire.

Against this backdrop it is remarkable that we have managed to maintain such a good picture in Leeds and, as Chair of the West Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel, I get to see some of the excellent work that police in Leeds and beyond carry out.

Firstly, I would ask the question, if there was a problem in 2016 when Councillor Amanda Carter was on that panel, why didn't she raise it back then, because then Mark could have done something about it if, in fact, what she is saying is true. I would dispute that the PCC did sit on useable reserves of more than £103m in 2016. As Councillor Carter knows, being a member of the panel, much of this funding was committed either in things such as the £20m Transformation Fund, for example, or in meeting funding gaps in police pay similar to the £9m pay deficit that we are facing in 2018/19 because when police pay goes up the Government do not give us that money.

Councillor Carter also refers to £15.5m increase in funding in this year's police budget. Well, Members, I say to you, there are lies, there are damn lies and then there are statistics. I would question any facts that people on that side of the Chamber talk about today in this Chamber because they do not know what facts look like and they do not know what funding looks like because I have got here a letter from Sir David Norgrove, who is the UK Statistics Authority Chair. He is writing in response to a letter from Louise Haigh, MP, who is the Shadow Minister for Policing and Crime and she wrote to him to say why is the Government talking about all this extra money that they are giving to Local Government when I know that is not true. He wrote back:

“In terms of the particular points you make, the Prime Minister's statement and the Home Office's tweet could have led the public to conclude incorrectly that Central Government is providing an additional £450m for police spending in 2018/19. The Home Office tweet also implied that the £450m is guaranteed. As the Minister for Policing's statement outlined, up to £270m of the funding settlement will come from local Council Tax, if Police and Crime Commissioners and Mayors choose to raise these sums.”

As I have said in this Council Chamber many times before, it is the Tories who are the tax Government and the tax party. It is not Labour. They are taxing poor people, disadvantaged communities for policing in this city and in this country.

In addition the Leader of the House of Commons stated that the £270m that can be raised locally was on top of the overall settlement of up to £450m. Lies, lies – or is that statistics? I would ask that Members take any reference to figures from that side of the Chamber with a huge pinch of salt.

I would also say that the Government has also decided that the funding formula review should be deferred yet again. This is a huge problem for us in West Yorkshire as only 22% of the budget comes from Council Tax, so I think they are the

ones who should be hanging their heads in shame. Look at what you are doing as a Government, do not look over here because we are doing the right thing; you are doing the wrong. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor James Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Speakers before me I think, certainly from this end of the Council Chamber, have really hit the nail on the head about actually what this Tory Government stands for when it comes to funding local services like the police and the approach of the Tory Government is absolutely clear – they expect us to pay more and get less. That is their approach to funding local services. We see it with our local Councils. The only way that the Tories will put extra money into local Councils is by putting Council Tax up, things like the Adult Social Care precept that the Tories have imposed on Council taxpayers and we see it again with police funding. The only significant increase in the cash in the police budget referred to in the Conservative amendment has come from Council taxpayers in Leeds. It has not come from the Government and I am surprised they did not put that into their amendment.

Of course, we know where the Conservative Government's priorities lie. We have seen them recently, they have given a £5bn tax giveaway for bankers, some of the biggest banks in this country, a reduction in the bank levy, and we have seen billions go to some of the most profitable companies in the country when it comes to reduction in Corporation Tax. The message from the Conservatives is quite clear – if you are a big bank or a big business the doors to the Treasury are open to you; when it comes to local services, you have to pay more as a local Council taxpayer - as Councillor Lowe said, paid for by some of the poorest and most vulnerable in society who are paying Council Tax just to keep local services going.

I also wanted to turn to another item in the Conservative White Paper which is a reference to reserves. As Councillor Lowe and others have said, you look forward to the same distance – the figure of reserves that the Conservatives used is not a current figure, it is a figure from at least two years ago. You look that far into the future and you see a far smaller number in the amount of reserves.

I was trying to think, I have heard this idea from Conservative Councillors before about how you can buy your way out of austerity by using reserves and I could not quite remember what it was but it struck me just then, it was Northamptonshire where the Tories thought they could get out of austerity by using reserves, and look what happened there. Look what happened there, the money runs out, the money does not come from Central Government and you have the absolute shambles of a Tory Council, the first Local Authority to go bust, run by the Conservatives, because they thought they could keep spending reserves and that was the answer to their Government's austerity.

I do not think we need in this Council and I do not think we need in West Yorkshire the Conservative's accountancy as the only Council in the country bust which if you keep spending reserves and that will answer all your problems. What we want is quite clear in our White Paper is we know how much our communities value the police, we know how hard the police work for our communities.

Councillor Buckley raised Jeremy Corbyn. I was lucky enough to hear Jeremy speak the other week when he was talking about...

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: You didn't vote for him.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: I was lucky enough to hear...

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: It was only Councillor Nagle who voted for him.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: I voted Labour, I voted for him in 2017 in the General Election, John. You remember the 2017 election when your Party lost power and had to do a dodgy deal with the DUP, that is where all the money goes. As I was saying, when Jeremy Corbyn talks about people who are contacting him asking where the police are, it shows he is far more in touch with people in this country than the fantasyland we hear at that end of the Council Chamber.

If you want to know how popular the Labour Party is, call another General Election. We did so well, we almost got there last time. Call another General Election.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: If you are in charge on resources, my God.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Call another General Election and we will see how popular different political parties are in this country. We saw that last time, we saw how cocky you were last time when you thought you knew it all and you got nearly wiped out by the country and supported by a minority. We have got it right, you have got it wrong. I support Councillor Coupar's White Paper. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Campbell.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Traditionally Councillor Lewis always mistakes volume with substance... *(laughter)*

THE LORD MAYOR: You have got need to comment.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: ...and he did not disappoint us today either but he did make one valid point, I thought, and I think we should bear this in mind because he did make the comment about Council Tax and the comment that the Government wants us to pay more and get less. If I look at your Council Budget you have embraced that with both hands.

It would be nice, I think, if we could get through a Council meeting before an election without the Labour Party putting forward a motion which is just about attacking the Government. I have no sympathy with the Government as you well know, and I do think that some of the Government's pronouncements and some of the Government's funding settlements in relation to the police have not been perhaps as helpful as they might be, but of all the things that the Labour Party could have raised in a White Paper debate, of all the things that they might want to do, of all their vision

that they might want to lay before the electorate of Leeds, what do we do? We just simply stand up and do the traditional let's knock the Government – let's knock the Government. OK?

OK, Councillor Coupar, your first sentence said to us the Labour Party have protected PCSOs. Actually, that is a bit disingenuous, I think - a bit disingenuous because those of us who represent areas beyond the ring road, or *terra incognita* as it is sometimes called (*laughter*) have not seen that because what did your administration decide to do? Your administration did a great deal with the Police and Crime Commissioner which transferred the PCSOs from the outer areas into the centre of Leeds, or into your favoured areas in South Leeds...

COUNCILLOR: Where they are needed.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: ...and that has created a situation, and you can moan all you like but it is true, where in North West Outer there are six fewer PCSOs than there ever were, and now we are down to a situation where we only have one Police Constable.

Now, that is not a decision that is based on crime figures. That is a decision based on the Police and Crime Commissioner in consultation with you interpreting where he can best get, I suppose, let's be brutally honest, support for the Labour Party.

If you want to talk about spending money wisely, let us just touch on the subject of the Police and Crime Commissioner's office. I understand he gets a salary of about £100,000...

COUNCILLOR: More.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: ...he has got an assistant who gets £53,000, if my memory is correct, and the qualification I understand for being that assistant was that you were a Member of the Labour Party, which perhaps limited the quality but there we are. (*laughter*)

So the total cost of his office is £1.6m. That £1.6m would provide the PCSOs for North West Outer and it would mean that when people call on me and when people come to my surgery and complain about the rising crime and complain about the number of burglaries going up, I would not have to say to them yes, I agree with you but the Labour Party made a decision to move the police cover you had out of our area into their favoured areas. Make of that what you will. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ritchie.

COUNCILLOR RITCHIE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I want to start off by actually, in the spirit of the first paragraph, thanking the Inner West Police Neighbourhood Team for their commitment to partnership working and the responsiveness when we have issues, and that is from the new Inspector who has made a fantastic start for us through the sergeants, PCs and the PCSOs who attend our

community meetings. That is in a time of increasing demand with the cuts that we have heard about that are in the White Paper.

I also think we should welcome and recognise the decisions made by this Council, this administration, that augment the police offer. Things like LASBAT and the PCSOs and the partnership working that we have generated.

I disagree totally with your comments about the Police and Crime Commissioner. I think we have got a Labour PCC who listens and prioritises the issues that affect our communities, such as domestic violence, child protection and emerging crimes such as people trafficking. I think also I welcome, and I am sure others do, the announcement of traffic policing that the PCC has just recently announced, to tackle the people who drive recklessly on our streets, something that has been neglected somewhat due to the cuts. It is, and I agree with my colleagues that it is a disgrace that the burden for paying for this falls on Council taxpayers.

What I will say, just in case I have missed a Channel 4 documentary on this issue. I thought it might be helpful to mention some of those comments from some of those who are on the front line dealing with the situation.

We had a survey by the Police Federation last year who found that nearly two-thirds of the officers rated their morale as poor. Police Fed Chairman up to 2017 Steve White said:

“Officers do a heroic job yet they feel undervalued and under pressure. Something has to give and unfortunately the evidence shows it is these officers’ personal welfare as they struggle to meet rising demand with dwindling resources and 21,000 officers fewer than, yes, 2010. In real terms pay has dropped by around 15% since 2010. No wonder officers are demoralised and despondent.”

Then there is an HMIC Report against Steve White’s comments. The Federation has been pointing out the pitfalls of continually taking the axe to police budgets over successive years and warning that it will actually hurt the very people we have pledged to support – members of the public. What we are seeing is a service being driven by cost constraints.”

Then you have got the personal consequences of austerity cropping up again. In 2018 the newly elected chair of the Police Federation says, “There are officers who have had to contact welfare schemes to buy petrol to get to work or put food on the table for their families. Something has to change. We are overstretched and under-funded and cannot go on like this. The Government needs to stop ignoring that reality and give the public the police service it deserves.”

What a damning critique of the Tory Government. Once the party of law and order, now the party of cuts and disorder. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lamb.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Thank you, Lord Mayor. My dad was a policeman. I grew up in the house right next door to Wetherby Police Station and I saw every day the dedication and sacrifices that police officers make. We should never, ever miss an opportunity to thank them for the work that they do on our behalf.

Lord Mayor, there has been a lot of dishonesty. I am not surprised they keep missing the Channel 4 fact check programmes; they are too busy tuning into Russia Today. *(laughter)*

I was pleased last week to learn that in the Wetherby ward we are going to get an additional police officer, an additional PCSO. Of course, it will not replace all that we have lost under the Labour Police and Crime Commissioner...

COUNCILLOR LOWE: Under Tory cuts.

COUNCILLOR: Under your Government.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: ...it will not replace all that we have lost under the Labour Police and Crime Commissioner and, of course, the number would not have had to fall so low had the Police and Crime Commissioner not built up reserves of £103.9m. That would have funded 300 full-time police officers not for one year or two years but ten years.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: 50 years if take Diane Abbott's figures.
(laughter)

COUNCILLOR LAMB: That is a very good point, if Diane Abbott was adding up you could have had thousands of officers for ever.

Lord Mayor, it is beyond doubt and beyond question the Labour Police and Crime Commissioner deliberately let police numbers drop so that he could then come along with this wedge of cash and pretend to be the saviour. It is a disgrace, that is a disgrace, Lord Mayor.

We have heard an awful lot today about 2010 and what has happened since 2010. Yes, there have been cuts to budgets but they seem to have forgotten why. They seem to have forgotten and I think it is time we reminded them because we have not had the opportunity to do so today. I think it is time, Lord Mayor, that we reminded them about the note that was left, "Sorry, there's no money left".
(interruption) Unless you are a Labour Police and Crime Commissioner in West Yorkshire, in which case you have got plenty of money to throw about. I think it is time we reminded them of selling off the gold at the lowest levels. It is time we reminded them that they are the ones that crashed the economy in the first place.
(interruption)

On this of all days, Lord Mayor, we should be celebrating. We have heard not one word from them that this is the first year since 2001 that on day-to-day spending the Government budget is in surplus. They ran a deficit every year from 2001 to 2010 and that is why this country could not cope when we had a financial crash. They are to blame. They are to blame for the cuts to services and they have learned nothing.

We only have to look across the car park at the wasteful £4m and I see the smirk on Councillor Wakefield's face about it, he should stand up and apologise to the taxpayers of this city for the money that was wasted on that building over there, Lord Mayor. Lord Mayor, I have not finished.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: I ask for him to withdraw that statement. He is totally wrong about the decision being made by the LEP, not by me.

THE LORD MAYOR: Could I ask you both...

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: I want you to apologise.

THE LORD MAYOR: Could I ask you both to just...

COUNCILLOR LAMB: I apologise for nothing.

THE LORD MAYOR: Could I ask you both to please sit down for a second.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: I think it is time Councillor Wakefield...

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: You are totally out of order, Alan.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lamb, would you please sit down for a second. Councillor Wakefield, are you making a Procedural Motion there?

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Yes.

THE LORD MAYOR: You want a point of...

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Yes, Lord Mayor. I think you can always understand, particularly before an election, that there is going to be very sharp debates and some exaggeration, some rhetoric, some banter, but what I think where you cross the line is when you start telling lies and you have not researched it. I am afraid that the allegation you have made is totally false. The investment decision was made by a LEP body with business people and Leaders and not by this Council, so you need to be absolutely clear otherwise you are actually bringing politics into disrepute and that is not right for this city and it is not right for this Council and it is not right for democracy. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Right, we are going to take that as a point of personal explanation. Councillor Lamb, you will be allowed to continue.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Thank you, Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR: Apologise.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Lord Mayor, I am not apologising for anything. There is £4m of taxpayers' money that has been wasted and taxpayers have a right to know what happened to it, Lord Mayor.

Lord Mayor, this Labour administration have learned absolutely nothing and this White Paper is just reinforcing the fact they are the ones who are responsible for the fact that the money was lost in this country, they are the ones that are responsible for the fact that this country got into such an economic mess. This is the party that has fixed it and cleaned things up and are putting things back on the right track. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Finnigan.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can I open by putting our thanks to the marvellous job the Morley Neighbourhood Policing Team do. They work in partnership, they do an excellent job, they have a very positive relationship with the communities that they police.

Lord Mayor, I am a simple man (*laughter*) and I am easily confused because on the one hand about 18 months ago I was told by Tory colleagues, loads of money in the policing and, on the other hand, told by the Labourites, no money whatsoever in policing so, as you do, you put in a Freedom of Information Request into the Police and Crime Commissioner to see what he has got to say about such matters. Very deep (and it is very deep) in Schedule D of some report or other you get the confirmation of how much reserves he is sitting on and that is more than £103m.

Then we have these conversations with senior police officers who will remain unnamed who come up and say, "Councillor Finnigan, we are having to shift these PCSOs from Outer to Inner. You are losing PCSOs, we are cutting the number of PCSOs that are walking Morley streets and putting them into Inner Labour wards." I am saying, "Why are they doing that?" and he is saying, "We have got these cuts." I say, "But you have got £103m of reserves that you can be using to police Morley" and he says, "Councillor, that is a political choice by the Police and Crime Commissioner."

Then later on a similar senior police officer, who will remain unnamed, comes along and says, "We are going to have to shut the help desk at Morley Police Station." I say, "Why are you doing this? Why are you closing the help desk at Morley Police Station?" "Councillor, it is those cuts." I say, "But you have £103m of reserves there, you do not need to close this." "Ah Councillor", he says, "it is a political decision made by the Police and Crime Commissioner."

At this point, because I am a simple man, I am getting more and more confused. There is loads of money and he is closing down services in Morley and shifting them to the inner city.

COUNCILLOR: You are like a broken record.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Then we hear that they are recruiting police officers, so again I go and have a conversation with a senior police officer who will remain unnamed and I say, "Hallelujah, the PCC is recruiting new police officers. This is fabulous news for policing in Morley, isn't it? How many extra police officers am I getting from this recruitment?" "Councillor", he says, "you are not getting any additional police officers via this recruitment campaign" and I say, "Why?" and he

says, “It’s these cuts” and I say, “But you are sitting on £103m of reserves, why are you cutting police numbers in Morley?” and he says, “Councillor, it’s a political choice by the Police and Crime Commissioner.”

In Morley we are paying an extra £60,000 a year to make sure that we maintain police levels. We are making it clear in this year’s local elections that if you vote for us you get more money put into policing and if you vote for them, what you get is cuts in policing and a closure of the help desk at Morley Police Station. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now over 45 minutes so I would like to ask Councillor Coupar to sum up, please.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Thanks, Lord Mayor. I hope I can bring some sense to this debate as it has certainly nosedived in the last couple of contributions, I have got to say.

Just to mention that the first paragraph you all seem to have missed in my White Paper was outlining our gratitude to the fantastic police force and its response that we have got here and that says so in the first paragraph of the White Paper, but you all appear to have missed that.

I have got to say, when you look at the extent of cuts to policing in this country - and yes since 2010, Councillor Buckley, because that is when you took charge – it is pretty astonishing that the Tories are implying that this is not the problem. Instead, the focus of the White Paper amendment and speeches I would say, with the exception of Councillor Carter, that we have heard today is on the level of reserves held by the PCC.

This is an obligation rightly that PCCs have reserves to be used as contingencies. Beyond the Force’s legal obligation to hold contingency moneys, this last year alone the PCC has had to use £11m from reserves to fund everyday front line policing. We have heard recently from Mark Burns-Williamson that there is a danger that the reserves of West Yorkshire Police will mostly be exhausted by 2022. It is not healthy to use reserves for general spending. Reserves can be spent only once and once they are spent the safety net has gone. Councillor James Lewis was quite right to point out what has happened in the Tory run Northamptonshire Council, what can happen when large public organisations use their reserves to fund everyday services. By being forced into using their reserves to fund day-to-day policing, police forces across the country are running the risk of being unable to respond to the event of an emergency. What they need is decent funding.

So, what we have done with the developments in Neighbourhood Policing and here in Leeds, PCSOs were introduced, I have to remind you, by a Labour Government and seeing as you keep harping back to nostalgia, why shouldn’t we? 2002 and 2003 here in Leeds. In May 2010 the Labour Government published its strategy on Neighbourhood Policing which set out ring-fenced funding including PCSOs. The Coalition got in in 2010 and what happened? We got cuts, cuts and more cuts.

An enhanced model of Neighbourhood Policing launched this week reaffirmed the commitment to Neighbourhood Policing and it is a shame not many of you have recognised that fact in this Chamber today. There will be an additional five Police Inspectors across Leeds and an additional nine Police Sergeants across Leeds.

Can I thank Councillor Ritchie for his speech and like him I shall be tuning in to Channel 4 later just to make sure we are not missing anything. Councillor Golton, I just do not believe you are living in the real world at the moment, I have got to say. Councillor Buckley, you gave no surprise in your contribution. You think there is one rule for you and your party and another rule for others. Councillor Lamb, for anybody to accuse us of playing politics in this Chamber, I have never seen such a blatant show of playing politics around a White Paper.

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: What a shameful thing for a politician to do!
(laughter)

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Same old, same old from the Tories. I really hope that your constituents do not listen to your alarmist view on community safety in Leeds as they will be scared to leave their homes.

The truth is that our police in Leeds do an excellent job and the high levels of customer satisfaction outlined in the survey says that. What we are calling for, Lord Mayor, and what you should be calling for too is for Theresa May to listen to what the police are saying, listen to what the public are saying and give the police in this country the funding they deserve. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: That is fine, thank you. OK, here we go. I would now like to call for the vote on, firstly, the amendment in the name of Councillor Golton.
(A vote was taken) That is LOST.

I would now like to call for the vote on the second amendment in the name of Councillor Amanda Carter. (A vote was taken) That is also LOST.

I now call for votes on the motion in the name of Councillor Coupar. (A vote was taken) That is CARRIED. Thank you.

SUSPENSION OF COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES

THE LORD MAYOR: We now move on to Suspension of Council Procedure Rules, Councillor Finnigan.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Move in terms of the Notice, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Leadley.

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: Can I formally second that motion, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. I would now like to call for the vote, please, on the suspension of Council Procedure Rules. (*A vote was taken*) That is CARRIED.

ITEM 16 – WHITE PAPER MOTION – CLEAN AIR ZONE

THE LORD MAYOR: We now move on to White Paper 3, Clean Air Zone. Councillor Finnigan.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am going to try and be brief about this. We all support clean air zones, there is no arguments at all that people die prematurely as a result of the poor quality of air and that is not just a problem in the inner city, that is a problem in other areas as well and I acknowledge that Morley has had a problem with its pollution levels in certain locations in Morley.

In general we support the introduction of a clean air zone but what we are asking for today is some caution to be taken to look at the unforeseen consequences of introducing a clean air zone unless it is well thought out and unless there is enough money – whether that is Central Government or Local Government money – to provide the help and support and the incentives that are required to make sure that nobody loses significantly in this particular Local Authority.

Certainly in Morley we have had a problem for many years on Chapel Hill. People may know Chapel Hill well. It is a hill that is hemmed in from two sides with high buildings, the pollution levels as a result of that are likely to be higher. We have had significant problems in the past, certainly with heavy vehicles coming up and down Chapel Hill and the pollution levels there have been significant and unacceptable, of that there is no doubt at all.

There is a housing association flat, Liberty View, that was built under the Coalition that provided fabulous supported homes for a lot of residents, many of whom have got health problems. We want to make sure that they breathe as clean air as anybody else in the Morley area.

The issues to do with Chapel Hill are the fact that pollution levels are already falling at this particular stage and there are other options and other opportunities to deal with that, and that could include a rephrasing of the traffic lights at the bottom of Chapel Hill but also looking at a weight ban on that particular section of road and that would probably resolve that problem and difficulty.

When the clean air zone proposal came out and went out to consultation at this particular point, we all thought it was a great idea and then a couple of small businesses in Morley said, “Councillor, are you aware of the impact this is likely to have on small and medium businesses?” I said, “Well, it is not an issue unless you are going into the city centre you are not going to have a problem, you are not going to be hit with £100 a day fine, any of these issues” and they said, “That is not the way that the clean air zone works.”

He explained it to me so that I was clearer about things. As they pointed out, they are operating small businesses usually that are not exceptionally profitable. They are struggling to make ends meet based upon the levels of taxation that they have at this particular point. As they point out, they are coming out of Morley and heading towards the motorway network and we are blessed (or cursed, some would argue) with the motorway network being on our doorstep. At that particular point they are going to be subject to a charge from the clean air zone, notwithstanding they are contributing nothing whatsoever to the pollution levels in the city centre, and certainly not contributing in any shape, way or form to the pollution levels that exist in the problem area that we have in Morley on Chapel Hill.

We needed to reflect on this and certainly when we were asked about our particular views, we need to think about being smarter about the way the clean air zone works because as one of the businesses that came to see us said, “All we are going to do, Councillor, is shift our lorries from our side of the motorway, Morley, to the other side in Kirklees where we are not going to have these particular problems and difficulties. We can avoid these charges altogether” and whatever benefits we get from those small businesses operating in our area, and there is no doubt that there is some economic growth because of that, shifts elsewhere. All that means is that it creates higher levels of unemployment and it drives away the small and medium enterprises that we need that are the backbone of economic improvement in our particular area.

This is why we need to think very seriously about how it operates but also to make sure that we provide the incentives, we provide the financial support that is required for those small and medium enterprises to compete.

Your Morrison’s of this world, your Sainsbury’s of this world are not going to have a problem, they are already there at this particular stage. They have got the money to make sure that they are compliant. We need to think seriously and make sure that Central Government provides the help and support that is required to make sure that we do not penalise unnecessarily to a degree where they find it impossible to operate those small and medium enterprises that exist not only in Morley but across the Leeds City Council area. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Varley.

COUNCILLOR VARLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I second this motion, this White Paper, and I reserve the right to speak. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Anderson.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. In amending this White Paper we are doing it almost reluctantly. It was because we had the advantage of seeing it and changes were then made by the Government, otherwise we would not have been amending this White Paper today. We were quite happy with what you had put forward, but we have the hindsight so hence the reason we have amended it slightly today.

What has happened recently to change? Well, on 27th March the Director of Resources and Housing gave authority to spend £1m of DEFRA money. £700,000 is going to be going on ultra low energy vehicles for taxi and private hire vehicles, that is £700,000 for that; infrastructure improvements of £80,000; a communications campaign of £180,000; and a bike share scheme of £40,000. Then there was a further announcement by the Government of another £1.8m which was then going to give some money for the extension of free parking for electric vehicles, public awareness campaigns, a scoot to school scheme, some further help about taxi leasing schemes and work to encourage a higher uptake of electric vans. I am speaking in hindsight here, to make it clear that we are not criticising, you were not necessarily aware of that at the time. That is the background to it.

Why did we put our amendment in? Is that money enough? Who knows? Is that Government money enough? Is it going to meet the needs? What is the quantum that we have got? What we are asking for in terms of our Exec Board paper is for the quantum to be identified. How much do we need in terms of investment? Where are the potential sources of that money? Is it all from Central Government or has the Council set aside some money for it? Is there anything we can do with business rates? Is there anything we can do to help businesses? What can we do? We need to set out the quantum of what we are trying to do.

That is all we are asking. We are asking you to set out clearly to Government what are your asks, what are you going to spend your money on? I have highlighted a few minutes ago where you have already set some strategic level investment. We need a bit more meat on the bone to see what it is going to be spent on. If you have read the delegated decision you will be already aware where some of it is going to be but not necessarily everybody in here is aware of it and certainly the public out there are probably not aware of it, so we need to communicate what it is we are going to be doing in terms of what we are trying to do.

What would be the cost benefit of these measures? It is fine spending the money but what is going to be the benefit that is going to come back again? What is going to be the effect on businesses of this in terms of a cost benefit analysis?

What I want to do is conclude by pointing out one of the six most important people in Europe who are going to be looking into this particular subject is actually sitting in this Chamber today, namely Councillor John Procter is going to be one of only six people in Europe who will make the decision on the European Commission's regulatory proposal for post-2020 CO₂ targets for cars and vans. If we get a chance he will explain to you what he is going to do, but he is one of the six most important people in Europe at the moment because of the work he is doing.

To conclude, what we are saying to you is we would like you to work with the Government, you have proven with the money you have got already that if you work with the Government they will put their hands in their pockets. The Government are to be congratulated for what they have done so far. Is it enough? That is why we are saying please support our White Paper. Thanks very much, thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Wadsworth.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: We have now decided on the right word; it is now time for Councillor Yeadon to give her valedictory speech.

COUNCILLOR YEADON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. For my final speech in this Chamber I would like to talk briefly in support of Councillor Finnigan's White Paper. To be honest I am not entirely sure why the Conservatives felt the need to amend it. It was short but perfectly formed.

The issue of air quality is one of the biggest challenges this city faces and it is vital that there is cross-party consensus on how we tackle it. Consulting with a wide variety of businesses that are based in Leeds is an integral part of the recent consultation period and only last week I met with representatives of the Confederation of Small Businesses. The feedback that we have received through consultation will be used as evidence during discussions with Government on the Clean Air Zone implementation process and to avoid penalising businesses within the city we will be seeking funding from Government for different support packages, exploring retrofit solutions and the possibility of sunset clauses.

I note that the amendment has called for our ask of Central Government to be brought forward as a matter of urgency to Executive Board and I just want to reassure Barry that discussions are ongoing with Central Government and are informed by the almost 9,000 consultation responses that we have received.

I have met with Minister Coffey and we are in constant dialogue with DEFRA. Our final proposal will be brought to Executive Board in June and will detail what support packages we will be seeking.

I am glad that Members across the Chamber share our belief of the principles of a Clean Air Zone, recognising that poor air quality is a significant public health risk.

As research into the effects of air quality develops, the number of adverse health effects known to us grows in number, which is why action to improve air quality is not something we need to work on over the coming ten or 20 years, but something that we need to do now.

I am proud of the proactive and innovative measures we have taken towards improving air quality in Leeds which has included leading the way with our fleet of ultra low zero emission vehicles, more than any other Authority in England. We are the first Authority to publish and consult on our clean air proposals and we continue to invest in public transport and cycling infrastructure and have also introduced measures to help drivers to switch to ultra low emission vehicles.

I am delighted to announce that the Council's Air Quality Team has secured a further £1.8m-worth of funding which will go to measures designed to prevent further air pollution. However, DEFRA stipulated that this funding could not be used for mitigation for the CAZ.

However, as I have already mentioned, further funding from Government to support the implementation of our Clean Air Zone is essential if it is to avoid negatively impacting upon businesses within the city and I would like to ask all Members to back our call to Government for further support on the issue so that we can improve our air quality without consequences for jobs and livelihood.

Finally, as this is my last speech within the Council Chamber, I would like to thank those of you who I have worked in collaboration with over the years. The opposing sides of this Chamber may occasionally see the world differently but I am adamant that we all seek to do what we can for the best for this great city, so best of luck to my colleagues for the forthcoming elections (on this side!) and thank you all for your support, challenge, wisdom and most importantly friendship over the last ten years. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Neil Dawson.

COUNCILLOR DAWSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. As we are only five weeks away from an election it may seem strange that I am actually speaking in support of Councillor Finnigan's White Paper put forward by the Morley Borough Independents. *(laughter)*

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Join us! You know it makes sense!

COUNCILLOR DAWSON: Before making a few comments I would like to thank Councillor Finnigan for the kind words he said at the last meeting on behalf of his Group to wish me a speedy recovery. Actually, sad as it may seem, from my hospital ward I watched the Council meeting via the webcast. Unsurprisingly, I was not joined by any of my colleagues in Ward C1. *(laughter)* They did not seem to be interested.

Can I also pay tribute to Councillor Shirley Varley who is retiring. As was said earlier, Shirley has been a Member of the Authority for seven years, since 2010 and I was there on the day that Shirley was elected and cheered, and part of the reason for cheering was that Shirley actually displaced the one and only BNP Member of this Authority *(applause)* and that was very pleasing. Shirley has been a work colleague for the last six years for me and I can only thank her when we have worked together and wish her all the best for the future. I know she will be still active in Morley in many groups and I think she has been a really good Councillor for Morley.

As I say, I am speaking in support of the White Paper put forward by the MBIs. However, I expect that this truce will be over very soon and we will go back to normal hostilities over the next five weeks. It seems like a very long Christmas truce in many ways. It has lasted until Easter! As I said, hostilities will probably resume after Easter. I can see Councillor Elliott laughing.

As has been said, I think everybody supports the principles of a clean air zone. One thing that particularly pleased me about the White Paper put forward is that it is not what I would call Morley centric, it is looking at the Council as a whole. As Councillor Finnigan has mentioned, we do have a problem in Chapel Hill but that

cannot be solved by just action within Morley on Chapel Hill. It has to be done by measures elsewhere throughout Leeds and throughout the country. Air pollution is creating 40,000 premature deaths in this country so something has to be done not just in Leeds but on a national basis and I am pleased that the Government is taking action on this.

As I think Councillor Yeadon has mentioned, Leeds City Council is already taking action in this area. Leeds City Council's own fleet now is already more low emission vehicles than any other public authority and that again is very commendable and a move in the right direction.

As has already been mentioned we are investing heavily in public transport, in cleaner buses and also in cycling infrastructure which will all help. We are also encouraging drivers to switch to low emission vehicles, vehicles with ultra low emissions and I have to confess I am probably one of these drivers. Probably about twelve years ago I believed the Government of the day in terms of driving a diesel, what were then called clean diesel cars. I have now repented and got rid of the clean diesel car and in the future I might go for an electric car as well – it will be easier to drive.

One thing I think which also comes through from the MBI motion is about the concerns of small and medium businesses and in a town like Morley and many of the towns in the outer Leeds area, small and medium businesses are the life blood of our economy, as they are for the city. Therefore, we do not really want to be taxing a lot of these businesses to make them move away from our centres. I think it is something that we will take on board as part of the consultation that is under way.

All the measures that we are taking are vital. If we are to do nothing DEFRA says that Leeds will be one of the five cities that will not be hit the EU Air Quality Standard by 2020 and we could well be mandated to have a clean air zone if we do choose not to have one.

What worried me particularly about the Conservative amendment is that it seems to imply to me that this Authority will become like an agency of Central Government as it says we will do more work closely and effectively in the future on all issues of concern to the city with Central Government. We are an independent political body and we make our own policy and decisions and I would not want to see this Authority just become an agency for spending money from Central Government. I think that is really important. Right, thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Neil. Councillor Truswell.

COUNCILLOR TRUSWELL: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can I just start by saying that it is a pleasure to follow my courageous comrade, Councillor Dawson. I have been a Member of this Council on and off for 21 years and I have never been asked before to support an Opposition motion, but before I was fazed by this unique experience I saw the Tory amendment, which made me feel far more at home.

Lord Mayor, air quality is a crucial issue and tackling it is vital, but it is a symptom of much greater challenges that we face. Councillor Finnigan quite rightly touched upon a number of these in a contribution he made a couple of hours ago.

The Infrastructure and Investment Scrutiny Board that I chair has conducted an inquiry this year into sustainable development and I am really grateful to board members and everyone who participated in that. In it we looked at definitions of sustainable development, what obstacles exist in terms of resources and Government planning guidance, and what we can do as a Council within those restrictions to genuinely promote sustainable development and hopefully embody it in documents like the Best Council Plan and the Inclusive Growth Strategy.

We know that the people who pay the greatest price for unsustainable growth are those who suffer the greatest inequalities, and air quality is one of those important elements.

If I can be anecdotal for a second, Lord Mayor, when my children were very, very young we lived on a notorious rat run. Each of them traumatically was hospitalised with acute asthma attacks. Once we moved the acute attacks stopped. Now, I cannot prove a causal link but it makes you think, doesn't it, especially as a parent.

We know that there is no such thing as a safe level of air pollution. Our challenge should not be simply to keep below EC levels but to keep them as low as practically possible. The principle of making the polluter pay is a good one but, as others have said, who are the polluters? The answer is all of us, personally and as policy makers, not just some sections of the business community.

Lord Mayor, sustainability is a three legged stool with economic, social and environmental elements. This Government loads the dice in favour of developers to the neglect of the other two crucial aspects. That obsession with development combined with mindless and dogmatic austerity has created an increasing gap between development and the infrastructure we desperately need to mitigate its impact. We finish up creating problems, then trying to solve them, whether it is air quality, flooding, transport, health provision or school places.

This Council has a legal duty to protect the health and wellbeing of its citizens, yet that duty on issues such as air quality is not regarded by the Government as a material planning consideration if we try to make it stick on appeal.

Lord Mayor, 30 years ago – another trip down memory lane – this Council drew up a Green Strategy and action plan. As a result we were designated as an environmental city. Lord Mayor, we need to reclaim that mantle because it is being said we do not own the planet, we borrow it from our children.

Lord Mayor, we rightly have an ambition to be the best city in the UK but instead of simply outgrowing other cities, we should also be out-greening them. That would make us the best city to live in, the best city to work in, the best city to do business in, the best city to grow up in and, crucially important to so many of us in

this Chamber today, especially retiring colleagues, the very best city in the country to grow old in. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Richard Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I was fascinated to hear what Barry was saying about the DEFRA money, a million quid. I am never someone who says no to Central Government when it gives you money, but the scale of the problem faced by this city and by the haulage companies, the small and medium sized enterprises, is going to require far, far more than a million quid.

I think we all got a letter from Glyn Thompson from Pudsey Transport, though why Pudsey Transport is based in Morley escapes me. I did talk to him and he was explaining the profile of their fleet and I think from other conversations with haulage and skip hire businesses they are all in the same boat because they are not like the biggies, they are not, like somebody said, the Sainsbury's and whoever. They have a fleet that has some Euro 3s, some Euro 4s, some Euro 5s, perhaps the odd Euro 6, so out of all their fleet they probably have one decent vehicle that is OK. They have to get their whole fleet up to the Euro 6 standard or else it is very difficult for them to operate within a CAZ, but the cost, because diesel vehicles, HGV vehicles can go on for ever because you do not need to change them unless there is a problem like this. Those of us who have got diesel cars, they go on for ever. That is why we do not get rid of them even though we know that they cause other problems. How on earth are firms like this, because of what they are, operating on tight margins, going to achieve anything like that funding to do that, to upgrade their vehicles to Euro 6?

What is the impact of that going to be on the automotive industry, which I do not think is going to be able to supply them with the vehicles? What is the resale value of the vehicles that they no longer need? That kind of reintroduces the idea of what about retrofit, because the bus industry has successfully gone for retrofit. There is not any retrofit answers which not only surprises me, it appals me because where has Central Government been, where has that kind of partnership of enterprise and Government been where we have not looked at any kind of solution to the problem for HGVs. If we can do it for a bus why can't you do it for a wagon? Very similar kind of concept, big hole where the engine goes, fairly limited range of models that you use. Surely somebody could have worked out something but there is nothing or what there is on the market only works for Euro 5s, so that still leave you with a huge number of vehicles that you cannot do anything with.

What is the cost for one company? We are talking about perhaps a hundred grand. Perhaps a small company will need them. How on earth are we going to sort out the problem for the city as a whole?

Then you look at the other side which is the owner operators. Some big firms do not actually do it all themselves, they bring in other people who have one vehicle and that vehicle has a low resale value, it is an old vehicle. Those guys are not going to be able to operate, they are not going to get the finance for it so this is a huge financial problem that I just do not see being sorted out through some kind of generous grant from Central Government. I would love it if that were true but the scale of it is huge and I think this is all brought about because the Government did not

address early doors what the big problems were going to be with clean air zones. It has left it, it decided a clean air zone was the only answer and then left everybody to think about how they did it over a couple of years.

That is not good enough for Central Government. We have seen an abdication from them and they have thrown all the responsibility on us and we are left with a situation that is incredibly difficult to resolve and I certainly hope it is resolved.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: I am very, very pessimistic. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Wadsworth.

COUNCILLOR WADSWORTH: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I think we all accept that the 40,000 premature deaths that are caused by air pollution is unacceptable and we all need to do something about that. I am really pleased that the Morley Borough Independents have brought this White Paper so that we can discuss it here today. One of the biggest sufferers actually of the poor air pollution sat in congestion is actually drivers who draw it in through their air vents so in actual fact if you are contributing to it, you are also suffering from it, so it is in everybody's interests that we should do something about it.

My concerns about the clean air zone and who it affects at the moment is that this could be the thin edge of a wedge. At the moment we do generally have public support for this but if it was to extend to the private car, however old the private car is, I think that would change and I think we need to be mindful that if that is going to happen, we make it clear to people that older diesels are going to be affected sooner or later.

I also feel that local solutions, we have lots of congestion outside the congestion zone in places like Morley, Poole, Otley and Horsforth which would not actually be addressed by the clean air zone but would still have congestion.

The other problem is, of course, as Councillor Lewis has just been talking about, the business impact. There are so many HGVs that are affected by it and this is predominantly because we are including Euro 6 and obviously there are solutions for Euro 5 and maybe we need to look at some sort of either scale of charging for Euro 5, Euro 6 vehicles because businesses buy – what businesses tell me is that they buy the best vehicle at the time, the cleanest vehicle and some of those manufacturers operate Euro 5s that are nearly as clean as Euro 6 but fall into that category. They then have to, with their business model, run those vehicles until they have got through their useful life and they are trapped into that, so when they bought a Euro 5 they thought it was the best, they thought they were doing their best and now find that they are going to pay a penalty of £100 a day for travelling into the city centre, and I would be concerned if we got into a position where we had a premium for Leeds deliveries because that would affect businesses.

Government have offered support, as Councillor Anderson's amendment does say, and you need to really go to Government and say what you need. They Government do not seem to be refusing support, they do seem to be giving you support when you ask for it.

I do need to talk to Councillor Yeadon because Councillor Yeadon thought I gave my remarks poorly for Councillor Yeadon. This time I have to compliment you. You are setting the Council an example by driving one of two only electric vehicles – I think Councillor Garthwaite drives the other one but I am not sure.

COUNCILLOR GARTHWAITE: I do.

COUNCILLOR WADSWORTH: Obviously more of you are setting the example as time comes on but we do need to set that example by driving more electric vehicles.

Councillor Yeadon, you know how well I have enjoyed working with you over the past years and I will really miss you and I do wish you well in not your retirement I am sure because you are far too young for retirement, but whatever you decide to do. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor David Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Clearly the clean air zones have got to go ahead and to be honest that is just the start because I think, as Paul Truswell says, we are talking about meeting certain levels but possibly that is not far enough for the future.

It has got to go ahead but clearly in our stuff we put into the consultation from my party, one of the things we said was we felt that it should be about taking people on, helping people along and not hitting them over the head because the fact is we have got to take this forward and we have got to get support. We do not want to put businesses out of business or have them move and we do not want people to lose their jobs, but we have to do something about this. I think the motion from Councillor Finnigan is very helpful in that and should be able to move things forward.

I am sorry, Barry, but your amendment, I do not really see quite the point of that. I do not think it helps any. I am not saying what you are saying is wrong but I think that is to the point is Robert's motion, so we will be supporting Robert's motion.

While I am up, I sat on the various working groups with Lucinda over the last couple of years and I have got to say I have really enjoyed working with you. I think that you are easy to work with. We do not always agree but we can challenge you and not fall out and I will be sorry to see you go. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jonathan Bentley.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking in support of Councillor Finnigan's White Paper and really pleased that it is being

presented. It is good and I am really pleased to be in a debate that we are talking about how and when we put in a clean air zone, not if and why not.

If I may join the men of a certain age in Councillor Yeadon's fan club
(laughter)

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: That is not what she wants!

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: It has already been mentioned that Councillor Yeadon is passionate about her portfolio and I think her enthusiasm and her commitment to it will be missed. She practises what she preaches. She changed her car to an electric one and changed me into getting a plug-in hybrid. I did not want to quite take the risk of all electric but it is a terrific vehicle and I would recommend anyone who is changing their cars to look down that route.

Only yesterday, just more of her green credentials, she was telling us how she had bought some very highly skilled special worms to help with her composting. I do not know if they have arrived in the post.

COUNCILLOR YEADON: They arrived last night.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: They did, excellent! Councillor Yeadon and Neil Evans and their teams have raised the profile of poor air quality in the city and have come up with an innovative scheme which meets the Government requirements but does not put unnecessary burdens on the residents of Leeds, particularly the more disadvantaged residents who rely on older cars to get to work and get to school and what have you.

Councillor Finnigan is absolutely right in highlighting the possible adverse impact on local businesses. I know all Members have had letters from transport companies expressing their concerns and it is also understood that we cannot give so many exemptions so that the scheme does not actually produce what is intended so we should be looking, perhaps, at financial interventions as well to ensure compliance, particularly for small and medium sized local businesses.

We frequently hear Government saying that their first duty is the defence of their people and here with poor air quality we have a life-threatening hazard in the very air we breathe and we are right to call on the Government to spend whatever is necessary to defend the population from it. I support the White Paper Lord Mayor, thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: And now our final speaker before Councillor Finnigan sums up, again with a valedictory speech, Councillor John Procter. *(Applause)*

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: No, politicians do not get applauded before they speak, only after if they are lucky!

Lord Mayor, thank you for squeezing me in before this session is guillotined, effectively. It is interesting, isn't it, when you look back, and hindsight is a great thing, as I think a number of contributors have said today. Who remembers when

smoking was advertised as a great thing for us, it helped clear your chest. Look what subsequently was found out. A move to diesel, clean diesels, Councillor Dawson said a few moments ago you can go far further in them, better for the environment. Now the latest thing is buy a hybrid as well. I have got bad news for you if anyone has got one. Further to that now the move to all electric vehicles.

An interesting series of comments and I think I was most pleased to hear I think, Richard, every contributor makes the point that what the White Paper is about, which is bear in mind the businesses. I am very pleased that Councillor Richard Lewis has visited a business that has got real problems in this area, but you times that by most businesses in the city of Leeds as well and it is about trying to find a solution.

Clean air zones are a tool. I have to say be wary, be careful. Effectively they are going to be obsolete are clean air zones before you know it because there is, as Councillor Anderson alluded to, a Commission, piece of legislation that is going to be implemented within a year, that is the time frame for it and that will happen, and it is, as Councillor Anderson mentioned, dealing with post-2020 CO2 targets and emissions.

What is going to happen after 2020? Well, the target is going to be 15% reduction by 2025 and a 30% reduction by 2030. How is that going to be achieved? It is going to be achieved by, dare I say it, taxing the hell out of manufacturers and that needs to be a real, real worry and a real concern for many jobs in this region in terms of the automotive supply chain and automotive manufacturers in general. To achieve the 2030 targets, hybrids are useless – useless. Manufacturers will not be making hybrids to reach that target in 2030, it has to be all electric and therein is the problem, because the technology does not exist right now in sufficient quantity to deliver it. You cannot make the batteries. Retrofit for all battery operations is not good. It does not, frankly, work. It needs to be a chassis upwards and manufacturers are doing that but they are limited, very limited. JLR, Jaguar Land Rover, Range Rover, unveiled in Geneva two weeks ago a brand new vehicle, the floor pan of which is all a battery cell. Do you think that is going to be affordable by anyone in this Council Chamber? I doubt it. I doubt it. *(interruption)* Not on the salary I am on, trust me!

It is real big, big problem and it is interesting, there is one motor manufacturer from America, Tesla, that has been leading the way. Interesting though, isn't it, Tesla have put on hold the development of cars to move into the development of batteries.

Lord Mayor, in closing, we need to focus on new technologies, how batteries hold their charge, how they can deliver energy into motor cars. That is the future, Lord Mayor, thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, and Councillor Finnigan to sum up, please.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. That is rather a surprise. The first and second debate were what we usually predict at this particular point. I think this third debate has been pretty consensual with a lot of people making some very positive comments about the way ahead and I do not usually do that, as

people know. As people know I usually get up people's noses, I am like Marmite, people either hate or love me. It is very rare that I have the capacity to bring the Council Chamber together. It is unusual. It is a unique experience; I promise it will not happen again.

We are in a situation where I think we are all committed to a clean air zone and understand and appreciate the fact that it is a step on that journey. It is not a question of choice, we are already on that journey, we need to step further, we need to step quicker along that particular journey, but it is a question of making sure that we get the balance right. We want to make sure that we do provide the clean air that our communities have every right to, but we also need to balance that up with taking into account, solidly into account, its impact on certainly the small and medium businesses, and we need to look at the support package that we can pull together from whatever source that we can to make sure that we reach that balance, we have that balance at this particular point.

I will close at that particular stage. It has been consensual, I think we are all committed to working together to making sure that we get the clean air zone up and operating but with that balance that we need that will not penalise unnecessarily and to any great degree those small and medium enterprises that are the backbone.

In very finally closing, can I thank Councillor Neil Dawson for his help and his support and his kind words at this particular point. I would love to wish him all the best in the forthcoming election but I do not think I can go that far! I wish him all the best for the future. I hope he has a happy retirement, I am trying to aim to achieve that at this particular stage but he has been a pleasure to work with, genuinely, and Morley blood runs through him ultimately at this particular point. He is as committed as any of us are to Morley and that ought to be noted and it is to be commended. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Before I call for the vote, I have got a few things to say at the end so if you could hang around a bit and to not just get up and shoot off I would be very grateful.

I would like to call for the vote on, firstly, the amendment in the name of Councillor Barry Anderson. (*A vote was taken*) That is LOST.

Finally the motion in the name of Councillor Finnigan. (*A vote was taken*) That is CARRIED.

Isn't it lovely to end on a unanimous vote!

Thank you for today. Firstly, as you know earlier this year the Council had some fantastic news when it became one of Stonewall's top 100 employers, coming in at number 50 on the charts.

Moving on from that, Saturday 31st is the Trans Day of Visibility and Trans Pride have organised Leeds's first ever march on Saturday from 12.00 noon starting from Leeds Art Gallery and everyone is welcome.

Also, a final thank you to retiring Councillors, many of whom cross-party were mentors to me when I first came on the Council, so thank you to them and, finally, I think I get half an hour or so before I hand over to the 125th Lord Mayor at the next Council meeting, but I just wanted to say what a pleasure it has genuinely been chairing these Council meetings. Thank you. *(Standing ovation)*

(The meeting closed at 7.42pm)