

**LEEDS CITY COUNCIL**

**ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

Held on

Thursday, 21<sup>st</sup> May 2009

At

THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,  
CIVIC HALL, LEEDS

In the Chair:

THE LORD MAYOR  
(Councillor F Robinson)  
(Councillor J Elliott)

-----

**VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS**

-----

Transcribed from the notes of  
J L Harpham Ltd.,  
Official Court Reporters and Tape Transcribers,  
Queen's Buildings, 55, Queen Street,  
Sheffield, S1 2DX

VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF LEEDS CITY COUNCIL  
ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 21<sup>st</sup> MAY 2009

*(In the Chair - the Lord Mayor, Councillor Frank Robinson)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Welcome to all for the Annual Meeting. Our first small announcement, of course, is to switch off your mobile phones, and that applies to everybody so that we can go on peacefully.

I have one announcement that is of particular concern for my good self and that is that I was at Chelsea yesterday and I am certain council will join me in congratulating not only our sponsors but Parks and Countryside for a Silver Gilt award. *(applause)*

I could say it was quite brilliant. The name of Leeds went far and wide, believe me, yesterday and the garden was absolutely superb. Several nods because several people were down there and it was a great occasion, absolutely great.

LATE ITEM – ATTENDANCE OF COUNCILLOR ATKINSON AT  
MEETINGS OF THE AUTHORITY

I have to announce that I have admitted a late item to the agenda and I ask Councillor Gruen to proceed.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Lord Mayor, thank you very much. I move the report in the terms of the notice.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Bentley?

COUNCILLOR BENTLEY: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. In that case I will call for a vote. Those in favour please show. Any against? No, that is CARRIED unanimously. Thank you indeed.

VOTE OF THANKS TO RETIRING LORD MAYOR

THE LORD MAYOR: I see here Vote of Thanks to Retiring Lord Mayor. I will ask Councillor Andrew Carter.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. Members may always wish that I speak briefly but I have never actually seen it printed on a paper before!

Anyway, it is my pleasure, Lord Mayor, to move a vote of thanks to you and the Lady Mayoress and, indeed, the Deputy Lord Mayor and Deputy Lady Mayoress for what has been an excellent year of office. As members will realise, I shall be speaking at more length, regrettably for them, a little later this evening, but I will make one or two comments now, particularly about the team aspect of the Mayoralty.

First of all, members will remember that much was said and made of the fact that the Lord Mayor has always been extremely keen on Britain in Bloom, Leeds in Bloom in particular, and matters relating to floral displays. I am therefore forced to

say that as a final engagement going to Chelsea was a blooming good way of going out of office! *(laughter)* I will try and get better!

My Lord Mayor, may I add my congratulations to yours to the Parks and Countryside team. Those of us who were able to visit Chelsea cannot help but to have been impressed by the craftsmanship and the professionalism of our Parks and Countryside staff who created the HESCO Leeds Garden and many people visited that garden and a number of them were from Leeds and the comments certainly when I was there – and I think that has been borne out by other members who were there – saying that we ought to have got gold, which was absolutely correct. Anyway, there is always another year.

I would like particularly to mention the fact that both the Lady Mayoress and the Deputy Lady Mayoress have not enjoyed the best of health through their year of office and I think we owe them a massive debt of gratitude for the way in which they have continued to undertake their duties, sometimes when they must have been feeling anywhere near at the top of their form, but that did not show and so I would like particularly to record my thanks to both Sheila and Pat for the amount of work that they have done over the year and I hope that they will both enjoy better health in the coming year.

Then to you, my Lord Mayor. Your excursions have been many and varied, only recently returning from Serbia but you have also been to Dortmund and to Brno and you have welcomed many visitors here, as is absolutely right for the First Citizen of Leeds, many people here from all over the world and I know they will have gone away with a better view of Leeds for having talked and met with you.

My Lord Mayor, I should also say that you appear to have made a number of friends during this Council year, not least some on the Labour benches *(applause)*. May I just remind you that you are back with the lads as from tomorrow! *(laughter)*

My Lord Mayor, nonetheless we are not an easy group of people to manage on any side of the Chamber and I do not envy anyone of any party the task of keeping us under control when we are at our very worst, which occasionally we are. Congratulations to you really from keeping a relatively calm demeanour throughout it all.

I shall personally look forward very much to you coming back because Joe and I have had to share all the work between us and we have been saving quite a number of things up for you and I am sure you will get straight back into it with your usual enthusiasm.

Let me conclude by saying I think we have had a splendid year. We have a lot to be proud of in this city, not least the traditions always carried through by our Lord Mayors and their Civic team. From all of us, thank you very much indeed and I will be happy to say a little more later. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor David Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. First of all I beg the Lord Mayor's indulgence. I would like to offer my congratulations to the new Leader of the Green Group, Ann Blackburn, who is the first female Leader of a Party in Leeds. *(applause)* She took over from me about eight minutes ago, so I do not know what life is going to be like for me now back at home!

Back to matters at hand. I take great pleasure in seconding this motion of thanks to the Lord Mayor Frank Robinson. I seconded him last year, twelve months

ago, when he put up for the office of Lord Mayor and I said then that Frank would be somebody who we would be proud of as having as our First Citizen and he has proved us right in that.

I think it is fair to say that in his dealings with Council, his Chairings of Council, he has been fair to all sides and has not been scared on the odd occasion of pulling is Leader and Ward colleague. He has done a wonderful job and I have got to say, at a time when politicians in a certain place – I am not saying here but in certain places – are not too popular, he shows that politicians in Local Government are made of the right stuff.

I am not going to go on long. Actually when we changed the method of how we are doing things tonight I was a bit upset because I thought I was not going to be able to say anything about Frank because obviously my Group never have gone to the dinner and we will not be, unfortunately, down at the Town Hall, but I am greatly gratified of having the opportunity to thank Frank for his efforts. You have been a great Lord Mayor and we welcome you back to the Area Committee in July because we have missed you! Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Parker.

COUNCILLOR PARKER: Thank you very much, Lord Mayor. On behalf of the Labour Group can I reiterate basically what Councillor Carter has said? You have been a tremendous Lord Mayor, you have been fully put to the test in this Chamber and, as I said at the onset of your year in office, me and you shared an interest in coal mining and I just wondered if you might have been better down a pit than some of the arguments that you had to deal with in this Chamber.

I did speak to you about a possible event being put on for the Grand Final winners, Leeds Rhinos, which you did and then you did suggest to me that they had not actually invited you to this Grand Final. I do not actually know if you got to that. Did you get to the Grand Final?

THE LORD MAYOR: At Old Trafford?

COUNCILLOR PARKER: Yes.

THE LORD MAYOR: Yes, I did. Yes, very good.

COUNCILLOR PARKER: I did not know, Frank, so I am really pleased that you got there. That is about the only bit of silverware the city has. Leeds United just failed at the last hurdle. I think the only bit of silverware is probably by Garforth Town; Councillor Murray you are the Chairman of the club and probably that is the only bit of silverware coming.

I would just like to close on thanking the Lord Mayor for a couple of appearances in Kippax. He came for the carnival, which was a windswept day. The main marquee went over the top of the pylons and it was cancelled but Frank put some time in with the people and they now consider you to be the second best Lord Mayor that has come out of Kippax! (*laughter*)

I understand you spent some time with royalty, the Countess of Wessex and other people and the sailors of the Ark Royal and many others. It says here that you gathered at a karaoke event.

THE LORD MAYOR: Chinese.

COUNCILLOR PARKER: It says karaoke on here and that with a name like Frank he might sing 'My Way'.

I finally close by saying it has been a great year, you have been a great Lord Mayor and I for one in my 23 years in this Chamber have never seen anybody at his last Council meeting get a standing ovation from all parties (*hear, hear*) and I think that says a lot. Thank you very much, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Townsley.

COUNCILLOR TOWNSLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Lord Mayor, honoured guests, ladies and gentlemen. On behalf of the Liberal Democrat Group it gives me great pleasure and honour to support the vote of thanks to the retiring Lord Mayor, Frank Robinson and his lovely wife, Sheila, not forgetting, of course, the support they received from Gerald Wilkinson and his Deputy Lady Mayoress.

You have done this city proud in the way that you have conducted yourselves and we appreciate that immensely.

Frank chaired the Council meetings fairly and with authority and when the occasion arose with humour, although I cannot remember many cases that he needed to use humour for. I thought that I was photographed in the press more than any previous Lord Mayor. I think he must have shares in the YEP because I think you have beaten me. You have worked hard for your charity, Andrea's Gift - I must admit, a little known charity and one that I had never heard of – and have brought it to the forefront by raising its profile. I do hope that you have managed to raise lots of cash for it.

It is now time for you and Sheila to take a well-earned rest and take at least some time to reflect on a wonderful year, so once again on behalf of the city, thank you. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Elliott.

COUNCILLOR ELLIOTT: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. On behalf of the Morley Borough Independents we also wish to formally record our thanks and we will speak further about this at the Town Hall. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. I do not know how I reply to all that but thank you indeed for all the very, very best wishes that you have expressed and I am pleased that I can say thank you to all my colleagues everywhere for your co-operation. Thank you. (*applause*)

#### ITEM 1 – ELECTION OF LORD MAYOR

THE LORD MAYOR: Right, we go along to the election of Lord Mayor and I ask Councillor Andrew Carter to speak.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. I am delighted to be able to move that Councillor Judith Elliott be elected as Lord Mayor of the City of Leeds to hold office until the date of the Annual Meeting of the Council in 2010.

I have known both Judith and Terry for a number of years so I was very happy to be able to move this motion. I feel I should, as is traditional, give some background to both Judith, Terry and their family.

They have been married for 46 years, are former pupils of Westerton Primary School and Morley Grammar School. They have a daughter and son, four grandchildren and, in addition, an extended family made up by three young Chinese people – Alan, Patrick and Wendy – to whom they acted as guides, mentors and guardians whilst they gained their education in this country.

As we all know, Judith represents Morley South ward on Leeds City Council. In her younger days she played competitive hockey and tennis and was for many years involved in coaching. Over the years both Judith and Terry have been involved in various business activities both in Morley, Leeds and elsewhere.

It is really for Judith's varied charity work, stretching back over very many years, that she is best known. She set up and chaired the Morley branch of the Save the Children Fund for 25 years and is still a member of that committee. She is involved with the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, receiving a Certificate of Recognition for her many years of service, in addition to supporting Dr Barnardo's as well as helping with Meals on Wheels for over 15 years.

Lord Mayor, you will be interested in this because Councillor Elliott took over as Chair of Morley in Bloom several years ago, a position which she still holds, so flower power will continue to reign. She also set up the Morley Murals Committee, whatever that may be – I have to say I have never heard of that before – which she has chaired since its inception in 2003 and, of course, is also a founder member of the Leeds/Bradford Royal Society of St George.

After the tsunami in Sri Lanka Judith was instrumental in setting up the Morley Thirukovil Charity which has raised in excess of a quarter of a million pounds to help that village which was badly hit by the disaster. She has served as the Deputy Chair of that committee since it was formed.

She has been an elected member of Morley Town Council since its formation in 2000 and she is still a member and was the Mayor of Morley in 2003/4.

When she joined Leeds City Council she became a Board Member of Aire Valley Homes and the Health Scrutiny Board, while at present she serves as a member of the Children's Advisory Panel and as a corporate carer. In addition, she is a member of the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee and a Director of the Craft and Design Gallery, also serving on the Scrutiny Board for Children's Services.

Judith has a wealth of experience in charitable work, social work, as well as in political activity and all those things associated with it. She will be ably assisted by her husband, Terry, who is a Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire and has been very actively involved with sporting events and different sorts of sports across the city as well as in Morley.

It is my great pleasure to move that Judith Elliott is our Lord Mayor for the forthcoming year. I so move. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: I call on Councillor Brett to second.

COUNCILLOR BRETT: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am delighted to be able to second on behalf of my party the motion in Councillor Carter's name that Judith Elliott be the Lord Mayor of Leeds.

I think it needs to be said that for a number of years in this Chamber, around ten per cent of the Councillors have been from parties which are not the three main parties – not from Conservatives, Labour or Liberal Democrat. I therefore think it is

fitting that someone who is not representing one of the three main parties is nominated for the position of first citizen of Leeds.

It is perhaps particularly fitting given what has happened in the last two weeks at national level where there has been a surge in support for what some of the press have described as “none of the above”, that all of us from the three main parties I am sure have thought long and hard about what has gone on and we cannot put our heads in the sand, it does affect us. I suspect that it is therefore doubly fitting that we have somebody from not one of the three main parties as our Lord Mayor.

Indeed, I venture to say that were we democratic enough to have an election today, the people of Leeds choosing between the two nominees that are before this meeting, I am very confident indeed that Councillor Elliott would have won such a vote.

I have to say I have some considerable personal sympathy with the position that Councillor Jim McKenna finds himself in. The phrase I think that Councillor Gruen’s motion uses is, “the historic conventions and agreements”. I have to say, as Jim knows because we have had this discussion, those words have indeed been broken before and Councillor Townsley knows exactly how you feel, Jim, because in 2000 and 2001 he was in a very similar position to then position you find yourself in.

I have prepared a number of things that I was going to say about Judith and Terry but the Leaders always go first and the Leader in this case has pinched many of the things that I was going to say. It does, despite everything that we have heard before, strike me that there is something of great importance that you and Terry have been married for 46 years and you have stayed in the place where you were born and that you have this large and growing family and I think particularly noteworthy is the extended family that briefly Andrew referred to – three young Chinese folk who you have acted as guides and mentors for while they were having their education in this country. I think that says something particularly noteworthy about you.

I am not sure whether Andrew mentioned Morley Literature Festival but the notes that I saw said that that was something which resulted from your inspiration and I think that again says a huge amount about you. It is absolutely clear to me from what has already been said that, Judith, you are someone with a huge record of contributing widely to improving people’s lives in Morley and it is my very great pleasure to second the motion which, if it is passed, as I hope it will be, will allow you to do that on a wider scale as the Lord Mayor of Leeds. I second the motion, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: I will call on Councillor Gruen to move the amendment.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Lord Mayor, I move the amendment in my name on behalf of the Labour Group. Let me start by saying that I do not believe the office of Lord Mayor is an irrelevance. It never has been. The office has demonstrated over the centuries, not just decades, that people in Leeds value the First Citizen. They support a politically neutral figurehead at the top of the Council. Indeed, if there is one thing that defines every Lord Mayoralty it is how that person becomes locked into all our communities, no matter which part of Leeds they belong to.

The presence of our Lord Mayor has made countless people’s lives happier. They have the power to be influential ambassadors for this city both in Leeds, regionally, nationally and, indeed, internationally. May previous Lord Mayors have spoken about putting the city on the map. Many have worked tirelessly to give prominence to our city and all have shown ingenuity, determination and passion for their challenges.

In summary, therefore, the point that I am making is that this is not some kind of sideshow. It is not something that was traditionally and should now be swept away by people with either little understanding or, indeed, affection for what the citizens of Leeds actually want.

Lord Mayor, no one single person could have lived up to these values, traditions and aspirations which we hold of the office, than yourself and your team. I am pleased my colleague, Keith Parker, has already paid tribute to you and I associate myself with his warm words of acknowledgement, praise and gratitude for all you have done.

I am sure you have had many memorable moments; I guess many outside of the meetings of this Council. However, for many of us the defining moment of this Lord Mayoralty was the exceptional ability of the Lord Mayor to put the ashes back into the volcano J L Carter. Any master of the ship would have been proud of the navigational skills exhibited.

So, Lord Mayor, why are we at the point that we are today? We think the reason is actually very straightforward. Like it or not, and accept it or not, there has been a convention which Councillor Brett has referred to within this Council about the retention of the Lord Mayoralty between the political groups for as long as I have been a member of Council. The convention has been changed and updated when the representative strengths of the groups on Council have changed significantly. For example, whilst in the early days the retention was principally between the Labour or the Conservative Groups, it was amended to include a Liberal (now Lib Dem) Lord Mayor when that was appropriate. No-one, to the best of my knowledge, ever took issue with the guidelines which, incidentally, applied even when the Labour Group represented about 90% - 90% - of Councillors at the time in this Chamber.

I can only remember one occasion – and Councillor Brett has referred to it – when the system broke down. Frankly, that was when the two then Opposition parties quarrelled between themselves as to who the nominee should be. In one corner we had Councillor Chris Townsley and in the other corner the late Councillor David Hudson. I have to tell you that the controlling Labour Group never interfered. It made no public statement. Most importantly, when both nominations were put to the meeting, it allowed every single Labour Group member a free vote. They could vote according to their personal preference and conscience and not in line with a Group, or in this case an Administration, whip.

Sadly, times have changed. We have not had the usual normal discussions through the channels of whips or Leaders. Indeed, we had no early sighting of any possible complications, which arrived one day when the Morley Borough Independents put down a White Paper saying their nominee would be Councillor Elliott for the coming year.

At that time – and I have kept the verbatim reports – we made it clear that we accepted the MBI should have a turn for the Lord Mayoralty, absolutely correct and no argument, and that the convention should be amended. We were surprised and disappointed that the administration decided to back this particular move.

Since then I have been told by a number of senior politicians in this Chamber that nobody spotted the complications arising from this vote. For them I am told the landscape of other issues simply did not ensure that this was followed through.

I do not want to speculate on why the vote went through and what happened since. What I do know is that it could have been prevented and it should have been



prevented. We have made every possible effort behind the scenes involving all Group Leaders and whips but to no avail. Tonight, therefore, we simply draw on our democratic right to express, I hope with dignity and respect at this meeting of Council, that we have put forward another nominee who we believe should have had his nomination acclaimed in the usual tradition by the whole of Council.

My seconder, Councillor Taggart, will elaborate on the reasons why we have nominated Councillor Jim McKenna. My part in this is to say that we are not opposed whatsoever to Councillor Judith Elliott as a person and as a representative of her Group. Indeed, after today's vote the Labour Group will draw a line and we will respect the elected Lord Mayor and I, as Chief Whip, will continue to give her the same support and courtesy I have given to you, Lord Mayor, and to previous Lord Mayors. For us, the matter is closed once the votes tonight are completed.

We are sorry that the methodology adopted and the lack of progress and what we perceive to be a lack of fairness has continued and we sincerely hope that it will be a single occasion and that wiser counsel will prevail behind the scenes once today is over and the new Lord Mayor starts their term of office.

With respect, I move the amendment. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: I call on Councillor Taggart to second.

COUNCILLOR TAGGART: Thanks very much, Lord Mayor. I am here to speak on behalf of Jim McKenna but I think our visitors today may not all be aware that every single words that is said at Leeds City Council is recorded and written down and published. I think we are probably the only Local Authority left in Britain that does this so we effectively have our own version of Hansard, and that is why I am going to have to start by taking issue slightly with something Councillor Brett said, because it is on the record and it does need to be corrected, because at that time Richard was not a Councillor.

We are going back to 2000/2001 and the debacle then. It is true, as Councillor Gruen has said, there was no public statement made by the Labour Group but there was a discussion inside the Labour Group at the time and I argued passionately that we should keep to the agreement that we had reached. By the mid-1990s both the Tories and Liberal Democrats were down to single figures on Council - at one point there were 82 members of the Labour Group – and a new agreement was reached between the political leaders at the time – that was John Trickett as Labour Leader and the other Leaders – was that there would be two Labour Lord Mayors followed by a Liberal Democrat, two labour Lord Mayors followed by a Conservative and so on, until the arithmetic changed.

In 2001/2 it was the turn of the Tory Party, not the Liberal Democrat Party, and I stood up inside the Labour Group and I argued passionately for sticking with the agreement. We did not issue a public statement and when the Annual Council Meeting took place, I actually proposed from the Labour Benches that David Hudson should be Lord Mayor because I thought we should stick by the agreement that we had reached.

Jim McKenna was elected in 1988 for Armley which, back in the 1980s had been written off by the Regional Labour Party as a hopeless seat because it had a long history of Liberal representation, but Jim took the seat from the Liberals and he has held it ever since and it is now one of the safest Labour seats in Leeds. In all these 21 years he has had a distinguished career on this Council.

He has served, for example, as Deputy Chair of the Under Eights Committee, he chaired one of the Housing sub-committees, he chaired Personnel Panel, he chaired various joint boards when we were fighting to keep jobs within Leeds City Council to stop them being privatised. He chaired Planning and Development Committee – a huge role – and Plans West Panel for six years. He has chaired three Scrutiny Boards. He has also represented the Council well on outside bodies – West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Authority, the Association of Metropolitan Authorities, Local Government Association and West Yorkshire Waste Management. Since 2004, of course, the Labour Party has been in opposition and Jim has shadowed Development, Jobs and Skills and Adult Services. He is also an extremely able and long-serving Chair of the Labour Group in Leeds.

I know he is an extremely popular figure, he is liked by people across the political spectrum and like, Councillor Gruen, we are sorry that it has come to a pass to move an amendment and I hope this is never repeated again but today's arrangements are not happening because the Labour Party wanted it. They are happening because the consensus that we have always had when it came to Lord Mayor has broken down, which is unfortunate.

Like Councillor Gruen I bear Councillor Elliott no ill will, I think she is a splendid person who has got many fine qualities. In particular she has got a big record of opposing and fighting racism which for somebody like me from my background is extremely important, so we particularly applaud that aspect of her life.

Anyway, there is Jim McKenna for you, a splendid man, would make an excellent Lord Mayor. Ladies and gentlemen, members of Council, thank you very much. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Finnigan.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor, and good evening to you and can I wish a very good evening to people who I affectionately call the Morley Mafia who are up at my left and up at my right – a very fine evening to them all.

We are obviously delighted – and I personally am honoured – to support a motion to make Judith Elliott the Lord Mayor of Leeds. It has been a decade, according to my investigations, since we have had a woman Lord Mayor in Leeds. That is far too long. We believe that it is a very positive step for the city of Leeds. We hope that in the future we will see more women in the role of Lord Mayor of Leeds.

We are absolutely delighted that we are nominating a woman to become the Lord Mayor of Leeds and a Morley woman at that, because Morley women are very strong and very focused individuals and I think that will be something that will be a real benefit to this particular post.

I am delighted to say that in Morley we elected our own Mayor last night. We elected another woman, Councillor Shirley Varley, who is up to my left this evening, and I am absolutely sure that she will do an excellent job as well.

What can we say about Judith? She is clearly charming, witty, hard working, pleasant, irritating, diplomatic, frustrating, political, caring, courageous, battling – have I mentioned she is irritating? (*laughter*) I probably have.

The big thing about Judith is her compassion and her humanity, and that shines through. We have a phrase that we use in Morley and it is the “poor little fish” phrase. It is what Judith refers to anybody who is in any sort of unfortunate

circumstances; that can be locally, that can be nationally, that can be internationally. Her compassion and her humanity shines through every time.

You have already heard about her work for Barnardo's. You have already heard about her work for Save the Children, Meals on Wheels, Cancer Research and the RNLI. Judith puts a lot of work into the RNLI, raises thousands of pounds and she was severely disappointed that we still do not have a lifeboat in Morley, but there we go! *(laughter)*

When we heard the tragic news about what had happened in Sri Lanka Judith was one of the founding members who came forward for the Morley Thirukovil campaign. As you have already heard, it raised over a quarter of a million pounds to aid and assist that community.

This is a community that is deep in Tamil territory and the work and effort and energy that has been put into that and the money raised is sorely needed, taking into account what has happened there over the last few years.

She is the Treasurer that is behind, along with a lot of other people in Morley, the great St George's Day Parade. The Morley Literacy Festival was, indeed, her idea. The Morley Murals Committee is one that she chairs and they have not only produced two fabulous statues that grace the front of Morley Town Hall; they are already working very hard for a new statue to commemorate Ernie Wise and his relationship to Morley.

There is no doubt that Judith is well liked and well loved in Morley. Indeed the Morley Observer yesterday referred to her as "Our Judith" and that is what we think she will bring to this particular role in Leeds. All those communities across Leeds hopefully in a year's time will be referring to Judith as "Our Judith", someone who has compassion, who has real humanity and can bring communities together. That is why we think that we are fully supporting her in the role of Lord Mayor of Leeds.

If I had a little bit more time we could explore the flea jumble sale story *(laughter)* but unfortunately that is not something we are going to be able to do tonight, or even the snowman story. Again, that is possibly libellous and possibly illegal! Without anything more, Lord Mayor, we fully support this resolution. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: I call on Councillor Carter to sum up.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. I want to begin by actually thanking the mover and seconder of the amendment for the measured tones that they used in their amendment. I do not agree with the content and I will come to that in a moment, but at least the debate has taken place in what I regard as a civilised form.

The argument as to whether the debate should be taking place in any event is another matter and I have to say to Councillor Gruen, if you want to invoke history in connection with the Lord Mayor, you cannot identify the point at which you believe history begins, which is indeed what you did.

I want to take you back to the 1960s in this city. We can go back three centuries if you want to but we will just stick with the 1960s when the Labour Group on this Council was reduced to penny numbers. They continued to have alternate Lord Mayors throughout the years when they were reduced to seven or eight members. They continued to have alternate Lord Mayors and they were given a

bigger share of the aldermanic bench than the share out actually entitled them to because of the conventions.

However, when the boot is on the other foot there was no discussion, Councillor Gruen, and I was there and you were not, about how it was changed. Your then Leader asked to see me and asked to see the Leader of the Liberal Democrats at the time and said, "My Group have decided there are now so many of us we are going to take the Lord Mayoralty for the foreseeable future" and that is what you did, I think, for four or else five consecutive years.

COUNCILLOR TAGGART: Rubbish.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Well, certainly a number of years.

COUNCILLOR TAGGART: Three.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: It did not alternate. I am not going to argue with you, Councillor Taggart. I am not going to argue with you – for a number of years. Therefore, we will accept no lectures about conventions.

I accept entirely that you are aggrieved - it is your right to be aggrieved – but can I point out to you that you have known for eleven months what was going to happen today. When your Leader came to see me in June of last year and made it quite clear that you were unhappy about what had been passed in Council, I suggested strongly that your Group talked to the Morley Borough Independents. A resolution had been passed by this Council which we intended to adhere to, but if you had been able to come to an arrangement then as far as I was concerned – and I think as far as anybody else over here was concerned – that arrangement could have been altered.

What I would also say to you – and I have no objection at all to Councillor McKenna and ultimately I am sure he will make an excellent Lord Mayor of the City of Leeds. You could, if no agreement had been reached, have come to a Council meeting some time in the last eleven months and tabled a resolution without nominating an individual other person and thereby causing that person undoubted embarrassment, and we could have had a debate and come to another conclusion, or reached the same conclusion. You had eleven months in which to do that but no, I think you were determined to come to this meeting on this day to make the point. If that is the case then you have done what you wanted to do.

We must move on from here and, quite honestly, we do have to talk following this, we have to discuss how to go forward in the coming years but again I have to say that Councillor Taggart – and I thank you for this – clarified the situation over what happened in the year 2002 and it certainly was my recollection of what happened, but Councillor Harris and myself at the time had a disagreement and our Groups did, but the contrast again was this – we brought it to this Chamber not on the Annual Meeting of Council but at a time when it could be argued out without, as they say, hanging out your dirty washing in public. It was done not at the AGM of Council but at a time previous to that because that was what we agreed was the best way to do it to save embarrassment to whoever was going to be Lord Mayor.

Let me just now very quickly refer to why Councillor Brett and I in discussion with the whips have altered the way the Order Paper today has been set. It has been made very clear to us by prominent people who carry esteem and respect in this city that comments have been made to them about what was going to happen here today and one person said – not just to me but to others – "there will be blood on the Council Chamber floor." Quite frankly our view was – don't look round like that, that

is what was said and nobody accused you either, Councillor Gruen – quite frankly, as Councillor Brett rightly said, at a time when politics and politicians are quite frankly somewhere way below any other profession I can think of, to risk that sort of debate in front of people we have invited as our guests is unacceptable. It is all right Labour members shaking their heads. If they do not believe me, they can talk to me privately or the Chief Executive and we can clear it up for them. So, my Lord Mayor, we took the view that we were not prepared to see our city subjected to that sort of publicity.

I want to conclude on a more positive note. I have already said that we will have talks and are happy to have talks about how we progress from here and certainly as far as we are concerned – and I am sure I speak for the Liberal Democrats as well as the Conservatives – we have no political objection to Councillor McKenna whatever and are sorry that he finds himself in this position, but we are sure that Councillor Judith Elliott will make an excellent Lord Mayor of this city. I am delighted to hear that all parties will show her the respect that is common to all Lord Mayors and help her and support her through her year of office and I look forward to Judith and Terry and their deputies having a very successful year indeed and I look forward to working with them. Thank you very much, my Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Now we come to the vote on the amendment. I am looking for any call for recorded.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: No, just a vote.

THE LORD MAYOR: On a show of hands, then. A show of hands, then, I ask you to vote on the amendment of Councillor Gruen. Those in favour please show. Those against? The amendment is LOST.

I come to the main motion.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Can we have a recorded vote please, Lord Mayor?

THE LORD MAYOR: Is it seconded?

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: In the interest of the peace that seems to have broken out we will remove our request for a recorded vote, although we would point out that it is not about you guys; it is about somebody else in this Chamber.

THE LORD MAYOR: I have not yet got a seconder. He has withdrawn it, sorry. We will vote for the main motion. Those in favour please show. Thank you. Those against? Any abstentions? None. Right, the motion, then, is CARRIED.

I will now announce a brief adjournment and we shall resume in a few minutes' time. Thank you for your attendance.

The Sergeant at Mace escorted the outgoing and newly elected Lord Mayors from the Chamber

*(Council adjourned for a short time)*

*(In the Chair – the Lord Mayor, Councillor Judith Elliott)*

## ITEM 2 – DEPUTY LORD MAYOR

THE LORD MAYOR: I am going to go straight on to the Agenda now and we are on to Item 2 of the Agenda, page 3. I call on Andrew Carter, please.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor, and may I be the first to congratulate you on your new office. I am happy to move that Councillor A Barker be appointed Deputy Lord Mayor of the City of Leeds to hold office until the date of the Annual Meeting of the Council in 2010.

THE LORD MAYOR: I would now like to call on Sue Bentley to second.

COUNCILLOR BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would also like to offer my congratulations and I second the motion.

THE LORD MAYOR: We now will go into the vote. Those in favour? Those against? Any abstentions? Thank you, the motion is CARRIED so we have Councillor Andrew Barker will be Deputy Lord Mayor of Leeds for the coming year. *(applause)*

I would like at this point to say thank you for Councillor Barker for coming forward to be Deputy Lord Mayor. Thank you very much indeed and I hope that you and Diane, your wife, have a lovely year and we will work well together. Thank you.

### ITEM 3 – MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 22<sup>nd</sup> APRIL 2009

THE LORD MAYOR: Item number 3 on the Agenda. I call on Councillor Bentley.

COUNCILLOR BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I move in terms of the Order Paper.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gruen?

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: We will now go into a vote. Those in favour? Those against? Any abstentions? That is CARRIED. Thank you.

### ITEM 4 - ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 4 on the Agenda, Announcements. There are no announcements.

### ITEM 5 – ELECTION OF LEADER

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 5 on the agenda, the Election of Leader. I call on Councillor Sue Bentley.

COUNCILLOR BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I move that Councillor Brett be elected as Leader for the period 21<sup>st</sup> May 2009 to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2009 and Councillor Andrew Carter for the period commencing December 2009 to the Annual Meeting in 2010.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. I call on Councillor John Procter to second.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I would like to call for a vote on the motion. Those in favour? Those against? Any abstentions? That is CARRIED. Thank you.

ITEM 6 – RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE  
GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 6 on the Agenda Paper, Recommendations of General Purposes Committee. I call on Councillor Andrew Carter.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: I move in terms of the Notice, my Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Peter Gruen to second.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: I was getting worried that I second that but I will second it nevertheless.

THE LORD MAYOR: Right. I call for a vote then. All those in favour? Those against? Any abstentions? That is CARRIED.

ITEM 7(a) – ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMITTEES AND  
APPROPRIATE TERMS OF REFERENCE

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 7(a), Establishment of Committees and Appropriate Terms of Reference. I call on Councillor Sue Bentley.

COUNCILLOR BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I move in terms of the Order Paper.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Peter Gruen?

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: We go into a vote. All those in favour? All those against? Any abstentions? This is CARRIED.

ITEM 7(b) – APPOINTMENTS TO STANDARDS COMMITTEE

THE LORD MAYOR: (b) – Appointments to Standards Committee. I call on Councillor Sue Bentley.

COUNCILLOR BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I move in terms of the Order Paper.

THE LORD MAYOR: I now call on Councillor Gruen.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Smooth running, Lord Mayor, I second.

THE LORD MAYOR: We go into the vote. All those in favour? Those against? Any abstentions? This is CARRIED.

ITEM 7(c)(i) – MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES/BOARDS/PANELS

THE LORD MAYOR: 7(c). I now call again on Councillor Bentley.

COUNCILLOR BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I move in terms of the Order Paper.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gruen?

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: No, it is not me.

THE LORD MAYOR: It is on this paper, Councillor Gruen.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Sorry? Are we on 7(b)?

THE LORD MAYOR: 7(c)(i).

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: In that case, of course I will second it.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Therefore we now go into the vote. All those in favour? Those against? Any abstentions? This is CARRIED.

#### ITEM 7(c)(ii) – MEMBERSHIP OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now on to number 7(c)(ii), Membership of the Standards Committee. Councillor Bentley?

COUNCILLOR BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I move in terms of the Order Paper.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gruen?

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: All those in favour? Those against? Any abstentions? This is CARRIED.

#### ITEM 7(d) – APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRS

THE LORD MAYOR: 7(d), Appointment of Chairs. Councillor Bentley?

COUNCILLOR BENTLEY: I move in terms of the Order Paper, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Procter?

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Driver to comment.

COUNCILLOR DRIVER: Lord Mayor, before we complete the process of appointing the Chairs to the Committees for the coming year, I would like the opportunity to comment on behalf of members who sit on this side of the Chamber on one particular appointment, namely the Chair of Corporate Governance and Audit.

Before I do that, can I make it clear that this is not a personal criticism of the current holder of the Chair, Councillor Bale. Over the past couple of years while I have been a member of the committee he has done an excellent job and there are very many ways in which I would want to say he has had my vote on many matters in the business of the committee; nor is this a party political advantage job although, as we are in opposition over here, at least for a short time longer (*laughter*)...



COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Before you vanish altogether, you mean?

COUNCILLOR DRIVER: Those opposite may choose to see it as such. I dare to prophesy that in times to come they may think differently to the way they may now to what I have to say.

The comment I am making is essentially to suggest that the member appointed to chair the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee should be chosen from among the members of the Opposition on the Council rather than from the ruling party or parties as at present a practice which has prevailed since the new committee system was instituted about ten years ago.

Why do I say this? It is because both in terms of governance and finance the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee is the main critical instrument by which the Council monitors its ongoing legal, democratic and financial probity. The person who chairs that committee needs to be as unconstrained as possible by political loyalties to those who already have the power to make decisions and, for that reason, we believe, should not be a member of the controlling group or coalition.

If this Council is to meet the highest legal, democratic and financial standards – standards to which I am sure we are all committed – then I put it to you that as a body we can all benefit from having at the helm of this most important committee someone who is as unlikely as possible to be at risk of bias towards the ruling party which may be all too ready in some circumstances to divert attention away from the key problems and challenges which could be facing the Council.

That is why I and my colleagues would argue that the constructive exercise of such a role could best, therefore, be carried out by someone who is a member of the Opposition. A move in the direction I have outlined can possibly be made at a future Council AGM if not before and would, I believe, demonstrate this Council's commitment to greater transparency and openness in the conduct of its business.

Failure to accept this challenge could, of course, be interpreted by the Council's critics as condoning unnecessary secrecy and subterfuge in the crucial and essential matters of concern to the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee. That need not be so.

Lord Mayor, I hope these comments can be noted at this stage and brought back to this Council at a suitable opportunity so that we are able to make the best appointment possible when next we meet to appoint the Chairs of Council Committees including, of course, the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: I now call on Councillor Bentley once again.

COUNCILLOR BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I note your comments, Councillor Driver.

THE LORD MAYOR: We will now go into the vote. "That Chairs be appointed to those Committees as detailed in Schedule 7(d)." Does that clear things? We will go back to the vote. Those for? Those against? Any abstentions? This is CARRIED.

#### ITEM 7(e) – APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: 7(e), Appointments to Outside Organisations.  
Councillor Bentley?

COUNCILLOR BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I move in terms of the Order Paper.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gruen?

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I call for the vote. Those in favour? Those against? Any abstentions? CARRIED.

#### ITEM 8 – SCHEME OF DELEGATION

THE LORD MAYOR: Number 8, Scheme of Delegation. Councillor Bentley?

COUNCILLOR BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I move in terms of the Order Paper.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gruen?

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I call for the vote. Those in favour? Those against? Any abstentions? This is CARRIED.

#### ITEM 9 – PROPOSED CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

THE LORD MAYOR: Item Number 9, Proposed Calendar of Meetings.

COUNCILLOR BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I move in terms of the Order Paper.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gruen?

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I call for the vote. Those in favour? Those against? Any abstentions? This is CARRIED.

#### ITEM 10 – EXECUTIVE ARRANGEMENTS

THE LORD MAYOR: Item number 10, Executive Arrangements. Councillor Bentley?

COUNCILLOR BENTLEY: For the last time, I move in terms of the Order Paper, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gruen?

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: I will second.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. I call for the vote. Those in favour? Those against? Any abstentions? This is CARRIED.

THE LORD MAYOR: This is the close of business for today and those people who are going will now progress to the Town Hall. Thank you very much for your attention. (*applause*)

*(The meeting closed at 7.07 pm)*

-----