

LEEDS CITY COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Held on

Wednesday, 20th January 2010

At

THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
CIVIC HALL, LEEDS

In the Chair:

THE LORD MAYOR
(Councillor J Elliott)

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VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF LEEDS CITY COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 20th JANUARY 2010

THE LORD MAYOR: May I say welcome to everyone today on the first meeting in the New Year of 2010 and wish everybody a happy and healthy New Year.

May I ask that all mobile telephones and other electrical equipment be switched off when Council is in session?

I have some announcements today. I regret to announce the death of Honorary Alderman Frank Stringer, member of the Leeds County Borough Council from 1972 to 1974 and Leeds City Council from 1974 to 1988 together with former Councillor Brian Sanderson, who represented the City of Holbeck, their ward, during the 1980s.

As you are all aware, Councillor Kabeer Hussain, member for Hyde Park and Woodhouse, died on 29th December 2009. The Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor Andrew Barker, attended Councillor Hussain's funeral on December 30th. As it is not possible for Kabeer's family to be with us today, I would like to suggest that we reserve our tributes until they can be with us at a future meeting, when we will also have arranged to have his name included in the Roll of Honour here in the Council Chamber.

I call upon all colleagues to stand now please for a silent tribute to our former colleagues.

(Silent tribute)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you.

We have all been shocked and saddened by the scenes of suffering and devastation following last week's earthquake in Haiti. I realise that many of you have expressed the wish to offer support to help the victims of this tragedy and wish to advise that collecting buckets will be available in the Banquet Hall during our tea break.

On a happier note, I am delighted to announce that Councillor Jim McKenna has been selected as Lord Mayor Elect for the year 2010 to 2011. *(Applause)* Jim will be ably assisted by his wife Andrea *(Applause)* as Lady Mayoress and I am sure I am correct in saying that this is the first time two Councillors have undertaken these roles, so that is a first and congratulations on that alone. I am sure we should all like to offer our congratulations and good wishes for an enjoyable and successful year in office. *(hear, hear)*

ITEM 1 – MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 18th NOVEMBER 2009

THE LORD MAYOR: We come on to the agenda now. Item 1. I call on Councillor Bentley, please.

COUNCILLOR BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I move that the Minutes be approved.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I call for the vote, please. *(A vote was taken)* This is PASSED.

ITEM 2 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

THE LORD MAYOR: Number 2, the Declarations of Interest. I announce that the list of written declarations submitted by Members is on display in the ante-room, on deposit in public galleries and has been circulated to each Member's place in the Chamber.

I would invite any further individual declarations or corrections to those notified on the list.

COUNCILLOR HARINGTON: Lord Mayor, with reference to Item 10, Director of Green Leeds and Member of Greenpeace. I am sorry, Friends of the Earth.

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: It is not really a declaration because I have already made a declaration. It is to do with the Leeds Girls' High School. The Chief Legal Officer has circulated some information to the Whips this morning which I think may not have reached others.

THE LORD MAYOR: No. I will pass you over to Miss Jackson.

THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE (Corporate Governance): Following further discussions I think that I will give on advice when we actually reach that White Paper motion.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Bentley?

COUNCILLOR BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am also a Director of Green Leeds.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Anyone else? Then I would invite Members by a show of hands to confirm that they have read the list, or the list as amended, and agreed its contents insofar as they relate to their own interest. May I have a show of hands, please? (*Show of hands*) Thank you.

I will hand you over now to the Chief Executive for Item 3.

ITEM 3 – COMMUNICATIONS

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: There are not communications to report, Lord Mayor.

ITEM 4 – DEPUTATIONS

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: There are four deputations as detailed on the Order Paper this afternoon. The deputations include pupils of Brigshaw High School, Tenants of Bawn Estate – there are only three, is the latest information. That is pupils of Brigshaw High School, residents of Moorland Road, Bramhope, and Young People from Miles Hill Estate.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. I call on Councillor Bentley to move that all the deputations be received.

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

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Could we have a show of hands, please? (A vote was taken) This is CARRIED.

DEPUTATION ONE
Pupils of Brigshaw High School
Mayor for the Day

THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon and welcome to today's Charlotte Annakin. I would like to say here that Charlotte and I have met before and we were very pleased when she won the Mayor for a Day. We went off to the switching on of the lights, which was a wonderful event, and Charlotte actually spoke then to the people present, which I understand amounted to about 40,000, so you have nothing to worry about this afternoon, Charlotte!

We are pleased to have you here. Congratulations once again and we would like to hear what you have to say.

CHARLOTTE ANNAKIN: If I was running Leeds for a day I would say 'You don't have to spend a fortune to improve life for a lot of people.' Who would not be in favour of that? Talking about spending - spend a day in a wheelchair and find out how difficult and frustrating your life can be.

Annoyingly, for the most part, it's not the big things that cause the problems; it's the small things which are easily fixed. The wheelchair experience is a real sensitiser. We take so much for granted, not realising that these small things can bring you to a standstill – literally.

Getting into the city is free - a great start but not all of the buses have access. Drive in and you can have major problems with parking. It is so annoying when clearly marked disabled spaces are taken by perfectly fit people who have much more provision but cannot be bothered to walk.

On the path you find uneven paving, so it's a bumpy ride and some litter can be particularly unpleasant when your wheels and hands are the way you get about. Imagine encountering broken glass, chewing gum and even animal waste. It is bad enough when we get it on our shoe.

Get to the shops and many of them have a small step or threshold. One small step for man can be a giant leap for a wheelchair. Only the bigger shops have automatic doors so it is a nightmare if you're on your own; you have to rely on an increasingly 'in a hurry' society.

Once in the shops and restaurants it can be difficult to navigate the tables and aisles. Floor space is expensive; racks are put close together and become a jungle of tee-shirts and trousers. Then, where are the disabled changing rooms and how difficult will it be to pay?

There are so many small changes that would make a massive difference. SO that is the moan, but what is the solution?

The people who have the problems can advise on the solutions. Don't presume - give them the voice and empower them to make the changes by listening and acting. After the wheelchair experience, I would be suggesting:

To create a wheelchair experience area in Briggate entitled 'How would you like it?'

Ramp all steps into public buildings

Create remote control access to parking spaces

Ask shops to create space for browsing and make space around the tables particularly where there is fixed seating. Advise them on the average width of a chair

Extend the time at crossing

A massive awareness campaign involving local TV and radio to kick start the process. They would publicly award those who make an effort and for those who ignore it - why? Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you very much, Charlotte. Councillor Bentley?

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

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: I am very happy to second.

THE LORD MAYOR: Could we have a show of hands, please? (*A vote was taken*) This is CARRIED.

Thank you for attending today, Charlotte, and for what you have said. You will be kept informed of the consideration which your comments will receive. Good afternoon and well done. (*Applause*)

DEPUTATION TWO

Moorland Road Residents, Bramhope

THE LORD MAYOR: We now have the Moorland Road residents regrading the speed limit in Moorland Road, Bramhope.

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 please begin by introducing the people in your deputation.

MR M KINGSTON: Thank you. My Lord Mayor and fellow Councillors, good afternoon. My name is Mark Kingston and these are my colleagues, Mike Reilly, Veronica Kirwin, Sarah Kingston, my wife, and Lindsey Boshier.

As you may have seen on local press, radio and TV, we are campaigning for a reduction in the speed limit from 60 miles an our to 30 miles an hour on the street where we live.

Moorland Road is a small country lane on the edge of the village of Bramhope village. It is single track, it has no pavements and it has two blind bends along its roughly a mile length. At the southern end is a small community of round about 20 homes, which includes 13 children of ten or under who obviously like to run and play and move between each other's houses. There are further houses dotted along the road and at the north end is the Bramhope Scouts campsite. This is due to be upgraded to a County site this year, with greater numbers of scouts visiting most weekends of the year. The lane in between is used by villagers and residents alike for walking, jogging, horse riding, as well as the scouts using it on a regular basis on

the weekends. It should be an absolutely idyllic place, looking out over open countryside, and it would be if not for the fact that cars can legally speed down it at speeds of up to 60 mph. It is completely crazy, but that is the case.

The situation has been made worse recently in that local roads have been reclassified down to 30 mph. This has led to the road becoming a rat run for drivers who are in a hurry. They know that they can travel at those excessive speeds without being censored for it. All of us know of residents locally who have had to dive into hedges to avoid being mown down, there are several cars who have ended up in ditches, one of the local children was knocked off his bike. It is only a matter of time before somebody gets really seriously injured or killed. At less than 30 mph they have a chance; at 40, 50 mph, which they are legally allowed to do at the moment, we all know they have got very little chance at all.

We have been campaigning for around about five years actively, lately with a great deal of help from Greg Mulholland, our MP, and Councillor Barry Anderson has also been a big help. Both of them have been very supportive and realise the seriousness of the situation. We also have the support of local police who agree that the limit is wrong but cannot currently censor drivers, even if they are travelling at 50 mph plus, because they are well within the legal limit for the road. They agree that the situation is farcical and that it needs to be changed.

The Highways Department have repeatedly refused to lower the limit and they have given several reasons for that. Firstly, in terms of speed, they measured the speed and they said that the average was 30 mph. For a start, we know that they measured the speed just before one of the blind bends where drivers do slow down to some extent, so obviously that would have been at a lower speed. The locals drive much, much slower than the 30 mph limit so by logic there are many drivers who drive much, much faster than this and it only takes one car travelling at that legal limit of up to 60 mph to kill or injure, seriously injure one of us.

The second reason they have given is one of cost, with an initial estimate given of £6,400 to change the limit for the road, but again what price do you put on the life of a child or one of us?

This decision was made even more laughable to my mind when the following day after getting this letter we received another one from a different part of the Council saying that they had found a spare £20,000 and were going to resurface what we considered to be our already very serviceable road, thus making it even faster. They were happy to make it faster but could not address our concerns at a quarter of that price.

Thankfully at last we have made some progress. Two days ago the Highways Department agreed to reduce the limit to 30 mph but only outside the houses at the southern end of the road – a stretch of about 200m. They costed this as £5,800 as opposed to £6,300 for the full length of the road – a minimal saving of £600. That is because the vast majority of that change is made up of legal costs.

Whilst we are delighted at this process, surely we can afford an extra £600 to protect all the recreational users and the scouts who use it on a regular basis and, more to the point, to remove that temptation for drivers to use the road as a legal rat run. Moorland Road needs to be 30 mph along its full length.

We urge you to end the lunacy of this situation and to help make all of Moorland Road a safer place for all of us. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Bentley?

COUNCILLOR BENTLEY: I move that the matter be referred to the Executive Board for consideration.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: I second, looked after children.

THE LORD MAYOR: Could I call for a vote on that? (*A vote was taken*) Thank you very much. Thank you for attending and we shall keep you informed of the consideration which your comments will receive at the appropriate Executive Board meeting. Thank you very much for coming and good afternoon. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Might I, whilst we are waiting for the next deputation, just tell everyone that you may have seen someone filming Charlotte Annakin earlier. This was from our own press office and it was regarding the Mayor for a Day which was held in Local Democracy Week.

DEPUTATION THREE
Young People from Miles Hill Estate

THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon. We have some young people from Miles Hill estate requesting traffic calming measures on the estate. We are very pleased to have you here this afternoon, we have already said "Hello", have we not, so it is nice that you are here.

I would like you to make your speech to the Council which should be no longer than five minutes and would you begin, please, by introducing your deputation?

MEGAN HANAKIN: My Lord Mayor and fellow Councillors, good afternoon. My name is Megan.

JODIE LEWIS: My name is Jodie.

BECKY McCONNELL: My name is Becky.

MEGAN HANAKIN: We all live on the Miles Hill estate. First of all I would like to say thank you to all you Councillors for allowing us to come along today to put our case forward to you, and also a special thanks to Councillor Jane Dowson for her support.

JODIE LEWIS: All of us live on the Miles Hill estate in Leeds and we have one particular problem that is very bad in the morning between 7.00am and 9.00am. Traffic cuts through from Stainbeck Lane, along Miles Hill Road, on to Miles Hill View, then on to Potter Newton Lane. Miles Hill View is a narrow street full of families with young children with a range of ages. There is also a lot of parked cars. Between 8.00 am and 9.00 am a lot of cars cut through our street on to Scotthall road. At this time parents will be taking their children to nursery or school and some may even walk themselves.

BECKY McCONNELL: We have previously, with the help of our local neighbourhood policing team organised spreadsheets surveys, which are available if needed. A lot of these cars go faster than 40 mph. Our parents have tried to calm down the traffic with petitions but this has been ignored. We have made, with the assistance of youth services, stick on messages to put on wheelie bins to give a message to drivers. An example of some of these could be:

- 1) Kill your speed not a child
- 2) Look twice for motorbikes
- 3) Stop, look, listen and think

MEGAN HANAKIN: Since we have been trying to get traffic to calm down, Miles Hill Road has had speed bumps made and this will allow traffic to slow down, but then it all speeds back up on Miles Hill View and Street. We are asking you to install bumps on to Miles Hill View and Street and hopefully this will reduce the speed and make our streets a better and safer place to walk.

JODIE LEWIS: Thank you for listening to us. We hope you can help us with this problem and make our street safer for everyone. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Bentley.

COUNCILLOR BENTLEY: I move that the matter be referred for consideration to the Executive Board.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Could I have a show of hands, please? (*A vote was taken*) Thank you very much, this is CARRIED. Thank you very much, girls for coming here this afternoon and congratulations in the way that you have presented your case. You did very well indeed. You will be kept informed of the considerations which your comments will receive, so good afternoon and thank you very much for coming.

ITEM 5 – REPORTS

THE LORD MAYOR: We come now to number 5 on the Agenda. I call on Councillor Bentley.

(a)

THE LORD MAYOR: I call on Councillor Bentley.

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

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Could I have a vote on this please? (*A vote was taken*) This is CARRIED.

(b)

THE LORD MAYOR: 5(b) on the Agenda, Councillor Andrew Carter.

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

COUNCILLOR BENTLEY: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Could we have a vote on this, please? (*A vote was taken*) This is CARRIED.

ITEM 6 - QUESTIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: We come to Item 6, Questions, and I call on Councillor James Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Would the Executive Board Member for Environmental Services please outline how much waste was diverted to landfill during the recent industrial action of bin workers and street cleaners in the city?

COUNCILLOR MONAGHAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. The total amount of waste that went to landfill between the beginning of September 2009 and the end of November 2009 was 47,232 tonnes. This is 5,935 tonnes less than the same period last year. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Supplementary question?

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to ask a supplementary in two parts. First of all, does Councillor Monaghan join with the other Members of the administration who are applauding the fact that industrial action caused so much disruption to this city, which I believe Member of the administration have just been doing because they do seem to find it a big joke that people were not having their bins emptied.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Can you also say how many uses for a chocolate teapot?

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: If I may ask the second part of the supplementary, can Councillor Monaghan outline what impact was made to the recycling rate in the city – not that rate of going to the landfill site but to the recycling rate in the city, particularly in his own ward of Headingley, which is one of the worst performing areas in the city.

COUNCILLOR MONAGHAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am afraid I cannot answer what the recycling rate in Headingley is. If you had asked that in the first part of your question I would have been able to get the figures and answer that. However, I can let you know that the predictive cumulative recycling amount for the year is still down to be 31.26% for the city and additional information - because in spite of the supplementary you would probably like it anyway – just to let you know that actually the total cost for the strike action, including disposal costs and communication costs, is now £38,000.

However, what I would like to supplement that with is to say that the settlement we reached at the end of the strike will actually save this Council £2m a year. *(Applause)* This administration has already put together a recycling improvement plan, which I am sure we will probably come on to later on in the Minutes, that will affect how that money will go back into improving the service to make sure that recycling is easier for people across the city and make sure that everyone has access to a recycling service and the garden waste collection where they do not have one at the moment and can have one. It is a priority of ours to tackle areas such as Headingley and those other areas across the city that have difficult issues with recycling to make sure that they recycle as much as possible and it is as easy for the people who live there as possible to recycle.

I would also just like to say following on from the end of the strike we are now working with good relations with the unions and we have seconded two shop

stewards to work with us in route rationalising the refuse routes across the city and we have already rationalised Saturday routes, we have rationalised eight routes down to four and those four extra routes are now providing an extra service for people in Leeds.

I want to reiterate that this administration will always be clear and transparent with any cost-related industrial dispute and any effect on recycling figures.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: I would like an answer to the question and not your answer to *(interruption)*

THE LORD MAYOR: No, finished, sorry. Sit down. Question 2, Councillor David Hollingsworth.

COUNCILLOR HOLLINGSWORTH: Would the Executive Board Member for Children's Services care to comment on the OFSTED comments regarding Looked-after Children? *(Interruption)*

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: I hope that is not going to set the tone for the rest of the afternoon, Lord Mayor.

Lord Mayor, Members who take an interest in this matter will note that in July 2008 there was an inspection of our services for fostering and adoption agencies which was judged as inadequate for the city and we were very disappointed to get that scoring. They will also recall that twelve months later there was a re-inspection and we have been able to take that score up to "adequate", which was pleasing but not where we wanted to be.

I thought it was worth bringing to Members' attention the recent announced OFSTED inspection which was primarily centred on safeguarding and outcomes for looked-after children where the improvement that had been made in that re-inspection in July has been confirmed as being a sustained improvement for looked-after children.

We do note, however, Lord Mayor, that there are still a couple of areas that are identified within the looked-after children's report where we are still judged as "inadequate" – primarily around the areas of case loads of social workers and, of course, the difficulties that we have with recording on our electronic system. I will refer to those later on in the afternoon, Lord Mayor, in the major debate.

What I did want to take the opportunity for today, though, Lord Mayor, is to note those areas where we have improved our performance...

COUNCILLOR TAGGART: Eleven "inadequate".

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: ...for instance, in areas including being healthy, enjoying and achieving, ambition and prioritisation, partnerships and, perhaps most gratifyingly, in the area of equality and diversity since narrowing the gap between the achievements of our looked-after children and the wider cohort of children in the city is our priority.

I will quote from a section of the report, Lord Mayor. As I said, talking about leadership and management:

“Ambition and prioritisation are good with firm commitment from elected Members and frontline staff to improve outcomes for looked-after children and care leavers. There is a strong focus on narrowing the gap between this group of young people and young people across Leeds and the national average. The vision of priorities for looked-after children are clearly articulated in a range of strategic plans and link clearly to the top priority within the Children and Young People’s Plan. This commitment has translated...”

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Why don’t you save it for the White Paper?

COUNCILLOR GOLTON:

“... into some improved outcomes for looked-after children, for example in improving their achievements in educational outcomes and improving healthy outcomes.”

The reason why I am quoting that, Councillor Wakefield, is because it points to a lot of work that has been done...

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Press are here.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: ...by Council officers and, more importantly...

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: What about the children you are failing? You don’t mention them.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: ...Lord Mayor, that those priorities are put in place through co-operative work with the corporate carers body. It makes direct reference to the commitment that those elected Members have made to the outcomes of looked-after children and it also points at their work, for instance with Alun Rees, to ensure that the initiatives made in the educational attainment of our looked-after children is bearing fruit now. I wanted to take that opportunity, Lord Mayor, to thank those corporate carers for their sustained interest throughout that period to achieve that improvement. *(Applause)*

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Total abuse of question time.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Total abuse.

THE LORD MAYOR: I now call on Councillor Lobley. I am sorry, did you have a supplementary, Councillor Hollingsworth?

COUNCILLOR HOLLINGSWORTH: No.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: I cannot think of one.

THE LORD MAYOR: Sorry about that. Councillor Lobley.

COUNCILLOR LOBLEY: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. Would the Leader of Council care to comment on the government decision to stop the Regional Development Agency from funding the full £18m agreed in the Council’s geographic allocation for the Leeds Arena and clarify what support the Council received from Leeds MPs?

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. As you would expect, I thank Councillor Lobley for that question. My initial response is that, like all Member of the Council, I think, I am bitterly disappointed that the geographical allocation to the city of Leeds, which contains a number of schemes besides the arena, was interfered with by central government and the £18m that we were initially promised was denied us, despite the fact this has been agreed for over three years and had on three occasions, I understand, been ratified by the board of the RDA. One is forced to wonder when talking about schemes of relatively small amounts in the scheme of things across the whole of a region like Yorkshire and the Humber, if a government actually wants us to believe it believes in delegating powers down to a local level, in devolving power to a local level but it wants to interfere once that support tops the £10m figure.

As regards the Leeds MPs, Freedom of Information, I have discovered, is a wonderful thing. I wrote to the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills and asked them to let me have any information or letters exchanged between any Members of Parliament on the subject of the Leeds Arena. I also asked for details of any meetings that took place about the Leeds Arena with the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills. I have the six or seven pieces of paper in my hand, so I can tell you, my Lord Mayor, that contrary to what some Members of Parliament might like to have portrayed in the press, what the real story was. I am referring here to the Labour Members of Parliament.

First of all – if you want me to refer to the other Member of Parliament I will, but you won't want me to. (*laughter*) I will tell you first of all that two Early Day Motions were tabled in the House of Commons condemning the government's decision to take away funding for the Leeds arena. None of the Labour Members of Parliament signed those Early Day Motions.

However, George Mudie did write to Rosie Winterton in July and then to Pat McFadden in October. By this time, of course, we had already found out we had lost half the money we had been promised. Colin Challon, the MP for Morley, he wrote to Pat McFadden.

COUNCILLOR SMITH: Post marked the South Seas.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Of course, as you would imagine, Clive Betts, acting on behalf of the other Sheffield Members of Parliament, wrote to Pat McFadden. Paul Truswell – nothing. Colin Burgon – nothing. John Battle – nothing. Fabian Hamilton – nothing. No letter, no meetings, no nothing.

COUNCILLOR: Shame.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: No wonder, my Lord Mayor, they wanted to try and trumpet this belated meeting on 11th November, the time of which was altered presumably so that the other Member of Parliament turned up late which, of course, he then did...

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Surely not.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: ...to try and make out that having done like what the Sheffield MPs had done and already lost us £9, they were finally getting their backsides in gear, as the saying goes.

These serial under-achievers who represent the Labour Party in Parliament have no right claiming any credit for one penny-piece that has come to this Council

for the arena. Their behaviour has been slipshod and slovenly to say the least.
(*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Do you have a supplementary, Councillor Lobley?

COUNCILLOR LOBLEY: I do have a short supplementary. I wonder if the Leader of Council would like to comment on the comments made by Fabian Hamilton MP, the Leeds North-East MP, on 14 October in the Yorkshire Evening Post where he said:

“We have made it clear in no uncertain terms we are behind it and we think it is essential for the future of the city. We will start with Peter Mandelson and I will organise a meeting with him to impress on him how important this project is for the city.”

In light of these comments, would the Leader of Council consider his earlier comments that the Leeds Labour MPs are – and I think I quote – a shower? Thank you very much.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: My Lord Mayor, if I was not in such genteel company I would go a great deal further than referring to them as a shower.

I am glad to hear that Fabian Hamilton says he was behind it. He certainly was – way behind it! (*laughter*)

My Lord Mayor, I now know why it took the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills three times as long as is legally required to actually give me these pitiful numbers of letters because, of course, they were presumably trying to save some of the Labour MPs from embarrassment. I hope Councillor Ogilvie now, to save his Members of Parliament any further embarrassment, might want to withdraw the White Paper in his name later on. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: We come to number 4 now and I call on Councillor McKenna.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can the Executive Board for City Development please notify Member what steps this Council is taking to protect the green belt from unwanted planning applications?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Carter.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Yes, my pleasure to answer that question. I pass my congratulations immediately to Councillor McKenna and to his wife for their forthcoming year of office. I am sure that will be extremely successful and a happy year for them.

What we are doing to protect the green belt. I think Councillor Members should be well aware we have on two occasions now debated the protection of the green belt and greenfield sites in this Council Chamber and, I am pleased to say, got considerable support, unanimous, from the administration and from the Independents and the Greens – not quite unanimous from the Labour Party and I know Councillor Hanley always either votes against or abstains – presumably he believes that we should be building on the green belt which the rest of us, of course, have said on numerous occasions we are not in favour of.

Since that time we have set out very clearly that the Council is committed to providing affordable homes in particular on brownfield sites. We have been

congratulated by no less a person than the Secretary of State for the number of affordable houses we are providing, all on brownfield sites, even in these difficult economic times.

To further update Councillor McKenna, we have now laid down a High Court challenge to the government's Planning Inspectorate where the Inspectorate have overturned decisions of our Planning Committee when our Planning Committee has refused – or both our Planning Committees have refused – development on Greenfield sites. We are now challenging the Inspector's findings in the High Court. As I speak at the moment another such public enquiry is taking place; I am sure there will be more to follow.

If Councillor McKenna's party could exert any influence at all on their government, they would get them to suspend or scrap the Regional Spatial Strategy which has been suspended in other areas of this country but noticeably not in Yorkshire and the Humber because it would take the pressure off considerably and allow us to move forward with our regeneration proposals which are crucial to the future of many communities in this city. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Do you have a supplementary, Councillor McKenna?

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: I do, Lord Mayor, and can I thank Andrew on behalf of myself and Andrea for his kind comments.

My supplementary is, can Councillor Carter explain why last November he decided to speak in support of an application at the Plans Meeting which wanted to build on the green belt and does he agree with me that this application, had it been given the go-ahead, could have had serious ramifications for the Council being able to protect the green belt in the future?

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: I expected this would be the supplementary. The site to which Councillor McKenna refers is actually somebody's back garden and they wanted to build a detached garage. They had permission to build an integral garage and merely wanted to build a detached garage, which most of the other dwellings in this particular street have got. That is why I believe the applicant was quite right in wanting to be able to provide on his own premises a very small detached garage.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. I call now on Councillor Parnham.

COUNCILLOR PARNHAM: Can the Executive Board Member for Environmental Services tell me what plans are in place to deal with the backlog of bin collections, bearing in mind that in some areas the service has not returned to normal after the bin strike?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Monaghan.

COUNCILLOR MONAGHAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. As you will be aware, the industrial action caused significant disruption to all Street Scene Services and to residents of Leeds and it was regrettable that it caused that disruption, Councillor Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Tell that to your Members who were laughing, James.

COUNCILLOR MONAGHAN: At the end of the industrial action, when the striking staff came back to work, the Council continued to employ temporary workers

to ensure we could operate a full service. Additionally, the crews who would normally work on garden waste were used to catch up backlogs in refuse collection.

Unfortunately the severe weather affecting Leeds has had a significant impact on the delivery of the refuse collection service. Snow and freezing conditions first started in mid-December and have only really improved from the beginning of this week.

If you will excuse me, I would like to take this opportunity to put on record my formal thanks to the Street Scene staff who continued to work through some very difficult and challenging conditions to collect as many bins as possible.

I would also like to thank them for their flexibility in supporting the Council's gritting and snow clearing efforts when they were unable to undertake their regular duties.

I am pleased to say that as of Monday this week the full refuse service, including collection of brown bins, was in operation. Additional resources will be provided to support crews collecting heavier black bins this week and the same will happen for green bin collections made during the weeks of 1 and 8 February.

THE LORD MAYOR: Do you have a supplementary question? No, then we move on. Councillor Driver.

COUNCILLOR DRIVER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can the Executive Board Member for Youth Services please update Members on the implementation of the new youth Connexions contract – known to many of us as the NEETS contract - given the go-ahead by the Council last October?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Harker.

COUNCILLOR HARKER: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. The start of the date for the IGEN contract for Wedge Based Connexions Services has been delayed from starting on 1 January to 1 April. All the existing decommissioned organisations accepted the offer of a three month contract extension for this period. This guarantees continuity of service. IGEN have offered all those organisations the opportunity to be sub-contracted from 1 April 2010. All but one organisation have felt in a position to accept the terms and conditions offered them. The overall contractual arrangements which come into place with IGEN from April 1 will ensure the required quantity and quality of provision.

COUNCILLOR DRIVER: Lord Mayor, a supplementary. Can I say first of all that while I appreciate that that is a step in the right direction, it does not guarantee the stability and security of some of those organisations that were badly damaged by the decision that was so made.

Can Councillor Harker explain why he did not personally intervene after the Chair, Councillor Hyde and every single Member of the Children's Services Scrutiny Board raised serious concerns over the temporary and potential impact of this £5m contract on tackling NEETS in our city after the call-in?

COUNCILLOR HARKER: Let us put on record that I too had concerns well before this contract was called in by the Scrutiny Board and I asked officers to re-look at the whole of the contract. The legal advice I was given then and the legal advice that I was given following the Scrutiny Board report, was that Scrutiny Board had not come up with any substantial reason to suggest that the commissioning process was

faulty. Therefore, I ran the risk of having this Council in court if we did not go ahead and award the contract.

THE LORD MAYOR: I call now on Councillor Campbell.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Would the Executive Board for Central and Corporate care to comment on reduction in sickness absence during the current financial year and also on the hard work and dedication shown by Council staff during the recent bad weather?

COUNCILLOR BRETT: Thank you, Lord Mayor. This is a good news story, despite the strike, despite swine flu. The figure that we have at this point for the number of days that we have lost through sickness absence in this financial year is 8.00 – eight days. This time last year it was 8.73, so there is a 9% improvement. The full year forecast at the moment is 10.67 days against a target of eleven days and the outturn last year was 11.63 days for each full-time equivalent member of staff.

There has been a rolling twelve months performance showing sustained improvement over the last twelve months, down from a level of 11.65 days in January to 10.80 days last December. The impact of saving one full day per employee of sickness levels equates to around £2m in direct and indirect costs, so we are not talking about small resources here.

At the end of Quarter 2, September 2009, we took a look back at the rolling twelve months and compared it to the twelve month period ending in March 2009 and saw the following trends. There is a general reduction in numbers of our staff taking sickness absence over all the periods, whether we are talking about two weeks, a month or six months. All of those categories are down and the average is 6%.

The biggest factor was the number of staff who are being progressed through the Managing Attendance Process where those at Stage One are up 12% over the comparison of the two periods, those at the higher second stage 56% and those at Stage Three 150%.

I would like to pay tribute to all the staff in Leeds City Council who are involved in this process and make it clear that it is not just HR staff – all managers are managers of attendance, so hopefully we will end the year with the increased improved performance that I have talked about.

The severe weather has presented, as we have heard from other colleagues, a number of challenges and certainly in my own office there have been a couple of members of staff in the last few weeks who have spent more than two-and-a-half hours getting to work. I do not think that that is at all unusual to my office. It has been a very difficult time for many members of staff to get to where they work and I would like publicly to thank all the members of staff who have struggled in sometimes against the odds to get to carry out their duties. The way in which employment policies have been flexibly used to assist staff helps in this situation but I think it is fair to say that a lot of staff have gone the extra mile to make sure that disruption has been kept to a minimum and I would like to commend our staff who have gone that extra mile. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Do you have a supplementary, Councillor Campbell? No. We will move on then and I will call on Councillor Shelbrooke.

COUNCILLOR SHELBRooke: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. Would the Leader of Council and Executive Board Member for Development and Regeneration

agree with me that it is wholly inappropriate for a Member of the Plans Panel to offer support for a planning application still to be considered by that Panel?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Andrew Carter.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Thank you, my Lord Mayor; thank you, Councillor Shelbrooke. We have, many of us, repeated over and over again that any serving Member of a Plans Panel would be ill-advised to pass comments that might be construed to indicate support or, indeed, opposition for a planning application if they serve on the Plans Panel - I think according to a ruling we might have got on something else that might have been discussed today on any Plans Panel, but certainly not if they serve on the Plans Panel to which the application will be submitted.

THE LORD MAYOR: Do you have a supplementary, Councillor Shelbrooke?

COUNCILLOR SHELBRooke: Yes, thank you, Lord Mayor, so would the Councillor care to comment on comments made by Councillor Peter Gruen at the Crossgates Forum on 19 September 2007 intimating that he would steer the Crossgates roundabout gates through the planning process. *(laughter)*

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: My Lord Mayor, certainly Councillor Shelbrooke you would have thought, would you not, that senior Members of the Council who are also senior civil servants would practise what they are supposed to preach and make sure they did not inform members of the general public that they would steer, guide or otherwise manipulate whatever was supposed to be going on, a planning application for a pair of very expensive gates on the Cross Gates roundabout through the planning process. I would have thought that Councillor Gruen would not want to find himself referred to the Standards Board and I am sure he will ensure in the future that he makes sure he makes no similar mistake.

However it does, I think, underline so that nobody can any longer be in any doubt that Councillor Gruen was, indeed, one hundred per cent in support of the £189,000 gates on the Crossgates roundabout. *(Applause)*

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Under Standing Order 13.2(c)...

THE LORD MAYOR: Just a moment. Can you just explain?

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: I want to raise a point of order which is under 13.2(b) and I want to query the accuracy of the report that just given in terms of myself and I want to actually say, as Councillor Shelbrooke was not present, I would like him to furnish me with the information that he has actually relayed to the leader of Council because I think I have yet again been unfairly---

THE LORD MAYOR: I am sorry, I am going to have to stop you there. You have said what you wanted to say but you should not have been saying it. *(laughter)*

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Throw the shovel away, Peter.

THE LORD MAYOR: We can just squeeze one other question in from Councillor Yeadon, please.

COUNCILLOR YEADON: Can the Executive Board Member for Adult Social Care please update Members on the future of generic service users at Calverlands Day Centre?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Harrand.

COUNCILLOR HARRAND: Thank you, Lord Mayor. If I can digress before I start – and I do not apologise for the repetition – I would like to ask Members of Council to join me in thanking and congratulating the valiant staff of Adult Social Care who worked so hard to make sure that no older or disabled person was exposed to risk by the recent adverse weather conditions. This was not just a matter of arriving at work. Homecare workers, driving assistants and the meal service, cooks, care assistants, domestics in care homes, day care staff and back room office admin workers all struggled against the atrocious conditions to make sure that our frontline services for the city's most vulnerable groups were maintained. We were on the front page of Community Care magazine last week, Lord Mayor, as the best example of such services across the whole of Britain. *(Applause)*

COUNCILLOR LYONS: We are not used to clapping.

COUNCILLOR HARRAND: You will not want to clap for our Adult Social Care staff? We should all be immensely proud of our staff who put their service users first and themselves last. We have witnessed social care at its finest. Every single member of this Council owes them an enormous debt of gratitude for keeping their constituents safe.

Calverlands. Calverlands in the centre of Horsforth provides a mainstream day service on five days a week and a specialist service for people with dementia for two days a week. As reported in the Executive Board on July 22, November 4 last year, the plan for Calverlands is to convert it to a seven day dementia service to meet the growing demand for dementia care services in the north-west of Leeds. This will allow people who use the Woodhouse Dementia Centre to transfer to Calverlands. This will be an enormous benefit for them and many of them come from Guiseley and Yeadon already, passing Calverlands on their way into Woodhouse. I am sure Members will understand that people with severe or even moderate dementia are the very people not to be managing these long journeys.

People at Calverlands who are currently attending the generic day centre will be asked to tell us their preference for an alternative day centre to enable Calverlands to become a full-time dementia care centre. Alternative centres in the west of the city which they can choose from are Queenswood Drive Day Centre, Burley Willows and Spring Gardens in Otley.

From the beginning of next month we will be holding individual discussions with service users at Calverlands and their families and representatives to establish what they want. Some of the people already attending Calverlands on generic days may indeed have slight or moderate dementia. Our discussions with them and their families will see if their needs are best met by continuing with the generic service or whether they should now take their place in a specialist dementia centre. What is important is that each and every individual should have an appropriate service that meets their unique care needs.

I will leave it at that, Lord Mayor, because we have run out of time already.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. We are now out of time, I am afraid, and we cannot have any supplementary questions. Sorry about that, Councillor Yeadon.

We are out of time so any questions which have not been answered will receive a written response which will be circulated to all Members.

ITEM 7 – RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now moving on to number 7 on the agenda, on page 7. I call on Councillor Andrew Carter.

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

COUNCILLOR BRETT: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Can I call for a vote, please? *(A vote was taken)* This is PASSED.

ITEM 8 - MINUTES

THE LORD MAYOR: The Minutes, Councillor Carter?

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

COUNCILLOR BENTLEY: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Could I take a vote on this, please? I am sorry, we do not need a vote yet! We are not on to the voting – I am getting carried away!

- (a) Executive Board
- (i) Neighbourhoods & Housing.

THE LORD MAYOR: I am now calling on Councillor Blackburn, please. Ann Blackburn, page 8, number (i), Neighbourhoods and Housing.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: Yes, I wish to speak on page 79 Minute 150. I am pleased that the Council are now doing some Council housing. It has been a long time coming. There is not much of it but nevertheless, it is a step in the right direction and also that these properties for over 55s, I am hoping, will release family houses both in my area and also in Pudsey.

As I said, it is a step in the right direction and thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Les Carter, please.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. I am delighted that you are pleased with the effort. So was John Healey. John Healey actually congratulated us, saying it is the best effort across the whole of the country, so I hope you people over there will remember.

Can I just make one other point, actually, as far as lettings are concerned? Can I just make one appeal to all of you? You will remember about two meetings or so ago the White Paper was approved by Council regarding lettings. The papers are now going to be brought to different groups and also to seminars to talk about our policy on lettings. It is a consultative document so that means it is not pre-fixed. I hope there will be contributions from people who will come back in and that is something I will be very interested in to know what the results of that when it comes back. Thank you, my Lord Mayor.

- (ii) Children's Services

THE LORD MAYOR: I call now on Councillor Ann Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: You have caught me on the hop I am afraid.
Page 86 Minute 166.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: It is difficult being a Leader, isn't it?

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: Yes, I would just like to say that I do not wish to speak on this at this time. *(laughter)*

COUNCILLOR: Neither do I, Lord Mayor!

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jane Dowson.

COUNCILLOR DOWSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to speak on page 81 Minute 153, proposal for statutory consultation for the expansion of primary provision for September 2011.

Here we go again, yet another Executive Board and another round of expansions for Leeds Primary Schools. I am fully expecting a really empty feeling inside when finally we do not have to discuss the expansion of primary provision in this city; much the same, I would think, that you will feel if Councillor Lyons ever does not ask you where you are going to put the incinerator.

COUNCILLOR LYONS: I never get a bloody answer! *(laughter)*

COUNCILLOR DOWSON: I have said before how important this issue is and how you have already failed the children of Leeds for 2010 by your failure to forward plan. I just hope that you have enough time now to ensure that next year's children are not let down in the same way.

I see from the report that you plan to give the parents of next year's intake the results of the consultation before they submit their preferences – a courtesy you did not extend the parents of this year's pupils; a lesson learned there, at least. You have overseen the closure of primary schools, including Miles Hill in my own ward of Chapel Allerton, a closure local residents and myself campaigned vigorously against and you now found yourself in a situation where we face a severe shortage of primary places. How embarrassing is that?

I know you are going to say, "Ah, but Labour closed schools" and yes, we did, but the circumstances were completely different. We did not have a pattern of rising school numbers. The fact is, you missed it, you missed years of increasing numbers and this was on your watch - you missed it – so please do not wag your finger in this direction for recent mistakes because they are yours and no-one else's. *(hear, hear)*

In order to remedy this problem you have brought proposals forward to expand a number of primary schools from September this year, others from September next year and we are told to expect more proposals for September 2012, but let us just look at what you have proposed this time. One of the schools you are planning to extend to a three form entry is Hugh Gaitskell in Beeston. Figures from Education Leeds show that this school is one of the worst five performing in the city in terms of Key Stage 2, and that is performance for both English and maths. This school has 35.6 percentage of BME pupils and my colleague Councillor Iqbal will be speaking later on educational attainment for the pupils who attend schools like this.

What measures are you putting in place to ensure the school is supported in both terms of improving its performance and coping with the additional numbers?

I really do not know what is worse – Councillor Harker, who buries his head in the sand, or Councillor Golton, who is just so out of touch he really, really believes he can convince everyone in Leeds that a failure of Biblical proportions in Children's Services is really a report on how well they have been doing. *(laughter)* We are not for one moment blaming the hard-working staff. It is all down to a lack of leadership from yourselves.

You may have sweet-talked the YEP but we know the facts and so does everyone who has read the report. The report on primary expansion that went to the Executive Board talked about phasing of some schemes resulting in expenditure over two or more financial years. What exactly does this mean for the children affected? Will their schools be ready for next September or won't they? How long will these expansion works take? Please tell me, are we not facing the prospect of portkabins in yet more schools?

Do you know what really annoys me about this is the fact that we never actually got an apology. We have got an explanation that the administration got it wrong when they were looking at the numbers, and you admitted at the last Council meeting, Richard, that you got it wrong, and I think you really ought to think about standing up and apologising for the stress this failure has caused and will cause for the children and the parents for the foreseeable future.

You are currently mopping up your self-made crisis and there is nothing that we can do about it but you do have enough time to get things right for next year and for 2012. Please think long and hard about the proposals you are bringing forward. Please do not let down any more children in Leeds. Thank you, Lord Mayor.
(Applause)

COUNCILLOR SELBY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Minute 161 page 84, Primrose, City of Leeds and Parklands High School.

Consultation, or so they claim. At the last meeting I had I had concerns over the plans to close Parklands and more specifically the lack of consultation. As Ward Members we were not informed of any of the changes proposed about Parklands over the last year. These have been many, these proposals have been many and first of all the school was going to become a trust but not an academy; then it was going to end as an all girls' school; then it was going to become an academy on the City of Leeds site and then finally close with all girls' provision. You would think that Ward Members would be consulted about these things at a very early stage. You would think community leaders would be consulted about them at a very early stage because, as I highlighted last time that was inadequate.

It is not just the ward members who are not being consulted. School governors are not being consulted as well over the proposals that we are talking about. Friday evening I went on to the email system. An email was sent out to all councillors about half-past twelve on Friday and the schools were made aware of a meeting that was taking place at Parklands High School on Monday – last Monday, not next Monday. With minimal consultation parents of the school were made aware of the meeting and that is what Education Leeds calls consultation.

So far as consultation so far as the academy is concerned, you would think, knowing that Board members are expressing concern about consultation, that a meeting would be arranged at a time when more members could be there but the papers that went to the Executive Board highlighted that the consultation meeting

would take place on the same day as the next Council meeting. Fortunately, we managed to get that changed but that shows the mindset of Education Leeds and those who politically are in control of Education Leeds as to what they really believe consultation is about.

Then we put the question of girls' only provision and accessibility to consultation papers. The consultation period began on January 7th but it was only posted on the Education Leeds website on the 14th, so if people do not have a full eight weeks to respond, can we have an assurance from Councillor Harker that that consultation period will be extended by another week so that we do get the full eight weeks and can you also confirm so far as all girls' school is concerned the consultation has been noted - that this consultation process has been noted to all primary schools in Leeds because girls who would go to Parklands or any all girls' high school would go from anywhere in the city. If not, why not?

Then so far as the consultation is concerned, can we have an assurance that it will be a balanced consultation because when one looks at the paper that went to the Executive Board, we had a one line comment "Research on single sex education concludes there is no convincing evidence that it has a significant impact on pupil performance." Ignoring the fact that there has been further research going back to last March – there was an article in the Guardian from the Good Schools Guide showing that girls are more likely to thrive and get good results if they go to single sex schools - what assurance have we got that we are actually going to have a balanced report, a balanced consultation with all the information given?

The impression one gets about consultation and Education Leeds and those who politically run it is that they are going through the motions but the decision has already been made. This is a shabby way to treat the people of Leeds, it is a shabby way to treat the staff and pupils of Parklands. People deserve better. Having spoken to the governors, having spoken to them and seen the documentation, very few people have confidence in your abilities to conduct fair and reasonable consultation. The feeling that people have is that the decision has already been made but the Liberal leaflet will no doubt say it is all the fault of this Conservative-run administration. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. I now call on Councillor Iqbal.

COUNCILLOR IQBAL: My Lord Mayor, I wish to comment on Minute 164 on page 86 on the attendance and exclusions report for 2008 and 2009.

At first glance this report looks like good news and we should not underestimate the excellent work that has been done by officers from Education Leeds and other agencies in improving school attendance.

Attendance in primary schools in 2008 and 2009 was at 94.1%, while attendance in secondary schools for the same period was 91.54%. However, levels of persistent absence in primary schools increased last year, which is a very worrying trend as this means they are failing to match national levels. Primary school pupils who are eligible for free school meals, have statements of special educational needs or those in receipt of inclusion funding have the lowest levels of attendance. In fact, they are three times more likely to be persistent absentees. The rates of permanent exclusions also fall into just 0.05% for both primary and secondary schools. Unfortunately, pupils with special educational needs are again three times more likely to be excluded and looked-after children are seven times more likely to be excluded.

We all know that children who do not attend school regularly are at a serious disadvantage when it comes to attainment. Unfortunately but not surprisingly the

very same groups of children who are not attending school regularly tend to be from those groups who are not scoring well at GCSE. This is particular apparent for those pupils from the less well-off parts of the city. The number of children who are eligible for free school meals achieving five GCSEs at A* to C fell last year by 3.5%. The gap between them and those children not eligible for free school meals is now 36%.

The number of SEN pupils who get five good GCSEs has dropped last year and 19% of them leave school without any qualification. General levels of attainment for Asian heritage pupils are also too low – 13% below the average – while those pupils classified as from other black backgrounds saw a huge drop in attainment of 29.2%.

This tale of poor attendance which leads to poor attainment has an all too familiar conclusion. Many of our young people who leave school with few or more qualifications end up as NEETS. According to recent figures Leeds has the fourth highest rate of unemployment in the country and there are almost 7,000 people between the ages of 18 and 24 claiming Job Seekers' Allowance. This is a worrying situation and one that is set to get worse.

Jim Knight, the Employment Minister, recently warned that youth unemployment is set to continue to rise this year as companies continued to go under.

It is, therefore, imperative that we put in place policies to help the jobless, especially young people. The government have done their part with initiatives such as the Future Jobs Fund which has provided a grant of £4.7m to this Council for job creation. You have tried to do your bit with the Work for Leeds Scheme which is recruiting apprentices. This is a novel idea but, as with most things you become involved with, it is not fulfilling its promise. Your stated aim is to have 250 apprentices by March 2010; unfortunately the latest figure shows you only have 132 at present which means there is still some way to go.

It is time that your administration stopped burying its head in the sand once again on this issue and actually did something tangible. Many people look to the Council for help when times get tough and you have a responsibility to help them. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: I call now on Councillor Ewens.

COUNCILLOR EWENS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I apologise for the phone – I have changed over my suppliers today and I did not know how to switch it off!

I am speaking really from the point of view of corporate carers to Minute 155 on page 82, because corporate carers, I think, have done a good job most of the way through, whatever people have said about Children's Services, and I have visited regularly for six years one – there is not one in my ward so I have taken one in another ward – and they have a very impressive record. They have had three lots of "excellent" on Ofsteds and I have met all the staff; they are totally committed not just to the young people but to each other as a team, they work as a team. They are a staff which holds together because they work well together and I think that stability is one of the things that lies at the bottom of quality.

They have a regular holiday in Newquay where they can go and nobody knows they are looked-after because in some places looked-after still bears a stigma and I think that is quite dreadful.

They have a kitchen where they can all learn to cook, where I helped to get the plans improved so that they could use it for more than one at a time. The staff give individual support to each child for what they are doing – going to college, going to work experience, getting them back into school if necessary – and not being pushed into doing any kind of course and following a pathway which is not ideally suited to them. They really are treated very well as individuals.

If the home has a problem, they are liable to ring me and ask me if I can help them to do something about it.

I think that in Minute 166, which unfortunately Councillor Blackburn – I would have done better coming at the end, really – we can look to things like what the corporate carers have done, for example for improving all sorts of things – sustainability, teamwork and treating children as individuals. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gruen.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: I would like to speak on page 84 Minute 161. When I saw Councillor Ewens down to speak I thought we were going to get an intellectual argument about City of Leeds School but, of course, that was far from her mind...

COUNCILLOR EWENS: I will give you that outside.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: ...despite the fact that there is a consultation exercise. Councillor Ewens is a very brave person outside of the Council Chamber. She tells everyone, whether they want to or do not want to listen, that she supports City of Leeds School and over her dead body will anything happen to City of Leeds School. She is fully behind it and she tells us Councillor Harker is also fully behind it.

That is fantastic, is it not, because when you get into the Council Chamber and we have a vote – and, of course, we have got recorded votes, thanks to the technology – what do the Hyde Park Councillors do? They voted down City of Leeds School.

Here we are, on the one hand we tell the public and the people of Hyde Park “We are going to support your school” and you come into the Council Chamber and obediently bend at the knee when the Whip tells you to and you vote against City of Leeds School. That is a travesty of justice and should not happen. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Harker.

COUNCILLOR HARKER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to deal with Councillor Dowson’s comments first. She has tried valiantly in most Council meetings to blame me personally for the rise in the birth rate (*laughter*).

COUNCILLOR ATHA: I do not think she is blind.

COUNCILLOR HARKER: I do take very seriously the fact that some very good officers who supply information to me and to Councillor Gruen as Chair of the Admissions Forum, an independent body that scrutinises what Admissions do, looks at the papers before I bring them to Executive Board. These officers were surprised when the extra numbers were discovered. Unlike some other Authorities I can report that Bradford this year – not next year but Bradford this year – had not enough spaces in their primary schools – we have. We still have spare capacity in our primary schools.

COUNCILLOR LYONS: Not where the kids are.

COUNCILLOR HARKER: I am going to ask the question is James suggesting that rather than taking the actions we are taking, carefully and in a considered way, we should bus children, because that is what it begins to sound like. It begins to sound like the other side are suggesting I should be bussing children to the spare places.

The moment that I was told that we had a change in the number of children coming into primary school in certain parts of the city where we would have to go to government and ask to raise the numbers for next September, then I asked the Scrutiny Board to find out why this Council did not have access to the correct data. I did not have access to it, Councillor Gruen's committee did not have access to it.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: I am implicated in this?

COUNCILLOR HARKER: You are totally implicated, Peter, because you have got a role of Scrutiny there and a role of care.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Independent. You are responsible.

COUNCILLOR HARKER: I am working hard with officers to ensure that where schools have to take extra children, the resources are there so that these children's education does not suffer. Anybody who questions my commitment to the education of children I take exception to.

I would now like to move on to the complaints about the consultation period. It is interesting. I actually have had a conversation with one Councillor today on the way into Council about the consultations. I promised this Council we would have open consultations. If there are problems, why not pick up the phone and tell me? Why not give me chapter and verse so I can go back to the officers that carried out the consultation and say that I am not satisfied? Many Councillors on all sides of this Council where there is a problem often pick up the phone and come to me and I arrange a meeting and I sit in those meetings...

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Listening.

COUNCILLOR HARKER:while the Opposition party, or while any of the other benches make their point, and I listen very carefully to what the officers and what the councillors are saying. I think that is important and, as a result, we have moved forward in several areas.

If there is a problem with the consultation come and see me, ring me or send me an e-mail and I will take it up and ensure that if there is a problem, it is put right. I want open consultation – open consultation.

Councillor Iqbal, we are aware that some children are not thriving as well as they should do in education for a whole variety of reasons and resources. I am encouraging – not encouraging but asking Education Leeds to put in the resources that are necessary. I think you were right to say that most of the report that you referred to on exclusions on attendance gives Leeds something to celebrate. We probably have the lowest exclusion rate of any Authority in this country and I think that is something we should thank our officers for and celebrate.

I now come to Peter – Gruengate was the gates at Cross Gates. This is City of Leeds and his slight attack on Penny. For a start, we have to remember – I will stick to City of Leeds – that City of Leeds is one of the National Challenge schools. That means that we do not have total freedom around here. We are being pushed by

the Labour Party. We are at the consultation stage, that is all. We have gone out to consultation on the way forward. We have been pushed in the timetable by the Labour Government which tells me over and over again – in fact in one conversation not before this Christmas but Christmas 2008 when I tried to explain what we were doing with the national challenge schools and how I hoped what we were doing would move forward the Secretary of State for Schools interrupted me four times with the question, “When are you going to close City of Leeds School?” If any party in this Chamber wants to close City of Leeds School it is the Labour Party.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Absolutely. Hear, hear. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. My colleague, Councillor Harker, has covered the meat of most of the comments here. I would like to comment on Councillor Ewens because she was referring to a paper that was received at Executive Board about the attainment of looked-after children and I think the point that Councillor Ewens was getting across was that we are able to make improvements in attainment for looked-after children precisely when their placements are stable and they have good quality support from the staff in question.

I think one thing that is worth mentioned, Lord Mayor, is that these serious issues that Councillor Iqbal did raise in terms of the achievement of special educational needs children, our looked-after children, 70% of them are special educational needs and the work that has happened recently under the auspices of Alun Rees as the virtual head of looked-after children, if nothing else can offer a model in terms of how we can achieve improvements not just for looked-after children but for other children that have special educational needs and we are seeing how we can take those models forward to achieve that. I hope that gives some reassurance to Councillor Iqbal.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Golton. I now call on Councillor David Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I refer to Minute 167 on page 87. It is the City Council’s response to “Your Hospital Your Say”. Can I say, I welcome the Council’s response, particularly where it refers to the areas of representatives. I know when it came to our Area Committee, quite honestly I have never seen anybody get hammered for doing a presentation as much as the person did. What he was suggesting was that my ward, Farnley and Wortley, Pudsey ward, Armley ward and Beeston ward be put together, and that Farsley and Calverley ward and Bramley be put with Kirkstall, which was totally daft.

I am glad Council are asking that these areas be based on our Area Committee areas which every other organisation in the city works to and I welcome that. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Hear, hear.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Blackburn. Councillor Yeadon.

COUNCILLOR YEADON: Can I just take this opportunity to pay tribute for the Mayor for the Day, Charlotte, and how well she articulated the barriers experienced by disabled people every day. I thought that she articulated in such a strong and imaginative way and I would like to thank her for that.

Lord Mayor, I would like to speak to Minute 134, page 73, the KPMG Inequalities Report. I felt I was reading about two different cities and, shockingly, ten years of life separated those cities.

I hope everyone in this Chamber agrees it is horrifying that Leeds in 2010, a child born in the City and Hunslet has a life expectancy that is ten years shorter than a child born in Adel and Wharfedale.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: They have got Conservatives looking after them.

COUNCILLOR YEADON: In what world is that just? I do not think it is something to make jokes about.

It is not just life expectancy that divides this city. In deprived Leeds, which includes the areas that fall into the lowest 10% of national deprivation bands, the infant mortality rate is higher, dementia admission rates are higher and the low birth weight rate for babies is a massive 11% compared with 8% in Leeds overall.

The mortality rates for the city for those under 75 from circulatory diseases ranges from 50 per 100,000 people in Adel and Wharfedale and 224 per 100,000 people in City and Hunslet. This situation is wrong, plain and simple, and shocking numbers of residents are affected by these frightening statistics. 22.4% of the population of Leeds live in areas that we term "deprived Leeds". Worryingly, 30% of births in the city are to families living in these areas. It saddens me to know that statistically families with young children are more likely to live in the deprived areas of the city.

Surely we all agree that the Council must do everything in its power to change this situation. We must change it to give children a brighter future and adults a better quality of life. I accept that very valid attempts to tackle the situation are being made at a strategic level. However, these massive inequalities will only reduce when there is effective communication between those making those strategic decisions and those making front line operational decisions. At the moment this is not happening.

Let us use Holbeck as an example. The Council agree strategically that Holbeck has some of the most serious health and social issues that need to be tackled in the city. There is a community where residents, as Councillor Harrand rightly pointed out at the last Council meeting, struggle to buy even fresh fruit. However, at an operational level, decisions have been taken to close both the local sports centre and the day centre. Surely by taking services away from these residents you are sending a very negative message to the people of Holbeck about your commitment to tackling the serious problems in their communities.

Until this administration can find a way of communicating with front line staff more effectively, they will have a struggle to successfully narrow the gap. All directorates must understand, as the KPMG report highlights, how they can contribute to making a really positive difference to reducing inequality and deprivation in this city.

What is more, this administration must learn to listen. You must listen to the communities affected by these appalling statistics. This city needs genuine consultation, meaningful community engagement and effective communication of these exercises.

I believe that we all want to see a fair Leeds where everyone has the same chance of a health life and a bright future. I am asking you to take action and to make this a reality. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you Councillor Yeadon. Councillor McKenna.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Thank you, Lord Mayor, and firstly can I thank you for your very kind announcement. I must apologise to Members of Council if I looked like a rabbit trapped in the headlights – I was so overwhelmed by your warm response I felt like one, but I am sorry about that.

If I can go on to the Minute, Lord Mayor, I would like to speak on Minute 135 page 73. Firstly, let me say thank you. Thank you for your hard working front line staff in adult social care. Thanks for the dedication and commitment which has seen the Care Quality Commission award Leeds with an improved star rating. You see, Peter, we do applaud where necessary and we do note.

The last year has been without doubt a very turbulent one for adult social care. This time last year colleagues on our side of the Chamber expressed grave concern about CSCI's conclusion that adult social care in Leeds was weak and ineffective. As you will recall, we were particularly concerned about safeguarding in Leeds. At the start of 2009 I was certainly not alone in fearing for the safety and wellbeing of some of the most vulnerable adults in our city, so congratulations must go to the staff for taking a vital step in the right direction.

I am reassured that Leeds City Council is taking action to improve its record on protected vulnerable adults; however, like the inspectors, I believe that more can and must be done. We must not be complacent. Now is the time to build on this positive news, recognise where there has been progress and acknowledge that there are still significant areas to improve. We must continue to strive to improve the services we provide.

One of those areas we absolutely must improve is choice – real choice for vulnerable people who need our services to keep them safe, to protect their wellbeing and to help them maintain their independence. I think all of would agree that increased choice is vitally important if we are to make sure that vulnerable people can live with dignity and in safety in our city. Furthermore, as our population ages this is going to become a more and more important issue. In 2008 nearly 60% of all households receiving home care were over the age of 65 and, as we are all aware, this is on the increase. After all, the fastest growing age group in the UK is the over 80s.

Real choice means real options for people. That is why I could not stand by and watch you launch an attack on the city's few remaining day centres. Older people should have the choice to attend a day centre if it is in their best interest and, more importantly, it is what they want to do.

This Council is very lucky to have some fantastic officers working in adult social care. We need to harness that potential and make sure we do not stall in our efforts to drive forward improvements which deliver first class services to the vulnerable adults in our city. At last, adult social care is moving in the right direction. Let us build upon that, for there is much more to be done. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor McKenna. I now call on Councillor Peter Harrand to sum up.

COUNCILLOR HARRAND: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Thank you, David. Yes the bit about the areas and the election constituency is just nonsense and I think Maggie Boyle at the Trust has got the message – I will be surprised if she does not change that. What you were going to say if you had had more time was the nonsense of the City Council having one representative on this governing body, which is the same as the Chamber of Commerce. We put £4m a week into social care in this city – I am not sure what the Chamber of Commerce give but it is a hell of a lot less than that, so we are campaigning for at least one more member of the governing body.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Hear, hear.

COUNCILLOR HARRAND: Lucinda, we could spend all afternoon talking about what you are saying and the inequalities and the inconsistencies across the city. It has been going on 50 years. If you look at reports of the Chief Medical Officer before the war he is complaining about exactly these things – Headingley then was top of the league; Hunslet was still down the bottom even then. These things have not changed since the second week in May 2004. What has been going on has been going on...

COUNCILLOR LYONS: You have not done owt.

COUNCILLOR HARRAND: ...for 30, 40 years that I have been sitting watching it. The life expectancy in the south of the city is increasing in these areas. What is happening is that life expectancy in Adel and Wharfedale is increasing as quickly if not faster, so whilst there are some successes, statistically it does not look so clever because we are not actually closing the gap.

The stuff about you cannot buy fresh fruit in Holbeck is actually not true any more. The truth is worse than that. You can buy fresh fruit in Holbeck – from the off licence. We feel as strongly as you do about the health and inequalities across the city. I think you will find that we have as good a record as anybody at closing that gap in that we are now appointing Health Improvement Managers, I think they are called, to every part of the city. Each Area Management Committee is going to have a Health Improvement Manager allocated to them when that begins and we have got ours in North-East already, so the whole of the city in the spring.

Jim, your point about the success or the improved report that we got from the CQC this year, thank you, very much appreciated, and I do agree your point about independence and choice. We will continue to offer a first class service.

In language that you will understand, our reaction to this current report is a bit like you can beat Manchester United one week – hooray – but then if you go and lose to Exeter City the following week it rather brings you down to earth, so we are not complacent – we shall have to continue to beat Manchester United away regularly. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Harrand. I now call on Councillor Leadley.

(v) Central & Corporate

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: My Lord Mayor, I would like to comment on the Comprehensive Area Assessment Report, which is noted under Minute 136 of the Executive Board meeting for 9 December.

We have had the same report at Corporate Governance and Audit and I would say that it is one of the worst written that I have ever read. It seems to have been written by a word processor on autopilot which had cut and pasted comments repeatedly without saying very much the first time.

We should be able to look forward to reports on the City Council by outside bodies as, for better or worse, they should give valuable insights into the workings and effectiveness of services which will confirm accurately what is being done well and point out clearly what is being done wrongly or having poor effect. They should be compasses by which the City Council may plot its course. Unfortunately, this Comprehensive Area Assessment did seem to lack substance and authority and I felt none the wiser for having read it. Thank you, my Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Leadley. Councillor David Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I refer to Minute 168 on page 87, regarding the Leeds City Region Forerunner Agreement and particularly I am talking about wider membership involvement.

I know when we discussed the document at Corporate Governance and Audit, one of the comments I made was it seemed to me that City Region was becoming like the Council of Ministers without the European Parliament and to some extent that is what we have got.

I have got no complaints about what the political make-up is of the leaders of the particular Authorities as they are because what comes around goes around, so at some point in time hopefully they will be from other parties, but the fact is that we need all to be involved and we need some form of accountability back to ordinary members of whatever party they are and that means members from each of the cities in the region. We have got to move forward on that. We cannot put our heads in the sand and say no, we do not want the City Region because the fact is that if we are going to get resources and offer resources with places like Manchester, we have got to work together but we need some accountability. I do not think, from the document that is here, that accountability is there yet but there is a lot of work to do and we need to get it. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Blackburn. Councillor Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to speak on Minute 136 on page 74, which is the Comprehensive Area Assessment, and the potential impact of the recent industrial action on the Council's recycling rate, which is referred to in the report.

I know the impact of the industrial action caused by this administration's mis-handling of pay and grading is something that regrettably Members opposite find something to celebrate. We have already learned this afternoon their views on this and I note the contempt that they show for this matter. I also think it is quite interesting that Councillor Monaghan has come to this Council Chamber and admitted that figures released only six weeks ago are woefully inaccurate. I think this shows why it is really important...

COUNCILLOR MONAGHAN: Point of personal clarification.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: You have admitted you were £100,000 out on the cost of the strike six weeks ago. I think that is admitting that you were woefully inadequate. If I may continue, what we really need to get to the bottom of is some of

the facts behind the industrial action in the context that the recycling rate is incredibly important to this city and in the context that some times, as we have had with Councillor Monaghan's behaviour today, this administration do not always come clean on what is going on. (*interruption*)

I specifically in this wider context of the Comprehensive Area Assessment refer to the Integrated Skills Report which, as Councillor Monaghan told the Evening Post on 4th November, completely blew the union's claims of unrealistic targets out of the water. I think first of all, those of us on Central & Corporate Scrutiny heard Councillor Brett admit to the Scrutiny Board that he had never bothered reading this report. The irony is not lost on us of Councillor Brett lecturing well-paid workers about productivity when he himself did not bother to put the time in to read a report about this. I think this shows serious problems at the administration and serious irony.

Three months after this report was trumpeted as the be-all and end-all to the strike action, a copy has not yet been made available to me. Why is there no openness on this administration? They admitted their initial figures on the cost of the strike are wrong and have had to come back to clear those up. The recycling rate is important and we need to see some final figures on those to show actually what is going on. Can we believe the figures that have been given to us before? Finally, for the complete avoidance of inaccurate information about the industrial action and the consequences being released, I call upon Councillor Brett and this administration to finally release this report, stop hiding behind it. If there is something in there that is embarrassing for you, we clearly can see that is what is happening because you will not release the report. Give us a commitment in this Council Chamber that you will release this report or we can only draw the conclusion that there is something hidden in there that embarrasses this administration that has already been embarrassed by releasing inaccurate information which it has had to apologise for and correct in this Council meeting today. Thank you. (*Applause*)

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I appreciate Councillor Lewis's calm and reasoned argument there. (*laughter*) Can I also make reference to the CAA report which actually talks about the urgency to get our recycling up. I also think that Councillor Lewis is right about some smokescreens and spin being used because if it is true, then the Taxpayers Alliance prediction is that, as a result of this strike, we are going to get ourselves into a financial disaster because the strike lasted so long that we have avoided targets, then we are going to waste hundreds and thousands of pounds and I can fully understand why Councillor Lewis is trying to pursue a little bit of clarity, a bit of honesty from his administration, because if we waste that money because of this long strike, then think what we could have done with that money for the children and elderly people of this city. Think what we could have done with it instead of prolonging an unnecessary strike.

On this side we are happy with the outcome of the strike. I think the low paid workers of this Council deserve recognition for their courage and stamina to stand up to the bullying, the intimidation, the name calling that went on from that side of this Council. (*hear, hear*) If you are going to learn some lessons so we can motivate our workers, may I give you some? Three lessons, Councillor Monaghan and Councillor Brett, because one thing Councillor Carter said when he took over, he said, "This strike was badly handled" and guess who he blamed? I will let you draw your own conclusions, Richard, but he certainly was not about.

The three lessons I think you ought to learn. One, if there is a point of conflict, sit down and negotiate. Do not wait ten weeks like you did with only 13½ hours at the table before you sit down.

Two, if you have got a problem with productivity and sickness, implement the management procedures that we have in this Council. That is what we have had for some years. Do not go on blaming the workers for being lazy and skiving.

Three, if you want to value, as you should do, low paid workers, for Heaven's sake, Councillor Monaghan, stop before, during and after the strike threatening to privatise them if they do not work hard enough. That is Dickensian, 19th Century bully boy tactics and it is wrong.

I think there are a lot of lessons. These majority of people in this city thought this strike was handled extremely badly. There is no doubt in my mind. Actually, it is not just the majority of people.

I read a letter from a Lib Dem Member about this strike, and I will read it out because it is very telling. It is very telling because he tried to criticise the Lib Dems for the handling of this strike and he said:

"No matter how it is dressed up, the local party decided to silence a critic in a fashion that would do any dictatorship credit. All I initially called for was the consideration of the union's position and an end to the strategy of defaming the binmen's character in a style that fully deserves the epithet of 'Thatcherite'. However, even this was too much. If this was an isolated problem, then it would not be so much an issue but the blatant truth is that in Leeds the Liberal Dems are not fit to govern and that the people of Leeds would be best served by the defeat of the current coalition."

We could not put it better ourselves, it is absolutely true and I am positive that when the by-election arises in Hyde Park, the people of Leeds will give this judgment on an administration that bullied, intimidated and tried to cut the wages of low paid workers instead of showing them the respect they clearly deserve. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Lord Mayor Wakefield. Councillor Atha.

COUNCILLOR ATHA: Can I refer to the same Minute and the same Assessment and to draw attention to again the waste issue, the Waste Transfer Centre in Kirkstall that is proposed.

For those who do not know what it is, it is where they are going to bring 100,000 tonnes of rotting waste – this is black bin waste. Someone said there will not be any food in it but anyone who believes that knows damn well it is a lie. They are going to bring 100,000 tonnes into a site they are going to build. The building is within this distance of the houses opposite, one of the most densely populated areas of the country. It is less than half this distance from the nearest food restaurant. It is directly behind a street of shops. It actually is in a situation which could not be worse placed for a waste transfer centre.

I made clear my opposition to this quite some time ago but I did accept an offer to go with colleagues, Colin and others, to see two waste transfer centres to be developed. I must say, having gone there I noticed one thing about them. The first was that they were on industrial estates, or at least distant from houses. You might say, "Is it important?" Quite frankly the people in this part of Kirkstall, when it was a waste transfer centre before, were plagued with Biblical plagues of flies and tremendously noxious smells.

COUNCILLOR: You built it.

COUNCILLOR ATHA: If you do not believe this or if you think that I am exaggerating, I ask you to go and knock on some of the doors of the people who have actually got this building, the burned-out building, directly in front of them. Go for yourself and see. No spin, no lies – telling the truth. Quite frankly it would be much easier for me as a local Councillor that I did not have this problem on my doorstep but it is a real problem for real people, decent folk in a very concentrated area of housing.

The Evanston site is the wrong site. I went down to see the two new sites that were being proposed, albeit being operated by one of the people who are bidding for this contract. Nothing I saw there persuaded me that that was right for the place it is now being proposed in Evanston Avenue. The noise in itself was very considerable and carried way beyond the confines of that industrial estate. The lorries backing in and backing out, you will hear the beep, beep, beep, very loud noises. The noise itself is considerable. Think of those enormous vehicles, the biggest vehicles on the road which are permitted because what they are carrying is fairly light so you need an awful lot of it to make the journey worthwhile. Those lorries going in and out down that main road which is already oversubscribed. It really does not satisfy anyone and this Council should say to the people who are bidding, "Look for a site elsewhere. Look for an industrial estate away from this area, or away from any habitation." I do not want it in Pudsey in the middle of housing. I do not want it in Horsforth or Adel next to housing. I would like it on an industrial estate in the area where the rubbish is coming from, and it is coming from everywhere else but Kirkstall, which takes it. That is just not just and fair.

We really must look for an alternative site and I am quite sure that if we put our minds to it we can get that, it would reduce the volume of traffic on a road which is already oversubscribed by traffic and, in fact, would make an enormous difference to those people. You must have seen it in the press when the kids at the school objected.

What I do find disappointing is when a real issue like this comes, we bat it off in terms of can I score a political point off this or not. There is not any really serious thing and I am going to do that now because quite frankly one knows people like Councillor Harker, you know him as an honest man, a decent chap, the kind of person – same with Golton, same with some of the others - but quite frankly the truth of the matter is that Councillor Brett is a failure and should go because you, in fact, stimulated the strike to the point at which it became a serious problem not for you but for the 700,000-odd people in Leeds. That was your success in making life intolerable for them with the rubbish when you could have had the deal you got in the end months earlier – months earlier, within about a fortnight. You did not because you refused to do the negotiation.

We come to Councillor Golton, again a person we like, think he is a nice fellow, decent chap, if we are going away somewhere we are delighted to have his company, but the fact of the matter is, you have failed. You have failed and we are not saying you have failed – the outsiders have come in and say you have failed.

We have Councillor Harker who seems to think that children are born at the age of five because he is suddenly surprised there are so many of them and then he tries to make a joke of it. It will not do. It is a failure. These are failures.

Penny Ewens, a person who I have got the greatest respect – I respect you enormously. If when the times comes for closure of that school or the closure of West Park Centre, when that comes up before us, if you vote with us I will respect

you then and everyone else will. You may lose some friends there. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Atha. Councillor Chapman.

COUNCILLOR CHAPMAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking to Minute 137, page 74, on the Corporate Performance Report 2009/10 Quarter 2.

The report represents a high level performance summary of the Council's progress against the Leeds Strategic Plan and Council Business Plan for (*inaudible*) priorities for the first six months of 2009/10.

I would just like to mention some of the notable areas of good work. The Council's use of available resources; engagement with local residents and communities; improving the condition of the transport infrastructure and improving road safety; reducing the number of decent and affordable homes; reducing health inequalities; finally, increasing the numbers of those supported to live in their own homes. Thank you. Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Chapman. Councillor Atkinson.

COUNCILLOR ATKINSON: I am sorry, Lord Mayor, I was late but we are still snowbound in parts of Bramley. That is not what I want to speak about.

I have got it written down and I do not know whether I agree with it. It says, "Good afternoon, Lord Mayor" but I have already said that "and fellow Councillors." I do wish to comment on Minute 137 on page 74, the Corporate Performance Report 2009/10, second quarter. In this report there are a number of indicators against which our performance is judged. Indicator TP3C states that it is Council's responsibility to develop extended services using sites across the city to improve support for a very – other than Bramley and my family - important subject close to my heart, which is the children of Leeds and their families and communities.

I have heard a rumour – I do not know how true although I have approached one or two Councillors – that there is going to be a plan to charge schools to come into the farm. I do get very emotional about Lineham, as some of you well know. It has been on the go 15 years. We have had over 25,000 children for a week's holiday – kids who sometimes – and I know the press are here but I am not playing to the press, I am not up for election this year – but some of those children come with nothing, not even a toothbrush. We take them out, and I am going to namedrop, we go to Marks and Spencer's for tracksuits, we go to Boots the Chemist to buy a toothbrush and toothpaste. Some of those kids have never slept in a clean bed. These are kids from our schools.

Yesterday there was a group in and I deliberately went up because I did not know whether I would be allowed to speak – I do not often break a Whip but never mind – but at the end of the day I asked the staff that were there. I am not going to name the school because the Head does not know that I am going to speak about it. I said "Would you come here if you had to pay?" "We would not be able to come." Why are you depriving these kids? These kids are our city's kids of the future. You people – not this lot – I have my (*inaudible*) with this lot sometimes – but you lot over there, you are throwing the hard work of the many businesses of this city away.

Last week I had a mad evening – I do not know who came or who did not come – down at a restaurant down the road here (*inaudible*). In less than two hours we raised £10,000 for the kids. A person came to have a look round Lineham Farm – I am not (*inaudible*) with the family at the moment - and she changed her will. A

month later she died; she left it to us for a climbing wall and for a new kitchen. We have the Variety Club. How many people – Councillor Harker, I cannot see him – has been twice on open days. Has anybody from the Children’s Committee ever been to Lineham to see it? No. To me they are a damn disgrace and I say it collectively because I feel very hurt. It is now how much – I said it at the group meeting I wanted to bring people to this meeting and Keith Wakefield says, “You cannot bring the cows and the sheep.” Why not? The kids have never had other than picture books; they have never had proper meals. These are kids in our city.

When I said to you a few weeks ago, I met two children from an area of Leeds who suffer from malnutrition. I could not believe it. We have doctors and service on call at no charge and yet what do Leeds City Council want to do? I have always said that perhaps it might not be right. They want to charge per school to come for a week’s holiday. Some of the teachers, I am led to believe, queue up to come to Lineham because they treat it as a week’s holiday. It is wrong.

Please, change your minds when you are doing the budget. Do not give me an excuse like we need an invitation – you do not, just come up. Come and see. I am sorry, Lord Mayor, I will sit down. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Atkinson. I would now like to call on Councillor Monaghan.

COUNCILLOR MONAGHAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor perhaps Councillor Golton is going to stand up and respond to Councillor Atkinson, but I would just like to say that I took up Councillor Atkinson’s offer just before I was elected to go and visit Lineham Farm and they do excellent work there.

I will address Councillor Lewis’s and Councillor Wakefield’s points first. It is incredibly frustrating to have to stand up and say this because I think I answered your question earlier, I think I answered it at the last full Council meeting, and no matter how many times I seem to say it in Council meetings you still do not listen and still do not actually get to understand what has happened and you still are living in your own made-up figures, made up for what about what happened with the strike.

Productivity, the quote you quoted me as having said something about blowing the union’s claims out of the water – the information we used, the productivity we asked for was accepted by the unions. It made up part of the settlement deal, so any idea that we were exaggerating productivity trying to be unreasonable is ridiculous. Those have been accepted as part of the settlement.

The report you are talking about I am not entirely sure which report it is, you have never asked me for it. However, if you would like to email me for it, email what it is you actually want, I will do my best to get it for you and I cannot see any reason why you cannot see that information.

Regarding the figures, at the last full Council you asked a question and I did reply. The cost of the strike at that time was £50,000 to the city. I made it entirely clear that that was the cost at the time – however, it would take months for us with clearing the backlog to know what the final cost was of disposal of excess waste and what our recycling figures would actually be.

I made that clear last time and this time the figure, the revised figure, is a cost of £38,000 to the Council. However, I suspect it may be revised again and I will happily give you that information when you ask for it, no doubt several times at the next Council meeting.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: The answer keeps changing.

COUNCILLOR MONAGHAN: As for the assertion that actually the cost of £38,000 could have been better spent on Children's Services, actually the amount of money we are saving as a result of the settlement is £2m a year, which I have already said, which is a huge amount of saving which will be invested back into Council services. *(Applause)* We have already seen the recycling figures and have given that.

I will not say that the refuse strike was worth it, as I am sure you want me to do, because it did cause disruption for people across the city. However, we were actually brave enough to stand up and take the decisions that had to be taken to improve the service, to provide better value for the taxpayers of Leeds, something you and your administration failed to do in 2004. *(Applause)*

Regarding the former Lib Dem Member that Councillor Wakefield referred to - I will not mention his name - I think he was a former Labour Member before he was a former Lib Dem Member. *(laughter)* I believe he is now another Labour Member and I look forward to reading his blogs about your party. *(laughter)*

Regarding Councillor Atha's point - negotiations, I think perhaps Councillor Brett will touch on that - about Evanston Avenue, as usual a very noble effort to take party politics out of it by actually bringing it in. I have to say, some of the stuff that has been put out there, particularly by Rachel Reeves, and using school children to put across her views, I have to say I think has been the worst kind of politics. *(interruption)*

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Almost like the Lib Dems.

COUNCILLOR ATHA: Prove it. Prove it. Will you email me the stuff you take exception to?

COUNCILLOR MONAGHAN: I will make every effort to reply to the Chair of Governors, the Headteacher at Kirkstall Valley School - I think it is Kirkstall Valley - to ensure that they are as informed as possible about what has been proposed at this site. It is interesting to know that this has been a waste transfer station, it was, for 20-odd years under the Labour administration. You never made a single effort to actually...

COUNCILLOR ATHA: It was wrong then, it is wrong now.

COUNCILLOR MONAGHAN: ...oppose it or to tackle any of the problems then.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: You never said it. You know that.

COUNCILLOR MONAGHAN: I do appreciate Councillor Atha actually taking us up on going on the journey to see Barnsley, an old-school type waste transfer station, and to see a modern one in Shrewsbury and I hope his colleagues who could not make it will be able to attend on a future visit. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Hamilton.

COUNCILLOR M HAMILTON: Thank you. I just wanted to pick up on what Councillor Monaghan said regarding the waste transfer station and Councillor Atha's

very clever performance which is to say that he is not playing party politics and then to do a completely political speech.

COUNCILLOR ATHA: That is not clever, that is being honest. I am sorry you do not recognise it.

COUNCILLOR M HAMILTON: Right, that is being honest. Let me be honest back then, Bernard. A couple of Area Committee Meetings ago we had the honour of Rachel Reeves, the PPC for Leeds West, delivering a deputation on this very subject. I have to say, the speech that she gave, as far as I could see, contained an awful lot of inaccuracies about this particular subject...

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: It would do, she is not very good.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: How do you know?

COUNCILLOR M HAMILTON: ...which, of course, is Opposition politics, actually, is it not? That is what it was about. She certainly was not giving accurate information.

I then had a look at her involvement with her whole campaign. Not only is she a governor of the school which featured on the front page of the Evening Post with the children with masks and things protesting against this particular proposal, but when you have a look at the website of the Parent Teacher Association, there is a link to her political website – there is a link to Rachel Reeves’s political website from the Parent Teacher Association of that school.

If that, Bernard, is not playing party politics, I do not know what is. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ewens.

COUNCILLOR EWENS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I simply wanted to say that it is 20 years since I was present at a meeting to save West Park Centre then, so the fact that I never done it is not true. The fact that we supported Councillor Atha in the Area Committee and agreed that we would all like to see it stay, but we do not know – we do not know because it is your call now. (*interruption*) It used to be Weetwood Ward when I was working in Weetwood Ward and it still is Weetwood Ward.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Ewens. We will have to move on to Councillor Brett, please, to sum up.

COUNCILLOR BRETT: Lord Mayor, I would like to do things slightly in reverse order to say, in case I run out of time, that I hugely respect the immense passion shown by Councillor Atkinson in holding this Chamber spellbound. She clearly is very, very deeply concerned about the future of Lineham Farm and even if she has left the Chamber now, I am sure others will say to her, I am sure we will say to Councillor Atkinson that Lineham Farm will continue to work with our schools and will continue its valuable work with some of our most deprived children. (*Applause*)

I want now to turn to Councillor Leadley, where I think some of the remarks you made are quite welcome because some of us share your concerns about the quality of the whole Audit Commission process. I know Councillor Wakefield shares, with Councillor Carter and I, concerns that the chief man did not see fit to talk to political leaders and when challenged on that simply said, “This is a light touch inspection.” I think we all feel that there is light touch and doing nothing and this was probably doing nothing.

Councillor David Blackburn, the Forerunner. I think you touched on something which is a real problem. I had tried to ensure – and I hope this has happened now on more than one occasion – that the support officers for the Leeds City Region do a newsletter to email to all 600 Councillors who are involved. Until we had the agreement with Government about what actually the City Region was going to do, it was very difficult to work out the democratic deficit and how we would proceed. I do not know whether Councillor Smith's Partnership Scrutiny would want to get involved in this but there is an opportunity deliberately with our Partnership Scrutiny to look at outside bodies.

I have to say, Councillor Lewis, that although many of your points have already been answered, I want to re-emphasise this administration's absolutely determination to push up recycling rates and if I could reach out and say that some commonality between us might be – and there is not very much common ground but some common ground might be – concern about what is happening to recycling during the strike. I think what you have already heard today from Councillor Monaghan may reassure you that we are wanting to push it back up, it is over 30% again, and we very much wish that most of the money that has been saved from the very good deal, as far as we are concerned, in terms of productivity – and I repeat what we had always been asking for, that 37 rounds collapse to 29 – that was agreed and that is what leads to this considerable saving which will go into recycling.

I really find it so difficult to take strictures and lectures about pay and grading. 1997, when it started. I was not there in 2004 but those who took over had to look for pay and grading in the box labelled "Too hard to do." (*hear, hear*) You had done nowt on this matter and it is quite clear to see why you did nothing, because it was just too difficult dealing with that.

I am disappointed, Keith, that you have succumbed to the sort of point scoring political speech which maybe your Members demand that you give. I am not going to trouble to spend a lot of time answering some of the things you allege because they are just plain wrong. To allege as many others have...

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: It is still privatising.

COUNCILLOR BRETT: ...that we on our side are somehow trying to take it out on low paid workers...

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: You did. You did

COUNCILLOR BRETT: The bin collectors and the drivers, their average take home pay more than £20,000 before the strike.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: You are picking on low paid workers.

COUNCILLOR BRETT: They are now the best paid, we believe – one of the best paid teams in Yorkshire in that area.

If we had really wanted to do this - some other Lib Dem leaders in the North of England have been very critical of me. Why, you might think?

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Rightly so.

COUNCILLOR BRETT: Because we have given pay protection for three years and many other Councils cannot afford to do that. If we had really wanted to hammer the low paid, and of course we did not, if we had really wanted to, we would not have given three years' protection.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Attack the low paid.

COUNCILLOR BRETT: I have to say, Bernard, that you started very well. I actually thought for the first four minutes we had had a reasoned argument.

COUNCILLOR ATHA: I am not surprised.

COUNCILLOR BRETT: I listened and thought that Councillor Monaghan might actually take on board some of the reasoned points that you made. You did seem to lose your way towards the end.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: He always does.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: He lost his way a long time ago.

COUNCILLOR BRETT: I am not going to sink to the level of political debate which means I answer some of the poisoned points which you made towards the end.

I welcome the comments that Councillor Chapman made. This report that she referred to has far more green than red and it does also have a lot of amber. There are a number of issues that we are working on that need to do better, so I am not complacent about this Corporate Report to which she referred. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Brett. I now call on Councillor Parnham.

(vi) Development & Regeneration

COUNCILLOR PARNHAM: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I wish to comment on Minute 171 and Minute 172 on page 88. Before I do, I would hope it is not inappropriate for me just to express my regrets on the death of Councillor Kabeer Hussain. Like he I have three kids, I have got a full-time job and I understand he was interested in Kashmiri issues, so we share something else in common. I feel that his death and also the damning Ofsted report that is to come has cast a bit of a pall over this meeting.

However, life goes on and the two Minutes I wish to comment about are very positive – and I am very grateful for the Executive Board to have passed them.

The first with regards land at Czar Street in Leeds 11. It is the transfer of land to a rehearsal studio. I happen to have known the person who owns the studio, Mark Hubbard, for a number of years. He worked with my wife for the Employment Service and whenever we spoke over a pint Mark always expressed his wish at some point to expand the studio, expand the services that they were offering for the benefit of disabled groups and I am so pleased to see that finally, after all these years, the Council has quite inspirationally, I think, gone ahead with this transfer.

It is going to benefit young people specifically in three ways. I notice that Old Chapel Studio will open its doors to at least three key programmes – Find Your Talent, Breeze Youth Festival and the Out of Schools Activities Team which, as you may be well aware, helps young people who are out of school.

It is a ten year span programme and I think it really could not be in better hands than Mark. I am sure that those who have influence within the Council, the

officers, will in time approach Mark and hopefully the studios will benefit people with learning difficulties. I have done some work with music therapy over the years and I am sure it will be something that will be ideal for those premises. That is the first one.

The second one – and I will keep it brief – is the Chapeltown Townscape Heritage Initiative and the Armley Townscape Heritage Initiative - both fantastic projects and I am very grateful again that the money has been forwarded to benefit these inner city communities. Regeneration of community development is very high on my agenda, as I am sure it is for many of the Councillors who represent the poorer boroughs of Leeds. I am glad to see at last that money is flowing from the city centre to these areas and it will benefit not only the shop frontage but it will give people who live in these working class areas a real boost and I think it clearly will obviously lead to regeneration and businesses relocating into these areas.

I am particularly glad to see that property at 2, Branch Road Armley, known universally as Mike's Carpets, is in line for a bit of a boost and I am also pleased to see that this scheme has come to fruition. Councillor colleague David Blackburn has pushed for the regeneration of West Leeds for many years, as has Councillor Ann Blackburn and other Councillors, and I am also pleased to see it will tie up with other regeneration initiatives.

I am very pleased about that. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Parnham. Councillor Andrew.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. In my ward and other wards that abut the A65 there have been major developments over the last number of years, not least High Royds, Silver Cross and Parkinsons have put extra demands on the A65 and the prospect of future developments, not just in Leeds but also in other Authorities like in Menston, mean that we are going to face more traffic on that road.

That is why I welcome the A65 Quality Bus Initiative. It really is good to see that we are having an investment of over £20m plus to bring a better way of getting people from my ward and other wards along the A65 in and out of the city centre.

The scheme will include a total of 4km of new bus lanes covering inbound and outbound journeys, bus priority signalling, additional pedestrian and cycling crossing facilities and cycle lanes, also improvements to bus passenger facilities, including new shelters and information. This is all good stuff and it has reached the point where work can now start.

I know I am not alone in this Chamber when I say that when I switch on my computer and open my emails and see that there is one there waiting for me from Councillor Illingworth, it fills me with dread. (*laughter*) Only one, they say! Yes, we can laugh about it but actually in all seriousness, his actions could have put this £20m-worth of investment at jeopardy. Writing to the government as he did complaining about this scheme really is a great shame and it is a shame that he could not support other colleagues in his own group who do welcome this scheme.

In fact, even his own Secretary of State agreed with us, the administration, saying that the Council had fulfilled its obligations in adverts for the CPO and the consultations and he confirmed, too, that it will alleviate congestion. He may not want it but my constituents and the people living in my ward cannot wait for it to start. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Andrew. Councillor Marjoram.

COUNCILLOR MARJORAM: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. I also wish to speak in support of the Quality Bus Initiative. The A65 Quality Bus Initiative is vital to maintaining the economic success of the city, not least because it links the increasing expansion of the airport with the city centre itself.

The other issue, of course, is that the quality of life for residents that live on that road is blighted by the near constant queues of traffic and the whole point of the Quality Bus Initiative, as far as I can tell, is that it helps make bus journeys not only quicker but more attractive and hopefully that will – we have a White Paper this evening about climate change – go some way towards meeting some of our obligations. It is, in short, as Councillor Andrew has identified, vital to the city's increasing success.

Indeed, a £22m investment is welcome anywhere at this difficult time. It would be regrettable then, if, when the government look to make cuts in the transport budget, as they no doubt will, no less a figure than the Governor of the Bank of England saying the same today and the Chancellor, of course, saying the same thing last week, it would be regrettable if this is one scheme that they looked to withdraw support from. It would be especially regrettable given some of the genuinely deprived areas of the city that this scheme will help connect to the city centre and the opportunities thereby, if this scheme were to fall by the wayside.

It is with that in mind that I would like to focus on the role of Rachel Reeves as the Parliamentary Candidate for Leeds West. Her name has already been mentioned this evening.

COUNCILLOR LYONS: What was it again? It was not Rachel Reeves, was it?

COUNCILLOR MARJORAM: What she needs to do, in my opinion, is to make her voice heard. There is clearly some confusion in the Labour Party about what that means. What that does not mean is to say something convenient to the paper and then do nothing with your own government, which is what they have done, of course, over the arena. What it actually means is to come out and speak on behalf of the people of West Leeds in support of the administration and this vital transport scheme.

She is quick to proffer an opinion but this seems to be one area where she has been very, very quiet and I therefore urge her and the rest of the Labour Party - because seemingly the only person who does not agree is Councillor Illingworth – to come out and put on record their support for the Quality Bus Initiative and the administration in bringing this vital scheme to life in West Leeds. Thank you, my Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Marjoram. Councillor Fox.

COUNCILLOR FOX: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I wish to speak on the Buslingthorpe Conservation Area, which actually is linked with Item 7 on the Agenda, which was, if you like, nodded through, quite rightly, I may add.

I want to take the opportunity of referring to the importance of the leather industry to Leeds. I declare my personal interest which is that I am a pensioner of – yes, unbelievable – Charles F Stead & Company. I was Company Secretary and Accountant there for 16 years and the Charles F Stead & Company, which still exists, still operates, is one of the three tanneries that is now part of the conservation area.

One of my unofficial tasks was custodian of the records whilst I was there and it does strike me that every single ancient old building in Leeds, industrial building, has a history and it is quite fascinating, the history I inherited when I was Company Secretary. Every morning I used to open the huge safe within the offices there, which was built into the wall, open the safe and on the inside was a wonderful painting, if you like, which said, "By Appointment, Safe Manufactures to Her Majesty the Queen." It was not Queen Elizabeth, I have to say, that it was by appointment to.

Within the area of the offices there is a war memorial which is headed by a memorial to Captain Stead, who was the eldest son of the founder of Charles F Stead & Company. He was killed in the First World War, together with 20 or 30 tannery workers.

Within my box of tricks I had cheque books dated around 1900, unused cheques – Becketts Bank, which is the Nat West in Leeds. These links are all there. Of course, the main link was the Meanwood Beck. Along the Meanwood Beck there would be something like 15 tanneries in the 19th Century which would be employing several thousand Leeds workers. We forget now, of course, that these tanneries were surrounded by lots of housing, which has now gone, so they were major employers at the time.

Steads themselves were major producers of leather for bellows for gas meters, so most of the domestic gas meters in this country would have had Leeds production in them.

My purpose is not to give you a potted history of the leather industry, but there are a couple of things which I recall from my box of tricks. One of them was a letter, no less, from the Town Clerk of the City Council, dated somewhere around the 1860s, I just forget the date, and it was a copper plate handwriting letter, hand written, with the Town Hall as the address at the top, from the Town Clerk to the tannery, which was then called Wilson Walker, before Stead took it over, recording his visit to the tannery when he was inspecting the Meanwood Beck. Of course, things never change, the Meanwood Beck is just as much a problem as it was 150 years ago.

The sad thing is in his letter he records that he slipped on the bank of the Meanwood Beck and broke his leg and I think that a copy of that letter should be on the Chief Executive's desk as a reminder of the hazardous nature of the role which he occupies and doubtless his successors will.

The other thing I would briefly mention about Steads and the tanning industry is that Steads were a major recycler. As Members we are frequently arraigned by our electors about the state of the paths and especially the problem of what we can euphemistically call dog dirt or dog fouling. One of the functions of Steads throughout much of the 19th Century and early 20th Century was every Saturday morning there would be a queue of school children, youngsters, lined up with their buckets of this very valuable product which they had collected; Steads would pay them out half a crown, two shillings or whatever, because dog dirt was as very key component in the tanning process.

Sadly, my time is up but I can tell you a great deal more about tanning but I am not going to go into the details of quality control but I do very much welcome the fact that the City Council (a) have the powers and exercise the powers and so rapidly and so fast to secure this area as a conservation area as a recognition of the importance of the tanning industry in Leeds, which actually had national implications,

and I look forward to seeing the final details of the conservation area itself once they have been completed. Thank you, my Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor. Councillor Lamb.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I always seem to end up following the really good speeches, so I will try and bring the tone back down to what it was. It will be easy for me!

There are two Minutes I would like to speak on. Firstly I want to speak on Minute 171, page 88 and I want to join Councillor Parhnam in welcoming the decision of the Executive Board to transfer the surplus land on Czar Street to the Old Chapel Music Community Interest Company, which I think is a fantastic thing and I am sure that is something we can all agree on.

Music, and particularly live music, has played an important part in my life and I spent many happy evenings as a teenager at the Duchess, the Cockpits, the Town and Country Club as was watching live bands from the local and national scene, some of whom were very good, and I started to feel I was getting an idea for spotting talent. I saw the Stereophonics long before they were famous, and Travis at the Duchess. One evening I remember back in 1997 I went to watch a particular band called Runston Parva and it was one of the few occasions that I left a gig half way through because I thought there is no hope of this band making anything. Of course, some of you will know – you were there too, they were awful – that band was an early incarnation of the Kaiser Chiefs, so that's what I know about live music.

The key point is spending that time inspired me to take up playing the guitar and I have played in bands and all sorts of things. I get a great deal of pleasure from music and live music. *(interruption)* Settle down, I am not having a go at you for once! I might start that later on.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: Oh, go on!

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Having that sort of inspiration has given me a great deal of pleasure in life and it is the diversionary activities that we are providing. It is great to see the Executive Board and this administration showing such a commitment and finding a way to give things for young people to do. It is providing those positive activities which is a key part in this administration. It is a key way of diverting people from the other paths that they can take and I know from being involved in the music scene here in Leeds, over in Belfast, in Harrogate as well, that there are a lot of young people who get involved in music that if they did not, their lives would probably take a very different path and this is a real opportunity to set people on a positive path.

The second Minute I would like to speak on is page 87, Minute 169. It is a completely different subject but nonetheless important. It is about a brown sign from the M1 motorway for Wetherby, which is on the old A1, has been present for an awful long time and was removed as part of the very welcome upgrade to the town which advertised our historic market town.

Thanks to current Government policy they have set down that it is illegal to advertise historic market towns from a motorway. Before the A1 upgrade Wetherby had a brown sign and the market traders, the business association have all felt that it is having a detrimental effect. We have approached the Highways Agency to ask them to give us our brown sign back and they have said they cannot do it and will not do it.

What I do not understand is why it is OK for Alton Towers – I have no problem with Alton Towers being signposted from the motorway, which was built sometime in the 1970s - I have no problem with Legoland being signposted by a brown sign from the motorway – it was built some time in the 1970s – but it seems bizarre that Wetherby, which was first mentioned in the Domesday Book in 1086, cannot be advertised by a brown sign from the motorway.

We have an awful lot of things to offer. Otley has a brown sign, albeit not from the motorway and while the Otley Members may object, we are considerably more historic than you! *(laughter)*

We have got blue plaques littering out town – not littering, they are very welcome. It is a great place to stop and people are being denied the opportunity, if they had not planned to, to stop off somewhere that is a fantastic place to stretch their legs and this is really affecting the businesses at Wetherby very badly, so I would be very grateful for any support that anyone can lend to our campaign which is being well supported by the Wetherby News, to get the brown sign back for Wetherby. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Lamb. Councillor Lobley.

COUNCILLOR LOBLEY: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. I would like to comment today on Minute 172, page 88. I would like to start off first of all by congratulating the Executive Board on their approval for the £1.1m for regenerating Chapeltown Road. I would also like to thank as well the Heritage Lottery Fund, without whom also this scheme could not have gone ahead.

I think what we are all agreed about with areas such as – I am not going to get into a battle of wits with you, Councillor Gruen, when you are completely unarmed. *(laughter)* What we are all seeking for Chapeltown and other similar areas in the city is a lasting improvement. This is not some politician from Westminster announcing some small pot of money that lasts for a short period of time and then is cruelly taken away to the detriment of all the people in the area as we have seen over the last few years with the Labour Government, but what we are after here is something that will encourage a lasting change, really encourage, importantly, businesses to set up in the area to create employment.

I was very interested to hear a phrase that Councillor Parnham mentioned – he said “working class areas.” If anything, I think the problem here is the people who are not working that we need to get working if we are truly going to regenerate an area and make that regeneration last. It is not just a case of improving the buildings in the area but it is getting people into work.

I know the Labour Party have a real affinity for buildings but really there is more to life than just buildings, so whilst I am very keen that all of the property owners along Chapeltown Road get involved in this and apply for the grants to help them improve their buildings and improve the local environment, what I am hoping out of this is that there will be the will from local people and business people across Leeds to consider relocating business in the area, to consider employing local people to work in those local businesses to really kickstart a proper, lasting regeneration of the area. This is not building a nice community centre for somebody to hang around in in the day; this is about giving people jobs and lives and it is very important.

In summary, I would like to thank the Council for their real commitment to this area. It is hugely important. What I would also like to ask is for local people and local business people as well to look at their responsibilities. We have some sites in the area which are really letting the area down and we all know where they are – the

petrol station, the former video centre etc – and the owners of these buildings and sites really need to sort themselves out and get involved in regenerating the area.

We all have a responsibility, I am very grateful to the Council and I look forward to this being the start of what will hopefully be a true, lasting regeneration for Chapeltown. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Lobley. Councillor Castle.

COUNCILLOR CASTLE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I too wish to speak on page 88, Minute 172.

The newspapers told us that Monday of this week was Blue Monday, the most depressing day of the year – the weather is cold and grey, credit card bills are dropping on our mats reminding us of all the spending we did at Christmas and some of us are worried about our jobs, particularly Labour Members of Parliament. *(laughter)* However, the Chapeltown and Armley Townscape Heritage Initiative Schemes are good news on four counts.

First of all, good, solid buildings that are looking rather tired are going to be given a new lease of life. Secondly, the schemes will encourage community involvement by the residents and owners of small businesses in Chapeltown and Armley. Thirdly, jobs will be created in the badly hit construction industry. Fourthly, workers, particularly young workers, will be encouraged to learn new skills to enable them to restore the buildings that are part of the scheme.

Although the coming General Election is still some months away and we are saddled with a Labour Government for the time being, we do have some good news to savour. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Downes.

COUNCILLOR DOWNES: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking to Minute 141 on page 75. Just before I do, I probably should declare an interest as Chairman of Metro. We have been working with the City Council on the Quality Bus corridor on the A65 and I am really delighted that the Executive Board have approved the funding so that we can get on with the scheme.

In addition to what colleagues have mentioned earlier there are other impacts for wards such as mine. I regularly use that corridor to get into Leeds, to get into Metro on Wellington Street and when I do so the buses are often unreliable and as a ward Councillor I get more complaints about the frequency and the running of those buses than probably any other casework I am getting at the moment.

MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC: Well done, mate.

COUNCILLOR DOWNES: There we go, someone else who suffers like I do. This improvement will ensure that the buses get into Leeds much quicker and also on time. The number of buses that have missed or whatever back to my area has resulted in a reduction in the number of buses that run, buses that do not actually come out past the ring road and also the latest think that the operator tried to do was to reduce the services through the villages of Menston, which is near to my ward, on the grounds that they could not keep up a reliable timetable, which they could not anyway.

All of these things add to the reasons why this corridor is so important. I too have received emails from Councillor Illingworth and I think he is wanting to say

something, and I hope it is to apologise for trying to scupper the scheme because it really is something that is key to getting people into Leeds.

We have seen a decrease in patronage in bus services in Leeds and I think if anything this will help to get people in and to encourage people to use it, if they can get into Leeds faster and more reliably. Also to do that at Metro, at the last meeting we had a motion that I put forward to move forward to Quality Bus contracts, which was supported by all Members of the ITA and we are the first ITA in the country to do so.

This, I think, will go hand in hand with this scheme to ensure that we can increase bus patronage in West Yorkshire and we are working towards that as fast as we can, so I just really wanted to congratulate the Executive Board on that decision and look forward to moving forward with this project. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Downes. Councillor Lyons.

COUNCILLOR LYONS: Lord Mayor, I am a bit surprised at what has been said across there. Of course we want a Quality Bus Initiative. Of course we want good transport across Leeds and West Yorkshire and the country and we get it by a lot of the time working together, a lot of time going out for consultation, but what I have heard here today from Parliamentary candidates – Andrews and rest of the, there's Lamb, Downes and Castle that's been talking, Lobley – not one of them has mentioned where the money is coming from.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: The taxpayer.

COUNCILLOR LYONS: Not one of you has stood up and said, "Thank you very much, Labour Government, for sorting our transport out."

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Taxpayers.

COUNCILLOR LYONS: Not one of you. You are playing about with when we get on to what we want to say we should have consultation. We do have consultation and John Illingworth is replying to part of that consultation. I would have it no other way. I would not say that he was wrong; I am saying that we are right and we want this bus initiative, but when you come here and you tell everyone out there how bloody good you are and what you are doing and when none of you has said where the money is coming from from this Labour Government, backed by Labour Councillors in Leeds to get your bus initiative. I hope when you put your leaflets out – and Ricky Downes, you ought to be ashamed of yourself, you are Chair and you know as well as I do the trouble we had talking to Ministers and everybody else to get the money. *(laughter)* We did get the money.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: You have lost control again, Peter.

COUNCILLOR LYONS: We got the money and now he stands up as if it was his idea and Andrew Carter's.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: We planned it.

COUNCILLOR LYONS: What a load of bloody rubbish that is. Let me tell you and tell you straight, all of you, do not come here and lecture us on what we should be doing. Think of what you are saying and where it is going and what it is doing. Andrew, you look daft enough without pulling faces. *(laughter)*

As far as I am concerned, going back to the transport issue, yes, a marvellous idea. It was not just thought of when Ricky Downes was coming in on this bus from Otley or his bike that he used to have from Otley. It was thought of a long time ago and it has been worked on with a lot of people that has got a lot of passion for transport and what should happen in this country, and we should be properly funded and we find that when we work together, they stab us in the bloody back by coming to meetings like this and do not tell the people where the money is coming from.

If you appeal to us in the future we will not believe a word you are saying and why on earth, when you are putting your leaflets out, you Parliamentary candidates, will you please mention where the money is coming from or are you afraid that the people will already know? *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Illingworth.

COUNCILLOR ILLINGWORTH: Thank you, Chair. I was not going to speak because I did not think it would be mentioned but Minute 141 page 75. Just for the record, I have supported the A65 bus scheme since 1992 when it was first promoted. I came to a meeting of this Chamber and we talked with the local landowners and I have backed it consistently ever since.

I just wonder, however, if the Members opposite have actually looked at the scheme they have got, because it is a pale shadow of the original version. There is no bus lanes where they are most needed, the most congested bit; it is not segregated from the other traffic; and it will lead to rat running in residential streets. Those are the points that I have been making to the designers saying, "You have got the design a bit wrong."

There is negligible improvement in bus performance in the present scheme. If you actually look at the bus timings rather than just trumpeting out slogans and so forth, you would see that the gain in bus performance is actually quite small. It could be better – it could be an awful lot better.

My opposition to the present scheme is nothing at all to do with opposition to buses – I am wild about buses, it is the future of this city. What I objecting to is a very badly designed scheme, one that does not deliver for the people who go on buses and that is what I want looked at. There is a computer model for this scheme which I do understand, which I have studied, and what it shows is quite serious queuing problems at both ends - not resolved, to the best of my knowledge. The letter which I sent to the Director of Highways points that out. I said, "You can knock me down with a feather; just show me the model working and I will look a fool." That was six months ago, nine months ago – nothing. He knows it does not work, I know it does not work. In the fullness of time you will have to spend more money on it to make it work because it is a ship with a hole in the bottom at the moment, Lord Mayor, and unless you make some improvements to this scheme, you will be very, very disappointed in what you get. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Rafique.

COUNCILLOR RAFIQUE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Page 88, Minute 172. I think it is an excellent initiative to be funded by this Government, the Heritage Initiative, Lord Mayor, through the Heritage Scheme.

It is ironic that Councillor Lobley only chooses to speak every four to five years on issues concerning Chapeltown, although I appreciate some of his comments, but Councillor Lobley has never attended a single meeting of the Heritage Scheme.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Hypocrite.

COUNCILLOR RAFIQUE: Indeed, he has never shown an interest in this scheme at all. Instead of posturing and making statement here, clearly attempting to promote himself as the prospective Parliamentary candidate, he would be better off to use his positive position as Chair to make sure that appropriate and urgent action is taken with some of the derelict properties on Chapeltown Road and help to pursue the compulsory purchase of those properties and to bring business in. That is the only way we can do that.

It is ironic that he only chooses to speak on Chapeltown and become a Chapeltown Champion every four to five years when it is his turn to stand as the Parliamentary candidate for the area.

Instead of closing the Job Shop on Chapeltown Road I think he should be helping to reduce unemployment in one of the poorest areas in the city with one of the highest (*inaudible*) rates in the city as well. Stop playing politics. Actions speak louder than words. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Atha.

COUNCILLOR ATHA: I am only speaking in anticipation of an attack – and they have started – on Illingworth for writing apparently to the Government as though that was some kind of crime. Quite frankly we should all, if we think something is right or we see something that is wrong that should be put right, then it is our obligation as individuals to try to do our best and if in fact a bus scheme has defects in it, what on earth is wrong for the person who sees this writing to tell the Minister it is wrong? Quite frankly, you can talk to people locally and you get sometimes no further.

I do not mind Councillor Lobleby having a go, he is Parliamentary candidate. I was one twice against Whitelaw, who did not count his votes – he weighed them, as he used to say to me, “My dear boy, I weigh my votes”, so I know what it is like to be a Parliamentary candidate. You have a go now – it will not count for a toss. We can all accept that, that is not important.

What is important is that nobody should be put under attack for doing what he or she feels is the right thing, and whether that means writing to the Ombudsman or writing to a Minister or writing to anyone else, then we should not be criticising that person unless it is done deliberately and maliciously or knowing it to be untrue.

I was aware of the fact that we may well be taking this opportunity of attacking someone who has done their homework, who possibly could tell the engineers what they should be doing to make it better. When I read that after all this cost it is going to be only a slight, few minutes advantage travelling from the city centre to the Morrisons out at Kirkstall, you say in terms of value for money, that is not worth it – there must be a better scheme.

The rights and wrongs of the scheme I will not enter into, but what I will enter into is a strong defence of any Member, whether it is *that side, that side, that side* or anywhere who, feeling something is right, makes the comment and speaks out and says so and that is why it is wrong that we have been insisting that those poor people who were evicted from the school, the Royal Park School, are having to pay £3,000-something costs. You should be saying to them, “No, these are decent people, they went into save the building, not damage it.” Why should we make them pay for the cost?

Another case where a woman objected to a place in Leeds being given an extension of the hours into the early morning. She opposed it in the Magistrates' Court. She failed. She was then forced to pay costs. This is wrong.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: That is not us, it is the courts.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: We did not do it.

COUNCILLOR ATHA: It is a kind of moral blackmail, financial blackmail that we cannot stand. I will stand by any Member over there or anywhere else who does what he thinks is the right thing to do as long as it is done honestly and without being malicious and I see any attack on Illingworth in that light. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Atha. Councillor Grayshon.

COUNCILLOR GRAYSHON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Page 75, Minute 141, the A65 Quality Bus Initiative. I find it quite amusing that the Council is having to ask bus operators to run a bus service in a manner which is acceptable and it would seem to me that I have no problem with Mr Illingworth sending a few emails. I have blocked him from receiving them, so you can receive them; I cannot.

What I would say is that Mr Illingworth has quite rightly written to the Government on this matter if he is not happy. I would suggest that we all write to the Government and ask for the buses to be placed back into public ownership because that is the way they should be run.

It seems to me that the taxpayer is funding this corridor on to the benefit of private enterprise which will help them and it may very well help the few people who travel by buses, but really the answer lies in the buses being returned to in the ownership of Local Authorities. I always forget whether the word is re-regulate or de-regulate but what we need back is Leeds City Transport and that kind of thing throughout the country to end this nonsense of First Bus having the monopoly. *(interruption)*

That lot over there may have done it but this lot over here have done nothing about it and what we need to do is get it sorted out and have some commonsense on the matter and return the buses to where they should be, which is into the ownership of the public and ensure that the service runs correctly. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Grayshon. Councillor Gruen.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Two comments, Lord Mayor. First, I believe Councillor Lamb referred to the Highways Agency when he spoke. I declare an interest and want to make certain that it is recorded that I did not participate in that debate.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: You have learned.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: No, one has to be careful when Councillor Andrew Carter is about. Secondly, I want to pick up the phrase that Councillor Loble used that we are enamoured with buildings. I plead guilty. I am enamoured with the new John Smeaton College. It is a fantastic building, it is a fantastic learning and teaching environment. Similarly I am enamoured with the Roundhay High School. I am enamoured with the Brigshaw High School. I am enamoured with the Debbie

Young Community Academy Building. There are fantastic learning/teaching facilities throughout the whole of this city due to the funding of a Labour Government.

COUNCILLOR: Taxpayer.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: When that funding is available, Councillor Harker stands up and says, "It is my money and haven't I done well?" When the funding suddenly is not available he says, "That bloody Labour Government have not given us any money."

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: That is true.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: He is caught out and he agrees with me.

COUNCILLOR HARKER: Never, Peter, Never.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: The thing is, our principles and values are firmly rooted, Matthew, unlike your roots which change every couple of weeks.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Carter now to respond, please.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: My Lord Mayor, I have heard some Councillors with some brass neck but the biggest turncoat of the lot to talk about changing roots takes the biscuit. *(laughter)*

My Lord Mayor, let us deal with Councillor Rafique first but more particularly, the very important issues of the Chapeltown Townscape Heritage Initiative and the Armley Townscape Heritage Initiative.

Councillor Rafique, it is not Government money. It is Council money supported by grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund. That money comes from the good members of the public who pay and gamble on the lottery every week. Nothing to do with the Labour Government or, for that matter, any other Government.

I happen to think that these two schemes which we have championed in this administration will play a key role in regeneration and I am delighted that we got the support from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Councillor Lobley is right, it is not just about regenerating bricks and mortar; it is about what that means in terms of a statement of confidence in an area for people to invest, people to keep their businesses, there, move the businesses there and employ more people. It is all right smirking about people out of work in Chapeltown or Armley. There are a lot of them and a lot of them who would like jobs and when we put money in like this into these sort of areas, what, £1.1m into Chapeltown – and that is the second phase, one phase already has been done – and £1.2m into Armley. It is good news and it should be welcomed and it has got nothing to do with the Government; it has got all to do with the Heritage Lottery Fund, our good relations with them, the quality of our bids to them and the money put in by all of us on this city Council.

It is imperative in these difficult economic times that we keep regeneration moving. I was horrified last year when I heard your budget presentation with which you absolutely carved up the regeneration team in this Local Authority. Thankfully you were not in a position to implement it. Regeneration will be very difficult in difficult economic times, but it is essential in difficult economic times or the communities all of us have been trying to help over many years will not see any sort of physical regeneration delivered.

In Armley planners have indicated to the West Leeds Gateway Committee that they are wanting to phase back to Area Action Plan, something I am not happy about at all because I think that that is crucial in terms of moving the Armley scheme forward. West Leeds, as you have heard me say on many occasions, this part of West Leeds has been neglected for far too long and the Armley-Wortley West Leeds Gateway Area again is crucial to the regeneration of a whole area.

The land at Czar Street, I thank all the Members who have been good enough to comment on it. You are absolutely right, it is essential that we help young musicians from all different sections of the community and in particular those who are disadvantaged. I am delighted with the support we have got from the Pigeon Detectives and the Kaiser Chiefs. My colleague Les Carter was completely bemused when he was hearing about all these other groups, most of whom he has never heard of. I, of course, have but only, I admit, because I have to listen to them regularly and ask who they are and my son lets me know in no uncertain terms.

It is a great opportunity because with all that is happening in the Leeds cultural scene, we have to use music not just for music's sake but again to aid regeneration, to aid jobs and training. What we have done at Czar Street I think is a major step forward in that direction and I do thank all the partners. If you have not read the report, please do.

Buslingthorpe. Yes, an example of us doing something perhaps not as democratically as we ought but everybody agreed it needed to be done quickly, the mechanism was there for doing it with the right checks and balances. Interested in the history that we were given from Clive.

A65 Bus Initiative. Well, John, I am pleased you support it because in three weeks' time we shall know whether we are going to get this £21m. A scheme is always capable of improvement and I am not saying that this one could not be improved. What I am saying to you is, it is the scheme the Government have agreed. If we start mucking about with it now, we could very well lose it. There is no guarantee in three week's time or at the next Council meeting I will be telling you we have got this money, no guarantee. What I will tell you is this, if we do not get this money it will set back improving transport connectivity along the whole of the A65 and we have a massive opportunity. We have two possible railway stations plus the bus corridor plus various other things that together will make that corridor a great deal easier and much more environmentally friendly for the people who have to travel up and down it every day. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Carter. Councillor David Blackburn.

(vii) Environmental Services

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I was not expecting to get this far! I refer to page 77 Minute 444 and that is the Climate Change Action Plan. I am not going to get into the debate we are going to have later, we are all going to come up with our various target reductions, but I just thought I would say something.

Twelve years ago when I got elected to this Council, if I had put this to Council I would probably have been the only person to vote for it – there might have been the odd one or two – and probably the only person to vote for it and it would be, “Oh, that lunatic is at it again.” It just proves how far we have moved in twelve years and what is in that document is significant. We do not think it goes far enough but it is significant and proves what the progress is we are making. If we can make that

progress in twelve years, let us make some further progress and move forward.
Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ann Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: I am sorry, Lord Mayor, no.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Chastney.

COUNCILLOR CHASTNEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I got in just in time. I am also going to speak on Minute 144 page 77, also on the Climate Change Action Plan. I am also conscious, like David, that this environmental issue is going to come up a bit more broadly and in greater depth later but for now I just want to pick up one particular example and to also identify how far we have already come. David is absolutely right on that.

One thing I am going to look at here, the free non-means tested insulation scheme. That is the offer of free assessment and provision of loft or cavity wall insulation to up to a thousand properties. That is just one key project but I want to pick that out to illustrate a wider point, which is hopefully something that everyone will keep in their mind when we do get to the climate change debate in the White Papers later on.

For me, a project like the insulation scheme, that is of value for its own environmental sake alone. It is a green goal worth pursuing in itself but I am pretty conscious, I am not naïve and recognise that it is not a view perhaps shared by everyone here – indeed it would be foolish to assume that was the case.

What I would like to say to those who are a little bit more sceptical – and I grant there will be plenty – bring up this point, that for many of these green schemes, many of the things in the action plan and many of the things we hopefully actually want to pursue beyond that, there are benefits beyond just their environmental value. Look at the insulation scheme again. For me it is enough to know that CO₂ is estimated to be cut by 0.6 tonnes a year for every single house. That is great but I am accepting for others that may not be a sufficient outcome that they want to see, so for them you also point out that it carries further benefits, things that you can tangibly quantify and identify. In this case we are looking at an estimated £128 saved for a family bill for every household, so aside from the carbon we have got a cost there. That is vital financial help, often to some of the neediest people that this scheme will be going to. If you actually roll this out city wide to over 100,000 houses, for example, something I would like to see considered, it could be over 65,000 tonnes of CO₂ emissions reduced a year and there will also be, for example, 400 persons per annum of employment also created as well, £1m saved in total energy bills. If you take that together, it is environmental but also financial and social benefits as well.

That is just one case but it is illustrating a broader point, that even if you do not see the desperate need to tackle climate change, even if you do not see the financial need to tackle climate change in a broader sense – and I will gladly argue with anyone that was going to take that position – we should all at least together be able to see the financial and social benefits of supporting the types of schemes that have been found in the Climate Change Action Plan and those schemes that hopefully later on today we will actually clear the path for. When we do come back a bit later from our overpriced chicken tikka banquet, and despite the political wranglings that unfortunately we are probably going to be engaged in, I hope we will all at least keep in mind that we should all be able to find a reason to take a bold stance on climate change, whether or motivation is, as for myself, purely

environmental or social or financial. We all need to act positively and I hope we can all find a reason to do so. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Campbell.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Thank you. Lord Mayor. Can I speak to page 78 Minute 145. I pick up a point Councillor Blackburn made at the very beginning. Twelve years ago when he arrived nothing much was happening with regard to the environment but you have got to admit, there is quite a lot going on at the moment, because not only are we talking about the Climate Change Action Plan but we are also talking about a scheme to increase recycling in the city itself. Keith touched on the subject earlier on and said we need to get our recycling rates up. Here is a positive step forward by the administration with, I think, everybody's support to move this thing forward.

I do not particularly want to touch on the issue of the refuse dispute but I think one of the positives that has come out of that is the attitude now between ourselves and the unions towards reorganising, if that is the right word, the collection service within the city. If you look at the paper that we talk about on the Minutes this afternoon, you will see that it is designed to dramatically increase the amount of recycling that is taking place in the city and in particular it is designed to deal with those areas which in the past were regarded as a rather hard to deal with area.

I would recommend this to you and I would recommend that members of the public, if they get the opportunity, read it and I would also say to Members that in many ways it is up to you. I think we are all champions for recycling in our wards, we all ought to be taking the opportunity this presents to get our recycling rates up a bit further and use that opportunity and use our abilities and skills within the ward to get our recycling rates up to 50%, which I am absolutely confident we shall do. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Campbell. Councillor Monaghan to sum up, please.

COUNCILLOR MONAGHAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I think as we are going to talk on climate change quite a bit more later I will quickly skip over that but just to say I welcome Councillor Blackburn and Councillor Chastney's comments and to agree that twelve years ago we would have been arguing and debating in this Council Chamber whether climate change actually existed; now we are arguing about how best to actually deal with that, which is a really positive step.

In responding to Councillor Campbell's comments, I too will avoid any discussion around the refuse industrial action last year. However, I will say this does reaffirm our commitment to getting as high as possible a recycling figure in this city and it is a reflection of this administration's priority to do that and to make sure the service is flexible across the city and acknowledge that in Adel the resources and the service may need to be different to in Headingley, which may need to be different to Beeston. Across the city we need to look at how we can best engage people with recycling and support them to recycle and I am pleased to say that in February all ward Members will be contacted by our Education Awareness through the Waste Team to actually identify areas in their wards that they are concerned about, identify areas that we know are a problem area for recycling and to work with ward Members to identify a solution that will encourage as many people to recycle as possible.

I am very pleased to have moved that paper to Executive Board. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Finnigan.

(g) Scrutiny Board

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Lord Mayor, just before we go for tea I am talking at page 140, 63 Section 106 planning agreements. Regrettably and I think somewhat unfairly Section 106 planning agreements have received a bad press recently. Certainly in Morley we have worked very well with the Parks and Countryside Commission and the planners to try and make sure that we use Section 106 in an appropriate way to improve the quality of life and the quality of green spaces in our local communities. Certainly since the election of my good colleague Councillor Leadley in 2003 we have seen Chilwell Park refurbished to a very high standard; we systematically worked through Gildersome playground for that to be refurbished; Drighlington playground was also improved and we got two extra junior football pitches there as a result of Section 106 payments, and we do believe it is very important to put across a positive view of what Section 106 can achieve.

Moving across to my good colleagues Councillor Elliott and Councillor Grayshon, who have worked very hard in Morley South and we have seen Henbrigg Park refurbished; we have seen Hesketh Lane refurbished and I would like to pay particular tribute to both Councillor Elliott and Councillor Grayshon who have managed to bring £50,000 of private sponsorship into that arrangement to make sure that that was a high quality scheme.

We are in a situation where at present we are seeing Scratcherd playground refurbished even as we speak; hopefully that will be up and running and offering a high quality playground before the spring. We have the skate park that is already being improved and we are in a process of negotiation and consultation to make sure that actually happens.

Section 106 is something that can be used very usefully and very productively to make sure that we do improve the quality of life for our local residents. What we would say is that we would like to see that expanded to see what can be done in terms of improving community space and community rooms and to see what can be done to make sure that it is used in a more appropriate way.

The last thing we would say on this particular issue is, if you have got any spare 106 moneys anywhere else, we are quite happy to spend them for you. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Finnigan. Councillor Carter to exercise the right of final reply, please.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. I will begin with some brief comments on education, which is not a subject I normally trespass into but in view of some of the comments from the other side I will briefly mention education and deal with the consultation and the rising numbers first of all.

To hear all the people over hear speak you would think that, on a serious note, Richard, Leeds was the only major urban conurbation to be hit with these increased pupil numbers. That is absolutely not the case. In fact, a lot of the major conurbations have been hit with this and it is simply, in many respects, because the Government has no idea how many people are in the country and how many are not.

That is going to go on, unfortunately, because – it is not a debate we particularly want today but it has to be accepted as a fact that the Government have lost control of the boundaries of the country and we do not know how many people

are here and therefore how many kids may turn up to school, particularly in certain heavily populated inner urban areas. It makes life extremely difficult.

What it also does, it does place upon us the responsibility of proper consultation and I have to say to you that both Councillor Richard Harker and myself have raised with Education Leeds the method by which people are informed and the timeliness of the information about consultation on these proposals on particularly now junior schools but very soon it will be secondary schools as well. It is imperative, because these are difficult decisions, that there is proper consultation and for proper consultation not only do the parents and the residents have to find out but the elected Members for the wards concerned need timely information, proper briefings and they need to have invitations that clearly spell out where they are supposed to be and what is being discussed. Both Councillor Harker and myself have taken that up extremely forcibly with Education Leeds and it has been taken on board.

Adult Social Care was mentioned and somebody said – I think it was Councillor McKenna – that there must be no complacency. I can promise you, there will be no complacency. I do want to reflect comments that I think came really from all sides to congratulate the staff in adult social care for the excellent work that they have done in improving the service between the previous inspection and the most recent inspection and particularly the leadership team. I know Sandie would not want me to single out any people in particular but the whole team deserve our thanks and I am sure that many of the people who they work so hard to help will equally be very thankful, but no complacency whatever. We want to move that service forward again.

I would say to the Members opposite, some of the comments that are made to us by the inspectorate are around the personalisation of services and the modernisation of services and if we are to achieve the best modern services for our elderly population, then we will have to take some hard decisions and you all have been noticeable by your extremely entrenched views that are not shared by your Parliamentary colleagues, by your Government and will not be shared, I do not think, by any future Government. I think you need to look long and hard at how we need to modernise our adult social care to make it an excellent service for the 21st Century.

When I listened to Councillors Wakefield and Lewis and one or two others, it would appear the message has not got through from the Lord Mandelson of Wherever or wherever he is. They still seem to be wanting to appeal to their core vote, however small that core is shrinking to be. The language they used in connection with the strike and comments, personal comments to Councillor Brett merely reflected they are certainly of the Balls part of the party rather than the New Labour part of the party – their party, I might add.

Let me just go on to the strike and say this to you. The strike might well have been handled better by the unions, because the people who (*interruption*) lost out the most were the people who lost twelve weeks' pay. They were the people who did not have to lose that pay because we always said, both Richard and I and the officers, three years' protection, 18 months still to go, we will talk our way through the differences and we will work to narrow the gap and now we have narrowed the gap to nothing, but it was always contingent upon the improvement in the refuse collection service.

The refuse collection service and refuse in general as an issue is something that you lot again have not been prepared to get your heads round and come to terms with. It is hugely expensive, it is going to get more expensive if we do not recycle more. Your Government signed up, as usual, to the dictates from Europe.

We are now paying millions of pounds in landfill tax a year, and that is a direct tax, not even a stealth tax which your lot are so good at, but a direct tax on the people of Leeds from your Government.

We have to get our recycling rates improved, we have to get the cost of the service down, we have to get a better service at the same time and the only way to do that was to modernise the service which had not been modernised for a quarter of a century.

I mentioned it before and I will mention it again, whether Councillor Wakefield likes it or not. He may refer---

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: It is untrue.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: It is not untrue. He may refer to the fact that it was a long strike. He presided over the shortest strike in the history of Leeds. In 2004 just before the local elections when they lost power, the unions, the men in the refuse collection service came out on strike because his lot were trying to introduce modernisation. An hour and a half later...

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Without consultation.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: ...the strike was over, the Council capitulated, so we have got Brown the Bottler in Downing Street and Keith the Capitulator in the Civic Hall.

My Lord Mayor, what happened in the end was a good deal for the Council taxpayers of Leeds. We were hugely sorry for the inconvenience. We live here as well; all of us suffered when the bins were not emptied. It was a lot more inconvenient for some people, particularly once again the ones who could least manage who got the most inconvenience, but what we have got out of it is a modernised service and a service that will improve over the years to come at a cost we can afford and a saving of £2m a year most of which is being ploughed back into the service, not just put into the coffers of the City Council.

When Councillor Lewis calls on us for honesty and clarity, I am not prepared, my Lord Mayor, to take lectures from that party on honesty and clarity. Read the Iraq War Enquiry and ask yourselves how you can stay members of a party that is full of so many dissemblers who go along there and try and gloss over the lies and deceptions heaped upon the people of this country. Do not lecture us, Councillor Lewis, about honesty, do not lecture us about honesty and clarity. *(Interruption)*

My Lord Mayor, in finishing I am going to run a competition. I want someone to come up with 15 good uses for a chocolate teapot. *(Applause)*

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

It is now time for tea and whatever reports a certain newspaper has made regarding our Council day teas, I think we are all deserving of the tea we are now going to enjoy. I welcome the visitors from the public gallery to join us in the Banquet Hall. Thank you.

(Short adjournment)

ITEM 9 – WHITE PAPER MOTION
OFSTED INSPECTION OF CHILDREN’S SERVICES

THE LORD MAYOR: We begin now the second session, which is the White Paper motions. I call upon Councillor Mulherin.

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Apparently due to some legal advice that we received only last night at the Whips’ meeting, I am obliged to move Procedure Rule 14.10 to seek of Council to move a motion to amend the fifth and final paragraph by replacing the word “Resolves” with the word “Urges”, now placed after the numeral 1, and the insertion of the words “Resolves that” after the numeral 2.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Mulherin. I would seek leave of Council to move in the following terms. Do we all agree with what Councillor Mulherin has said? (*A vote was taken*) Therefore, it has been AGREED. Councillor Mulherin, would you like to continue?

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Thank you. Here we are again, a new year and a new report but, sadly, with the same story damning once again the shocking state of Children’s Services in Leeds. This time, Ofsted found that the overall effectiveness of services in Leeds to ensure that children and young people are safe is inadequate. On the back of this, Councillor Golton sent a letter to all Members on 6 January and gave us a rather different spin, as he will no doubt do again later today. His letter completely failed to mention that the Inspectors judged the Council to be “inadequate” at ensuring children and young people are safe. Instead, he chose to focus on the scarcely better “adequate” rating of taking reasonable steps to ensure safety. Whatever spin he and his coalition choose to put on it, the fact remains that they are failing to safeguard children.

It is not even as if this report should come as a surprise. You have had repeated warnings from the Labour Group and from previous inspections that Children’s Services in Leeds are facing real and significant problems. You will remember that we called a Special Council Meeting just one year ago to debate the concerns that we had then about Children’s Services. The main focus of that debate was the APA report, which found that this Authority was merely “adequate” for staying safe, being healthy and the capacity to improve Children’s Services. The Inspectors questioned the capacity then to improve. We believe that was unacceptable then and made it clear in this Chamber.

That report also identified that the number of unfilled posts for social care staff working the children and families was a major weakness, with too much reliance on temporary staff and social care vacancy rates nearly twice those found in similar councils.

We called on you then to stop being complacent and dismissive of our warnings and the findings of one inspection report after another. We urged you then to take the criticisms on board and take appropriate action to ensure the protection of vulnerable children in this city.

You, Councillor Golton, did not share our concerns and accused us of attempting to “ferment disquiet within the people of Leeds in terms of the quality of the services that they are getting for the most vulnerable members of our city.” You, Councillor Brett, said, “We believe we are well on the way to putting right the faults that have rightly been identified.”

Let us remind ourselves of the reports that followed and see whether Councillor Brett is correct in his assertion that you are well on the way to putting things right.

The CPA in March 2009 said that Leeds needed to do more to protect vulnerable children and the Children's Services' rating fell from three stars to two. In July 2009 we saw the Serious Case Review after the tragic death of Casey Leigh Mullen, which highlighted failures throughout the system. Last summer we also had the unannounced Ofsted inspection which, I am sure you will all remember, found that seven out of 23 children from the random sample they took were left at potential risk of serious harm. You, Councillor Golton, assured us that steps were being taken, action plans were put in place and that the situation was under control.

We then had the announced inspection and, lo and behold, the overall effectiveness of Children's Services was "inadequate" with only an "adequate" capacity for improvement. In fact one third of the judgments in the latest report came back as "inadequate".

I think it is worth taking the time to list these judgments. Overall effectiveness – inadequate; quality of provision – inadequate; service responsiveness, including complaints – inadequate; assessments and direct work with children and families – inadequate; care planning, review and recording – inadequate; leadership and management – inadequate; evaluation, including performance management, quality assurance and workforce development – inadequate; value for money – inadequate; assessment and direct work with children – inadequate.

Given the seriousness of this report and the implications it has for Leeds, we believe that it would have been appropriate for a Special Executive Board meeting to have been called to fully discuss the findings. Our Executive Board Members were, after all, prevented from speaking on the problems that the state of Children's Services in this city had reached in a Comprehensive Area Assessment at the Executive Board meeting before Christmas when you failed to bring forward an emergency paper.

The fact that you were not prepared to discuss the concerns then just shows the lack of gravity you afford to the long-running problems within Children's Services. You seek to reassure people now that changes have been made and that changes will be made but how many children will slip through the net while we wait for these changes to take effect?

Under your watch the capacity for improvement is only "adequate", having fallen from "very good" to just "adequate" in only 18 months. That is a damning indictment not only of the service you provide but of your inability to remedy problems even when they are identified for you.

Throughout your tenure the situation has got steadily worse. How can anyone have confidence that the changes and improvements that you talk about will actually happen or happen fast enough for the children and families who are relying on that service?

It is difficult to see how you can convince us that you know what you are doing when the latest report itself states:

"The cost of delivering effective child protection services across the city is not yet fully understood by the Council."

Let me make it quite clear that we on this side of the Chamber believe the cost of your complacency to date and your incompetent running of Children's Services has already been too high - the cost to vulnerable children who we are responsible for, the cost to families and communities in terms of lost confidence in the services that we provide, the cost to the Authority in staff turnover, payouts to senior officers who have left and recruitment costs to replace them, and the cost of the reputation of Leeds City Council.

This Authority has received a Draft Improvement Notice and has already had an Improvement Board imposed upon it from outside, with an external Chair to sort out the mess that you have made. It would seem that you have no idea what you are actually doing or what you actually should be doing. The latest report goes on to say the challenge remains insufficient – again an issue we have raised time and time again and one you have repeatedly ignored. Indeed, Councillor Golton, at the Special Council Meeting last January, you said:

“With the Scrutiny Board with our friends and corporate carers I know that I am subject to continual, ongoing, in-depth evaluation and accountability...”

It seems that Ofsted disagree with you and have confirmed yet again that what we were saying was true. At the last Executive Board meeting you said that you were going to involve the Opposition in Scrutiny but you failed to say how, so I am asking you here and now exactly what form of involvement you are proposing.

Surely you must agree that the time has come for your administration to stop the practice of pretending to scrutinise itself. The purpose of Scrutiny is to act as a check against decisions taken by an administration. How, then, can an administration Councillor effectively chair that Board? In order to achieve the transparency challenge and accountability that Scrutiny requires, you must allow your decisions to be properly scrutinised by your Opposition.

If this had been the case then the questions we have been raising for so long would have been properly addressed through the process and perhaps we would have been in a better position to help you to avoid some of the mess you have made at the expense of the children of Leeds. You implemented a grotesquely top-heavy superstructure within Children's Services. Again, we told you at the outset that it was the wrong decision but you went ahead regardless. The concentration of resources at the top has led to a shortage of front line staff and huge caseloads for our social workers. It is worth noting that Ofsted made particular reference to the burden being borne by newly qualified staff and the fact that social workers were unable to access training.

Do not intentionally misunderstand me, as I know you are wont to do, Councillor Golton. We are not laying the blame for this situation at the feet of the social work staff, who have an extremely difficult job to do, even without the additional burden of caseloads that are too high. No, the blame for this situation lies solely at the feet of your administration and can be traced back to your decision in 2005 to allocate your resources in the wrong way. You made that decision, you left the front line wanting and now, thanks to you, we have Government intervention for a department that cannot adequately safeguard the children of Leeds and seven out of 23 children in a snapshot taken last year left at potential risk of serious harm.

The children of Leeds deserve better. It is time that you on that side of the Chamber gave serious consideration to that and stepped aside to enable the people of Leeds to get the higher standards of service they deserve rather than the third rate service they get from you. It is with a mixture of sadness and anger that I thought it

was necessary to table this White Paper today. We cannot allow you to muddle on any longer failing the children of Leeds. Ofsted recognise that, the DCSF has recognised that; it is time you recognised that. I move the White Paper. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake to second.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Now we have an amendment in the name of Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I have to say I received that motion with a mixture of sadness and anger. I have to say, Lord Mayor, I was very disappointed in the tone of the Labour White Paper and it is particularly significant on the day that we welcomed our Mayor for the Day, a young person who showed plenty of promise, that young person offered a constructive, policy-based proposal people could buy into. I think she would be appalled at your headline-grabbing approach to what Ofsted had to say about our services for children. *(interruption)*

This latest Ofsted report is hot on the heels of the APA which itself commented on the unannounced inspection that previous summer. That inspection was on our Contact and Referrals Services. Unfortunately, the Labour Party are determined that all we will hear from the report is a headline that suits their spin of crisis. Undoubtedly there are areas that require sustained attention. These areas have been judged “inadequate” and we do not gloss over them. We never gloss over areas that are judged as “inadequate” no matter how much you insist that we do. If anything, disappointingly, it is your White Paper that glosses over the inconvenient truth.

It is significant that you have chosen the headline from the unannounced inspection which happened last July when we were all concerned to hear that seven out of 23 cases of referrals that were made to our social services teams were deemed by Inspectors to have shown that people were at potential risk of serious harm. That was last July.

The APA judgment referred to this as well and this, it said, was a significant reason for judging that Children’s Services overall performed poorly and it was actually mentioned in the APA. The other area that you mentioned in terms of why it was said to be performing poorly was because one of our children’s homes was judged as “inadequate” in an Ofsted inspection and also our private fostering arrangements were still judged as “inadequate”, primarily because your Government had not put a system in place to re-inspect for two years. That was what the APA said.

COUNCILLOR TAGGART: How do you sleep at night?

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Judging by the motion you would assume that Ofsted, when they came back to us at the end of November, had found no movement. Actually it says, and I am going to quote – you point to the headlines; I am going for the text, Ms Mulherin:

“The Council have responded well to the findings of the inspection in July 2009 and taken swift action to improve the situation. The improvement plan has been refreshed and implemented and immediate action has been taken to ensure that policy, procedure and practice, including a robust Risk Register, meet minimum

standards for children's protection enquiries. There is a strong corporate steer for improvement from Lead Members and the Chief Executive of the Council has demonstrated responsibility for the implementation of improvements through the Chairing of the Improvement Board. Significant work has already been undertaken to prioritise improvement. Poor staff performance is being addressed and some systems and processes have already been re-designed to support improvement. For example, case management decisions are now subject to robust auditing."

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Nothing to do with that.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON:

"The threshold for access to the Child Protection Services is now appropriate and this work is being prioritised, but the time lines and quality of assessments remain a challenge."

That is a balanced assessment of our approach to what was found in July.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Whitewash.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: What I can say, Councillor Mulherin, is that those inspectors did not just look at 23 cases when they came back to the Authority at the end of November; they looked at 35 case files and they looked at them in depth. Not one of those showed that a child was at potential serious risk of harm. That is an inconvenient truth for you and you should have included that in your motion. (*hear, hear*) (*Applause*)

However, Lord Mayor, the prioritised work in Referrals and Assessment is only Stage One. There are still some serious issues to tackle. The caseloads of our social workers, as has been referred to by Councillor Mulherin, is not sustainable and is affecting performance in the field. Our computerised recording system has passed its sell-by date and is frustrating the rate at which our social workers can record their work. The Inspectors are right to highlight these issues and to make them the basis for their conclusion that we are still performing inadequately until these two issues are solved.

Immediate actions to ease the pressure on social workers has been the recruitment of Advanced Practitioners. At this point, Lord Mayor, I think it might be worth noting that the number of social workers has gone up incrementally each year since this administration took power in 2004. The issue of vacancy rates for social workers might have been an issue in the period that Councillor Mulherin talks about but it is certainly not an issue now when we do not have vacancy rates for social workers. In fact, we are recruiting Advanced Practitioners, as I have just pointed out to you, who are there specifically to relieve the social workers that are in place of complex cases, thereby enabling them to take on those higher workloads for the time being at a more sustainable rate. Moreover, Lord Mayor, these Advanced Practitioners are there to build practice within teams on the front line.

Social Work Assistants will also tackle administration tasks to ensure that social workers get away from the computer screen and are released to spend more time in family homes. However, Lord Mayor, it is dishonest of the Labour Party to imply to the people of Leeds that these problems can be solved overnight. The Ofsted report itself states this through the list of actions with different time scales and

the recognition that the Ofsted inspection in November took place twelve weeks after the previous inspection. It should be noted that the inspection that happened of our fostering and adoption services, Lord Mayor, was re-inspected twelve months later and also included a six month health check by the Inspectorate to ensure that we were on the right tracks. Twelve months versus twelve weeks.

Lord Mayor, it should be noted that our investment decisions cannot be talked about this juncture because they form part of the budget. However, we were able to impart the priorities that we will be including in the Children's Services section of the budget with inspectors and they do refer to this. In terms of being unsure about the cost of how safeguarding will look, this is primarily due to the fact that we are still reviewing the structure of our safeguarding and social work services to ensure that they do best fit what is there, therefore you cannot put a price tag against something which you have not completely finalised.

What I can say, Lord Mayor, is that our investment decisions are not helped by the exorbitant increase that we have suffered over the past 18 months due to the increase in costs charged by the Ministry of Justice to take our children to the courts for care proceedings. It cost this Council £300,000 in its first year of implementation and with the rise of over 20% in extra referrals this year, it means a pressure...

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Red herring.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: ...on our budgets for these kind of fees is now half a million pounds. That is over £800,000 over a two year period, Lord Mayor. We call on the Labour Group opposite to join us in calling for those charges to be stopped.

I have to say in contrast to the approach from the Ministry of Justice, other parts of Government have shown support. I do appreciate the focus that Dawn Primarolo has given us and supported us to find an independent Chair for our Improvement Board, and I will pledge that the meetings of that Improvement Board and, of course, the actions that come out of it will be reported regularly both to Executive Board and therefore also to this Council.

In conclusion, Lord Mayor, I do encourage all Members to monitor progress closely. Do not read headlines. Go into the text because that is where you will understand---

COUNCILLOR LYONS: There's nowt wrong then, Stewart?

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: That is where you will understand how our hardworking professionals in the field are tackling this in practical terms.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: It is you that's not.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Also, Lord Mayor, I appreciate ongoing support from individual Members whichever role they have, whether it is the Children's Champions, Corporate Carers, Governors, whichever, to monitor progress both of our Improvement Plan in the face of these Ofsted inspections but also in terms of monitoring progress within their own communities.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Not even an apology from you then.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: It is that kind of grass roots information that is integral to making sure that we improve at a pace. Thank you, Lord Mayor. I move the amendment. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: I call on Councillor John Bale to second.

COUNCILLOR BALE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I rise to second the amendment in the name of Councillor Golton. No-one can be complacent and no-one on this side is complacent. Children quite clearly are our most important responsibility as a Council and as individual Councillors.

It is clear that there have been shortcomings and no-one on this side is denying there have been shortcomings.

COUNCILLOR: Yes you are.

COUNCILLOR BALE: What is equally clear is that those shortcomings have been recognised, that prompt action has been taken and that there is a trajectory of improvement clearly in place.

I have to say, I think criticism of the present and previous incumbents in the role that Stewart now occupies are grossly unfair. I have acknowledged the fact that I believe in the first two years of this administration, 2004 to 2006, that we did not move fast enough, but I have to say that Central Government has to take its share of responsibility and we are seeing this all over the country, because Central Government believed that all we had to do was create a single point responsibility and everything would be right and that was incredibly naive. We are not complacent...

COUNCILLOR LYONS: You have not done the job.

COUNCILLOR BALE: ...but Labour's attack on Children's Services in Leeds is intemperate, it is unfair and it is very unhelpful.

The reality is – let me mention something that has not been mentioned so far. Our own systems are pretty good. Our internal audit processes, as Members of the Corporate Governance and Audit heard last week, identified and reported on the shortcomings on 21 April last year, 21 April 2009, and those matters were reported and acted upon.

I believe there is a debate to be had about the extent to which internal audit, which I think is an excellent part of the Council's procedures, the extent to which an internal audit report should be more randomly escalated. That is the debate that we need to have and it is something which Corporate Governance and Audit last week suggested should be looked at because internal audit reports to the functional managers, which it did, in April last year, the reality is that the shortcomings have been recognised ahead of the Ofsted report through that internal audit process.

Lisa's characterisation of the Ofsted report was highly selective. It is fine to go through and simply mention the things that are inadequate. Ofsted refer to our responding well, they refer to our taking swift action, they refer to our robust Risk Register. Councillor Mulherin did not mention those things. We recognise that an "adequate" judgment, which is what we had on being safe and feeling safe – not "inadequate, "adequate" – we recognise that "adequate" is not good enough and as I say, we have a trajectory of improvement and we are building now on firm foundations.

I am afraid that this characterisation of an unaddressed crisis is very wide of the mark, but I want to refer to the tailpiece of this motion, which has not been referred to yet. This is this terrible attack on the independence of Scrutiny. In a

desire to score cheap political points she attacks the political independence of Scrutiny.

I have been impressed by the extent to which Scrutiny in this Council is, indeed, politically independent. I will not embarrass colleagues by mentioning them by name but colleagues right across the political spectrum are discharging that Scrutiny function as Chairs of Scrutiny Boards quite superbly.

Councillor Mulherin is prepared to sacrifice all of that and to turn Scrutiny into a political battlefield. The motion makes clear that if a Labour Member were to Chair the Children's Services Scrutiny Board, the principle of political independence would be immediately suspended; thus at a stroke it disqualifies Labour from holding that office for the foreseeable future. (*hear, hear*)

Lord Mayor, in an election year it really is quite encouraging to know that Labour has not lost its ability to shoot itself in the foot. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gettings.

COUNCILLOR GETTING: Lord Mayor, if I could briefly comment on this White Paper and the Ofsted report. I would like to start by commending those officers who are working in a very focused way and who are striving to move this agenda forward and who are determined to make a real difference for our young people.

Can I also commend those Councillors – and they are on all sides of this Council – who give so much of their time to be school governors and to be Children's Champions and to be on the Children's Scrutiny Board and the Scrutiny Working Parties - the Scrutiny Working Parties I have looked at in detail about safeguarding and resources.

It is interesting though, Lord Mayor, that from these meetings of the Working Party, where we have had 14 meetings and we have listened to 28 witnesses, whereby our senior officers are presenting to us what their concerns are and what their priorities should be. It is very important because when it comes to the Ofsted report, the Ofsted report in fact mirrors their concerns, so all the issues about inadequacies are the issues that our senior officers are highlighting and these are the issues that our senior officers have examined the policies and what they are doing to put things right.

You have already mentioned the word "Ofsted" and immediately it plants fear and anxiety in people's minds and this should not be so because it does provide an independent mirror, an independent report, even though sometimes there may be a Government slant on it, which should tell you in the main what you already know.

Even more important about the Ofsted report is that although you already know – or you should know – the issues, it does make you concentrate and allocate your resources appropriately to putting things right, and that is the value of Ofsted. It is only bad news if something in the Ofsted appears that you have no idea about – then in that case there is reason for serious concern.

We have heard, Lord Mayor, or Scrutiny has heard, of how senior officers are working on these policies to try and put things right but having looked at the issues that cause concern, it is equally important this Council should note where improvements have been made. Children's Scrutiny has been made aware of the significant work that has been undertaken to prioritise improvements.

There are many examples in this report which shows there has been a move forward. Policies are in place, new plans have been made and there are more to be made. There obviously is a clear way forward, there are policies which are fit for purpose and it requires that all 99 Members of this Council support those policies. It is not just if we criticise the Council – and by the way the Council is all of us, all 99 people in this room (*interruption*) - if you will listen, friend, I have not finished – there are good examples in the Ofsted, good progress has been made on the Children and Young People's Plan which demonstrates a good level of achievement, significant progress in some aspects of safeguarding.

I do not want to repeat what other people have said and I have said all that I was going to say, but what I would like to stress is that all of us have a part to play in trying to move things forward, not just at a Scrutiny level but at a local level and on Area Committees, in our own ward where there are issues we should examine as local Councillors in our wards. I have certainly picked up issues from the Scrutiny Board which I am not happy about and I have uncovered things that need sorting out and we should all play a part in that.

The NBI Members of this group fully support and encourage our officers; equally we give our support and encouragement to the portfolio holder of this office who is (*interruption*). You do what you think is right and we shall do what we think is right. We believe he is hardworking, he is committed and we give him our support and have confidence in him. Only, Lord Mayor, if we support and work together will we demonstrate to the City of Leeds that every child does matter and, Lord Mayor, I conclude. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Gettings. I now call on Councillor Ann Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. A lot has been said about this and I said quite a bit last time we had the inspection we had and here we are again. Yes, there has been some improvements and I think I cannot say it is all bad, but nevertheless when we look at it, it is mainly "inadequates" and at the best "adequate". There are two or three "goods" there but to me even "adequate" is not good enough, because I want "good". We should really be aiming for "excellent" but "good" is, let us be honest, if Authorities get "good", that to me is acceptable. You aim higher.

I am still not happy with it. We have got a long way to go. I appreciate, as I have said, there have been some improvements but nowhere near enough and this report is not good enough. We all want to know that the children out there are getting a good service. We all want to know that and I am sure regardless of what our political views are.

I look at this and I see in there that we have still got the timeliness and quality of assessments remain a challenge. It mentions about the social workers' caseloads are too high, we are getting some more social workers but the front line management capacity is insufficient and again they talk about recording the electronic recording system is not fit for purpose. Of course, we have got to get that right, we have got to have things recorded properly as they should be.

There is quite a bit in here that there are weaknesses there, we know that, we know that a Board was formed after the last inspection and the Inspector even criticises that, saying that the Improvement Board was set up by the Chief Executive and apparently that has not had people going to it, shall we say, high enough in the Council so that the Inspector is criticising it in this report.

To me there is a lot. I do not think I have got the time to speak and I know a lot has been said but I am trying to be a bit fair and say it is not all “inadequate” but nevertheless “adequate” is not good enough. This report, yes I have looked at it, I have read it all the way through, Stewart, so I am not just looking at headlines there. This report, if everybody looks and it and reads it all through, to be really honest they have got to say that it is no way is the sort of report that Leeds City Council wants to get.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Appalling.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: I want Leeds to lead and that is what all of us should want and that is what we have got to aim for. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Parnham.

COUNCILLOR PARNHAM: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I will keep this brief because obviously a lot of people want to speak. First of all, I do not agree with Councillor Bale, with respect, that Councillor Mulherin’s White Paper is politically motivated. I do not agree at all. I agree with Councillor Mulherin. I specifically do not agree with Councillor Gettings’s positive noises. I do not agree with you, the optimism – I just do not.

COUNCILLOR GETTINGS: We do not agree with you.

COUNCILLOR PARNHAM: When I printed this off on Saturday night, 35 pages, I did not know the contents but I expected a positive report on balance, having heard what had been said previously, the reassurances that were given. I was really appalled - it is the most I have been since I was elected Councillor 16 months ago, reading this. Of the 33 criteria only six were rated “good”, 27 were rated as either only just meeting minimum requirements or below.

I do not want to start saying who is good and who is bad. I certainly do not think that all the people working in the department are up to scratch – I do not know how we are going to sort it out and I am only a new Councillor so it is not really for me to make the judgments on that, but I certainly think that with political leadership comes political responsibility and at some point people have got to say, does the present leadership of Children’s Services have the rigour and the vision and the – can I say - ability, perhaps, to change things around, because we cannot go on like this. That is all I have got to say, thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Andrew Carter.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: My Lord Mayor, when you receive an Ofsted report, an inspectorate report, any sort of report of this nature which will have in it a whole series of comments across the whole range of the operations, I always look, when I am looking from the outside in, at the response of the organisation that has been inspected and whether it looks at the report and says, “Well, actually, we do recognise that report, the good, the bad and the indifferent”, and does say, “Actually yes, that is a reflection of where the service is at at the moment”, but to be able to make that judgment on this you have to read it all, as Stewart Golton and John Bale said, and as Rob Gettings has alluded to. You cannot pick and mix. You cannot just look at all the parts that are bad – and I am not in any way pretending or suggesting that a lot of what is in here is anything but bad – but you have to look at the whole lot and you have to look at the comments of the Inspectors as to how the organisation is responding and how the management team, not just the officer management team

but the political management team in the department, is responding to what has happened and the position that we are in at the moment.

There is no doubt at all that the situation is being taken extremely seriously. A whole range of measures have been put in place. The Chief Executive of the whole Council has taken a significant leadership role in terms of the way in which the Independent Review Board is structured, what input that will have, and there is a real commitment by this administration, every one of us, to make sure that nothing less than “good” will do.

Why do I say “good” and not “excellent”? Because “excellent” is the aspiration; “good” is the necessity. We have to become “good” in Children’s Services, just as we are progressing in Adult Social Care, and that is what is happening.

I do want you to reflect, everyone in this Council, on what is happening in the world of young people. We have a 20% increase in referrals. No organisation, I do not care where it is or what it is, in the public or private sector can respond like that to a 20% increase effectively in its business, in this case in referrals, very worryingly, of young people. We have to gear ourselves up now and it is right for me to say we are not going to comment on the budget process in this meeting other than to say that quite clearly we have taken on board the capacity issues that this raises, whether or not they are historic or whether or not they are caused now by this sudden increase in referrals – an increase that, I regret to say, I have to say, I tell you, I think will go on increasing because every time, quite rightly, there is coverage anywhere in the country of anything happening to a vulnerable young person, then immediately in every children’s social services department across the land referrals go through the roof. I am not condemning that – some of us may well be taking part in those referrals because we see things happening in our own wards and somebody may be made aware of something elsewhere in the city and you think that looks suspiciously like something else I have heard about, so you can see how the whole thing ratchets up.

We have a major piece of work in front of us but I do believe that we have got now in position the right management team on a permanent basis, the right management team on a temporary basis, we have now appointed an Interim Director of Children’s Services and we are going out for permanent recruitment. I believe that Councillor Golton – and I really do not like the way, I know my time is nearly up, I do not like the way this debate and previous debates on Children’s Services have been personalised in the way that they have and also in the way that not long ago Adult Social Care was. I noticed when you were praising the progress in Adult Social Care you completely forgot the comments you had made only a matter of months ago on Adult Social Care in connection with the Executive Board Member. You cannot have it both ways.

This is a very, very serious issue. We recognise that, we recognise very much the bad parts of this report and we recognise what the Inspectorate are saying about how we are coping with dealing with them. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Carter. Councillor Lancaster, please.

COUNCILLOR LANCASTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Firstly, can I apologise? I should have declared an interest as a governor at Carr Manor High School and as a Member of the Networks Cluster Leadership.

We have heard about that we are not complacent on this side so I will not go on about that and how hard we are about working to address these issues. It might be controversial to the other side but I have to put in at this point the pressures from outside about nationally how child poverty has risen and also locally about there is more than 7,000 reported incidents of domestic violence. That kind of thing and escalation in the city is bound to impact on the more children that need caring for.

We have seen, I have personally seen the work of the Children's Centres and I am a real fan of them. I think this is where, to address issues, the local provision, that is so important. We have now 48 designated and operational Children's Centres and Leeds will be one of the biggest providers of Children's Centres in the country with an increase by April 2001 to 58 Children's Centres providing services for all families and children across the city.

Councillor Iqbal talked earlier about children at risk. These centres are doing some fantastic work with families, especially through the Common Assessment Framework.

There was some positive comments and I would imagine the Members opposite would not expect me to be any other – I am a half full person, not a negative and I think it is now where we go forward and what we do to increase that.

Services have been organised in localities to deliver sharply focused early intervention services which are closely aligned to meet local community needs. This is where the value is, this is about dealing with them locally. Families are increasingly able to benefit from a wide range of locality based early intervention and family support services provided through effective multi-agency work.

Also, progress has been made to set the threshold for access to child protection services at the right level, implement effective auditing arrangements of team managers' decisions and improve the initial sifting of child protection referrals. Services are beginning to make a difference and are improving the lives of the most vulnerable and needy children and families. I could go on but I know it is not what you want to hear; you want to say it is all negative.

COUNCILLOR LYONS: We want the job doing right.

COUNCILLOR LANCASTER: Please will you let us speak? You might not want to listen.

COUNCILLOR LYONS: You asked the question to us.

COUNCILLOR LANCASTER: As a governor of a high school, one of the positive points was that there has been a strong focus on improving the behaviour of young people in secondary schools and this has shown some success. The most recent local data indicates the proportion of schools judged "good" or better for behaviour of pupils has improved to 81% and is much better than found in 2007. Schools support pupils well. As I have said, I could go on.

Anyone who has read Lord Laming's report, this was in March 2009:

"Few careers are as demanding or as rewarding as that of working with children, young people and their families. People who enter the children's workforce, be it in health services, the police, education, youth work or social work do so to make a difference to other people's lives. Every day thousands of children are helped, supported and in some cases have their lives saved by these staff.

However, rather than feeling valued for their commitment and expertise, professionals across these services often feel undervalued, unsupported and at risk. Morale amongst social workers in services for children is particularly low.”

The Government knew about that, that was in this report, but...

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: (*inaudible*) here in Leeds.

COUNCILLOR LANCASTER: I accept that we have got a lot of work to do but what I would say on that page and reading this report, the statement that jumped out at me, “All kids need is a little help, a little hope and somebody who believes in them”, and I know everybody in this Chamber today wants to give that help, the hope and the belief in those people and I am sure that we can all find a way to work together to improve the lives of our children in the city. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Lancaster. Councillor Wakefield

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can I preface my comments again with comments made by Councillor Gettings – that is our appreciation for the officers of this Council responding to one of the biggest crises that has ever faced children in this city. (*hear, hear*) I have to say, I think Paul Rogerson has done a magnificent job, along with Sandie Keene, who has taken on additional duties.

I also want to reiterate a point I made two months ago when we were here last and say that this Labour Group does take this seriously, can have something to contribute and wants to contribute and I always think that when they are in trouble with an argument they bring Councillor Bale out to do a bit of political...

COUNCILLOR ATHA: The honest man.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: I thought he was the honest man, but I think quite clearly his arguments about Scrutiny are totally and utterly false. None of the people, we are not looking for political opposition. What we are saying is, with every respect to Bill, he has taken on two thirds of the budget. He is doing Children’s, Education - it is far too overloaded. Let us separate it, let us play a positive and constructive role.

Twelve months ago we had a meeting in this Council and we pointed out our concerns about the structure, the processes and the impact on our children and we did it constructively. Seven reports later - we are now talking about seven reports later from Ofsted, the patience of Ofsted and the patience of Government have snapped. They see deteriorating services in this Council and what is worse, they have now got external intervention in this Council, an Improvement Notice, an external Improvement Board. That means quite simply they do not have the confidence in this administration to make the improvements to a service which protects our children and particularly our vulnerable. That is why we have got an Improvement Notice, that is why we have got ministerial intervention and that is why we have got an external board, because they have proved to be totally and utterly incompetent.

I know we asked for the resignation of Councillor Golton some months ago and for whatever reasons they have decided to stick with him. You can draw your own conclusions about that. If he is going to say, then I beg him to take this serious, take the gravity of this situation seriously and he does not. I will give you a little sample – I wish I could have more time – of an interview with Radio Leeds. He

talked about quoting the documents, you talk about quoting only the positive. Radio Leeds understandably wanted Councillor Golton to do an interview and they asked him a fair question. They said, "Given you have had all these reports coming up the line, don't you think you could have done more to prepare yourself for the future?" This is what he said. "Well, I think that is down to how the scoring mechanism works because the Ofsted regime in recent years has become more and more forensic." In other words, he used a totally and utterly diversion to do one simple thing – just say, "We got it wrong." Just say, "We need to get our finger out, we need to commit ourselves." When he was asked about, "Are there sufficient resources?" what did he say? "I think this is one of the reasons why it is important to have a measured response to this report." Totally and utterly inadequate and I think that was the view of everybody listening to that programme. This man will not accept any responsibility.

Officers are to blame in the past, the Government is to blame in the past, the Ofsted criteria is to blame in the past – everyone is to blame because of his responsibility.

In the report, as you say it is a very large report and it says a couple of things. First of all it talks about a lack of resources. Who is responsible for resources? It talks about the lack of understanding of value for money. It talks about the breaking of the spirit of social workers in this city because they have overloaded them with case work. That is only one person's responsibility and that is Councillor Golton and the people who support him on that side are just as culpable because they have to decide as well. It is not just him, it is the whole lot on those benches that are utterly responsible for the failure to provide adequate services in this city. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Wakefield. Councillor Gruen.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: It was interesting to listen to Professor Bale talking about the various aspects why action should be mitigated. I just pick up a couple.

He talked about a robust Risk Register. There is no point in having a register if you do not take action based on the register and mitigate the action. He talked about it being a big job. It is a big job. He did not say, though, why the Government had created a Director of Children's Services and he knows why and we all know why. Before then there were far too many incidents which showed Councils up and down the country wanting, failing, and the idea therefore was, quite rightly, to bring all those responsibilities together. It is a huge job and I note that the only person who is no longer here is the person who did that huge job. She has been unceremoniously discarded. She is no longer with us.

In Haringey when that happened someone had to take political responsibility and accountability and it was not just the portfolio holder – actually, it was also the Leader of the Council. They had to take accountability and sometimes you may be in the wrong place at the wrong time, but if this is not an issue of political accountability, I do not know which is. *(hear, hear)* I do not know which is.

We have talked about this being the right structure – Andrew has now left the Chamber. He said he has now got confidence that we have the right management team. In November 2006 the then Leader, Councillor Harris, told us:

"We have smoothly moved through the appointment process to have appointed, in my opinion, the best possible person to deliver the biggest Children's Services Agenda of any Authority in this country."

Not much later when Councillor Brett took over from – who was it?

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Jennings

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Of course it was, that marvellous, effective steward of that department, Councillor Brett said:

“The advantages we think of the organisation we have set up gives a level of detachment, a level of overview which we think may significantly be helpful.”

Later on he said:

“In due course, if you can convince us that we are wrong, we will consider looking at this again.”

Three years later they have not looked at it again. This is no criticism we have dreamed up at one Council meeting. We have said from the very beginning you have the wrong structure. You have the wrong philosophy. Who has ever seen a locality co-ordinator? There are some good people there but certainly even the people we think that we value highly from their previous record, they have not been able to do the job because they have been constrained to do the job.

We now have a situation that because of the administration's total lack of successful planning, we are asking the Director of Adult Social Care, as if that was not a big enough job by itself, to say, “Oh, by the way, can you also, in your spare time, take on the role of Director of Children's Services? It is only in the interim. We will appoint somebody else but for the next couple of months or so divide your time and do that as well.”

I do not think we are being fair on people. It is fantastically huge job, you have just said, and you are saying just double up and do a bit more, can you, please? Responsibility for these matters has to rest politically and I know you can say it is self-interest to talk about Scrutiny but earlier on in the planning debate Councillor Carter was saying what is matters is how it looks to people outside, not what we think ourselves.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: Did he resign?

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: How does it look to people outside that you are scrutinising yourselves as an administration across this portfolio?

COUNCILLOR ATHA: Exactly

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: It is absolutely morally indefensible, it is wrong, it is proven to be wrong and you should change it immediately, because on the way to recovery you ought to accept and say, as someone else has said, “I am sorry, we failed. We have failed and we accept we have failed and we have got to put it right”. You, Stewart, are saying, “I am the man to put it right and this is what I am going to do and here is my apology I will put it right.” None of that has happened. You have not apologised, you have not said it is wrong, you have not said you have failed over seven, eight reports. How did you treat us ten years ago? Like a pack of animals and hounds when that Ofsted report came in. For ten years you blamed us and said, “It is your fault, we will take no lessons from you.” Come on, grow up, be mature in your politics and say, “Sorry, it is our fault, we accept responsibility.” *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Gruen. Councillor Murray.

COUNCILLOR MURRAY: Thank you, Lord Mayor, for giving me an opportunity to talk about the report and, of course, a lot of what I would say was actually accurate and will actually just come from the report itself.

I would like to start in paragraph 23. Paragraph 23: "Practice has improved sufficiently to ensure that children are now safe." They were not before but they are now safe. Thank goodness, thank God, thank Ofsted but what we cannot thank is the neglect in the leadership in this Council because Ofsted appear to have awakened the administration on their responsibilities on safeguarding which is unbelievable when you think of the coverage of these issues have in the press. You would have thought they would have been wide awake.

Paragraph 8, Andrew has already mentioned it: "Leeds has experienced an increase in referrals up to 19.4% on the previous year." Go back a year, just go back a year and ask yourself if you are running this service, what would you have asked? You would have asked, would you not, are referrals going to go up in 2009? The answer would have been, you would have asked a well-paid director, a lead Member of Children's Services that question – you could have asked the binmen on the picket lines, they would have told you what was going to happen to referrals this year; they were going to go up.

The point that I am asking is, you planned to do nothing about that knowing that was the situation, knowing that the situation was going to get worse; you were going to do the minimum – the minimum. It took Ofsted to find you out, it took Ofsted to tell you to get the basics right.

Paragraph 18: "Staffing shortages seriously impact on the ability of this Council to make further progress on the plan. Social workers' caseloads are too high, front line management capacity is insufficient and the electronic recording system is not fit for purpose." Fundamental basics, is it not? Ask that question out there, what would they say? "Do you have enough social workers?" "No." "Are they well managed and trained and supported?" The answer would be "No." "Have you got a system in place to be able to do something about it?" "No." Ofsted had to say it, get it right and get it right urgently. Have you and are you tackling the unacceptable high level of social workers' caseloads, insufficient team management capacity and ensuring that newly qualified social workers are protected from carrying high and complex caseloads, because that is what the situation was and probably continues to be, because what is happening is what Keith said earlier – young, bright, talented, able people are joining social services, they are committed to doing the job and helping children and families and what is happening within six months their eyes are glazed...

COUNCILLOR: Ground down.

COUNCILLOR MURRAY: Exactly. They were ground down, they leave, they go, they pack it in, so what you end up with is a triple whammy. The triple whammy is this, is it not – workers disillusioned and disappointed, children and families who rely upon those workers disappointed, disillusioned as their social worker changes on a regular frequency and, of course, what about the taxpayer? They get disillusioned with the service as well. There is that cost, is there not, the cost of recruitment and replacement.

The question you have got to ask, and it is a good question, I think, is this Council so poor that it cannot afford a decent front line staff service? Is it that poor or are we just spending our money elsewhere and on other things?

I ask the question, how much money have we spent on consultants since 2004 in Children's Services? The answer is, £11m. That is how much money we spent on consultants since 2004. What are you hiring consultants for? Your hire consultants, do you not, to save money and to get a better service. If they had done that we would have been pleased. Is that what we have got? No, we have not. We have got an inadequate service, as Ofsted have said.

It still goes on – just a little aside. Andrew mentioned we have got an acting Director of Children's Services. Another consultant – that is the way we are going. That is £1,000 a day – a day. That is £1,000 a day. That does not include travelling expenses. It does not include accommodation. I should hope to hell it includes tea, biscuits and sandwiches or else they will be on the front pages of the Yorkshire Evening Post. That is what is happening. £1,000 a day is £5,000 a week, that is £50,000 for ten weeks' work. That to me would probably afford two front line services who do the job that we want to see happening and do it.

I got to that point and I was doing this at the weekend. I picked this story up and I am reluctant to read it really but it is perhaps worth mentioning. My job is to save children from abuse. Colleagues in this debate badly, I think, or brightly, whichever way you want to look at it. A police detective tells of his harrowing five years in a child protection team where he came across kids in crack houses---

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Murray, you are out of time, I am afraid now.

COUNCILLOR MURRAY: I am angry, very angry that I cannot stand up here and finish what I have got to say in the next five minutes because I think *(interruption) (Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Taggart.

COUNCILLOR TAGGART: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. This is not a debate about grass cutting. It is not a debate about potholes, is it? It is quite literally a debate about life and death because every week in this country some poor child is murdered by some adult somewhere. Every week we read appalling stories of torture and starvation and neglect and death, and that is what it is about, so it is not on those lower levels which might exercise us at the majority of Council meetings. This is about really, really serious stuff.

This report – and I notice we have got several members of the public in the gallery – it is not too long, it is well worth reading. Some of it has already been quoted. Paragraph 13, at the beginning, let us listen to what this says:

“The overall effectiveness of services in Leeds to ensure that children and young people are safe is inadequate. The Council does not meet all its statutory responsibilities as set out in national guidance with core business of child protection related to contact, referral and assessments. In July 2008 the unannounced inspection of the contact, referral and assessment arrangements in the city found significant weaknesses in the provision of safeguarding services.”

This is not an old report. It was only published on 7 January this year. The inspection was done from the end of November to the middle of December. I could go on and on. It is failing, failing, failing.

Councillor Golton said, well, you can pick and choose, there are good bits. One of the few people who comes out well in all of this is the Council Chief Executive. He is personally mentioned for the work he has done and it does seem since Mr Rogerson got involved that there have been some changes for the better and we should acknowledge that, but overwhelmingly this is a bad report.

There are 33 categories at the end of the report where you are judged and there are four categories – outstanding (which is what we all want Leeds to be, certainly) good (which I suppose is all right), adequate (which is certainly not good) and inadequate. One of the Greens has already mentioned, 27 of the 33 are in the bottom two, so if you can imagine Leeds as a sort of football league as it used to be, Divisions 1, 2, 3 and 4, we ain't got anything in Division 1, it is overwhelmingly 3 and 4. We turn out third rate. It is no good saying the Government has done this on the justice charges – that does not count. That applies to all other social services authorities as well. Some of them have got glowing reports. We have had report after report and it is simply not good enough.

Sometimes the quality of a person can be judged by their ability to be honest. I have seen, for example, Councillor Harris when he made a mistake and said, "If I have got it wrong, I will look into it and I will apologise" and he was man enough, you remember, to stand up and apologise. It was not a terribly big issue but I admired him, I think we all admired him for being able to do that. I have seen Councillor Harker speak honestly on education issues from time to time. He is a Liberal and I am Labour but I acknowledge that the work he does is important and he is willing to listen to other points of view sometimes.

I have to say with Councillor Golton, his letter to Members was an insult. Does he not realise we cannot read ourselves? The interview on Radio Leeds was completely inadequate. Councillor Golton, where is your humility? Where is your honesty? Where is your apology? You come over in this Chamber as complacent and as arrogant, a bit like a strutting peacock, blind to the blindingly obvious; someone who is living in a world of denial.

It is not good enough. It would have been better for you to come along and say, "I stick my hand up, I am responsible, I am the Lead." Councillor Gettings is wrong, although there are 99 Councillors, it is the Executive Board that have the powers and it is the individual Executive Board Members who have the portfolios. It is on Councillor Golton's watch, there is no doubt about it, and I repeat, every week somewhere in this country some child dies a terrible, horrible death. We have some marvellous social workers here working in Leeds but what we lack is leadership. It is clear in here the leadership is no good.

Councillor Golton has not demonstrated today and he has never demonstrated before that he has got the ability or he has got the personal qualities to look in the mirror and face up to what the reality is.

We do not want you in power anyway – you would expect me to say that – but we want someone who we can trust with the future of our children and Councillor Golton is not that person. You have report after report. It is clear you must do the honest thing – it is time for you to go. Thanks very much. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Taggart. Councillor Harker.

COUNCILLOR HARKER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. This is a very damning report and nobody on this side of the Chamber is saying that it is not. I have had to sit here and listen to selective pieces read out. Neil, you very interestingly complimented the Chief Exec and I will join you in that. We could pick out pieces

from here but I draw your attention to the penultimate sentence in paragraph 14 – you did not choose to read that:

“Elected members demonstrate a strong commitment to championing the need of vulnerable children and they are appropriately challenging the rate of progress on the delivery of the Improvement Plan.”

I hope that we are going to get the tit-for-tat tonight out of our system, I really do. You are quite right, some of what you said is absolutely right. We have got to work together and I do urge us to do that. I think that this administration by putting in things like Children’s Champions and other mechanisms, the cluster groups that we sit on, the delegations to Area Committees of some of the Executive Board powers for local delivery of Children’s Services are movements forward, yes.

I did not enjoy listening to the verbal feedback when it came. I was horrified, it hurt and it hurt Stewart just as it hurt me but we are determined on this side of the room to move forward to create the service that we all want in this city. There cannot be a single Member and I cannot even imagine that there is a Member of this Council who does not want to see a good Children’s Services in this city and we should all work collectively to that end. *(hear, hear) (Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: I now call on Councillor J L Carter.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: Lord Mayor, I have no doubt the groans from over there is because I have got a long memory. I can remember what has happened in this Council. Before I get on to that, let us make one or two points first.

I have looked at your White Paper. It does not remove Stewart. It simply condemns him, or Councillor Brett, or the previous incumbent. The person it removes is Councillor Hyde. It moves him from office and you should take it over. I will tell you this, there is not one on your side that I would swap for Bill Hyde as an independent Chairman of Scrutiny. I will tell you this as well, I can call Bill a pain because he is so independent but let me also say what it also means is what you are saying is you have no confidence in Councillor Taylor, Councillor Renshaw, Councillor Coupar, Councillor Selby and Councillor Driver – all Members of that Scrutiny Board. You have no confidence in their ability.

COUNCILLOR GRAHAME: He is not the one who has to answer to you and what you can do.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: You have no confidence in their ability whatsoever.

COUNCILLOR LYONS: You address the issue.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: Let me now come back to Stewart Golton. Yes, we have got to look at a report, which nobody has jumped about on this side and said it is the best report since sliced bread, but let me just say this. If we are going forward we have got to ensure that we have got somebody it will go forward with and somebody you have confidence to go forward with. I will be quite honest, there may be one or two on your side – maybe and I only say maybe – that I would have confidence in but I will tell you what, I have confidence in Stewart, I have seen what has happened. I have been involved in meetings of the Cabinet, I have seen how he has performed and I have seen how he is going on. Believe me, I have confidence in his ability to do what he has got to do.

Councillor Wakefield shouts across and gives us this about how awful, how disgraceful. Somebody has come in to try and help you. When they were in power in Education, they did not come in to try and help them – they took Education away from this city and Peter Gruen is over there walking out and he was part of it, so do not trust his word.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: So was Tom Murray.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: And so was Tom Murray. They were all involved, they were all there. They took Education away from the city and for that they should have resigned.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: But they did not.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: But they did not resign. None of them resigned. Nothing is being taken away from us. What this report is saying is look, there are faults, look, you have got to do this and these are the ways it is going to forward. I have a lot of confidence in Stewart.

Let me also go back to this Act. I have said from Day One about this Act I have never believed this Act was not too big, that the services it was covering, virtually two-thirds of the Council, that it could be dealt with by one officer in one way and one Member. It was appalling. It is appalling. I will be quite honest, it is my opinion that that Act being as vast as it is has led to children being neglected and suffering because we are looking at this huge thing, looking at so-called Every Child Matters. There has got to be some judgment on which children are being looked-after, taken care of and they can get on with their life. What you are saying is otherwise you will not put the resources in and they are mega resources that have to go into this to ensure that the children who are vulnerable are the ones who we are going to ensure are safe.

I have no fear about it, it is not just this Council. It involved police, it involves all sorts of different agencies. It is not by itself. I come back to you, certainly you have not got the ability to run this. I am not kidding you, I am not being awful to you but you ain't got it and you would not be able to run it. You might talk about it but you could not run this particular service. *(interruption) (hear, hear)*

COUNCILLOR LYONS: *(inaudible)*

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: You could not, that is a racing certainty. You were talking about transport earlier. Fifteen, 16 years trying to get Supertram, he was leading. Can anyone see the Supertram? I never saw it, did you? I never saw it. Where was it? Did you see it? Nobody saw the Supertram. Be quiet, Michael.

COUNCILLOR LYONS: *(inaudible)* Conservative Government.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: What I am saying to you is, I will go back again, this is an important subject. It is a subject which I am quite confident in the people who are going to be dealing with it and I will tell you what, I will be a damned sight more confident than any of you lot sat over there. Thank you, my Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Carter. Councillor Judith Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Lord Mayor, is it not the case when them over there start to lose the argument that they bring on someone like Les Carter who displays completely the reasons why we are in the state we are in.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: Thank you.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Rubbish.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Trying to deflect from the seriousness of the issues that we are having to deal with.

I have to say I have listened very carefully to the debate today and sadly I have to say I have come to the conclusion that the reason why Councillor Golton is in such denial of the scale of the problems is simply down to the fact that he does not understand the role he has as Executive Members for this service.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Rubbish.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: His leadership role in particular. Do you know, we have raised this again and again and yet he still sits there with report after report highlighting weaknesses and, even worse, the fact that children in the city have been let down and put at serious risk as a result of his administration's sheer and breathtaking incompetence.

We need honesty and clarity and above all real leadership to move things on. I have to say, staff working in his department right the way through from officers in here to front line are dedicated, hard working and committed but, you know, what they need more than anything to see and to feel change.

I actually wonder, and many of my colleagues wonder, how often you actually go out and talk to front line staff. They would certainly tell you about where the failings are from the lack of organisation that stems from you. Complete and continued lack of political direction and leadership and do you know what, it is the staff who are having to pick up criticisms for your failings. They are the ones who see morale has sunk low in all of this. How on earth are we going to keep the good staff working of the city, let alone attract new staff?

I have to say in the report there is a question about value for money being inadequate and how damning is this, "The true cost of delivering an effective contact referral and assessment service has not been evaluated and this remains unknown." How many more inspections will it take for you to do the decent thing, Stewart? You seem totally incapable of accepting responsibility. I was actually with teachers when they read the report, the press comments, and they could not believe and were incredulous at how you were trying to gloss over the seriousness of the issues that have been raised in the report.

Now we have intervention, let us put it clearly, an Improvement Board reporting direct to Government. This is proof of how seriously everyone outside of Leeds is taking the situation. We are only one of nine Authorities in this position. You make excuses, you talk about the increase in referrals, about behaviour – this is not unique to Leeds. What is unique to Leeds is the way that you have dealt with the problems that have come up.

Do you honestly have any idea at all how Leeds is regarded from outside? Despite all your assurances as to progress, we are regarded as simply moving the deckchairs around, being inward facing and a talking shop and, above all, failing to deal with the basic fundamental problems that have led us to these failings.

All confidence has gone in your ability to turn this round and this is totally reinforced, as has been said today, by your stubbornness to accept that part of the

problems is your own administration holding the Chair of Scrutiny. The report speaks for itself. You set up action plans last summer, there are certain issues that have been cleared as being completed and those are the issues that are still being picked up as having not been addressed. If we have a proper Scrutiny process these issues would not have been glossed over.

Lord Mayor, surely enough is enough. We need urgent change to move forward and the only way to get that change is for Councillor Golton to accept responsibility.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Rubbish.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Please, for the sake of children in this city, do the honourable thing and go. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Blake. Councillor Hyde.

COUNCILLOR W HYDE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. First of all can I apologise for not having giving notice that I was going to speak? That was because I was not clear whether Members of the Opposition were going to pursue this illogical, arrogant assumption that somebody from their side of the Council Chamber is necessarily going to be able to chair a Scrutiny Board in a way which is more impartial than I can do it.

Having now heard from a number of senior Members opposite, I find it necessary to refute these allegations. I wonder whether Council will cast its collective mind back to earlier this afternoon when we heard from Councillor Driver? It was largely my fault that there was a reference back on the call-in, unanimously supported by the Scrutiny Board and that I was leading on that. Does that suggest to anybody, Lord Mayor, that I was partial to the administration?

Colleagues might like to know that yesterday one of my senior colleagues felt that I was almost operating in a way that was extremely unfair to the administration. I will not tell you what he called me but tantamount to being traitorous.

If that is the situation, and everybody in that sense believes that I am so independent that I am doing something wrong, I would like to know what it is.

The other issue is, which has been touched on by Councillor Carter, I am not asking colleagues opposite to refer to either Councillor Feldman or myself as my two party's representatives on the Scrutiny Board, but I would have thought it not unreasonable that they should discuss their view with any or all the five Members from the Opposition who are Members of the Scrutiny Board and see what they think because I do not get the impression that they believe that I am partial to the administration. I think that ought to have been an issue that should have been addressed.

Before I sit down, Lord Mayor, let me make it absolutely clear that I do welcome the input from the Members opposite and, indeed, it was because of a recommendation from a Member opposite that we did take forward the proposal that we bring an urgent interim report on exactly this subject to the attention of the Executive Board and that is in draft at the moment and will be circulated very shortly.

It does seem to me that there is a very odd scheme of things afoot somewhere. How on earth they can on the one hand say that I am so independent that I am not following the administration's line and ,on the other hand say that

somebody unnamed but from the Opposition ought to be doing the job and would do it in a more impartial way than I do.

You and myself, Lord Mayor, share a responsibility to be impartial in the functions that we perform. All I can say is that, having done your job and now doing this one, I would certainly much prefer to do that one than this. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Hyde. I now call on Councillor Mulherin to sum up. *(Applause)*

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Councillor Golton, your amendment refers to maintaining a sustained investment in Children's Services. If you continue to use the resources you have in the way you have up till now, with a top-heavy superstructure, a recording system that inspectors have condemned as not fit for purpose, an army of consultants that Councillor Murray referred to and overworked and under-supported front line staff, there is no hope of improvement at all.

You are still more interested in defending your own position than you are in addressing the significant serious weaknesses that have been found in Children's Services. Your dismissal of the nearly one in three cases in the unannounced inspection last summer that were found wanting, and your dismissal of the one in three judgments that were found to be inadequate in this report, proves that you are still not listening and that you are still in denial about the mess that you have created.

Councillor Golton and Councillor Bale and others are happy to set up smokescreens blaming the Government for all of their failings. They are desperately looking around for a scapegoat to blame so that they can shift responsibility once again from themselves.

Councillor Bale finally recognised that "adequate" was not good enough. He is too right there. These areas that have merited an "adequate" rating have simply met the bare minimum requirements in Ofsted terms. As Councillor Parnham notes, of the 33 judgments made in the latest Ofsted report, only six merited a better judgment than meeting those bare minimum requirements. As Councillor Ann Blackburn said, that is simply not good enough. We too want Leeds to lead.

Councillor Andrew Carter, I am glad that you agree that the situation is not good enough. I was interested to note your comments about an Authority's response to inspection reports and would simply refer you back to every Council meeting over the last few years in which we have flagged up our concerns about Children's Services in Leeds and the repeated denial that anything was wrong and the positive spin that has been repeatedly put on the situation. Had your administration paid heed earlier we would not have such a damning verdict now, or an Improvement Notice on its way or an Improvement Board imposed upon us.

Councillor Lancaster at least had something good to say about the Government and the number of Children's Centres and the level of local support its family policies have introduced to this city and others like it up and down the country. Since you ask the question, Brenda, no, we do not want to have to be negative. We would be delighted if the children in this city were being properly safeguarded. Sadly, under your watch, they are not.

I am grateful to my colleagues Councillor Murray and Councillor Blake for their comments about the impact of the chaos you have created. Councillor Carter, you said we cannot pick and mix and cannot just look at the parts that are bad. That

is all the administration opposite have done today. It is highlighting the good bits, looking at the question earlier for instance that was asked of Councillor Golton, asking him to comment specifically on the looked-after children section – that is picking and choosing.

You went on to say, Councillor Andrew Carter, that you do not like the way this debate has been personalised, unlike the other Councillor Carter whose usual bluster and bluff is quite frankly shameful in the face of this seriousness.

As Councillor Wakefield and Councillor Gruen pointed out, there has been no recognition in this Chamber that you have failed, no sense of responsibility and no-one has been held to account. It would be unfair to hold Councillor Golton solely responsible. He is, albeit, only one part of a group which is in term part of a coalition. You have all listened to our repeated concerns and you have all sat there and accepted that everything was in fact fine and that good meant very good, when Councillor Golton said it. Not one of you had the moral compass to stand up and say, “Actually I think they are right. We are in trouble” and the responsibility for the situation we now face lies with each and every one of you.

Let me remind you, Councillor Carter, of what you said in the Special Council Meeting we called last January:

“At the end of the day let me make it quite clear, we are the administration of this Council, I am the Leader, along with Councillor Brett and, of course, we take responsibility.”

Well, here is your big chance. You have collectively failed, you have proven yourselves unable or unwilling to accept when a situation is spiralling out of control. You have proven incapable of remedying that situation and you have done so at the cost of the most vulnerable children in this city. Take responsibility now. Councillor Golton has stated in this Chamber that he is politically accountable and he must accept now that he has failed in his statutory duties. Councillor Carter has admitted that as Leaders he and Councillor Brett must take responsibility, so take that responsibility. Stand down as the administration of this Council and step aside for the Members across this half of the Chamber who do take the protection of children seriously. *(Applause)*

COUNCILLOR BENTLEY: Lord Mayor, can I move under Council Procedure Rule 22.1 that Procedure Rules 3.1(c) and 4.2 be suspended to allow all the amendments on White Paper 10 to be formally moved and seconded without debate? Thank you.

COUNCILLOR ATHA: Is it right to take a procedural matter when the vote is about to be taken?

THE LORD MAYOR: We are going to do that but we have to do this before seven o'clock. Do we have a seconder? Councillor David Blackburn. Could I take a vote on what has just been suggested? *(A vote was taken)* We will have the suspension rules then.

We now are going back to the vote on the amendment by Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Can I move a recorded vote, please?

THE LORD MAYOR: Recorded vote.

(A recorded vote was taken on the amendment)

THE LORD MAYOR: The vote is as follows. Present 93 people; "Yes" 50; abstention 1; "No" 42. The amendment in the name of Councillor Golton has won the day. I now want to take the vote on the substantive motion, which is the amendment of Councillor Golton's. A recorded vote again, thank you.

(A recorded vote was taken on the substantive motion)

THE LORD MAYOR: The numbers present were 93: "Yes" 50; abstentions 1, "No" 42. The substantive motion has won the day. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR ATHA: If you are proud of that then you are proud of anything.

ITEM 10 – WHITE PAPER MOTION
LEEDS CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ann Blackburn, please.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: I wish to formally move this White Paper motion.

COUNCILLOR PARNHAM: I formally second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: We are on to the amendment by Councillor Monaghan.

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

COUNCILLOR BRETT: It gives me great pleasure to second this motion.

THE LORD MAYOR: The next amendment by Councillor Harington?

COUNCILLOR HARINGTON: I move the amendment in my name, Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: The amendment by Councillor Shelbrooke?

COUNCILLOR SHELBROOKE: I move the amendment in my name, Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: I have pleasure in seconding, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: We are straight to the vote now.

COUNCILLOR BENTLEY: Can we have recorded votes, Lord Mayor?

THE LORD MAYOR: The Chief Executive is going to take over now for the recorded votes.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: We are now moving to the formal vote on Item 10 on the Order Paper. There are three amendments to the motion. If any of these amendments is carried, that then becomes the substantive motion to which a further amendment may be moved. That will be the order in which we go through them.

*(A recorded vote was taken on the amendment
in the name of Councillor Monaghan)*

THE LORD MAYOR: There were 93 present; “Yes” 61; abstention 1; “No” 31. The first amendment is CARRIED. I will pass you over to the Chief Executive again.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Lord Mayor, I am withdrawing our amendment in favour of that one that has been carried.

COUNCILLOR NASH: Seconded.

THE LORD MAYOR: You are withdrawing yours now so we are not voting the second amendment.

THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE (Corporate Governance): Can I just check that Councillor Gruen is now seeking to withdraw the Labour amendment?

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Yes.

THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE (Corporate Governance): Is that seconded? Councillor Gruen is seeking leave of Council to withdraw the Labour amendment. That has been seconded. We now need a vote on whether or not you agree that can be withdrawn. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now on to the third amendment in the name of Councillor Shelbrooke. I will hand you over to the Chief Executive.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: The substantive motion now before the Council is the one in the name of Councillor Monaghan, so this is the proposed amendment in the name of Councillor Shelbrooke. This is, on your Order Paper, the third amendment in the name of Councillor Shelbrooke. This is the amendment as I say, to the substantive motion which was the amendment in the name of Councillor Monaghan. This is Councillor Shelbrooke’s amendment.

*(A recorded vote was taken on the amendment
in the name of Councillor Shelbrooke)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Those present 93; “Yes” 23; abstentions 2; “No” 68. This has been LOST.

Now the first amendment which was made by Councillor Monaghan is the substantive motion which we known need to vote on.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: This is the final vote, straightforward substantive motion as the amendment in Councillor Monaghan’s name.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: I would like a recorded vote, Lord Mayor, please.

(A recorded vote was taken on the substantive motion)

THE LORD MAYOR: There were 87 present; 68 said “Yes”, 5 abstentions; 12 “No”. This is CARRIED. *(Applause)*

ITEM 11 – WHITE PAPER MOTION

LEEDS KIRKGATE MARKET

THE LORD MAYOR: We now move on to page 18 number 11 the White Paper in the name of Councillor Dobson.

COUNCILLOR DOBSON: Lord Mayor, with permission we would like to request the removal of this White Paper from this evening's proceedings – withdraw.

THE LORD MAYOR: Do I have a seconder for that?

COUNCILLOR TAGGART: Seconded.

THE LORD MAYOR: Could I take a vote please? *(A vote was taken)* This is PASSED. That has been withdrawn.

ITEM 12 – WHITE PAPER MOTION PUBLIC SPENDING AND DEMOCRATIC ACCOUNTABILITY

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now on to number 12, the White Paper in the name of Councillor Richard Brett.

COUNCILLOR BRETT: Lord Mayor, I move this motion.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gruen to move an amendment.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Move the amendment.

COUNCILLOR TAGGART: Seconded, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: We now are on to the vote. We are voting on the amendment in the name of Councillor Gruen. *(A vote was taken)* This has LOST the day.

We now move to the motion, the original motion in the name of Councillor Brett. *(A vote was taken)* This has won the day.

ITEM 13 – WHITE PAPER MOTION (Procedure Rule 3.1(d)3) PUBLIC OPEN SPACE & PLAYING PITCHES

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now on to page 22 and it is the White Paper motion number 13 in the name of John Illingworth.

COUNCILLOR ILLINGWORTH: My Lord Mayor, I wish to withdraw this.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: It is illegal, you have to do.

COUNCILLOR TAGGART: Seconded.

THE LORD MAYOR: Are we all in favour that this is withdrawn? *(A vote was taken)* This has been withdrawn.

ITEM 14 – WHITE PAPER MOTION
(Procedure Rule 3.1(d)3)
LEEDS ARENA SCHEME

THE LORD MAYOR: We have now a White Paper in the name of Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: Formally move it please, Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Second.

THE LORD MAYOR: We have an amendment in the name of Councillor Carter.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Move it, Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR LOBLEY: Second, Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR: I move a recorded vote.

COUNCILLOR: Seconded.

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now voting on the amendment in the name of Councillor Andrew Carter.

*(A recorded vote was taken on the amendment
in the name of Councillor Andrew Carter)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Those present were 92; “Yes” 51; abstentions 3; “No” 38, so this has won the day and this becomes the substantive motion which we need to vote on, please.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: Could we have a recorded vote, Lord Mayor?

COUNCILLOR: I second that, Lord Mayor.

(A recorded vote was taken on the substantive motion)

THE LORD MAYOR: Those present 92; “Yes” 51; abstentions 3; “No” 38, so this substantive motion has been won.

Thank you everyone for being here today and I will say good evening. That is the end of the Council meeting.

(The meeting concluded at 7.15 p.m.)