

LEEDS CITY COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Held on

Wednesday, 8th July 2015

At

THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
CIVIC HALL,
LEEDS

In the Chair:

THE LORD MAYOR
(COUNCILLOR J CHAPMAN)

VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

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VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF LEEDS CITY COUNCIL
MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 8th JULY 2015

THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon everybody.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE LORD MAYOR: I just want to make one or two announcements. First of all just to advise all members that the meeting is to be webcast, which you can see the cameras round us. I would also like to point out that I have given Councillor Charlwood permission to remain seated throughout the meeting. She has got her leg in a pot and is walking on crutches so I thought it would be a little bit unreasonable of us to ask her to get up and down every few minutes.

Just a quick reminder that I am hosting an afternoon tea in aid of my charity, Specialist Autism Services, at Creams in the Core Shopping Centre on Monday, 3rd August, from 4.00 to 5.30. There are still a few tickets left, they are available at £10 each and if you would like to see Mark or John at tea I am sure they will be very happy to hand one over to you.

I would like to offer congratulations to those who were honoured in the Queen's Birthday Honours List:

Sir Gary Verity, Knighthood, services to tourism and 2014 Tour de France Grand Départ in Yorkshire;
Richard Matthew Jeavons, CBE, services to the NHS;
Peter Roberts, CBE, services to further education;
Roger Marsh, OBE, services to business and the economy;
Robert Mark Greenhill Semple, OBE, services to politics;
Jennifer Lizzie Ngulube MBE, services to children;
Robin Anthony Smith, TD, DL, MBE, services to the community in Leeds;
Robin Clayton, BEM, services to hospital radio West Yorkshire;
Dr Peter John Hine, BEM, services to heritage.

Yesterday we remembered those who lost their lives and suffered terrible injuries in the London Terrorist attacks ten years ago on 7th July 2005. We stand side by side with the people of Leeds in opposition to terrorism and we stand side by side in having tolerance and respect for each other.

I would like to offer my sympathy to all those affected by the terrible events in Tunisia recently. As you are aware, 38 people died in such tragic circumstances, and of these 30 were British and included Christopher and Sharon Bell from Killingbeck. Our thoughts are with their family and their friends. Can I please ask you to stand for a minute's silence.

(Silent tribute)

THE LORD MAYOR: In the announcements I did forget to say please could you make sure that your telephones are turned off whilst you are in the Council Chamber.

ITEM 1 – MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 21st MAY 2015

THE LORD MAYOR: Minutes of the meeting held 21st May, 2015. Councillor Charlwood.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: I move in terms of the Notice.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I second that, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I now call for the vote. *(A vote was taken)* CARRIED

ITEM 2 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

THE LORD MAYOR: Declarations of Interest. Are there any more declarations of interest that you wish to announce? *(No response)* I have one that I have been asked to announce of Catherine Whitham and Tom Riordan. With regard to Item 6, regarding amendments to the Constitution, both the Chief Executive and City Solicitor declare personal interests in the decision as it concerns changes to the disciplinary procedures affecting both the Head of Paid Service and the Monitoring Officer. I hope they do not have to leave the Chamber.

ITEM 3 - COMMUNICATIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: Any communications?

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: Thank you, Lord Mayor, yes. We have had two responses to Council resolutions from Ministers, the Right Honourable Nicky Morgan MP, Secretary of State for Education, and the Right Honourable Alistair Burt, MP, Minister of State for Community and Social Care, in respect of two White Paper Resolutions passed by the Council in April 2015. Both have been circulated to all Members of Council.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you.

ITEM 4 – DEPUTATIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: Deputations.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. We have three Deputations. The RadhaRaman Society have withdrawn so the Deputations are: the A660 Joint Council regarding the route for the proposed trolleybus scheme; Fair Access to School Group regarding the provision of school places in Leeds; and Friends of Redhall Playing Fields regarding the future use of the playing fields.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Charlwood.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I second that, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I call for the vote. *(A vote was taken)* CARRIED Thank you.

DEPUTATION ONE – A660 JOINT COUNCIL

THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon and welcome to today's Council meeting. Please now make your speech to Council, which should not be longer than five minutes, and please begin by introducing the people in your Deputation.

MS D CAREY JONES: Hello. My name is Dawn Carey Jones. I am secretary of the A660 Joint Council and I am here with Susan Sleaman and Claire Randall, also of the A660 Joint Council and with Barbara Mitchell of Little Woodhouse. We are here to make you aware that a shortage of open space along the proposed trolleybus route means that the scheme contravenes national and local planning policies and to ask you to act on this information.

NGT Project Board minutes reveal that the Board recognised that running NGT across Woodhouse Moor contravened both local and national guidance. The Deputy Chief Planning Officer is minutes as saying, "It will be difficult to designate the land on Woodhouse Moor as surplus." The Acting Chief Executive of Metro said, "It is difficult to argue the case for the land being classed as surplus." The policies that would be contravened are N1 of the UDP and Policy 74 of the National Planning Policy Framework which states that open space should not be developed unless it is surplus to requirements, or is replaced.

Despite this, at the trolleybus public inquiry Metro claimed that Hyde Park and Woodhouse has surplus open space and can therefore spare land on Monument Moor for NGT. When it was pointed out to the Deputy Chief Planning Officer that the previous week one of his planning officer's reports on the St Michael's College re-development had stated, "The ward of Hyde Park and Woodhouse records one of the highest levels of greenspace deficiency across the city", he claimed that this was an error and that the true position was one of surplus, as shown in the Draft Site Allocation Plan, which he held up.

How much reliance can be placed on the Draft Site Allocation Plan, a document containing many major errors?

Error 1: it designates 1.3 hectares at "Cliff Mount Fields" as 'Parks and Gardens.' Although the area was classified as N1 in the UDP, it was used by City of Leeds School for formal sports and given to the school and fenced off when the school became an academy.

Error 2: it designates 19.8 hectares at “Woodhouse Moor Park” as “Parks and Gardens” but the Council’s Woodhouse Moor Management Plan 2004 reveals that the area is actually 19.1 hectares, 0.7 hectares less than claimed.

Error 3: it designates 0.5 hectares at “Mount Preston Street (Leeds University)” as “Amenity Green Space” even though this area has been entirely built on.

Error 4: it designates 1.2 hectares at “Woodsley Road (Leeds Uni)” as “Amenity Green Space” even though most of this area has been built on and just 0.1 hectares remain.

Error 5: it designates 0.9 hectares at “Willow Road – Rising Sun Public Open Space” as “Amenity Green Space” even though it is a fenced off, locked up sports pitch. Furthermore, it double counts this site by also including it as “Outdoor Sports.”

Error 6: it states there are three tennis courts on Woodhouse Moor when there are actually six. They occupy 0.1 hectares and not 0.2 as claimed.

Error 7: it states that the three bowling greens on Woodhouse Moor covered 4.1 hectares when they actually covered 0.4 hectares and since two are decommissioned, the true figure is less than 0.2 hectares.

Error 8: it double counts 1.3 hectares at Cliff Mount Fields by including the area as both “Parks and Gardens” and “Outdoor Sports.” This area should not have been included as “Outdoor Sports” since the Draft Site Allocations Plan states it excludes educational outdoor sports provision.

Error 9: it states that the area of Woodhouse Ridge inside Hyde Park and Woodhouse ward is 5 hectares. A glance at a map shows this to be incorrect. If it were true, the area would be bigger than Cinder and Monument Moor combined, which clearly it is not.

Error 10: it states that dividing 5 hectares of Natural Greenspace by the 2011 population figure of 26,000 gives a provision of 1.9 hectares per 1,000 population, when it actually gives a provision of 0.2 hectares per 1,000, much less than the required minimum of 0.7.

When all the errors are corrected and up to date population estimates used, Hyde Park and Woodhouse is shown to have deficits in all categories of open space. This means no part of Woodhouse Moor can be spared for the trolleybus. There are serious implications too for the housing target for the ward. Please can the above Draft Site Allocations Plan errors be corrected and the document checked for other similar errors in other wards. Similar errors do exist.

On the false understanding that Hyde Park and Woodhouse has surplus open space, the Council appropriated three sections of Woodhouse Moor for the trolleybus scheme. Now that you are aware that the ward had a deficit in open space, please reverse this decision and please also reconsider your decisions of 1st July and 13th November 2013 to support an application for a Transport and Works Act Order to enable the trolleybus project to proceed. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Charlwood.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: I second that, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I call for the vote. (*A vote was taken*) The vote is CARRIED.

Thank you for attending and for what you have said. You will be kept informed of the consideration which your comments will receive. Good afternoon.

DEPUTATION TWO – FAIR ACCESS TO SCHOOLS GROUP

THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon and welcome to today's Council meeting. Please now make your speech to Council, which should not be longer than five minutes, and please begin by introducing the people in your Deputation.

MS N DOWD: My name is Nicola Dowd, this is Ffion Wells and we are here representing the Fair Access Group. The group's aim is to ensure equitable access to local primary places in North Leeds. The group formed following offers day this year when it quickly became apparent that a significant number of children Roundhay, Moortown and Alwoodley were offered none of their five preferences. We identified 86 children in this position, all of whom had followed the admissions guidelines and included their nearest school amongst their preferences. Most were offered schools outside their local communities. A typical example of a four year old allocated her 28th nearest primary school, one her parents had never seen or heard of, which was 3.4 miles away from her home along busy roads.

Figures from the Department of Education reported in the Yorkshire Evening Post on 16th June this year show that Leeds had the joint highest number of parents of anywhere in the North of England who saw their children allocated to a primary school that they did not choose. Clearly this is an unacceptable situation.

Whilst the majority of children in Leeds can be sure of a place at their nearest school, and even have a choice of which local schools they attend, a significant minority in the same city have no prospect of a place at any school local to their home.

We would like to ask you to reflect on why this situation arose. In the data obtained from Leeds City Council it is clear that the birth rate has been steadily increasing in North Leeds since 2010 and that in the period 2014-17 predicted reception intakes far exceed the number of available local places. In 2014 this was addressed by the provision of bulge intakes of an additional 30 children at both Roundhay Primary School and Allerton C of E.

In the 2014 Roundhay School Places Consultation, it was acknowledged that there was a need for 60 additional primary places in the area. Proposals to expand Gledhow Primary School and Immaculate Heart were put forward – the Gledhow proposition was accepted to commence in 2016 but Immaculate Heart refused to expand and no other additional places were found.

For 2015, despite the Council's own recognition of the problem, no extra provision was made at all. In the five weeks following the allocations for primary places this

year, Fair Access worked extensively, lobbying the Council, MPS and the media. Only then were an additional 90 places found, meaning that most although not all of the children who missed out on local schools this year have now been offered places at schools within their communities and we are grateful to the Council for this work.

Although this is a positive step for these families, this followed weeks of worry and stress at a time that they should have been looking forward to the next chapter in their lives. The available data clearly predicted an impending crisis which could have been avoided by capacity planning well in advance of offers day.

The repeated provision of bulge classes is obviously not a sustainable solution to the problem in North Leeds. Of the 90 extra places provided in Roundhay this year, only 30 are permanent. Based on the impact the additional places had this year, they were largely only increased choice for parents in the immediate area whilst doing nothing to address the complete lack of local provision in the areas north of Street Lane.

The number of 'nearest school' letters sent reinforces the fact that without further action there will continue to be a deficit of places. Taking Talbot Primary as an example, in 2015, 126 children were sent nearest school letters for Talbot Primary when only 60 places exist and this was not an isolated case – in 2014, 92 children had this as their nearest school and according to data this is predicated to be the case for 104 children in 2016 and 121 in 2017.

In Alwoodley the move of the Sikh ethos Khalsa Science Academy to the area, whilst ensuring adequate school places here in terms of numbers, is an inappropriate provision for an area already heavy in faith-based schools. Although technically a faith-based school, many parents this year quite reasonably objected to being allocated to a school clearly grounded in culture and beliefs they do not share.

Without action, according to the birth rate and nearest school data, the shortage of primary school places in North Leeds will continue into 2016 and beyond. We are aware that a planning meeting is proposed for September but with only two months from this until the application window opens for the 2016 intake, clearly the problem needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency. Whilst some members of our group are looking at the possibility of establishing a new Free School, this is clearly a long road and not by any means a certain one, and whilst we hope you will support them in any way you can, it should be recognised that this is not a viable solution for the 2016 intake, so we ask that you continue to communicate with us whilst working to an alternative concrete solution.

This may include changes to the admissions policy or, ideally, a permanent expansion of local schools, or the creation of a split site or through school. By working together and planning more effectively for the future, we believe that fair access to local schools can be achieved for all children in Leeds so they can grow and thrive within their local community. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Charlwood.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: I move that the matter be referred to the Director of Children's Services for consideration in consultation with the relevant Executive Member.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: I second that, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I call for the vote. (*A vote was taken*) The vote is CARRIED.

Thank you for attending and for what you have said. You will be kept informed of the consideration which your comments will receive. Good afternoon.

DEPUTATION THREE – FRIENDS OF RED HALL PLAYING FIELDS

THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon and welcome to today's Council meeting. Please now make your speech to Council, which should not be longer than five minutes, and please begin by introducing the people in your Deputation.

MR R GARNER: My Lord Mayor and fellow Councillors, good afternoon. I am Russell Garner, Chair of the Friends of Red Hall Playing Fields, and I am accompanied here by Katherine Fenton, Secretary. We are regular users of Red Hall Playing Fields - a Leeds asset in public hands since 1937 and much used and loved both for organised sport and general recreation.

We care deeply about Red Hall Playing Fields; this green open space plays a major part in the life of our community and with thousands of houses to be built nearby at Red Hall and in the Northern Quadrant, it will play an ever more important role. It unites our community, promoting mental and physical health and wellbeing. It provides a safe environment for young and old alike, in the attractive heritage setting of the Grade II listed Red Hall House. One of our group has in the past year used them to manage his own health, losing four-and-a-half stones in weight. This is in no small part due to the fields being a beautiful, tranquil, and extensive open space in which to exercise.

The geographic position of Red Hall - to the north of Roundhay Park, to the west of the Wetherby Road - means that it forms part of the so-called "green wedge" out of Leeds from Oakwood Clock through to Shadwell and the countryside beyond. Other sites near to Red Hall within this green wedge, have been safeguarded from development despite the fact that they are not publicly accessible, but Red Hall Playing Field presents an anomaly - one that has not been recognised as such in the Site Allocations Plan. The fields are in the top three least sustainable sites allocated for housing using the Planning Department's sustainability appraisal scores, and in the top two if apparent errors in the scoring were to be acknowledged.

Cross Gates and Whinmoor ward is deficient in quantity in five out of six types of green space, with playing provision noted as a particular area of shortfall against Core Strategy policy G3. 80% of the 81 green sites in the East Leeds fail to meet the required quality score, which Council officers say is "an issue of substandard greenspace provision in the East area across all typologies".

In our part of the ward this shortage will be more acutely felt with the building of several thousand houses and a dual carriageway. This will cut residents off from the countryside while dramatically reducing the size of the fields from eleven hectares to just three. Despite this planned reduction and their removal from greenspace allocation, to our surprise the fields are still to be considered in greenspace surplus and deficit analysis.

Today we are seeking the following outcomes:

1. We would like to the Council to commit not to sell the publicly accessible portion of the site. Sixteen months ago the then Executive Board Member with responsibility for Neighbourhoods and Planning told us “That debate is yet to be had.” We can wait no longer for that debate.

2. We ask that this site be reconsidered as designated greenspace. It was allocated for business park development 23 years ago but the local context has changed greatly. Red Hall House was sold in 2010, separating the house from its setting. Any housing on the field would not only damage the historic landscape but also push our ward further into greenspace deficit, exacerbated by the arrival of many thousands of new residents in surrounding developments.

3. As local residents, we would like to participate in decisions regarding the maintenance and landscaping of the field in ways that respect current usage, that are sympathetic to the site’s history as parkland to the house and that will benefit the many new residents.

4. We would like support and guidance from officers and Councillors as to how to ensure sports and recreation aspirations are protected and acknowledged in the decision-making process.

5. We want to retain this open, large, safe area of land so that different activities can take place at the same time - football, dog walking, general recreation with our children. There are no parks or gardens in walking distance these fields, our only local amenity, serve those purposes too.

We understand the pressure on the Council to increase housing stock. Our concern is that in exchange for a small number of homes, we will reduce the community around these fields to a thoroughfare; we will further damage the quantity and quality of greenspace in a ward chronically deficient in both to levels unacceptable in the Core Strategy.

As our elected representatives you have this chance to safeguard Red Hall Playing Fields and ensure that this much-loved open greenspace is retained for present and future generations. This would be in keeping with the Leeds aspiration to be one of England’s greenest and most child-friendly cities. This would be a fitting legacy for all the sporting and recreational achievements of which Leeds is so rightly proud.

We would also like to take this opportunity to publicly thank our ward Councillors and Council officers for their understanding and support. Thank you for your time.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Charlwood.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: I second that, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I call for the vote. (*A vote was taken*) The vote is CARRIED.

Thank you for attending and for what you have said. You will be kept informed of the consideration which your comments will receive. Good afternoon.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: We go on to Item 5. Councillor Yeadon.

COUNCILLOR YEADON: Chair, I wish to move the new Children’s and Young People’s Plan.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Charlwood.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: I formally second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gettings.

COUNCILLOR GETTINGS: Lord Mayor, the MBI Group are delighted to receive and support the Children and Young People’s Plan. The plan builds on last year’s successful OFSTED achievements and we are particularly pleased that the obsessions and outcomes have not changed. They remain straightforward, easy to understand and fit for purpose. The single page of A4 containing an Executive Summary is also welcome, which will help Councillors focus on the way forward.

In the column entitled “How will we know we have made a difference?” 30 of the 20 points made are school-related matters. This being the case I think more work needs to be done to engage all our school staffs. The plan is full of relevant and focused reasoning leading to a well thought out plan. Our Group feels that the success already achieved last year will provide the enthusiasm to carry the plan forward.

Nigel Richardson’s rallying call is good to great and I think we should all buy into that. Lord Mayor, we give this plan our full support. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Lamb.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Very briefly, firstly can I welcome Councillor Yeadon to her new post and very much look forward to working with her. Secondly, I just want to say, we spend most of our time in this place and in this Chamber focusing on the things that divide us so it is nice to have an opportunity to focus on something that I think every one of us in this place is quite rightly full square behind.

Putting children and young people at the heart of everything we do has got to be the right approach. It is the only way to secure the future of our city and our country for the long term and I just want to associate our group and say we are fully behind this plan, proud to have played even a small part in bringing it together and we will do

anything we can to help support achieving the outcomes and objectives of it. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Yeadon.

COUNCILLOR YEADON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I hope that is the theme I am going to continue with for the rest of the day. *(laughter)*

I am really pleased to have the support across the Council Chamber for the new plan. I am very pleased to be able to move it as one of my first official duties at a Council meeting as the Exec Member for Children and Families.

The plan is a refresh of the plan that went before and it has been developed through the Children and Families Trust Board. It involves children and young people, an OBA session, a session that elected Members took part in and the Children and Families Trust Board, Scrutiny, Health and Wellbeing Board, so we certainly have had the opportunity for everybody to contribute to it and have ownership of it.

Just echoing Councillor Gettings and Councillor Lamb's point, Children's Service has been a huge journey and the Ofsted inspection earlier this year really demonstrated the results of working in partnership with a shared goal and what you can achieve by doing that.

I have said in the past I think it was very good of me to take on a portfolio after Ofsted has visited, and I am very grateful to Councillor Blake for that, but that is not the end of the journey, that is just a stopping off point along the way. I am very grateful for the support that you have all given to that part of the journey and look forward to it on behalf of young people in the city for the future. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: I now call for the vote. *(A vote was taken)* The vote is CARRIED.

ITEM 6 – RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE – AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 6, Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: I move the Item in the terms of the Notice.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Charlwood.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: I formally second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I call for the vote. *(A vote was taken)* The vote is CARRIED.

ITEM 7 – REPORT ON APPOINTMENTS

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 7, Report on Appointments. Councillor Charlwood.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Selby.

COUNCILLOR SELBY: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I call for the vote. *(A vote was taken)* The vote is CARRIED.

ITEM 8 – REPORT ON THE OUTER NORTH EAST COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

THE LORD MAYOR: We will now move on to the Community Committee Reports. Consideration of each report will last for no more than ten minutes. Item 88, Councillor Wilkinson.

COUNCILLOR WILKINSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. The Outer North East Community Committee is made up of the wards of Wetherby, Harewood and Alwoodley and of these three both Wetherby and Harewood are totally parish, as is the majority of the Alwoodley ward. One of our Community Committee strengths is the close liaison we have with the Parish Councils. The 16 Parish Councils make up the Town and Parish Council Forum that meets six times per year, chaired by one of the ward Members. The Members consist of the Chairs of the Parish Councils. These meetings are themed and the hot topic of the moment is introduced. As an example, at the last one, which was only a couple of weeks ago, this focused on the Community Infrastructure Levy and was chaired by Councillor John Procter, who is our Lead Member on all Planning matters. This will be followed up with a series of workshops over the next few months.

Although the Wellbeing Fund has been dramatically reduced over the past few years, we have used these limited resources wisely, supporting in particular the elderly through donations to MAE Care, Northcall and Wetherby in Support of the Elderly, plus support to many community events. It seems very appropriate that the Youth Activity Fund is spearheaded by our three youngest Members – Alan Lamb, Matthew Robinson and Dan Cohen, who recommend those schemes that are most appropriate focused on sustainable projects.

In conclusion, I feel that the limited time we have in Council meetings would be better used in holding the Executive to account rather than patting ourselves on the back. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Buckley.

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am happy to second. I have nothing else to add at all to that except I fully endorse Councillor Wilkinson's remarks.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Procter.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: No comments.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Robinson.

COUNCILLOR ROBINSON: I fully endorse what Councillor Wilkinson has said and will take the opportunity to hold the Executive to a bit more account, Chair. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Wilkinson so sum up.

COUNCILLOR WILKINSON: I do not think there is any need to sum up, Lord Mayor! *(laughter)*

THE LORD MAYOR: I do not really know what to say to that! I am going to call for the vote. *(A vote was taken)* I think the vote is CARRIED.

ITEM 9 – REPORT ON THE OUTER EAST COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 9, Councillor Andrea McKenna.

COUNCILLOR A McKENNA: Lord Mayor, I have to say that I do not agree with my colleagues over the other side. I think Community Committees play an important role in the community and I see them as the way forward. *(Applause)*

I am speaking today on the recent Annual Report on the Outer East Community Committee. The report details the work that the Community Committee has done over the last year to engage with residents and listen to their views with the overall aim of improving service delivery at a local level. This includes delivering projects and programmes on work and priority issues in our area.

Firstly I would like to thank the Community Committee Champions for all the hard work that they have done over the last year – that is Councillor Debra Coupar at Children and Young people, Councillor Mary Harland at Environment and Community Safety, Councillor Judith Cummins and Councillor Paulene Grahame on Employment, Skills and Welfare and myself covering Health, Wellbeing and Adult Social Care.

The role of the Community Committee Champions has developed since the introduction of Community Committees in 2014 and they perform a number of valuable functions, including setting the priority themes for the Community Committee Workshop and supporting the planning and follow-up of these events. The Outer East Community Committee has held three successful workshops in 2014/15 which are considered high priority – Employment and Skills, how do we support aspirations effectively and connect the community with the opportunities at Thorpe Park: Adult Social Care, tackling social isolation, loneliness, through partnership working; and Community tackling domestic violence and abuse.

We recently had a workshop on the Environment in Outer East which Councillor Harland will speak on in a minute. As an Area Committee we very, very rarely had a member of the public attend our Community Committees and at our last Community Committee meeting held at Temple Newsam House we had over 80 people present. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Harland.

COUNCILLOR HARLAND: Thank you, Lord Mayor. My Lord Mayor and fellow Councillors, as the Environmental Community Committee Champion I wish to speak today on the Annual Report of the Outer East Community Committee and the recent work in environmental issues in our area.

Our most recent workshop, the first of this municipal year, focused on environmental issues. Firstly, I would like to thank officers from our locality team and Councillor Andrea McKenna, the Chair, for facilitating one of the largest meetings to be held in the history of the Outer East Community Committee. For those who think that the public are not interested, this is clear evidence that Community Committees and local Members can enlist public support and enthusiasm for developing civic pride.

Litter and dog fouling, etc, are really important issues not just because it damages our environment but it undermines civic and community pride in our villages in the Outer East. Thanks to the incredible hard work of the In Bloom groups across our area, some of which are being judged today, villagers now have a sense of pride and passion for their streets.

Another issue we have had to address is flooding – again, an experience that can demoralise communities, especially when people have been flooded four or five times since 2007. At last we have managed to start work on a flood prevention scheme in Kippax. I have been working with my ward colleagues, Councillors Wakefield and James Lewis, to ensure a solution can be put in place to minimise the risk of future flooding and to go some way to eradicate the perpetual fear of a recurrence.

Work has now started on building an embankment behind the houses affected in Ramsden Street which should significantly reduce the risk from now on. In June 2007 over 20 houses on Ramsden Street were hit by serious flooding when the Kippax Beck overflowed and it was really upsetting to see residents so badly affected. Thankfully once the work is completed it will give those residents some peace of mind that it is unlikely that flood water will be able to damage their properties in the future. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Stuart McKenna.

COUNCILLOR S McKENNA: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to echo something that Councillor McKenna said because I do not think standing up in here talking about Wellbeing packs and food banks is a joke.

My Lord Mayor and fellow Councillors, I am speaking today on the recent Annual Report on the Outer East Community Committee and some of the funding we have provided this year to prioritise projects.

One of these projects includes Wellbeing packs for the elderly. The Community Committee contributed funding jointly with Housing Leeds and Public Health. The objective behind this project was to support Neighbourhood Networks to engage with elderly residents who are socially isolated. There is still a core of around 20% to 30% of elderly residents who are classed as socially isolated and whom agencies such as Neighbourhood Networks are failing to engage with. The plan is that providing a Wellbeing pack immediately gains the trust of the socially isolated person, who will

then continue to engage with the Network. It is also part of a multi-active approach to the issue of social isolation.

Each basic winter pack costs around £10 and includes items such as information leaflets, Leeds Social Care A-Z, Older People's Physical Active booklet and a thermometer card. It also includes soup, a blanket, thermo mug, hot water bottle and universal thermal socks and gloves and they go down very well.

Across the city 4,279 packs have been made available and 3,200 were given out by the end of the official winter. This enabled organisations to approach the vulnerable, offer a supporting hand and enable them to understand their context of living. Therefore, action can be put in place by referring to heating measure schemes, social events or health and wellbeing services.

The Community Committee is pursuing a project to increase outreach work for those that are socially isolated, with this project being part of a package so support that proposal and I look forward to continuing this work next year. Thank you.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Andrea McKenna to sum up.

COUNCILLOR A McKENNA: Lord Mayor, as you can see there has been a lot of important work that has happened so far this year through the Community Committee and more to come next year.

I just want to mention a few projects that we will be funding going forward in the New Year, which is two food banks we will be launching in the Garforth and Kippax ward. Over 26,000 emergency food parcels were handed out in Leeds last year, showing the extent of food poverty. This is a real problem. Food banks are providing a lifeline to people in this situation. The stigma that can surround food banks is unjustified. Often these people work on zero hour contracts and have very small incomes, not enough to sustain themselves, especially with the high cost of living rocketing. It is well known that food banks are struggling to cope with the demand so these two new food banks will be very helpful within our area.

Supported by Garforth NET and Brigshaw Trust the food banks will be launched in September and will be set up to work with Foodshare, food storage Department in Cross Green, a further development to a link with other providers in the area to discuss how we can play a part in ensuring that even more people in need are reached and utilising existing resources.

Another positive impact we have been able to achieve through funding is the Luncheon Clubs in our area. These are a real asset to the community, linking the themes with social isolation. They are a really good way of getting people out of their homes to socialise. In recent years several clubs have folded and others have very few attending. The Community Committee awarded funding to Garforth NET to support a worker to look at the Luncheon Clubs. This officer has provided support to clubs dealing with the organisation of meals, dealing with issues amongst members. We have gone from three to four clubs, now twelve in total and two new ones will be formed in the next year in Micklefield and Allerton Bywater.

THE LORD MAYOR: Can you just finish the sentence, please?

COUNCILLOR A McKENNA: Yes. The number of people attending these clubs has vastly improved and it is an excellent way of using our Wellbeing Fund. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: I shall now call for the vote. *(A vote was taken)* The vote is CARRIED.

ITEM 10 – SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 10, Scrutiny Annual Report. Councillor Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I move the Scrutiny Board's Annual Report.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Charlwood.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: I formally second.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Procter.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Colleagues have heard me say this a number of times, certainly in my Scrutiny Board, but these days, since the change in the way in which this Council works and moves to an Executive model, Scrutiny now is really the only meaningful way that most of the 99 Members in this Chamber can get involved in the business of Council. It is the only opportunity that Members have to hold the Executive and officers to account. There is literally no other way, therefore Scrutiny is very important and the Annual Report of the activities of the Scrutiny Boards clearly reflects that.

It was therefore with some surprise and a little concern that I had an exchange with a series of officers who were effectively imposing on the Scrutiny Board that I am fortunate enough to chair their view of what is and is not permissible to be scrutinised, and scrutinised by which particular Board.

As you would expect, Lord Mayor, I did not take kindly to this, nor should any Member of Council. What became apparent was there was and is confusion in the – I had better get it right, I think it is the Scheme of Officer Executive Delegations that was created.

I am a big believer in simplicity and I always tend to find that there is as clue to many things in life and it is usually in the name, so the Scrutiny Board that I Chair is the Scrutiny Board for Environment and Housing, but it turns out it is not actually for housing – not all housing, anyway. It is just a bit of housing, it is just actually social housing. It does not say that, I might add, in the terms of reference of our Scrutiny Board, nor in the relevant Officer Scheme of Delegation.

Really, Lord Mayor, this is simply to draw colleagues' attention to this matter. It is important that every matter of the Council is scrutinised by one Scrutiny Board or another and I look forward to officers sorting out the terminology so each Scrutiny

Board is very clear about what it is and is not able to scrutinise. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Groves.

COUNCILLOR GROVES: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I think there is no denying that the last few years have been incredibly tough for Local Authorities and I think it is important that Scrutiny plays a vital role in holding people to account. However, I think despite the budget cuts we need to reflect on what we have done in the face of such challenges. We have not lost our ambition as a city. This last municipal year alone we have hosted the Tour de France Grand Départ, continued to fund our city's unique Neighbourhood Networks, started to deliver a huge housing regeneration project and agreed to bid to become European Capital of Culture. There are countless other things that I could mention but Leeds's aspiration and determination is clear.

Throughout all of this the role of Scrutiny has been a key pillar to effective decision-making, ensuring that the focus of work remains on how it will benefit residents of our city. The role of a critical friend has never been more important as all of the Boards have challenged officers and Executive Members. We have kept a clear focus on improving communities and opportunity for all.

It would be impossible to do justice to the breadth and detail of Scrutiny that has taken place this year but I would like to highlight just a tiny cross section today. This year the Resources and Council Services Board was central to our reaction to welfare change, as it informed proposals to change the local Council Tax Support Scheme, pressing for any savings to be diverted into specific job seeking support initiatives and ensuring that Jobs and Skills section has the resource to meet the needs of the scheme.

Crucially the Board also identified the need to introduce a hardship fund into the proposed scheme, protecting the most vulnerable residents in the city. The Sustainable Economy and Culture Board demonstrated best practice in collaborative working and along with the Chair of the Safer and Stronger Communities informed the Council's plan in developing an ambitious city-wide District Heating Scheme. Throughout this process has focused on ensuring maximum benefit for residents.

Once again in what was something of a theme across many of the Boards this year, the need to ensure jobs, skills and opportunities of local people was highlighted.

Finally, the Health and Wellbeing and Adult Social Care Board provided a robust response to the possibility that patients were being put at risk by the Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust, calling for more transparency and accountability in the organisation's decision making process.

As Scrutiny Boards undergo a restructure for the future I am confident they will continue to make a difference for people in Leeds.

THE LORD MAYOR: Can you please sum up?

COUNCILLOR GROVES: I will do, Lord Mayor. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone, the Scrutiny Officers, the Scrutiny Chairs and everyone who was involved in the process. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Anderson.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can I welcome this report and I just want to highlight some of the work done in the Scrutiny Board this year. For example, our Peckfield enquiry which was quite an excellent enquiry, even though I say so myself, the reason being we worked with an external body, i.e. the Environment Agency, and a private company, the owners of Peckfield, who did participate – we might not have always agreed with everything that they were saying but they were willing to listen to what we were saying - and also the Council and also it was quite interesting to see how limited the Council's role was in actually doing some of the work here.

We also looked into PCSOs and the roles of them in community partnerships and their importance. We visited Middleton and – how can I put this diplomatically – it was so nice to see the way that the community welcomed the police being at the heart of their community and where they can gain access to them and they knew where the police where, and I think that is a model that I think needs to be looked at in terms of things.

We also started to look into Area Based Delegations. We did not quite finish the enquiry this year, which I will return to shortly, but one thing I would maybe ask Councillor Lewis to think on is that in terms of the Delegations, is this true devolution that you are offering to us or is this just another bit of decentralisation?

On that, if you really believe in devolving powers to Area Based Community Committees, what about some of the money coming down through some of the Community Committees as well so that we can then look at how it can be best spent?

Just finally I would like to thank the Members of the Board who were with me. Hopefully everybody enjoyed it, hopefully everybody got something out of it this year and, yes, politics did raise its head occasionally but hopefully people found it a friendly environment and in the nicest possible sense everybody was given a fair chance to say what they wanted when they wanted, and also I pay particular comment to Councillor Ron Grahame who always brought extra papers for us to every single meeting so that we knew what we were doing. That is actually beneficial. I said it jokingly but a lot of the research he did was beneficial.

Finally, I would like to pay my personal tribute to the work done by Angela Brogden this year, who has been through a traumatic six to eight months herself but throughout this time she still kept in touch with me. Like me, she is a control freak, she likes to be knowing what is happening all the time but without her my Scrutiny Board throughout the years would not have been the success that it has been and I pay tribute to the good work that she has done and particularly recently in the circumstances.

If I could just finally back up what Councillor Procter said in terms of Scrutiny of the future. We need to be careful what we are doing because we can throw the baby out with the bathwater.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor James Lewis to sum up.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. First of all, I would like to add my thoughts to the comments both of Barry and Kim about the work of Members on Scrutiny Boards across the year and the work of officers in supporting it. As

somebody who until fairly recently was a Member of the Scrutiny Board myself, I quite often recognise that you get out of Scrutiny what individual Members themselves put into it.

I listened with great interest to what John said about the organisation of the Scrutiny Boards. There is a natural simplicity on the aligning Scrutiny Boards to individual directorates but that is not to say that where there are those tricky issues that do not naturally sit in individual directorates there is nothing to stop Scrutiny Boards working together on joint enquiries. Again, particularly on the area of housing that John worked, obviously other parts of housing are in the City Development Scrutiny Board which is chaired by Councillor Paul Truswell and I cannot see a more natural marriage in this Council Chamber between Councillor Procter and Councillor Truswell!

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Comrade Truswell.

COUNCILLOR TRUSWELL: Same sex marriage.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: I will buy my hat ready for that day, Paul. On this issue I can see a natural alignment and joint working across Scrutiny Boards on what is a serious issue for the future of the city and that is something that I hope can be taken forward in the years ahead, to actually make sure. Whichever way you organise Scrutiny Boards there are going to be a few that do not neatly fit into one and we have always had that ability to work across Scrutiny Boards.

Finally, as I can see I am not yet up to the red light, Lord Mayor, I think it is worth again reflecting not only just the changes in the organisation of the Scrutiny Board but, again, just to note from the great work that has been done over the last year in Scrutiny Board, obviously Children's Scrutiny Board was one that was recognised not just here as adding a lot of value to the Council's work but also by OFSTED and I hope over the year ahead.

Obviously again just to say welcome, there have been some changes to the Scrutiny Board Chairs and welcome to our three new Scrutiny Board Chairs – Paul Truswell, Sue Bentley and Peter Gruen - who I am sure will continue, along with the new membership of Scrutiny Boards, to add a lot of value to Scrutiny. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. I shall now call for the vote. *(A vote was taken)*
The vote is CARRIED.

ITEM 11 - QUESTIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: We shall now move on to Question, Item 11, where we will have questions for a period of 30 minutes. Question 1, Councillor Carter.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Yes, thank you, my Lord Mayor. Before asking the question can I just beg your indulgence for a moment to congratulate Councillor Blake on being elected the first woman Leader of Leeds City Council. *(Applause)* I did not have the opportunity at the Installation Meeting so I wanted to say that now and also to wish her well in that particular job. I am sure she is delighted

to know that the Chancellor has just pinched her clothes because he has announced the introduction of a living wage at £7.20 an hour rising to £9 an hour by 2020.

I will now go on to the question, if I may, Lord Mayor. It was not my intention to introduce that, I had the note passed to me. It is a pleasure to be able to ask the first question to the first woman Leader of Leeds City Council.

Will the Leader of Council tell me whether she believes the original letter sent out on behalf of Leeds City Council to people in receipt of the single person's Council Tax benefits was appropriate or acceptable?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. It is a pleasure to be able to respond to your question, Councillor Carter.

Just by way of background, many of you will be aware that as part of the Council's budget strategy in 2015, this year, full Council agreed that steps would be taken to confirm that residents in receipt of the single person's discount actually remain entitled to that discount. It is fair to say that similar exercises in the past have identified a number of single person discounts that were no longer appropriate. We cannot always rely on everyone volunteering the information straight off when they are no longer entitled to the single person discount.

We have sent out similar letters before. This time round the letters went to more residents than in previous years and for some it will probably have been the first time that they have been asked to confirm that they are still entitled to a single person discount.

The letter is intended to strike a balance between giving information to residents about why the check is being carried out and explaining the consequences of not responding. I think it is appropriate to tell residents why we are carrying out the checks and what may happen to them next. It is fair to say the letter has been amended since the first one went out and I have asked officers to look at whether we can be more specific about who letters are sent to in the future.

THE LORD MAYOR: Do you have a supplementary?

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: I do, my Lord Mayor, because I would like Councillor Blake just to clarify that. First of all she said it was appropriate and then she said the letter had been amended. I would just put this to her, that a lot of the people who received the original communication – and I have no problem with the second communication or the fact we are checking up, let me make that absolutely clear. We cannot afford to be in a position where we are paying out money we should not be. However, bear in mind, Councillor Blake, will you, that the vast majority of recipients are probably elderly and the person who drew this to my attention was an elderly gentleman who had just had an operation and he received this. It implies – I am going to read it to you, if you do not mind. This is the first letter, that was withdrawn:

“These checks have indicated that one or more adults besides yourself have links to your address so we need to confirm whether your single person discount is value.”

No such evidence had been gathered, so people received this letter, Councillor Blake, that this did not apply to at all, were elderly and a number of them very distressed. I repeat again, I ask you whether this initial letter was appropriate. It was not, was it?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: I will answer you by saying in terms of justification we are talking about a figure of almost half a million pounds that we are due to recoup. This is a really important issue and I think with all of the letters that go out from Council we need to be very careful. Some people receive quite innocent letters and feel very threatened by the jargon within them, but I would draw to your attention as well that around the year 2009, before 2009, a similar process was undertaken, your administration sent out a letter, had another look at it and then amended it and sent out another one following on.

The fact that we have changed it in the light of comments that we have received shows that we are listening and we will do everything we can to endeavour that we get fair collection of such benefits but that we have to go out communicate that people will be checked to make sure that their claims are honest. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jonathan Bentley.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can the Executive Member for Environmental Protection [and Community Safety] please advise Council on the estimated number of deaths believed to have been caused by poor air quality in Leeds since the July Council meeting last year?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dobson.

COUNCILLOR DOBSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. With Council's indulgence I am going to actually give quite a technical answer to the first part of this question. I am sure there will be a supplementary. Actually, what it is not possible to do is attribute deaths directly, in our city, to the issue of air quality within the city. That is not to fudge the issue because actually I think it is an issue that all of Council takes extremely seriously. It is one of those issues that is going to cut across Departments in the future from City Development, my colleagues in Public Health and, of course, Scrutiny who I believe are picking up an enquiry later this year.

The actual answer is slightly more complicated because it is based on estimates, figures that we get based on models from Public Health England. What they tell us is that because of our burden of PM2.5 particles within our atmosphere, you could in part attribute up to 350 mortalities as a result of air quality.

What we have to do is also put that into some form of context that if you have a respiratory illness, often there is a significant number of factors that have both led to that condition and indeed impacts upon that conditions, so whilst we do take it extremely seriously, it is not possible to qualify and quantify quite in the terms that Councillor Bentley has asked. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

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

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor, yes, and I thank Councillor Dobson for his reply and I do appreciate how seriously he and his colleagues do take this issue and understand the difficulty in attributing deaths directly to this.

Let me ask him this, then. At the recent Public Inquiry into the NGT trolleybus scheme, Leeds City Council and Metro admitted in evidence that the trolleybus will not reduce overall CO2 emissions, will not improve traffic congestion, which is a cause of poor air quality, and it will worsen local air quality. Would Councillor Dobson now, in his role as Executive Member for Environmental Protection, and taking it so seriously he is concerned about poor air quality, persuade the new Leadership of the Council, regardless of the outcome of the Public Enquiry, to abandon this outdated trolleybus scheme as it is incompatible with Leeds Best Council Plan and the objectives of a low carbon Leeds?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dobson.

COUNCILLOR DOBSON: Do you know what, Lord Mayor, I genuinely did not see that one coming! *(laughter)* There you go, you live and learn as time goes by, don't you?

On the issue of the A660 I think it is fair to say I have been up to the University of Leeds and actually looked at some of the complex data that they are actually doing in terms of that corridor of Leeds and it is fair to say it is one of the issues that causes the most concern, quite rightly, in Leeds.

I am going to kind of turn it on its head a little bit, because the anti NGT debate would have us believe that the current system, the status quo, is actually a better solution, but when you look at it what the experts are telling me is quite different, that the PM2.5 top PM10s in that location are going off the grid. As a city we have the same issues as Manchester, Birmingham, Liverpool, London, of course, and even the Government will have been tasked with handling air quality and the A660 is one of those areas. I think it would be absolutely wrong of the Council to say let us leave the status quo because I believe NGT as a transport mode has to be deemed cleaner than - and I have listened to the experts, people who tell me that if you are on the A660 corridor in a bus trundling up and down it has got a catalytic converter but because of the stop/start nature of the journeys it never warms up, never heats up, never does its job and because of the slow crawling nature of that section of road that we all know well and we accept is congested, that situation is not going to improve unless there is a radical solution.

This has come at me a bit from left field but I am going to just comment briefly on some of the things the city is doing that I do not think a lot of my colleagues get due credit for: the £30m investment in the highway network at the moment to improve it for cyclists; the expansion – remember a year ago when we were all told Elland Road was a white elephant and it would not work and now we are looking to expand it and build park and ride to Temple Green; looking at some of the technologies that are going to come to Council next week to the Executive Board around compressed natural gas; and a lot of the measures that we are putting in place in this city, in Leeds,

that I think is going to make us an exemplar of good practice, and a Council that leads by example.

In terms of the A660, I will just finish on this point. I actually think that a lot of the arguments around the A660 have been for political expediency. I do not think it has been around looking at the issue of that corridor and looking at solutions and the current status quo simply cannot be allowed to continue. This Council has indeed embraced a difficult but radical solution, Lord Mayor. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Question 3, Councillor Jarosz.

COUNCILLOR JAROSZ: Would the Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adults like to comment on the Chancellor's recent announcement regarding Public Health funding?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Mulherin.

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Thank you, Councillor Jarosz. The announcement by the Treasury to reduce the Public Health budgets to Local Authorities by £200m nationally in year has been both unexpected and unwarranted. Simon Stevens, the Chief Executive of NHS, has repeatedly said that prevention is a key part of his plan to reduce demand for the NHS.

At the Local Government Conference in Harrogate last week he is reported to have said that cutting back on Public Health spending is penny wise and pound foolish. The decision by the Treasury, therefore, flies in the face of logic and the Government's own policy. Even worse, these cuts are to be made in the year when our Public Health budget for 2015/16 has already been fully committed. We are still awaiting a consultation from the Department of Health that was promised two weeks ago on how these cuts are to be made. However, despite that our share of the cuts are anticipated to be around £3m if it is a straight cut to the Local Authority on the amount of money that we currently get.

The other thing to bear in mind for Leeds is that Leeds, as a Public Health Authority, is already £6.2m short of the Government and Department of Health's own estimate of where we should be in funding per head for a population of the size of the city of Leeds with the needs of the population of the city of Leeds.

There are going to be some very difficult decisions ahead. We await the consultation and all I can say in summary is that this has been a very bad decision for the population and people's health in the city of Leeds. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Do you have a supplementary question?

COUNCILLOR JAROSZ: No supplementary, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor 4, Councillor Leadley.

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: My Lord Mayor, I am sure you will join me in welcoming Councillor Richard Lewis back to Planning and agree that the fate of Councillor Peter Gruen's sprawling portfolio was one of the remarkable events of our time, rather like the fall of the Austro-Hungarian Empire after the First World War.

By the time that everyone with an interest had made a territorial claim against it, there was nothing left. *(laughter)*

Anyway, on with the question. Following the return of planning to his portfolio, does the Executive Board Member for Regeneration, Transport and Planning believe that the LDF Core Strategy target to build 74,000 new homes in Leeds is a reasonable reflection either of need or of likely achievement?

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. It is like I have never been away, Tom! Coming back at this stage in the whole planning process I must pay tribute to everybody who has been involved, and that is certainly Councillor Gruen who, it is a thankless task to take through the work that he has taken through to this point and, actually, to all the people who sat on the Development Plans Panel and who have taken part in this process. It is not easy, it is something that is often ignored by people outside who only want to blame us for something when actually a huge amount of hard work goes in.

What my view is of the number is really irrelevant; it is what the Government Inspector agrees is a reasonable number is what is relevant. I do remember when I did have this portfolio that the officers were warning me up to a very high number and I was gritting my teeth and thinking that is quite frightening. We are in a far better place having a plan than Local Authorities that do not have a plan, and places like Harrogate and York are incredibly vulnerable to the adventuristic and opportunistic behaviour of developers and I think we will see that coming out very clearly in the coming months.

I do understand the reservations across the Chamber about numbers and I am more than happy to talk to any Member of Council, any political group about the figure. I will not say the door is always open to you because it always shuts, but I am happy to come and have those conversations if that is helpful. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Do you have a supplementary question? No. Councillor Renshaw.

COUNCILLOR RENSHAW: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Would the Executive Member for Communities comment on efforts to tackle food poverty in the city?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Coupar.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Thank you, Lord Mayor, and thank you, Councillor Renshaw, for giving me the opportunity to speak on the issue of food poverty in this city.

I would firstly like to outline the scale of the problem we have in this city. Nationally between 2004 and 2014 food prices have risen by 47% and there are now ten Trussell Trust food banks in Leeds, six food drop-ins as well as numerous social enterprises, parish pantries and street outreach programmes.

This does not just affect people on benefits but people suffering in-work poverty as a result of low wages too. Children accounted for up to 47% of all food parcel recipients across the city, 11% more than the national average. Of course, the Government are making it worse. The benefit cuts that have been implemented since

2013 have evidenced the amount of people needing our help as a Local Authority to help them out of poverty. Today, I am sure, as we are in this Council Chamber, further cuts to that welfare budget are being brought upon us and they are hitting the poorest in our society.

Make no mistake, colleagues, food poverty is a real and growing problem in this city and as a Council with our partners we are working to help these people. Charity workers and volunteers have handed out 26,182 emergency food parcels in a year provided by referral or allocated informally. 56,481 meal packs were handed out through street outreach, also known as soup runs. They usually involve groups of people going out on to the streets to feed the homeless community. 20,306 have reached food through the food bank or food parcel provider in 2014 and Fair Share, part of Leeds Food Aid Network prioritising getting food distributed to where it is needed using the skills, abilities and resources of the national organisation. FareShare takes surplus food from the food industry and distributes it fairly to different food aid providers and Leeds City Council has provided a year's worth of funding to enable FareShare Yorkshire to set up fresh operations in Leeds for its first year.

School breakfast clubs, a new initiative to provide free food to schools, was launched by charity FareShare and Leeds City Council, set up in January this year at 23 schools to provide breakfast to children who may otherwise have gone without, and in some cases food had previously been provided by teachers. Now, six months later, free food is being provided for clubs at 92 schools in Leeds involving around 6,000 children and many more waiting to take part. We will continue to support those in most need in this city. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Do you have a supplementary question? Councillor Andrew Carter.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Will the Leader of Council please tell me what steps she is taking to bring about a standard set of terms and conditions across the Combined Authority area for issuing of private hire vehicle and taxi licenses?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you. As everyone sadly is aware in this Council, this is an issue that has particularly been under the spotlight as a result of all the child protection, the CSE cases that we have had not just in West Yorkshire but obviously in a much wider area. I want to just reassure Council that we are fully committed to working with other Local Authorities, particularly across the Combined Authority, to achieve standardised taxi and private hire conditions, and to provide a much safer and more consistent licensing environment across the area.

Just for information, Wakefield is leading on this work and all of the relevant West Yorkshire officers have contributed to a report which will be going to a future meeting of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, which you obviously will receive. There are a raft of areas that we are looking at: retaining the role of the six Licensing Authorities with a stronger sharing of intelligence and the introduction of harmonised policies; a mapping exercise by Licensing Managers which have already illustrated a high degree of similarity; address the issue of cross-border working, which is a critical national issue for the sector and, of course, we cannot put all of this

into place by ourselves, it requires the action of Central Government as well as the police.

We will continue to support the six Licensing Committee Chairs meeting twice a year. Rossendale will be invited to be included in the work that we are doing. We are actively going to encourage Members of all Councils to undertake licensing and safeguarding training and, most importantly, I think, we are raising this issue with the Local Government Association hoping that we can get national collaboration across this area. We are all writing to the Home Office calling for national standards across the piece and undertaking communications across this area.

As I say, very important work. It is in hand and we are very conscious that every Local Authority area does follow their own Government arrangements for decision making.

THE LORD MAYOR: Do you have a supplementary question?

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Yes, my Lord Mayor. First of all, can I say that I think that Leeds licensing standards are very high and they are probably the highest in West Yorkshire and getting tougher, quite rightly so, but I am concerned. I think it is essential that we have, and I am sure Councillor Blake would agree with me, a uniform set of rules and regulations across private hire and taxis across the whole of the Combined Authority area based on good practice and the most rigorous of those terms and conditions which I think happens to be linked. I am sure you would agree with me.

I also am concerned that we still have not done enough and I think that the Combined Authority – and I would like some assurance on this and time scales if possible and I appreciate it is difficult at the moment. We cannot have a situation, can we, where people can go to Rossendale in Lancashire and apply for a licence when they have not got one here and we finish up with people driving hire vehicles whose home address is an LS postcode or a Bradford postcode and they are registered in Rossendale in Lancashire, having had no checks implemented by Leeds or by any other West Yorkshire Authority area. I think it is imperative this moves quickly. Can you please give some further assurances that we will put pressure on Wakefield to move this piece of work speedily to a report to the Combined Authority? *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: I completely agree with Councillor Carter and the urgency of this work and for that reason at a meeting with West Yorkshire Leaders last week I raised this very issue and asked for it to be brought forward to a Combined Authority meeting with the greatest degree of urgency.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Cleasby.

COUNCILLOR CLEASBY: Lord Mayor, could the Executive Member for Children please confirm what steps are being taken to avoid a shortage of school places across the city next year?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Yeadon.

COUNCILLOR YEADON: Thank you. This is quite a long answer, Brian, so bear with me. The basic need challenge facing the city has been widely publicised and I am sure we will have a constructive debate regarding it later today. We know that next year will be our greatest challenge yet. The birth rate for the cohort due to enter reception in 2016 is the largest, with 10,350 births, an increase of 350 over 2015. On top of the 1,273 places that have been created since 2010, we have identified the need for an additional 25 new forms of entry for 2016 across the city. To achieve this we must continue to ensure there is a consolidated corporate approach working across a number of directorates including Children's Services, Asset Management, Highways, Planning and Finance.

In 2012 Council established a corporate-wide planning group to engage in a continuous programme of work to tackle the need for school places. Through this group there is a regular analysis of local and city-wide data which is available to us to inform the process.

Supporting this we also have a continuous programme of work to add local intelligence, ensure cross-Council planning, lead wide-reaching consultations and adapting school place plans as appropriate. However, we also know that predicting the need for school places is not just a science but also an art. School preferences may not just be influenced by distance but also by faith, siblings' attendance and, of course, parental choice. There is also a range of governance structures which exist to shape and oversee the process including a cross-party steering group.

We can only meet this challenge by working in partnership with a range of schools across the city. We have already seen a number of schools, governing bodies and partners agree to expansion, bulge cohorts and establishing new sites, for which we are incredibly grateful. We know there are a number of areas of the city where new schools will be needed in future years to meet demand. As Local Authorities are now prevented from opening new community schools (something which we continue to lobby Government to reverse) we must investigate all options that are available to us to guarantee that no child in the city loses out.

In September we will be arranging a full Members' seminar to discuss the issue in more detail and to ensure that all elected Members continue to be aware of the issues in their areas.

There is a great deal of work ahead of us to ensure that solutions are put in place before 2016 offer day. I recognise this is an anxious time for parents and carers of children going to school for the first time. However, as an Authority we are committed to make sure that every child in Leeds has the best start in education that they can. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Do you have a supplementary question?

COUNCILLOR CLEASBY: I do, Lord Mayor, thank you for your generosity and thank you, Lucinda. Could I ask therefore, Lucinda, as a supplementary, if you concur and agree with Councillor Townsley and myself that to be helpful the Adult Training Centre site and the Leeds City College Horsforth Campus sites should both be retained for education?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Yeadon.

COUNCILLOR YEADON: As I said in my previous answer, there is a wide-ranging steering group which is actually led by Alan Gay which is looking at all the different options. I think we need to consider all the sites. However, it is not just a Children's issue we must take into consideration – Planning issues, Highways and, as you know, it is very complex.

I am perfectly happy to look at any site in your ward that you would like us to consider and have dialogue with you. However, we need to make sure that we take into consideration all the different factors for sites. I am happy to arrange a meeting.

THE LORD MAYOR: We are actually on 29½ minutes, so that is the end of Question time, sorry.

ITEM 12 - MINUTES

THE LORD MAYOR: Can we now turn, please, to page 9 in your Order Papers, on to minutes. Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: I move that the Minutes be received according to the Procedure Rule 2.2(i).

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Charlwood.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: I formally second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I call for the vote. *(A vote was taken)* The motion is CARRIED.

(a) Executive Board

(i) Finance & Inequality/Resources& Strategy

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now going on to Exec Board Minutes and the consideration of the Executive Board Minutes will end at 3.30. Can we go straight to Finance and Inequality/Resources and Strategy. Councillor Anderson - and can we please be minded that it is Councillor Anderson's maiden speech. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR C ANDERSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to comment on Minutes 11 and 12 in the Executive Board Minutes of 24th June 2015 in terms of both current and future funding for Adult Social Care.

I welcome the thrust behind a recent Local Government Association report on ageing, the opportunities and challenges of an ageing society for Local Government. Government and local Councils need to look at what they can do to try and address the issues that will be in front of us even more than now in the next few years. There will be an increase in England in the number of over 65s by an incredible 65% in the next 25 years. We must embrace this, not fear that we cannot cope with the challenges it will bring.

Our older people already make a fantastic contribution to our local communities, providing unpaid child care, volunteering in societies, clubs, charities and civic

organisations across this city. There are potential significant economic benefits from their spending power and taxable employment, many older people working well into their 70s.

Importantly, there are things that this Council will need to make provision for by using this and all the other information available around this subject. The older population, by the very fact that they are living longer, will become more diverse across all the spectrums that covers. Living arrangements will be more varied, with a lot of people living on their own. We must plan for future growing demand on Council services, most obviously and especially in social care and health.

With Public Health coming back into Local Government we have the chance to deal with this. For example, we need to address inequalities arising from socio-economic differences in areas such as life expectancy when there is a significant gap between men's life expectancy in poor and more affluent areas. When older people need care they are far better off in their own homes being cared for by family or professionals than in hospital. Where home is their preferred choice and it can be managed, this should be open to them without worrying about the financial cost. For example, in a recent report, Fit for the Future, it makes a number of recommendations including calling on the Government to extend the principle of personal budgets, allowing payments to family members to either provide care directly or privately commission carers as standard.

We should value our older residents and not see them as a burden or a drain on resources. They can contribute and be part of the solution. Councils have the opportunity to be radical...

THE LORD MAYOR: Please could you conclude.

COUNCILLOR C ANDERSON: ...and respond to initiatives that come forward. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am going to be following on from Councillor Mulherin earlier in response to a question which was friendly fire. She will be glad to know that this is also in the same sentiment. I am speaking under the Financial Health Monitoring Minute but it is around the issue around Public Health funding.

I was at the LGA Conference in Harrogate the other day and I heard the same speech that Councillor Mulherin referred to. I also understood the widespread euphoria over the fact that Mr Pickles had gone and he had been replaced by Mr Greg Clark, who speaks much more positively about Local Government and its capabilities.

Unfortunately for us, what we do not get in Mr Greg Clark is actually any different kind of policies. In fact, in a pure Conservative Government unfortunately we can only expect to have the unfiltered version and actually this health cut is an indication of how they see Local Government and how we can expect our future funding to be viewed.

The fact is that National Health Service funding, of course, is seen as sacrosanct and cannot be touched, but as soon as Public Health came under the aegis of Local Government, then all of a sudden it is fair game and this cut from the Health Department was not one which was challenged by Greg Clark. He did not recognise that actually the value of having Public Health money in Council ownership and accountability is that it is able to be spent far more effectively, far more integrated and deliver much better prevention results.

Just to give an example, this city is one of the few Local Authorities which has been able to maintain their full portfolio of Children's Centres, and we already had one of the biggest number of them. Other Authorities like Wakefield have been busy closing theirs. We are only able to do that because we have been able to integrate Public Health funding into the budgets for those Children's Centres. We cannot afford to see that kind of joined up thinking sacrificed on the salami slicing coming from Departments in Government. I hope that we will take serious consideration to ensure that we are not cutting any of this joint work that we have developed over the past two or three years in response to the expected £3m we are expected to save, and that we are trying to find different ways of saving that money although, of course, we should not have to save it at all. *(Applause)*

COUNCILLOR R GRAHAME: It was Judith who saved the Children's Centres, Judith Blake. That is who saved them.

THE LORD MAYOR: Please could you be quiet? Councillor Bentley.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I want to speak briefly on Minute 190 on page 108 as well, on the financial outturn for 2014/15.

We are used to receiving lots of gloomy financial news when we look at these reports but amongst all the numbers we discover that the Housing Revenue Account has made a surplus of £4.7m. The reforms to Council Housing Finance brought in by the Coalition Government in 2012 ended the subsidy system on the Housing Revenue Account and made it effectively into a self-financing trading operation and this gives more certainty in long-term planning and thus delivers great benefits for our Council tenants. As a result of a consequently healthy Housing Revenue Account, ambitious long-term capital projects can be delivered and the £4.7m surplus is being reinvested in facilities for older people's housing and for use by the Housing Advisory Panels on tenant and community generated projects, both of which we certainly support.

It was also good to see the amount of time that properties are now standing empty is reducing, so that is generating an extra £1m in rental income and saving half a million pounds in Council Tax.

Amongst all this good news is a continuing issue that comes up every time we look at the Housing Revenue Account and is raised at most Housing Advisory Board meetings, and that is the cost of dealing with disrepair claims. An extra £1.7m had to be found for this in the last financial year and as Councillors will know disrepair claims arise when tenants take legal action against the Council for failure to deal with reported repairs. The majority of these seem to relate to damp and condensation.

We know that a lot of these are encouraged by claims management companies and legal firms touting for work, but however these claims are generated there has to be

some element of failure there on the Council's part. Rather than having to spend money on defending claims and dealing with the legal process we should be making sure that we have a system in place that does not let the issue get as far as a disrepair claim and legal action and this means making sure that all requests for repairs are dealt with, there is adequate quality audit and control processes on completed repairs and particularly with the issues of damp and condensation these issues are picked up at the annual tenancy visit. If we can reduce our costs of failure, there will be even more to reinvest for the benefit of our tenants and communities. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Dawson.

COUNCILLOR DAWSON: My Lord Mayor, I am speaking on Minute 190 on page 108. I welcome that this Council has again managed to end the financial year by breaking even or even making a small surplus of £0.7m, but at some cost to the services we have provided and to the people that we represent. My fear is that Leeds will continue to receive an unfair share of the burden of grant reductions from Central Government.

A pattern for the last five years has been the unequal reduction in grant allocation between Authorities. This is not necessarily a North-South division, or even a Labour-Tory division, but a different division between deprived areas and affluent areas.

The single tier Authorities with the largest reduction in core Government funding over the last five years have been Knowsley, Manchester, Hartlepool, South Tyneside, Middlesbrough, Hull and Blackburn. Leeds is just under the 40% with a 39.9% cut in core funding in five years. The single tier Authorities with the lowest reduction in Government grants are Cheshire East, Wokingham, Windsor and Maidenhead, South Gloucestershire and Central Bedfordshire with around a 32% reduction in Government funding.

The allocation of Local Government Funding was traditionally based on need. Those Authorities with the greatest deprivation received the highest level of support. However, the way the grants were allocated between Councils was simplified in 2013, and the word "simplified" is interesting. Under the new system all Councils see exactly the same percentage cut to the core elements of their grants each year. Therefore, the most deprived Local Authorities will see the same percentage cut to their grants as the least deprived, and again this will amount to a higher overall budget cut.

This can be seen in the planned cuts for 2015/16. The most deprived Local Authorities will face a real term cut of 7.1% per person. The least deprived Authorities will receive a cut of only 1.7% per person.

If Council services were only providing street lighting, refuse collection, highways maintenance there may actually be some logic to this formula, but our Council services are not just providing those. Over 60% of our expenditure is on Adult Care and Customer Services. These services are protecting the most in need. In Leeds we have some of the wards with the highest levels of deprivation in the country. Our spend is predominantly on people and communities. There has been plenty of talk of one nation conservatism in recent weeks but little real change; another case of saying

one thing but acting in a different way. Without changing the funding formula the most deprived Local Authorities will see the largest cuts for the next five years and those in greatest need will suffer. A more fundamental reform to the way Central Government grants are allocated is required.

Though this Government does see some responsibility for all our communities, the initial response is not good. We have already had the £200m reduction in Public Health budgets announced and the Government's priorities are quite clear. Let us look at Inheritance Tax...

THE LORD MAYOR: Can you finish your sentence?

COUNCILLOR DAWSON: ...a small 4% of the population will be benefiting from this, those people who live in large houses probably in places such as Cheshire East, Wokingham and Windsor and Maidenhead. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: That is the first time I have had to press my yellow button. Please, when I ask you to complete the sentence would you do so, so I do not have to cut you off. Thank you. Councillor Hyde.

COUNCILLOR HYDE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I want to speak on the same Minute, Minute 190 page 108.

Colleagues, as you know the Chancellor has been doing his Budget speech this afternoon. Just to let Council know, he has decided to take £37bn out of public spending over the lifetime of the Parliament to 2020. That is just by an aside.

The reason I am standing up, Lord Mayor, is actually quite a serious issue. Before these announcements today he has actually taken £450m and £387 in the following year out of further education. This means large reductions in courses, job losses and just as an example to Council, in the last three months 773 people that work and train people in higher education have lost their jobs.

Recently a petition was presented to Mr Cameron of 42,500 signatures deploring the cuts, saying that they are unfair. That has been ignored. The Government really does need to listen. It needs to listen to the people's concerns and rethink these damaging cuts to higher education because it is leading to hundreds of thousands of people losing out on opportunities to improve their lives.

Caroline Rowley, the Regional Director of the Association of Colleges (Yorkshire) sums it up very well for me and this is a direct quote:

“What we are saying is that further education colleges are vital in improving people's skills and helping them into work to ensure the economy grows but at the present adult education and training has been effectively decimated. These cuts mean an end to vital courses that provide skills to a skilled workforce.”

It does not end there though, colleagues. In his announcements today, hidden in the detail, he is proposing to abolish the work-related activities groups, DWP, he is also looking to abolish the support groups. These are people who are deemed to be unfit

for work. That would possibly mean a benefit cut; my colleagues may wish to speak to you about that later.

It is absolutely crazy, colleagues, that on one hand this Government says “We want you back to work and off welfare” but at the same time cutting the courses and the skill and training needs of people to get them into the work market, particularly in our wards that are deprived in Leeds. It is absolutely crackers.

On the other hand the Chancellor of the Exchequer today announced earlier, before his speech today, that he was going to give £1bn to Inheritance Tax as a subsidy for people who have houses over £1m.

THE LORD MAYOR: Can I ask you to complete your sentence.

COUNCILLOR HYDE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. £1bn to Inheritance Tax to offset the Inheritance Tax for houses over £1m. It is absolutely obscene and ridiculous. What are the priorities, Lord Mayor? Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Groves. Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking to Minute 190, page 108. Budget cuts today are £177m. If we include demographic pressures that include demand, it actually amounts to £246m. Despite the Government’s attempts to diminish services and power from Local Councils, this Council has responded by finding savings in as sensible a way as possible. We cannot just top-slice budgets like the Government. We have a human responsibility to care for those needing Adult Social Care, the city’s ageing population, people with learning disabilities and Children’s Services. Unlike the Government we focus on social and health inequalities.

The Council has had to make changes. We have lost 2,500 employees but not one of them was through compulsory redundancy. Libraries, sports and community centres have had to close across the city. Both directorates and Scrutiny have delivered savings on agency over time and better procurement and I think that everyone in the Council has played their part in identifying the savings.

Scrutiny will have a big role to play going forward if we are to meet the financial challenges ahead. It must speed up the processes needed if we are to continue to plan to meet local needs. We must generate income, tackle low pay and unemployment, streamline services, build new homes and look at collective purchasing power. We need devolution of further powers and resources if we are to deliver real economic change. If the Government does not devolve it will be signalling that slow growth, low productivity and low paid work is fine for the North and I am sure it will be continuing its campaign against the poor and needy. We should all be fighting for a fair and equal society but it should never be affluence versus poverty. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Finnigan.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am looking at the Low Pay Charter, 191, and really talking a little bit about the living wage. Just to try and give colleagues a maths lesson, and perhaps I will expand on that when we finish at that particular point.

If you start off with £1 increase, the first thing that you have got is 20% tax and 12% National Insurance, so that £1 is down to 68 pence. Should you be in receipt of Tax Credit you will get another 41 pence in the pound clawed back, that is another 28 pence off that, that puts you down to 40 pence. Should you be on Housing Benefit and Council Tax reduction you have another 85% deduction in that, that is another 34 pence, that leaves you with six pence in the pound. Steve Carey is in the area, he will know whether my figures are correct or not.

The bottom line is out of that pound you are left with six pence and that is why you do need to change the minimum wage, which is what the Government are proposing at this particular point, and increase it because the more you have to rely on the benefit system the more complicated your life gets and the more all of that extra that you are earning is clawed back in different shapes and ways.

It is about trying to make sure that you increase that minimum wage to such an extent that you extract yourselves from the benefit system. The benefit system is not necessarily your friend, the benefit system can give you a good kicking because of the way that it has been developed over the years and the way that it is inflexible at this particular stage.

Universal Credit may deal with some of that but the big issue is about increasing the minimum wage and it is interesting to note at this particular point that the Chancellor was suggesting that by 2020 it will be nine quid an hour. I am sure we would all celebrate that whether we are on the left, on the right, wherever we might actually be at this particular point. If he achieves that then we get into a situation where people are getting a fair wage for a fair day's work.

We need to explore it slightly more than that because there is a philosophical ideological issue here where we need to understand a little bit more about where we are going. For people who watch House of Cards, the American version, if they look at Series 3 there is a character in there called Dunbar who is one of the potential candidates for the Presidency, who is arguing very much about Walmart and the fact that Walmart pay their workers lower wages and then recoup it in other shapes, ways or forms. She is seen as the very Liberal, very left-wing candidate and she has an interesting discussion and debate.

Is the benefit system basically subsidising employers? If that is the case then we need to be breaking free of that, we need to look at other ways of doing that and that is about increasing the minimum wage to something that is more sustainable and more supportable. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Taylor.

COUNCILLOR TAYLOR: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to speak on Minute 191 on page 108 on the Low Pay Charter. Over the past few months we have been hearing so much from the Government and the news about how the economy is on the up and jobs are being created. Clearly I welcome that by some of the people that are improving but that is not how a large number of the people in my ward are seeing it. They have complained day in and day out of poverty.

Too many people are still on low paid wages, insecure jobs or on zero hours contracts. It is incredibly difficult to live on low pay. It is not good for health and a stable

family life for those circumstances and those people have suffered through an economic crisis that was nothing to do with them in the first place.

In Leeds today we estimate that 68,000 working age adults are experiencing low poverty. In other words, going out working hard and doing their best still does not pay for the basic necessities. That cannot be right in 2015.

When we look at income, the most deprived community is in the city of Chapel Allerton (that is my ward). My ward deserves better and the way to deliver that is by promoting and introducing the living wage. The administration has already made a huge leap forward when it comes to low pay. In this year's budget we abolished the two low paid rates for Council workers, giving 1,500 low paid workers a 10% pay rise. We are also the only major city in the UK to sign up to UNISON Ethical Care Charter which commits us to ensure care workers have a fixed hour contract earning the living wage, no matter whether they work for the Council or our commissioned service.

We will continue working hard to raise pay for low earners but today I also urge employers in Leeds to follow our lead. We can only tackle low pay poverty if we do it together and it is time for businesses in Leeds city to play their part.

When we go out to work each day we should not have to rely on benefits to put food on the table. Introducing the living wage for all workers in Leeds would improve the lives of our community and reduce the Government welfare bill without hitting the poorest and the most needy the hardest. The time for action is now and the Labour Council will do all we can to continue on low pay. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lowe.

COUNCILLOR LOWE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I too am speaking on Minute 191, page 108.

So the Low Pay Charter was published by the Combined Authority on 25th March 2015 and as a Council that prides itself on being a good employer I think we should celebrate its introduction. Whilst the Charter emphasises the importance of introducing the living wage, as we have just heard, there are other non-pay factors addressed by this initiative which seek to create strong, sustainable and fair communities which we can all have a stake in.

Skilled staff means an upwardly mobile workforce which can exploit opportunities for progression in the workplace. As an Authority, then, we need to invest in skills development and boost workers' opportunity to progress so that they can grow and so can their families and the wider community.

Well led and managed staff means a motivated and productive workforce giving their all for the Council and the citizens of Leeds. We need to celebrate success, no matter how small, enable staff to contribute and challenge at all levels, giving the right information so that staff can be part of the solution and not the problem.

We should use the power of the Council to access benefits for our staff and for their families, especially where those colleagues are the worst off. As a Combined Authority our purchasing, procurement and negotiating power should not be under-

estimated and must be used to improve benefits, pay, terms and conditions across the region, guarding against inappropriate use of zero hours contracts and abuse of casual workers.

Finally, the Charter promotes collaboration across the Combined Authority to address the determinants of health inequalities, which stem from the workplace. Low pay, low morale, sickness absence, job satisfaction, productivity and staff engagement can all be improved by staff health and wellbeing initiatives. Things such as workplace counselling, good terms and conditions around sick pay and maternity pay, and access to wider support from the Council, such as financial inclusion, welfare reform, especially at the moment, and child poverty can all help staff to be healthier and therefore wealthier in the workplace.

We need to celebrate the Charter and be proud of the part that Leeds City Council has in its introduction and, hopefully, we will continue to be leaders and deliver this Charter for the people of Leeds and wider West Yorkshire because it is worth working hard to incorporate because it is going to work for the people of Leeds and beyond.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Smart.

COUNCILLOR SMART: Lord Mayor, I am commenting on page 108, Minute 191.

Our ambition is to be the best city in the UK and part of that is to be a child friendly city. We want children and young people to really enjoy growing up in Leeds and to have the opportunity to fulfil their potential.

Part of this is the right to a good education in a good local school and this can only be achieved if the Government stops restricting the abilities of Local Authorities to make this a reality. We need to ensure that we have the right tools to ensure that our children and young people have the best chances in life.

Now a child friendly city and the difference our young people can make is a vital part of the Leeds Growth Strategy. The children and young people of our city are our future workforce and so improving educational attainment is key to equipping the next generation with the skills they need to enter the job market.

It is impossible to predict what the future economy will look like, or what the future growth sectors will be so we need to ensure that our young people have the ability to learn, adapt and be resilient in the face of this rapid change. Outcomes for our children and young people play and will continue to play a major role in our ability to develop, attract and retain skilled people and their families.

I briefly mentioned earlier the importance of good outcomes for children. Poor outcomes come with a significant cost both in terms of cost to the public sector and to the public purse, but there is also a human cost. There is significant evidence of links between poor outcomes for children and their future outcomes including unemployment, low pay and deprivation which in themselves put an additional burden on the public sector and impact the productivity of the city.

We want to be a city where people and businesses want to settle. We want a reputation as the best city in the UK and this covers every aspect of the city and it is

important for us to recognise that each part is linked. If we want to attract and retain people then we need to show that not only can we cut it in the world of business but we can offer children and young people a world of opportunities so that they in turn can continue to help Leeds make its mark on the global stage.

You might think that saying we want to be child friendly sounds fluffy and unattainable but you would be wrong. The rationale behind it is a long term vision for the future prosperity of Leeds. Families and the opportunities they present us with should not be under-estimated. It is in everyone's best interests to continue to invest in our child friendly vision. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Can I ask Councillor James Lewis to sum up, please?

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I think I will start on the last item that Members addressed, and again I listened, as I often do on matters to do with low pay and benefit, I listened very, very carefully to what Councillor Finnigan said and I have to say I think I agree with a lot of what he says.

People progressing into higher pay needs not just to be about having more money in the pay packet. It also needs to be making sure that people are actually taking home more pay and we do not have a benefit system that at the moment, as it sometimes does, traps people into making some really strange and contrary decision about where they work and how they work. I think many of us who have dealt with welfare issues through our casework will know there can be some bizarre situations where people can actually be better off by working less hours or not at all and any reform of the welfare system should not just be about dealing with the massive deficit that George Osborne has so far been unable to deal with but also making a welfare system that actually makes work pay for people and that has got to be central to what we are doing.

Part of that has got to be about how much people are paid in the jobs they are in and the benefits they receive in the jobs they are in but I think there is a wider agenda on that as well. There are a couple of my Labour colleagues touched on that. I think first of all it is making sure people are entering the Labour market after school, as Councillor Smart said, with the ability to access a wide range of jobs and I think we have been absolutely clear as an administration supporting people's aspirations in the labour market and making sure people have those jobs and skills not just as school leavers but later on in life is a big part of what we want to achieve.

I think the second thing as well is something that Councillor Lowe touched on, about we as a Council employer can do more to make sure that people who work for us not only are working well in the jobs they are doing but have the opportunities to move up if that is something they want to do.

Let us not forget that we as a public sector as a whole are now less than 20% of the workforce in West Yorkshire and again anything we want to do to change what people earn for many people is actually about trying to bring private sector and voluntary sector employers with us. It is not just what we do as an organisation. I think that is something we should be setting as a priority about our approach to low pay. There are things we can do as a Council and things we can encourage other employers in the city to do by following our example.

I just wanted to turn to the financial report. I have to say I was very much enjoying the contribution of Councillor Golton and the Lib Dems. I think we are all as angry as Councillor Golton is about the £3m that the Government has taken out of Public Health, taken out of it in-year which will have a significant impact on contracts already let. I think Councillor Golton is very quickly starting to enjoy the position of the Lib Dems party now with only seven MPs, of not actually taking responsibility for things.

Let us look, those of us who have longer memories will remember that the Lib Dems in Government were responsible for taking £177m out of this Council's accounts. Let us not forget that and let us not forget also particularly in the area of Public Health not only have we had £3m taken away from us this year but again, Stewart, when the Lib Dems were in government we were under-funded right from the start of Public Health being transferred to the Council by about £6m. I do not think any of us over here are going to be kidded by the Lib Dems' sudden discovery that cuts to Council services are a bad thing when their five years in government saw so much being cut from our Council services.

I think there is a theme that has run through a lot of the comments that have been made today, including comments that Councillor Anderson made right at the start, and that is actually from all sides Council services are under tremendous pressure. They are under tremendous pressure because we have got a change in population, they are under tremendous pressure because we have got a growing population as well.

I think the one thing as well that both of the financial monitoring reports that Members have spoken on today reported, that those Members from the other end of the Council Chamber seem to breeze over, is that actually those pressures on Council services are coming hand in hand with a severe pressure on the amount of money that the Council is giving us to provide services and, as we move forward through the year, as we look about setting a budget for next year, as we digest the implications of today's budget and the Government's fiscal implications, I think one of the clear things we are going to have to do is make sure we are being as compassionate as possible in trying to deal with a changing population and dealing with a lot less money to do it.

Part of that is going to be how we run as a Council but part of it, as we have talked about, particularly on the low pay, is going to be about how other employers and other organisations in the city work with us. I move the Minutes, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

(iii) Cleaner, Stronger and Safer Communities

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. We now move on to item (iii), Cleaner, Stronger and Safer Communities. Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking on the Merrion House generator. One of the best legacies that Councillor Wakefield left this Authority was the Commission on Local Government and one of the concepts that it introduced, or at least encouraged, was that of civic entrepreneurship. We have just been offered a classic example of the "Oh, it's got nothing to do with us, it's them, oh the cuts, the cuts, the cuts" and bemoaning the fact that we have a budget which has a lot of pressures on it.

The secret about true leadership is actually doing something about it and maybe changing the environment within which you work, so yes, there are some hard decisions being made in cuts but also it is nice when we are able to generate some income for ourselves where there was none before and this is a great example of the Council actually being creative and its officers thinking, "Actually we have got something here which is an opportunity, why don't I go talk to my colleagues, grasp the nettle and actually put us in a much better position for the future."

Yes, we are in hard times but we do need to do more about it and this is a physical example of the Council achieving some income generating opportunity just by officers actually having the freedom of a little bit of creativity. Some Departments are better at it than others and I have to say the Chief Executive's mission to engender individual leadership and empowerment amongst our workers has been encouraged more in some areas than others. I would just like to say that I would like to see some papers like this coming forward from some of our portfolio holders in other perhaps more high spending parts of the Council so that they can actually look after some of their own futures in the same way. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Walker.

COUNCILLOR WALKER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Lord Mayor and fellow Councillors, I am speaking on Minute 193 page 1120, the electricity generation scheme in Merrion House.

The report mentions the potential for the generator to work alongside the District Heating Scheme. It should hopefully therefore be obvious that we are looking to bring a co-ordinated system of electricity generation in Leeds. We can and should be looking to do our bit but there is a wider system of energy prices, fuel use and the impact of these on residents throughout the city, one that we need to be addressing.

Lord Mayor, this may come as a surprise to many Members but Headingley is one of the areas of the city with the highest level of fuel poverty. Figures recently released by the Government show that 22% of households in Headingley are in fuel poverty. According to their own statistics, if you happen to walk through Headingley remind yourself that between a fifth and a quarter of houses are struggling to pay their fuel bills. These are the latest official stats and they cover up to 2013. Across the entire city the amount of people in fuel poverty, again according to the Government's own measure, has hardly changed. This remains at 11.6%, just over one in ten households, so by the look of it the work that we have done so far, important as it is, has only prevented a further increase in fuel poverty rather than leading to a reduction across the city.

Let us also remind ourselves that this is only half the story. The Government has changed the definition, meaning that an estimated 800,000 people across the country and 14,000 households in Leeds are no longer in what they call fuel poverty, with no change to their actual income or expenditure.

What can we do about it? With experiences like cutting eco funding, changes to the feed in tariffs at the last minute I think it is obvious that any Central Government funding in the next few years is likely to be short-term and stop as quickly as it started, and that is if it starts at all.

I would urge us all to look at this. What can we do to use our power in the energy market? How can we seek to get the best deal for our residents? Can we beat the energy companies at their own game? Energy from waste, district heating and energy generation in our buildings is a start. As a compassionate city we must work together to achieve the sharing of fuel wealth rather than fuelling fuel poverty. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Sobel.

COUNCILLOR SOBEL: Lord Mayor, I wish to speak on Minute 193 page 110 of the Executive Board, again about electricity regeneration as part of the Merrion House refurbishment.

This project fits with the Council's ambition for a more resilient city with lower carbon emissions. The scheme is just a broader part of a range of measures which will not only reduce our carbon footprint and reduce the Council's energy security but also create revenue streams from our asset base.

The scheme approved by the Exec Board will install a 2 megawatt peak gas fired electricity generating station with heat recovery. This facility will minimise the cost of energy procurement for the refurbished Merrion House, it would generate income by exporting electricity on to the National Grid and to other Leeds City Council buildings, minimise the cost of energy procurement for Leeds City Council as a whole by changing the consumption pattern of the Council significantly, and also reduce carbon emissions associated with Merrion House and hence reduce levy charges associated with those emissions.

This is just the first scheme coming to Exec Board in the coming months to improve the city's carbon emissions, energy independence and resilience. The city has already taken steps in this direction with a programme of external solid wall insulation on both social and private properties, reducing emissions and taking some of our most vulnerable citizens out of fuel poverty.

I look forward to seeing proposals coming forward in the next few months to create a compressed natural gas station which will allow the Council fleet to run with lower emissions, reduce the Council's spending on fuel for the fleet, allow the Council to encourage a shift to low emission vehicles by other corporate and public bodies in Leeds City Region, improve the air quality in Leeds and also investigate and hopefully establish an energy services company. That will ensure lower cost energy available for all, especially the fuel poor, replace most of the existing pre-payment heaters for those customers, roll out smart meters to all the customers and give the option to sell renewable energy and heat that we generate.

Lastly, a district heat and power scheme and photo voltaic scheme for Council properties should provide heat and electricity to some of our citizens most exposed to fuel poverty as well as significantly reducing carbon emissions.

I hope today's announcement by the Chancellor that renewable generation will be exempt from the Climate Change Levy will not put our hard work on establishing these schemes at risk, but with many more schemes also in gestation around renewable, working with partners in the city and beyond, I am proud of the ambition that we have shown in tackling the challenge of climate change to our city and our

planet in the long term and also improving air quality and working on fuel poverty. I hope we can all work together in the Chamber on carbon reduction and energy security. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Richard Lewis to sum up.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I never thought I would be in this place and hear so many nice words said about Merrion House. That is perhaps a sign of how much has been done to change that building one way and another so that it will be an asset to the city and it will not be the kind of money pit that it has been for many, many years for this Local Authority.

If I move on to other things, I think Janette and Alex have raised very serious issues about fuel poverty and what we can do as a Local Authority. There are a huge number of things that we can be doing, some of which are easier than others. I think we are well aware of the problems we do face particularly, I have to say, in our older properties such as you do have in Headingley. People sometimes think of Headingley as just being the leafy bits; others of us know that it is far from that and there is some very poor quality housing in the part of the ward nearest to the city, many poor quality back-to-backs and the issue of solid wall insulation in those properties and similar properties across the city is a major concern and we are working within the Combined Authority to see what can be done to tackle that particular issue.

In terms of what we are doing on our own stock, Alex mentioned what we are doing in terms of solar panels and I think what we will see is a large number of our tenants who cannot benefit from us because of the location of their properties saying “Why not us?” but that still does not prevent us doing the good work we are doing. The District Heating Scheme will not only bring benefits to large institutions within the city and at the moment we do not know quite where we will get to on that, but I think a large number of our own tower blocks will benefit from that particular scheme bringing benefits to tenants. We have to look at all our tower blocks in terms of both the comfort and cost to residents of heating and many of those blocks still have storage heater systems in them which manage to provide heat at the wrong times of day and do not do the job. We can make a real change to our 120 blocks one way or another, whether it is through cladding, whether it is through deals with firms that are interested in effectively using our blocks to generate electricity, or maybe more simple, passive measures that we can take ourselves. At this stage we do not know.

Huge amounts to do. As Alex mentioned the energy company, I think that will be a very exciting initiative for us that will bring huge benefits to tenants who currently often get landed with coin supply and we can give them a decent supplier at much reduced cost.

Much to do. I would just mention that it is not just about Local Authority housing stock, it is across the piece. It is difficult work to do but it is one of the things where we can make a huge difference as a Local Authority, even at a time like this. We need to be seen to be doing something to benefit all our citizens and do the things that I think Stewart was talking about, about bringing real imaginative schemes to the table that will make a difference to our citizens. Thank you, Lord Mayor.
(Applause)

(iv) Neighbourhoods, Planning and Personnel/Communities

THE LORD MAYOR: We will now move on to Item 4, Neighbourhoods, Planning and Personnel/communities. Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I want to talk about citizens of Leeds and a report that they replied back with in terms of reducing inequalities in the city.

Those that go to Executive Board will know that I have always been a bit of a cynic in terms of the ability to deliver on this area with the structures that we have in place at the moment. However, this report came back in and it is based on the work done by Community Hubs, which are a new initiative which sounds a little bit like a One Stop Shop, so some of us might feel like we have been here before, but the idea is to make sure that we have Council services and other agencies all working together in the one space and that they provide person-based partnership orientated solutions for those people who come across the door.

This report actually gave us some statistics which shows that actually the outcomes for many of the people that have come through these hubs and use the services have improved. One of the things that was lacking somewhat was evidence to show that the improvement was not a general trend and that it had actually been the result of actions at this point that produced the outcomes. I am sure that those will come in time and at this point in time we need to be positive and give them the benefit of the doubt that this work is actually making those kinds of improvements.

The problem is that these Community Hubs are not in every part of the city. However, we do have Community Committees and we do have, I think they are still called Area Management Teams which are groups of officers that are supposed to enable us as Councillors to create more community based outcomes in terms of services.

We do have those all over the city and at this moment in time if most of the effort is actually going into these Community Hubs, it means that the majority of the city is not actually engaging at the same level on this subject.

What I will ask Debra Coupar, as the new portfolio holder – no it is actually Judith, isn't it? Judith is there for Inequality but you are there for the Community. Right, both of you.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Anybody! Can somebody put their hand up!

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Can we make sure that Community Committees actually have an Area Management Team which is there to support Members to fulfil their role in this area. This means being able effectively to engage with the businesses that are there in their communities, the majority of our employers in the city are small and medium sized businesses and they are embedded in our suburbs. It is not the big names in the city centre. We need to be able to engage with them better to make sure that they integrate into our Council agendas by providing more apprenticeships, more work opportunities, more corporate social responsibility for the communities that they actually exist in so that we can actually make an even bigger impact in this area.

(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. It is Minute 6, page 113, Citizens of Leeds. I have got to say when I read this report some weeks ago I thought, isn't it nice to have a report that actually is positive, that is going somewhere and I have got to congratulate the officers who have been delivering and for that matter the administration on the work they are doing there.

There is a lot more work to do and, as Councillor Golton has said, there are parts of the city that are not benefiting as much as they could do from it but I think there are positive things happening here and it is a good thing to see, and hopefully we can go forward.

After today's budget obviously there will be even more problems for this city but I am confident we can go forward and you have got our support in that. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Anderson.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I refer to Minute 6, page 113. Whilst welcoming much in the report, because of time being limited I want to concentrate on some issues that Councillor Coupar might want to reflect back on and how we can improve things.

For example, the relevance of some of the data that is in there. It is out of date and if we need to make changes and alterations, how can you make quick changes and alterations if you do not have up to date data so that you can react to different circumstances? Never mind whether it is positive or negative, if you have not got accurate information it is very difficult.

Have you thought about is any of this information available via the Leeds Data Mill, for example, which is becoming UK renowned. The Government thinks it is absolutely fantastic, the work that is being done on the Leeds Data Mill so is any of the information available from any sources there?

Also there is no mention in the report about the pockets of deprivation in some of the "wealthy" areas in the city, as to how you are going to help and address those. I could be parochial, I will be parochial for a second and talk about the Hopedales in my ward. How are you going to get help and support into an area like that? Every Member, all 99 of us here could give examples of where we have pockets and they are not being currently addressed at the moment.

How do we get access to advice? We have removed, closed, transferred – whichever way you want – the Citizens' Advice Bureau from Otley which has left a hole behind. How do people get access to service, how do people get access to the advice that they are needing?

On a positive note I do welcome your new Council Tax Support Scheme. I think that it is a leader and I think the Government has also recognised that it is a leader and you are to be welcomed for tying it into finding a job, and I think that is vitally important.

What I want to do is just finally, by saying there are not any costings in this report as to how you are actually going to achieve this, nor is there any mention as to how the

funding is going to be secured, nor are there any performance measures. How do we know whether or not you have or have not been successful? You will tell me in a few months' time that you have been successful – fine. Unless I have performance data nobody can say one way or the other so by concluding what I would say is, the words are good but the actions, the Jury is still out as to whether or not you are going to deliver. You have made a good start in terms of this report but I would ask for more information in the future. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Urry.

COUNCILLOR URRY: I speak to Minute 6 on page 113. For Council commissions, accommodation and visiting floating support services for vulnerable people with complex needs, this includes those families and individuals and includes support for people who are homeless or struggling to live independently. These services supported more than 10,000 people last year.

Rough sleeping is one aspect of this. In the small hours of last Friday I was privileged again to join the Outreach teams looking for rough sleepers across the city. This work by Council officers and its agents, including CRI, goes on unseen at least three times a week and every night in freezing weather. People sheltering in doorways and basement steps, in ginnels, multi-storey car parks and bushes are approached with a cup of coffee and a friendly word and hopefully persuaded to go to St George's Crypt for a meal, shower, clean clothes and one of twelve hub rooms for short-term accommodation, funded by this Council. They will be visited first thing by officers from Housing Options who will find out more about them and seek ways to help them through supporting housing, medical and social care. There is an option for everyone, even those we have no funded duty to help which, for example, includes currently many people from Eastern Europe who may be given reconnection help to get home. Asylum seekers may be supported by other agencies too.

Fifteen people were found on the streets on Friday, a number that would be much higher without this constant but little recognised and seen work. Begging is not the same as homelessness. I am asked often what to do if someone asks for money on the street. People naturally want to help. Lord Mayor, no-one in Leeds needs to beg. Giving a few pounds to a beggar may just feed a substance dependency and is never going to turn their life round. People with complex needs require the right support, including Outreach to understand their needs, specialist services for mental health issues, drug or drink dependency, drop-in facilities, shelters and supported accommodation.

The Crypt sells books of five vouchers for £5 that you can carry with you, give a £1 voucher to someone in genuine need and they can present it at the Crypt for food and assessment and help with housing and long-term independence. That £1 really might turn a life round and if it is not used the Crypt still has the money to help others. If a beggar demands cash instead of a voucher, just ask yourself why. If you do give direct it is much safer to give a coffee or a sandwich than cash. The Safer Leeds website tells you how to text money to homeless charities or just buy the Big Issue.

Lord Mayor, we are currently reviewing our housing services to decide what should be commissioned in future. We will be mapping current provision, consulting stakeholders and service users, developing recommendations, designing services and

tendering and mobilising new services from April next year. Let us work together to make these services better. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Truswell.

COUNCILLOR TRUSWELL: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Minute 6 on page 113 covers the extensive and laudable support that we as a Council are deploying to tackle poverty but all too often our staff are like rescue workers pulling people from the wreckage of the latest Tory Government Blitzkrieg. *(laughter)*

Today almost 30,000 Leeds children live in poverty. Today for the first time there are more people in work living in poverty than out of work living in poverty. Latest estimates suggest one in eight Leeds adults experience in-work poverty. At least 30,000 full-time workers and 120,000 part-time workers in our city earn less than the living wage. That is one in five workers – Lord Mayor workers, not shirkers, not scroungers, not skivers as the Government and its poodles in the press would have us believe. This Government's response to that deepening human tragedy? Slash benefits and massage the definition of poverty to remove millions from the figures.

Lord Mayor, Theresa May had it spot on. At national level at least they are the nasty party. In 2003 they dumped Iain Duncan Smith as their leader and all the poor self-styled quiet man was doing was wrecking the Tory Party – to my mind a commendable public service. Today he has been put in charge of wrecking people's lives and he has set about it with a will. We have had changes to Council Tax benefits, we have had the bedroom tax and Barry, whatever you say, it is effectively a tax because most of its victims simply have no practical way of escaping it. We have the looming tsunami of Universal Credit. Selected pilot projects, Lord Mayor, with the least complex cases proved absolutely disastrous, yet they plough on. Some people say the Government does not realise what it is doing; Lord Mayor, they know exactly what they are doing, they just do not care.

Now we have the latest assault on Tax Credits. Yes, let us remove dependency on in-work benefits but not until the day that we have got a proper living wage, not until we have ended the abuse of zero hour contracts, not until we have provided better jobs and not until there is better training available to get people into those jobs.

Osborne's jam tomorrow offer which he has made today simply ignores the suffering that has built up over the last five years or so. Lord Mayor, I cannot believe that some if not all of the Members opposite do not have a scintilla of common humanity that enables them to share with us our disgust and dismay at this assault against many of our citizens here in Leeds.

I will do something that I have never, ever done before in my political life, Lord Mayor. I plead with them. I plead with them to show that you are not part of a nasty party, I plead with you to join us and I plead to come together with us to tell this Government enough is enough. *(Applause)*

(b) Health and Wellbeing Board

THE LORD MAYOR: It is now 3.30 so we will be moving on to comments on the Health and Wellbeing Minutes, so if I can call on Councillor Charlwood, the bottom of page 11.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am seeking leave of Council to suspend the Council Procedure Rules in terms of the Notice to allow the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board to sum up on the Health and Wellbeing Board Minutes for a period of up to four minutes.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Selby.

COUNCILLOR SELBY: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I call for the vote. *(A vote was taken)* The motion is CARRIED.

This item, Health and Wellbeing, should be for 20 minutes only but the Whips have asked, because of the number of speakers down to speak, it comes to more than the 20 minutes allocated but I have said that I will allow it to go to completion. That does not mean you can go to three and a half minutes each, it just means that everybody on the list can speak. Councillor Lamb.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I will try and help by keeping my remarks brief. I think it would be remiss not to respond to Councillor Truswell's comments and pleadings from a moment ago. It is just a real shame that we never have an opportunity, say every five years or so, to change the Government.

COUNCILLOR TRUSWELL: Every five months.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: I think we have just had one and the outcome was pretty clear so I think people have expressed their views and the Government can get on and implement its manifesto.

Lord Mayor, I want to speak on Minute 9 page 422 about dementia which, I suspect, like many Members here is a subject very close to my heart. It has touched my family, it is a horrible, horrible disease. I am sure many, many other Members and lots and lots of people in this city are affected.

Councillor Mulherin is well aware of one of my constituents who has been in contact. He is not especially happy with the response, I do not propose to go into that today but what he does highlight is part of the problem of being in an area such as Wetherby where many of the services that are closest to people who suffer from dementia and many other health issues are in North Yorkshire but we find ourselves funded in Leeds and the access to services can be five or six miles or literally just up the road, but the services we are supposed to access are in the centre of Leeds.

We have been doing some work with Crossley Street Surgery in Wetherby who have managed to access part of the NHS's Innovation Fund, the 2% fund that you will be familiar with and they, on 29th July, are starting a fortnightly service which will mean in combination with the local surgery, Carers Leeds, our local group Wetherby in Support of the Elderly and a number of the others will enable dementia sufferers and their carers to access all of their services in one place. They will not have to have the inconvenience of going into North Yorkshire and getting buses, all the added confusion that they would otherwise have to, and the main purpose of speaking, I would really like to invite Councillor Mulherin to come with me to visit the service

and see what has been put in place. The funding is only for twelve months. We think it is going to make a real difference to people's lives.

One of the gaps the doctors locally have identified is Adult Social Care in the system and I very much hope she will come with me to have a look, meet some of the carers and sufferers and see if we can do something to enhance that funding and improve those services not just for people in Wetherby but potentially it could be rolled out across the city. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Macniven.

COUNCILLOR MACNIVEN: My Lord Mayor and fellow Councillors, I would like to speak to Minute 11 on page 424 and Minute 71 on page 416 regarding the recent CQC (Care Quality Commission) inspection in Leeds. Recently all three NHS provider Trusts in Leeds were inspected on the quality of their care. Within the CQC report examples of good practice were highlighted, one of which related to the feedback system for patients in rehabilitation wards in Leeds. Through this system, if patients raised an issue at their weekly community meetings, they were informed about subsequent action taken through a display on ward notice boards and by communication at community meetings. This positive feedback from CQC I believe raises a hugely important factor – the involvement of services users in improving the quality of the services they receive.

Earlier this year the Health and Wellbeing Board held a mental health workshop attended by experts by experience. At this event service users involved professionals and Board Members considered how mental health services could be improved and how they could achieve integration and parity with other health services.

The workshop provided engaging discussions, identifying numerous areas for improvement, for example that Leeds should have an ambitious target for mental health and wellbeing and that the Health and Wellbeing Board should liaise country-wide with colleagues in other disciplines such as housing and financial inclusions. This feedback will be incorporated in to the Refresh of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy in the coming months.

It is vital that those receiving services are involved in this strategic planning. The Strategy highlights agreed principles for prioritising, collective resources and provides a framework which ensures that services are accountable to local people and helps the Council and NHS in Leeds working with service users, local communities and partner organisations to make improvements which enhance the health and wellbeing of our citizens.

Service user involvement is absolutely vital to provide valuable insight into the planning of services, to give them ownership, independence and control over the direction of their care. I believe that we should all welcome the involvement of service users and their lived experiences to plan future service provision, to influence strategic overview of priorities and initiatives in our city. It is essential that this mental health workshop is used as a template for how the Board continues to work, both in relation to mental health and other priority areas of the city. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jarosz.

COUNCILLOR JAROSZ: Lord Mayor, I would like to speak on Minute 12, page 425 regarding Leeds Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for 2015.

I am sure I am not the only person who thinks when it is Council day, why are we here, why are we doing this? These chairs must have been invented by somebody who did not like politicians because I have not got a back problem but I feel like I have got one at the moment! *(laughter)*

We all know why we are here, because we want to make a difference – we want to make a difference to the people of Leeds and integral to addressing Health and Wellbeing needs in Leeds it is the JSNA, together with the Council and Leeds CCGs that are leading the development of a rolling programme of data collection and analysis which is vital as we work to tackle one of the biggest challenges facing the city. Through this work we can demonstrate that the health and wellbeing of people in Leeds is improving.

A key success for us is the reduction in deprived areas of avoidable years of life lost through cardiovascular disease. However, like many other cities we still face a huge challenge including a changing population, remaining health inequalities all against a backdrop of reduced public funding.

One of the highlights shown by the JSNA relates to the potential number of years lost through premature deaths. Between 2009 and 2013 this rate has dropped by 6%. This was largely due to a reduction in the rates within deprived areas of Leeds, which is positive evidence that health inequalities are reducing through targeted programmes. This said, in the most deprived areas of Leeds potential lives lost to premature death is still more than 9,000 lives, indicating the magnitude of health inequalities, so we acknowledge there is much more to do.

The JSNA highlights the specific areas in which we must focus upon during our push for great health inequalities. A key driver of health inequalities is cancer, the largest single cause of premature death, and accounts for 36.3% of the total. We know that there has been a reduction in those areas worst affected; however, we need to make sure that this progress is sustained.

Through the JSNA we know where things are working and the areas we need to focus upon.

THE LORD MAYOR: Could I ask you to complete the sentence?

COUNCILLOR JAROSZ: I am sure we are all delighted to see that health inequalities are reducing in Leeds but there is much more work to be done to ensure that we have a more equally healthy city. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to speak on Minute 12, page 425 and Minutes 27, page 418.

As Councillor Jarosz has said and it is highlighted in the JSNA, a lot of good work is happening in terms of helping improve people's health and wellbeing but there are

still major inequalities in our city and this is certainly the case for people with learning disabilities. I just want to concentrate on three areas: one, some of the good work that we are doing; two, the challenges that we still face; and our strategy to address these challenges.

I am pleased to say that we have got a really good infrastructure in this city in relation to learning disabilities in the city. We have got some really good Third Sector organisations doing amazing work across the city and I have had the privilege of working with those over the last few years.

We have, of course, got really good in-house service which soon will be becoming Aspire, a new staff-led mutual and, of course, some really good work in Children's as well, particularly on the transition from Children's to Adults'. Of course, there are lots of really good initiatives such as Learning Disabilities Week that took place a few weeks ago – some of you may have experienced some of the amazing activities taking place – the Council takeover days that we have had in this Chamber which again I know many Members have been part of and, of course, the Learning Disability Partnership Board that I have the privilege of co-chairing, along with Susan Hanley, which is really helping to involve people with learning disabilities in the city.

However, there are some very significant challenges going forward. Thankfully people with learning disabilities are living longer but this means more people will be living with complex and high support needs which is going to have significant impact on our budget, and we have heard Members talk about the budget and the pressures that we are going to be facing.

There are also some very sobering statistics, and these are national statistics I am quoting, such as the fact that median age of death for people with learning disabilities is about 25 years younger than those without learning disabilities. Similarly stark when you look at areas like employment – it is estimated that 65% of people with learning disabilities would like to work but only around 7% are currently in employment, so we have got lots to do which is why over the last year we have developed a new strategy, Being Me, which has been developed with people with learning disabilities, they have co-produced that along with their carers. Unlike most strategies it is ten pages in plain English and lots of actions that we are determined we will address. The main themes are around being safe...

THE LORD MAYOR: Can I ask you to finish the sentence?

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: ...being well and being connected and, Lord Mayor, we had our first person with learning disabilities reach the age of 90 recently (*applause*) and so we can have many more people reaching that age there is still lots more to do. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Buckley.

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can I refer you to Minute 12 page 425, and 13 on page 426.

Can I just refer, as Councillor Lamb did, to Councillor Truswell's remarks a few moments ago. He has made the mistake that no politician should ever make – do not

blame the electorate. They voted in a majority Conservative Government a few weeks ago. It is all over, we won and they wanted it. *(interruption)*

COUNCILLOR R GRAHAME: Tactical voting it is called.

COUNCILLOR TRUSWELL: You never told them.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: No-one to blame but yourselves, as usual.

THE LORD MAYOR: Can I ask you to stop shouting?

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: Let me move on what I want to speak on. There are so many different topics on the Health and Wellbeing Board that it is difficult to zero in on any one or two in particular.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Buckley, can I just ask you to stop for a minute. Could you please not shout across the Chamber when somebody is trying to speak. I will stop either side, it makes no difference which, but please allow him to speak. I will add an extra few seconds for that.

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor, I am very grateful to you. They just do not like it when they have lost. *(interruption)*

The very nature of Health and Wellbeing is that all the issues, virtually all the issues are interlinked by cause and effect, by life choices, by personal circumstances and all have consequences and, obviously, eventual outcomes.

If we take two at random, years of life loss, which we referred to a few minutes ago, and obesity. There is such an obvious link between the two. If any of us watch films which are on from time to time about local life in the 1950s or the 1960s, what is really striking is how different people looked in those days. They are a lot slimmer than they are today. They had other problems which we do not necessarily have to the same extent – mass smoking, poor housing, low incomes and so on which just shows how vital it has been to get the economy right before we can spend money on these issues.

I would urge the Board to continue to focus on matters local to Leeds which we can directly affect, including finding ways of communicating with the population if only to hammer home the messages of do not smoke, do not abuse alcohol, do not take drugs, eat healthier, cut down on sugar.

Councillor Mulherin kindly wrote to me several months ago about the issue of food and drink in hospital cafes and I would just like to take this opportunity of saying that I will be following that issue up again shortly. This is a genuinely cross-party matter but these things are still around in the hospital cafes – Monster Energy, it says all sorts of things about how healthy it is, it is absolutely full of caffeine...

THE LORD MAYOR: Could you now finish off? I have given you extra time.

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. This is obviously the health option of today. Just to touch on...

THE LORD MAYOR: No, thank you, Councillor Buckley. You are taking advantage now.

COUNCILLOR TRUSWELL: They won the election though, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Can we move on, Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am covering a couple of Minutes which are mentioned on the Order Paper but my main point is around communications and one of them was specific communications for Health and Wellbeing Board.

I went to an event put on by Leeds Beckett University the other day and Councillor Buckley came and Councillor Jarosz came and thankfully a lot of other people came as well otherwise it would not be much of a debate. It was all about the potential to devolve health services to the local area and I assume this is promoted, of course, by Greater Manchester being able to take control now of Health in their area although, of course, what we might call control is not quite what Whitehall thinks of as control, but at least they are able to make more decisions in this area than other areas can.

The problem with this is that it involves a huge amount of change. We are going through a huge amount of change in this city as well in terms of how we care for those people that are either ill or are getting older, have more needs and, of course, people who have been around for a long time with needs they are finally getting them recognised, like those people who have mental health needs or the needs of people with dementia.

To enable us to meet that we need to change the way that we do things and there is an incredible amount of inertia in the system, whether it is people as consumers who are used to having things delivered in a certain way, local citizens who value a particular building which is associated with care, like a residential home and also, of course, the professionals who are used to delivering it in a certain manner and they feel they are the best people to have an opinion on it because they have been doing it all of their lives.

However, because of all these new expectations people are going to have to make some really big changes and they are not going to be easy changes. I think the difficulty for us is making sure that we are able to communicate that effectively. When we are looking at our communications policy like we have in these papers here in the Health and Wellbeing Board, we need to actually think more about the people outside the Civic Hall as well as the internal customers and we need to take them on that journey.

I think the biggest problem for us is, we are doing this in a time of constrained budgets and, of course, if we take the easy option and say that the change is there because it has been forced on us by cuts and it is solely charged through money, then we actually lose the argument about making change for the better and we really need to find the right balance so that we are taking people with us as opposed to taking people with us to the barricades, which is not really going to lead us to anywhere.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Lay.

COUNCILLOR LAY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I shall be speaking on Minute 67 of the Health and Wellbeing Board with regard to the CCG's Operational Plans, page 412 in today's pack.

I welcome this plan but it is a large, complicated and interlinked plan that in three minutes I cannot do justice, so I shall be focusing on children's mental health and its priority.

First of all, though, I would just like to welcome the news yesterday that the CCGs, the Council and Leeds Teaching Hospitals are seriously exploring re-opening up the 40 intermediate care beds at Wharfedale Hospital in Otley. Members will be aware that I and Councillor Graham Latty have spent much of our time since my election three years ago urging partners in Health and Social Care to review the closures at Wharfedale Hospital.

All of Leeds North and West will benefit and I am sure Councillor Latty will join me in urging all Members with residents likely to use those services, urge those partners to take forward those plans and move to implementation and action.

As a society we are now beginning to recognise children's mental health and its impact on growing up. I remember speaking to the Lord Mayor in her previous role as Children's Scrutiny Chair and to Councillor Illingworth when he was Health Scrutiny Chair a couple of years ago about the importance of CAMHS and TAMHS to young people's mental health, and so it was gratifying to see a joint Scrutiny report this year exploring the city's response to this growing area of concern.

Commissioners and providers informed us how they were to support the mental health of young people and were working on a new strategy that would improve access, reduce waiting times and raise standards and quality whilst reducing inequality.

Life chances are a particularly pertinent point when considering young people. Early intervention is a must – a must to improve not just the individual's mental health but also their relationship and employment opportunities. Providing mechanisms and strategies is paramount to help young people navigate a course through an increasingly complicated journey through life.

One has to fear the plans will not become reality when funding remains tight. Prior to May 8th there was hope, hope that additional funding would be sought and found, given the chance through Coalition Norman Lamb, the Lib Dem Health Minister, had not only driven the mental health agenda but had started to provide the additional cash so that parity of esteem was more than just a buzzword. Norman had fought for and got an additional billion and a half for mental health but whether this will now be delivered is difficult to know now that we are beginning to see the impact of not having Lib Dems in government.

The proposed in-year £200m reduction from the nation's Public Health grant shows us just what might be about to happen.

THE LORD MAYOR: Could you complete your sentence?

COUNCILLOR LAY: Yes I have finished, I will stop there. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Can I call upon Councillor Mulherin to sum up, please.

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Thank you, Lord Mayor, and thank you to all of the speakers. I am encouraged by the emphasis of most, at least, of the speakers on mental health and the need to focus on mental health and get that parity of esteem for mental health alongside physical health in the city, so I thank you for that.

The workshop that the Health and Wellbeing Board carried out earlier this year was a really powerful experience and we had people who came and shared their direct lived experience with us and their really important messages to us are something that we will use to inform the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy that we have to refresh by the end of this year, so we have another workshop coming up in a few weeks and that will form part of the learning to shape that new strategy.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those people who shared their experience with us as we did in the Board, but I think it is important for this Council as well to thank those who do help use their own direct personal and sometimes very difficult experiences to inform and shape and change and improve the way that we deliver and support people, deliver services for people and support them in their health and wellbeing in the city.

The lessons from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, very important messages there. We are actually starting to make a difference in terms of getting that health equality we want in the city, narrowing the gap between the worst off and best off parts of Leeds. There are some really useful things in there in terms of how we have reduced the number of potential years of life lost through things like cardiovascular disease, the number of babies who are surviving now, we have had a massive reduction in the infant mortality rate and that is an improvement across the city overall but also an improvement in that gap between the best off and the worst off parts of Leeds because of targeting services where they are most needed. Again, thank you to Councillor Jarosz for raising that.

Clearly, as Councillor Lay picked up as well, there is a need for us to have the adequate resources to continue on that work and we have already discussed the Public Health funding cuts. I will not go into detail again now but if we are going to be able to continue to improve and to build on what we have already started to see in terms of those health improvements in the city and that narrowing of the gap, we need to have adequate resources and the confidence that when we have invested those resources, they will not be snatched away from us in the course of the year when we have already got commitments in place.

In terms of communications with the public, I think that there is a key message there and I know that Stewart has spoken in this Chamber in the past about the need for us to bring the Health and Wellbeing Board papers for discussion here, so hopefully that is a first step in the right direction and you will welcome this debate that we have had today.

We do have to take people with us on a journey of change and I think the message that Stewart gave us was a very important one. Unfortunately I think the reference to lifestyle choices and the health consequences of that, I think in his comments

Councillor Buckley makes the same mistake that he accused Councillor Truswell of in blaming those who are suffering from the worst health outcomes of bringing it upon themselves. I think that is something we need to steer away from.

I would like to thank the Scrutiny Board for its work on CAMHS and I would like to thank Councillor Ogilvie for his work with the Learning Disability Partnership in the city. They have achieved a great deal in the last few years, not least in terms of producing the Learning Disability Strategy for Leeds which there is a great easy read version for, and I would like to thank him for continuing to take the role of co-Chair of that Board and welcome the imminent launch of Aspire as a staff-led learning disability support service mutual in the city. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

(c) Advisory and Procedural Committees

(iii) Development Plans Panel

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Now we move on to other Minutes. Nobody told me when I was to become Mayor that I was to suddenly become a mathematician on Day One! We should have started these Minutes at ten-to four to finish at ten-past four, but because I allowed the extra time on this last item, I am also going to add that ten minutes on now, so that you do not lose out on any time on Minutes. Catherine will tell me when the time is up. I think it will go through now to twenty-past four before Councillor Blake sums up.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I refer to the Site Selection Publications Draft that was discussed at the Development Plans Panel. I was heartened to hear Councillor Lewis's response to Councillor Leadley about the willingness to discuss where we were at but what I think Councillor Lewis has to accept is that over the past twelve months public confidence in the planning process and the development plan progression has been severely shaken. You might think I am referring to the views of Opposition Members – well, to some extent I am but I am more particularly referring to the views of the various community groups around the city who are not, by the way, all confined to the leafy suburbs of Conservative and Lib Dem represented wards. They are all over the city and they are mightily angry. They were even more angry after this meeting because they did not think they were being listened to or proper discussions taking place as regards how this site selection process was rolling out.

I hope now, Councillor Lewis, that we will hear some reassurance from you that you and Councillor Blake are happy to receive further representations about alternative brownfield sites that now become viable because the economy is improving that certainly were not viable, in fairness to yourselves, twelve months ago but certainly are now and we are seeing it all the time in terms of pre-application discussions developers are having with Planning Officers, that there is time to look at those, time to properly assess whether they could be thrown into the Site Selection Process in exchange for green belt sites being needlessly sacrificed.

There is the issue of the numbers, of course, where we continue to have a profound disagreement and while we agree with you about the Core Strategy and the need to have one in place, we still profoundly disagree in terms of the numbers.

I hope that we can rely on you now to be far more open to further discussion and alterations than has been the case. It has not been helped by the fact that assurances

were given about numbers being reviewed during the election campaign by Members of the administration which simply have not been fulfilled. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Procter.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor, I too speak on the same Minute.

When the UDP was considered, the Unitary Development Plan, there was something like 16,000 responses to the public consultation. It was the largest response to any public consultation this Council has ever undertaken.

If you then ask yourself what good did it do, how did those public responses feature in the changing of the plan, the answer is, none. That was regrettable then and I hope the controlling administration is not going to make the same mistake this time around.

This plan now moves to public consultation and, like others, I welcome that but it is going to depend on taking communities with the plan. Yes, whilst, as Councillor Carter has already mentioned, there is a profound disagreement over the numbers, we do accept that areas have to take a number – we disagree what that number is – but surely it is right that communities and people within those communities are best placed to determine where that number goes.

What is right for one area is not necessarily right for another area and the whole point of the planning reforms introduced by the last Government and also, I might say, by the previous Labour administration, was to try and take communities with planners and with planning. I think the biggest test for the soundness of our core Strategy and the site allocations therein is yet to come, in actual fact, Lord Mayor. I hope we will see that degree of flexibility.

I feel a little sorry for Councillor Congreve, and it is not often I say that, but he has gone from the sedate chair which you now occupy, Lord Mayor, to the slightly turbulent chair – it was the same chair, Lord Mayor, he had the last Development Plans Panel in here, he did not want to let go of the chair! *(laughter)* It was a slightly rockier road. He is an experienced hand at these matters and I know he understands why, because it is so vitally important to communities that all of us represent that any development that does take place in terms of the allocation strategy is in a place that is right for those communities. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Councillor Anderson.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. On the same Minute, I totally agree with what my two colleagues have said. What I want to try and bring to the attention of those Members of Council who are not on the Development Plans Panel are some of the things that have actually been done in your name recently so that you are now going to have to go back to your local community and explain to them why there has been no Scrutiny nor sight of the Greenbelt Background paper. Someone has seen it but the Development Plans Panel did not see it so how are you going to explain to your communities what has happened there? I do not know. There has been no Scrutiny or sight of the Infrastructure Background paper – again you are going to have to explain to your communities what has happened there, how we came to get where we are. The educational requirements, are you happy that these

have all been reflected back? Certainly in the north of the city we do not think that Education have properly reflected back in their education paper. They have ignored, somebody has ignored local opinion, local views who know best what is necessary in their area, it has just been forgotten about as if we were all an irrelevance.

The Highways and Transport paper already points out that the A660 is over 100% capacity, yet it is still OK to build on it without putting anything in first before the development goes ahead. The same goes with the A61 North, the A65, the A647 and the A62.

In Aireborough you are actually allowing towns to merge, which is actually not what your policies said when you first set them but you are now allowing them to merge. You have got to ask why is this being allowed to happen.

You need to explain to the public and also Members what exceptional circumstances actually are as to why you are taking things out of the green belt because I have been on Development Plans Panel and I do not understand what these exceptional grounds are. They have never been clearly set out to us in any shape or form.

You are not reflecting back current Government thinking. Since the officers argued for certain things, the Government has moved on. You have not reflected that back accordingly as well. When it comes to communicating this you have not published how you are actually going to communicate all of this to the public so they can actually understand and participate fully in what you are doing.

Finally, I do have to raise concerns at the way that some people are claiming that you are working with Neighbourhood Plan Groups. You might be in some areas but in a lot of other areas you are not working with the Neighbourhood Plan Groups in order to shape the communities that they live in and that they know. You do not necessarily have to agree with everything they say but you should spend more time listening to what they are proposing to do and how we can all work together. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Like my colleagues I wish to talk about the public perception of how this development plan is being handled.

A couple of Fridays ago on this Minute (which I too am addressing, page 317 Minute 4) we had a Development Plans Panel which was expected to be attended by a rather large swathe of the public – so much so that we had to have the meeting in here. Certainly from my own ward we had quite a bit contingent. Did they get what they wanted? No, they did not. Out of a possible potential twelve sites for development, mostly on green belt, in my ward two sites came up for discussion – two sites, and that was fairly desultory discussion. They did not even touch on the site that would join two townships, that would join Yeadon with Guiseley.

One thing I think that led people up the garden path was the size of the pack of papers. It had every site in it and if we have a planning meeting and we have the papers for the planning meeting, it features the sites we are going to discuss. That was not the case with this meeting and I know there are lots of reasons for this but when you are dealing with people out there who are worried about what is happening

in their part of the world and want to come along and hear discussion about it, then that is not really the sort of thing that they were expecting.

That is just the message I want to get across. We are not talking about what it is that is bothering people, we are not talking about what is going to totally change people's townships, people's areas where they live and we are not doing it in the full public gaze. I only hope that when we get what I am sure will be a deluge of observations from the public when we go out to public consultation, those who remember to do it again, incidentally, because there is a huge amount came in between times which people were told "Yes, we will look at this when we come to the public consultation stage." Let us hope that that does happen.

Lord Mayor, I think people expect a certain amount of clarity and transparency in public life and I do not think that in the case of this Development Plans Panel meeting two Fridays ago that they got it. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jim McKenna.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking on the same Minutes. I will try to keep my comments short. We have come to this issue many, many times and I expect we will again.

Can I say, we really do need to get these consultations in front of the public and hopefully when it does come to the Executive Board it will be released because it is all right us saying what they want, I think we actually need to hear their objections and their submission. I think that is hugely important and I see a lot of nodding of heads and I think we can all agree on that.

We can debate this in the Chamber and we can do it time and time again but it does not change anything. We want to know what our communities think about it.

I hear what you say, Graham, about your ward. I was at the same meeting when there was a lot of people who came from the Guiseley area and, of course, we all understand their concerns, but can I point out to you in its current form the Site Allocation Plan meets our established need for housing but it is worth remembering that it only achieves this by the inner area and the city centre providing more than their already significant target for new homes – in other words, they have a higher target.

I represent the inner city area, Armley, and there are many round here who will be doing the same and I can tell you, there is not a lot of green spaces in our area. There is not even a lot of playgrounds for our children, but we are taking a huge amount. As for coalescing of areas, Armley has coalesced into New Wortley, into City and Holbeck, into Burmantofts. There is no division between us and there is no green space. We are taking the majority there.

I do feel sorry for the people who do not want 200 houses next to them in an area of some of the leafy suburbs that Andrew has taken, but I have driven buses through their area and there is huge amounts of green space. Come into Armley and I will show you what we have got. We have got a great golf course that we had to fight very hard to save, we have got a park but we have got very little else.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: This is in the verbatim.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Andrew, I know you were doing your bid for the country park and you did take into account the riverside and Armley and I am grateful for that, but come on, let us get a sense of balance to this. It really does need to go out for people. It is no good us talking here and arguing here. Let us hopefully have it released through the Executive Board and move on.

Just a fact that I have gone, I have gone off my brief – we did not set the rules for strategic planning. That came from Central Government, your Government. Evidence collected by the BBC showed that a number of permissions for homes on green belt land has jumped up since the National Planning Policy Framework came into force.

THE LORD MAYOR: Could you finish this sentence please.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: In 2009 planning permission was granted for 2,258 homes. Last year it was 12,000. The developers are taking advantage of our lack of planning. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Walshaw.

COUNCILLOR WALSHAW: Thank you, Lord Mayor. It is always a pleasure to follow Councillor McKenna talking about planning and I do it quite often these days. It is always good to get an early heckle from Councillor Procter.

I just want to talk about the same Development Plan Minutes and I think we talk about the spatial future of this city in this Council an awful lot and I take issue with some of the comments that there has not been discussion, there has not been consultation. There has been an awful lot of both but I think, as Councillor McKenna says, we will be doing another load of that when hopefully the Allocation goes to Executive Board and then everyone in the city can have their say once again. Certainly as a Development Plan Member we will be wanting to see those comments incorporated so far as we can into the plan because we still have to, at the end of the day, house people in the city and house these people in the city running in towards the end of the next decade.

Before I make these comments, I am trying to be constructive so, colleagues, in your mind's eye, you all went to the Site Allocations workshops, most of which I chaired and I thank you for your comments. Picture all the seas of red sites in your wards, picture all of them. Seas and oceans of red sites that were rejected out of hand.

Now, this administration has to be evidence led. It has to be evidence led and we have some fairly cumbersome Statutory Instruments to deal with that are the products of several Central Government rounds of legislation both red and blue for sure. Those are cumbersome processes.

We have to get this right because when you did not have your – and I have used this as a clumsy analogy before but bear with me – all of your planning armour in place, then you can have some unhappy experiences and this city had some very unhappy experiences with volume house builders, with the development sector when we did not have all our planning armour in place and that is in the second half of last decade

and regrettably slightly into this. Where do we stand in 2015? This city is in far better condition than it has been for well over a decade, 15 years, to say when and where development happens and that protects all our communities, including everyone over *here*, everybody *here*. That protects our communities insofar as is possible from those unwanted developments. Again I ask you, colleagues, to picture those red sites in your mind when I say this. We have to get this right and we have to deal with the legislative hand we are dealt with.

Turning very, very briefly to phasing, it is not much discussed but it is a way of mitigating the concerns that some of our communities have about where those sites are because let us be clear, the borderline, more controversial sites, they will be all in the later phases. Those phased sites come forward as and when they are needed, don't they, it is a demand system. If the numbers are too high in the allocation process those controversial sites will not come forward, will they, and they will certainly be coming forward in the period of lots of new hard evidence.

I think there is a lot we need to get right but we need to move on, as Councillor McKenna said.

Just one last thing. The budget has been talked about today and I am sure our Chancellor is saying lots of lovely things for Leeds – or perhaps even maybe not – but all I would caution, colleagues, if you use the phrase “I want to simplify the planning system”, that usually means let us give a huge bonus to volume house builders to grab sites and throw up poor quality, poor thought through developments and that is the last thing that anyone in this city from any side of these aisles wants to see. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: We have now run out of time on that section so can I call on Councillor Blake to sum up. We are now on page 14, just at the top of the page.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to start my summing up by making reference to the events of yesterday. I think I speak on behalf of all of Council in thanking you, Lord Mayor, for setting the tone yesterday and the way that we were able to approach the horrific implications of the events ten years ago and, indeed, those of last week with such sensitivity, really reflecting the dignity and courage of the families and the victims and the survivors from those terrible acts of violence.

I think it is really important that we reflect on this and make sure that these terrible acts do not divert us from our values of tolerance and understanding that make up the basis of so much of what we do in this city.

I would like to thank all of Council for your contributions today and I will not be able to do you all justice in my summing up, I am sure you are aware of that. Just to pick up on the last debate, yes, Councillor Carter, of course we can continue to have conversations, Councillor Lewis made that clear earlier, but I think Councillor McKenna's point is absolutely right. This is the time now for it to go to Exec Board and to go out for consultation. That is the point we are at in the process, that is why it could not all be unpicked and picked over again at the last Development Plans meeting. Let us take it on, take it out to consultation and really pick up the comments from our communities.

The things from today's Minutes have all had an uncanny theme running through them around low pay, living wage, all of the pressures that we have got with people living in very vulnerable circumstances and some of the response that we have been able to put in place to help to mitigate some of those pressures. If Councillor Coupar had been able to stand up I know she would have talked about the community pathfinders and the hubs and the impact that they are starting to have and yes, let us look at how we can roll those out to the rest of the community.

I am really pleased as well to welcome Councillor Sobel's comments on green environmental issues facing the city. It is time for us this side of the Chamber to really start to pick up these issues and understand the impact that they have that the degradation of the environment has on people's lives and their sense of wellbeing and I look forward to further debates about that.

The issue about the Public Health cuts to me is just how cynical the whole process has been. We welcomed money coming out from the centre down to us as Local Authorities through the Health and Wellbeing Boards, we welcomed it. It is the right place for it but then to look at it as being outside of the ringfenced and protected budgets of the NHS is in my view an absolute scandal and it just defies belief that they can come to us and say that cutting this budget is not going to have a direct impact on National Health Service budgets. It is a nonsense. This is where all the preventative work happens, all of those things that mean so much to the people that we represent.

I am delighted we have got a section now on the Health and Wellbeing Board Minutes reflected, I think, in the interest that we have had and I think that was definitely the right thing to do and we will have a lot more comments.

The other theme running through the day was the budget that the Council has at its disposal, and Councillor Groves laying out what we have had to cope with over the last five years, but we know we are going to be coming back here in the autumn not only talking about the things that have been discussed in the Budget Statement today but anticipating more draconian cuts to the Council, and do we really think they are going to rebalance so that the Northern Authorities get what they really deserve? I really do not think so.

Let us just quickly have a think about what the Chancellor has stood up in the House today and said. The immediate analysis of what he has said is that a lone parent with two children working 16 hours a week at national minimum wage will gain just over £400 from the increase in the living wage.

THE LORD MAYOR: Excuse me, Councillor Blake, you should be summing up on the Minute.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: I am doing, I am doing exactly that, Lord Mayor. Sorry to contradict. This is exactly the point of what we were talking about...

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: No we were not.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: ...the impact of the living wage. I can go on to say that the impact of the tax credit changes that have been proposed today are £860. What a difference that is going to make.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake, can I just cool this for one moment? Can I ask both sides to consider, Councillor Blake, this was not in the summing up.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: I am sorry, I am reflecting the Minutes that we have discussed across the whole afternoon where we were talking about living wage, low pay charters, signing up to UNISON's Ethical Charter, the impact of the living wage. Are those not the things that matter to this Council? (*Applause*)

If we do not pick these up now then what is the point of us discussing in Executive Board and bringing issues to Council on a false premise? We are dreading the impact of these...

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: A very poor start.

THE LORD MAYOR: Excuse me, Councillor Blake, I have turned the microphone off because I do not think that what you are doing now is part of the summing up. We have not as yet heard...

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: That is outrageous, Lord Mayor, a Leader of Leeds City Council being stopped in her tracks. That is not right.

THE LORD MAYOR: I am just asking to speak. Councillor Blake, do you think we could tone this down, please?

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: That is not right, Lord Mayor. That is not right. It has never happened before. (*interruption*)

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: So they can just do what they want?

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: The Leader can do what she wants. This is a very poor start.

THE LORD MAYOR: Can I just say something? OK, no, it has never happened before. Perhaps I should have dealt with it a different way. I do not think so but I will apologise if the majority of people think that way. All right? If that is the case, if you think like I do then I will leave you to think like that but if we could just allow Councillor Blake to finish what she is saying, let us keep tempers at bay, please, so we can finish this session.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Lord Mayor, I meant no intention to cause you offence in the slightest but the papers that were in front of us from Executive Board reflect all of the issues that we are facing around the impact of cuts and the situations that people face. One of the things running through is the impact on young people. I think we need to continue to talk about the impact on child benefit.

Obviously we have to take account of the really serious people in the field and actually reflect that there are going to be higher child poverty for millions and lower taxes for the better off. I believe that today we have seen a highly political statement that will have a dramatic impact on the issues that we have been talking about today and I would echo the comments that all of us in Local Government, whatever side of the Chamber we are on, need to consider very strongly the impact on Local

Government's ability to look after and nurture and cope with the impact that these policies are having on the most vulnerable people in our city. We will come back to these issues, they are too important and will have a devastating impact on the families and young people of this city. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Lord Mayor, Jo Root has just scored 107 against the Australians. *(laughter)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: The Leader was just out for a duck.

THE LORD MAYOR: Can I now call for a vote on the motion to receive the Minutes, please. *(A vote was taken)* The Minutes are CARRIED.

Before we go into tea I will ask those people sitting in the gallery to join us. You are really going to love what I am going to say now. Here goes!

First of all, if we could come back from tea about 4.50. I have in front of me here an extract from the Chancellor's Budget, this is to be circulated with my permission during the tea break. You should have that before you come back into the Chamber. Thank you.

(Short break)

THE LORD MAYOR: Before we go back to the Minutes I would just like to clarify what happened before the tea break. I just want you to know that I in no way was trying to offend you, Councillor Blake, nor your Party.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Well, you did.

THE LORD MAYOR: You may think that, I am trying to say – will you let me try and say what I want to say and then I hope that we can sort this, Councillor Blake and myself, separately outside the meeting. It is a very difficult situation because we are sitting in here this afternoon with items on the agenda whilst there is indeed a Budget being given and therefore it has been extremely difficult to try and stop people talking about what was in this Budget. I personally did not know what was in the Budget.

I apologise again if I have caused any offence and I certainly did not mean to do so and I hope that we can leave the matter like that. *(Applause)*

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Councillor Carter mentioned it, Councillor Lamb mentioned it and Councillor Buckley mentioned it.

THE LORD MAYOR: OK. Now we are going to move to a report on Devolution which I can imagine can be a bit fiery too, so if we can all try and keep our cool it would be nice.

ITEM 13 – REPORT ON DEVOLUTION

THE LORD MAYOR: We have got a period of 30 minutes on devolved matters before going into three White Papers which are now to be for a maximum of 45 minutes each. You do not have to speak for 45 minutes but we have got that time allocated as it was felt that we should try and see if this would give more people the opportunity to say what they wished. Councillor Blake, could I ask you to introduce the subject.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor, and I welcome the opportunity to have a further discussion with you as you outlined just now.

I think it is fair to say for all of us that the topic of devolution is probably one of the hottest around at the moment and I think actually the debate that we have just had highlights in no uncertain terms just how important it is that we actually start to have more command and more control of the areas of policy that really have a major impact on the people who live in Leeds and the wider area.

I want to introduce the debate that is going to follow by asking for us to really think about three areas, three questions for us. Very straightforwardly, why do we want to devolve more powers? What additional powers will they be? What will be the geographic footprint for the powers to be devolved to?

We have actually circulated the comments that are in the red book behind the Budget this afternoon (if I can mention it) and it is a very important statement. Whilst there are conversations going on, the important wording in this is “if agreement is reached” and that is going to be the subject of intense discussions over the next few months, making sure that anything that we put forward is looked at in enormous detail to consider whether this is a path leading to a directly elected Mayor at the end, if we are going to get the significant powers that we believe we need as a city within our wider region to make those changes.

Let us consider, why do we need these powers? I think we know that of the £548bn raised in tax, Local Authorities keep just £50.7bn – that is only 9%. For every pound that is raised, 91% is sent back to the Exchequer. We keep just 9 pence. This is not sustainable. We know that our cities are punching below weight and the national economy depends on the economic growth in our cities to move forward.

What exactly are we talking about? We have already seen enormous success in the city from the areas that have been devolved, so tackling unemployment, supporting businesses to grow. For every pound of public money spent we have levered in £8. These are a range of the asks including transport, employment, skills and public sector transformation. Surely if we can get control it is much better than further cuts and more austerity measures.

Just to reassure you all, certainly in the conversations that have taken place so far, nothing has yet been decided upon this. There are various boundary issues that give the Government some problems but we are definitely looking at the larger footprint of Leeds City Region and talking to all of our neighbouring authorities.

Confidence has been massively shaken by the shock announcement of pausing the electrification between Leeds and Manchester and I am sure Councillor Wakefield will expand on this. This is something that is very close to all of us when we are in

those negotiations, how can we make sure that anything we decide is copper bottomed and will deliver for the people we represent. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Wakefield.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I cannot offer to be Francis of Assisi, I have never had that role in this Chamber, but I can offer a very honest comment about the last comment that Councillor Blake made about transport, because two years ago this Chamber, all political parties, supported the feasibility study that said this, that if we electrified the line from Manchester to Leeds, we would generate an extra £6.7bn and 27,000 jobs. I think all major cities, Core City Leaders in the North, were very enthusiastic about it and very committed, which meant that the Government actually thought this is a good idea and we heard the phrase for the first time of a Northern Powerhouse.

If people remember, during March and April we had the Secretary of State for Transport, we had George Osborne, we had David Cameron all here actually in the Banqueting Hall committing themselves to the electrification of the cross-Pennine line – then it was called HS3. It was so committed explicitly they put it in their manifesto and David Cameron said, on Look North, I watched the tape again, “We have already started the electrification of the cross-Pennine line.” Here is what it says:

“We will invest a record £13bn in transport for the North. We will electrify the main rail route, build a Northern hub and provide new trains.”

Two weeks ago tomorrow we got a very cynical statement saying it was on pause, whatever that means. You can understand the anger of Councils, Councillors - of all parties, I emphasise – you can understand the anger of businesses who got behind this concept and you can understand the people who are paying an increasing amount of fares who feel let down. Yet again, it underlined the huge inequality between North and South and the statistic that it does because the South is going ahead, the electrification from London to Bristol is going ahead, £395 per person in the North versus £3,005 for per person in the South.

It is time this inequality stopped, it is time the North got the investment and instead of a pause let us go ahead. I would like to see this Chamber, if we are really serious about devolution, really having a big campaign with all the Northern Authorities to make sure the investment in the North that includes not only the cross-Pennine, the Calder Valley and the Harrogate line goes ahead because, quite frankly, without that the people who cynically termed it and amusingly termed it the Northern Power Failure will be right and we will be proved wrong.

Lord Mayor, I really hope we get behind not only devolution but the urgent investment we need in cross-Pennine rail which, frankly, is not good enough at the moment. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Finnigan.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Devolution is a good thing, we are all for devolution over in Morley but what we do find difficult to understand is diet devolution that basically says we will devolve to this particular level and no

further. That means your local communities often feel left out of the decisions that actually impact upon their lives.

Earlier this afternoon we were hearing a discussion from Councillor Golton about the fact that Area Committees should have more powers and certainly more finance delegated down and there can be no doubt at all that Central Government needs to delegate down to the Yorkshire Region. There should be similarly no doubt that decision making from this Council needs to be passed down to a more appropriate level and that includes attaching the finance towards it. Those decisions should be taken at the most community based level possible. If we are for devolution then we must be fully committed to it and not be offered a diet devolution that stops it half way. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Carter.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Yes, Lord Mayor, out of deference to you, and only out of deference to you, I will not comment on what happened before the break.

As regards this, I am afraid the Government have shot themselves in the foot with electrification of the trans-Pennine route because it has allowed Councillor Wakefield to make the comments that he has made in here, some of which I agree with.

I am extremely concerned. I have always believed in devolving as much power as possible from the centre down to larger Local Authorities and Leeds is missing a trick because Leeds is not leading, it is following and it is following Wakefield and that has to stop.

When I go to a meeting and I am told, true or not, that Councillor Wakefield has been told because he is no longer Leader he should not be there, I really do get concerned. I look to Councillor Blake, the new Leader, to make sure that Leeds does start to lead this devolution debate because it is not doing at the moment.

Note the Chancellor's comments. Sheffield City Region, Liverpool City Region, and Leeds, West Yorkshire and Partner Authorities. That is because the Chancellor knows that other Local Authorities in the City Region and indeed beyond it, going as far as Hull and the East Riding, want to join a devolved Authority with Leeds at its heart, but Councillor Box, who has been allowed to become the mouthpiece for devolution in this area, he is standing in the way of it.

We have a window of opportunity. It has to be agreed by the Spending Review. I will tell you now that Sheffield and Liverpool have agreed their deals; Manchester has been given even more today in the Budget which we are not supposed to mention, but they have been given even more today and Leeds is still hanging back. Leeds has to grasp the nettle, however difficult that nettle is, because Wakefield cannot veto the future of this city. I look to you, Judith, and you, Keith, to make sure that Leeds now does lead in the devolution debate.

The Government is desperate to do a deal with Leeds. They recognise Leeds as the powerhouse. I will tell you what I would do – I would slap the electrification on the table as part of the devolution deal, that is what I would do, and I am surprised you

have not done it already instead of coming in here and whingeing about it. That is the way forward, my Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am very lucky in that occasionally I do get to go to the Combined Authority and to mix with luminaries of all parties, including Councillor Box.

I have to say I do not recognise this organisation being hamstrung by Councillor Box. I see an organisation which is hamstrung primarily by a Government that talks about devolution and then creates so many conditions on it that it is quite plain that the decision is not yours at all and then, of course, that plays into the hands of others from other parties that then say they are not really serious about it.

We need to make sure that we are taking as much opportunity as possible out of devolution and as with PFI in the past, if it is the only game in town then even if you do not agree with the concept you are not the people in charge and you must dance to their tune and work with that, and when the Blair Government was in place and they wanted to use PFI to create a whole new range of great learning environments in our schools or places where we can actually heal ourselves better in hospitals, even though we knew we would end up paying for it a little bit more later on we grasped it and the same thing is happening with devolution. We might not want elected Mayors, we might not like being told who we need to do business with, but actually we need to do it.

Devolution is an evolution and if we play our part and we do it positively with Government, we can perhaps evolve and make it better our way once we have proven that we can deliver under different Governments and those Governments, of course, will be used to an environment where they actually do have less control in the first place and therefore they might be more amenable to giving it up.

I think we are in a great position. I think unfortunately the Government is not because it thinks it controls things but it does not. There are too many national organisations like Network Rail that, because they are not really managed very well from Whitehall, do not deliver on very important things like devolution and electrification of our side of the Pennines. In fact, I think that one example shows why we have a much better case to take over these kind of transport infrastructure projects because we are at the heart of the delivery of it and therefore we will take far more interest in the effective delivery of it.

I trust, actually, Councillor Blake to take that lead on the Combined Authority. She has already imprinted herself there and shown that she is not to be trifled with so hopefully Councillor Carter will be pleased with the outcome over the year.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Rafique.

COUNCILLOR RAFIQUE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Lord Mayor, another area in great need of further devolution is jobs and skills. Youth unemployment in particular is a key priority for Leeds and the City Region.

If we do not make real progress in tackling youth unemployment we risk wasting the talent of thousands of our young people. We believe that every young person should

have the opportunity to fulfil their potential. At the same time, making sure young people have the skills employers in the region are looking for would provide a huge boost to our economy and help businesses to thrive. It would also make a huge difference to tackling persistent inequalities that blight many of our communities.

A recent report by the Prince's Trust also highlighted the extent of anxiety involved among young people which rises significantly from one fifth of young people to one third for those out of work or NEET. Our aim is to become NEET free city; with just over 1,500 young people still classed as NEET in Leeds greater powers and devolved budgets would help us achieve this.

Lord Mayor, we have a proven track record that we can deliver better services on a devolved basis rather than a one size fits all approach. We can work better with employers to encourage apprenticeships and we have the expertise and knowledge of the areas with high unemployment. Devolved programmes to reduce youth unemployment in the Leeds City Region have helped more than 2,000 young people take steps towards sustained employment. This is an example of how devolution of skills funding and pounds to local bodies can deliver better outcomes for the economy and local people than nationally led schemes.

Eight out of ten young people participating in the City Region's £4.6m Devolved Youth Contract secured, as a result of the 2012 City Deal, have progressed into employment, education or training as a result of support. The national figure by comparison is three out of ten. The number of young people aged 18 to 25 in Leeds claiming Job Seekers' Allowance has also halved from 6,675 in 2013 to 3,313 in 2015.

In conclusion, Lord Mayor, cities understand the needs of their local communities and working with the strategic support of their LEPS can take a lead in bringing together local knowledge of new business investment, transport and infrastructure planning, education and social and community service provision. Thank you, Lord Mayor.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Walshaw.

COUNCILLOR WALSHAW: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Talking about devolution after talking about planning, two of my favourite subjects. I look forward to a debate on science fiction but I know it is not happening any time soon.

I guess the basic question from this is what can devolution do for Leeds? It can do an awful lot. I think Councillor Rafique very ably demonstrated what we can do for skills and the immense difference between Local and Central Government delivery of a skills programme.

I think we can go a lot broader and look at different areas such as economic development, such as transport, such as infrastructure, including digital infrastructure, but I particularly want to talk about housing and planning which, as you all know, is my area of alleged expertise, just occasionally.

A couple of years ago I was asked by my old university, the Institute of Transport Studies at Leeds, to give a lecture on devolution. During the research I found out this process started in 2004 when a certain D Miliband Esquire issued a call for

expressions of interest from Core Cities. Devolution seems to have been going on for well over a decade now and it has survived now three changes of Government, so clearly it is an idea that has got legs.

I think this is a huge opportunity for Leeds and Leeds certainly will, if you pardon the expression, lead on this. I think when you are looking at how this is an opportunity, I want to give you a couple of examples – two macro ones, if you like, and one micro one.

The first macro one is, to get a regulated London-style bus network we as a Transport Authority, Combined Authority, have to jump through ridiculously numerous hoops just to say we should have the same ability as Londoners to have a managed bus network that delivers far more bang for their buck in terms of transport.

Look at housing. This city can amass land and borrow far more cheaply than the volume house builders, so we could make a huge contribution to ending the housing crisis that bedevils us in a generation. That would take this Government, I appreciate, to take an ideological leap, as it were, and say Local Authorities have played an enormously important role in solving that problem. Certainly the volume house builders over decades have certainly not played their part and they are certainly not delivering the breadth and range of homes that we need.

Those are two macro ones that would bring enormous benefits for everybody in Leeds. I will give you one micro one that just annoys the heck out of Councillor Walker, Councillor Pryor and myself. In Headingley we have had loads of success with Regulation 7 regs and that is getting the letting boards out of gardens and on to houses. You will have noticed Headingley is no longer the sea of boards and that has gone through a couple of Council teams and it has been a big success. To get that renewed or extended we have to produce in probably triplicate, quadruplicate (I am running out of multiples but you see what I mean) a report that has to go to the actual Secretary of State's office just to get that extended.

That is ridiculous. That is a level of micro management. That should just be down to this Council or, even better still, the Community Committee that the area is relevant to. We should just be able to make these little changes.

As you can see, Lord Mayor, there is macro changes and micro changes that we could do better in Leeds and I look forward to this continued debate. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Councillor Blake to sum up.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I just want to reassure Councillor Carter that I do not have a reputation for being a shrinking violet and I do not intend to start now.

The issue that you raise, though, is an important one because if we are going to move this agenda forward we do have to work in collaboration and that is absolutely fundamental. If you pick up some of the comments by the much heralded Manchester Devolution Deal, actually there is a lot of debate going on beneath the surface about the relationships between the different Local Authorities. We have got to learn from their experience and make sure that, whatever we do, we have got everybody firmly on board.

Stewart is right. The Devolution Bill itself gives us difficulties because there are all sorts of talks about which boundaries you can cross and which you cannot in terms of matching Combined Authority areas. There is an incredible debate going on with the Police and Crime Commissioners at the moment who are feeling very vulnerable, I have to say, in the main, but that is another boundary area that has to be taken into the mix. We are pushing back at Government all the time and actually, Andrew, you know, we were pleased to see that Leeds was mentioned in the statement today, before it has all just been West Yorkshire Combined Authority and we recognise that there is Leeds, West Yorkshire, our other Local Authority partners but obviously there is also the business community who are very solidly behind getting involved in these conversations.

I just want to reassure Council that we need to have a whole series of debates looking at the asks that have been sent down and really making sure that we keep the pressure on. We have heard in the debate where the benefit will come to us if we have more control over our own destiny and the things that really have not come out are how we can save millions of pounds as we have done in Children's Services by getting involved earlier in the problem, so more resources and more powers.

I do just want to leave you that seven weeks, eight weeks in politics is a long time. Beware of Twitter. On 1st May George Osborne tweeted, "Labour has let down the north before and an Ed Miliband Government propped up by the SNP would do it again cancelling key transport projects." *(laughter)* I leave that with you, Lord Mayor, thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you for that, Councillor Blake. Right, I will now call for the vote. *(A vote was taken)* The motion is CARRIED. Thank you.

ITEM 14 – WHITE PAPER MOTION – SCHOOL PLACES

THE LORD MAYOR: We now move on to the final segment and that is the three White Papers, as I said before up to a maximum of 45 minutes. Can I call, please, on Councillor Lamb for the first White Paper motion, which is on school places.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Choosing the best school for your children is one of the most important decisions any parent makes and one that they agonise over. We would all, I am sure everybody in this Chamber, like to have a good local school in every community and a good place for every child. Sadly, that is not the case. There are huge differences between the quality and standards of schools and understandably every parent will do everything they can to get their child into a school they perceive is the best for their child. Wherever possible they want that to be as close as they can to their home, to their community. Children form friendship groups very young – at nursery, from playgroups at one and two years old - and they do not want to be splitting those up at four years old.

We had a big problem in North Leeds this year. I think everyone recognises that. There were problems across the city. North Leeds was particularly an area of focus. It was not something that was unforeseeable or unforeseen or came out of the blue. It should have been addressed. There were many solutions proposed; for a variety of reasons Children's Services were unable to find those solutions until offer day came.

Due to a group of very well organised, articulate and determined parents who put a lot of pressure on the Council through the media and showed no intention of going away, they spoke very well at the meeting earlier today, pressure was brought to bear and within a month the Council managed to find 90 additional places that they had not been able to find in the twelve months previously.

There are two questions that I hope Councillor Yeadon can answer today which as yet I have not had an answer to. How much did it cost the Council to create those 90 places and what was cut from elsewhere in Children's Services to fund those additional places?

I think we have already looked at Scrutiny at having a look at this and I think it has been agreed. It is not an issue that is only going to affect North Leeds. There are going to be pressures in Guiseley, in Farsley, in parts of the Inner City, in parts of South Leeds. I am sure within five years or so the projections are showing that there is not a ward in the city that will not be affected by this.

It needs a cross-party approach to deal with it. It is not something the administration can and should be left to deal with on their own. I did write this paper in the hope that all parties would be able to support it and, indeed, I offered it to other parties for their comments and thoughts to see if we could find a way to put something down together. Sadly, that was not taken up. It is not too late. Hopefully we worded it very carefully to try and take some contentious bits out.

I fully understand and appreciate within Schools Policy there are areas that we fundamentally disagree on. There are approaches that we are ideologically opposed to each other. What I am sure we can all agree is that we do need to come together to find a way to make sure there are enough good school places in every part of the city for parents to access. It cannot be right that children are offered their 29th nearest school and that we think that is acceptable. That cannot be right. It is to the credit of the administration that ultimately they did find a way and they did find a solution but it is a sticking plaster at best. It is storing up problems for the future. Already thoughts are turning to how those bulge cohorts are going to impact on secondary schools moving forward.

It would be easy for us to shout from the sidelines, we have our moments at that, but on this issue we are committed, absolutely committed to working with the administration to try and find a solution and a better approach.

What I am asking for is that we are pragmatic. I understand the issues and concerns about certain types of governance. I do understand it. You will not be surprised we do not agree about it. To me and I think most parents, they do not care who runs the school. What makes a good school is strong leadership, good teaching and learning and strong governance in whatever form that takes. I think that is what most parents want. I do not think they are bothered whether it is run by the Local Authority or whether it is run by an academy or free school. I do not think they care; they want a good school and I think we have to be pragmatic, we have to take all the opportunities that are available and we have to look, particularly when we are looking at things like the Core Strategy and Site Allocations, where is the money going to come from? There has been £157m given to the Authority to deal with basic need. There is more money available if you are prepared to take every option available.

What I would urge, and I hope we can have a constructive debate and this starts a debate, this is not the end of it today, but that we can come together and try and come up with some solutions for an issue that is going to affect every ward across the city. I hope perhaps, just on this one occasion, we might be able to reflect on the debate. The wording is such I hope that anyone could agree with it in the Chamber and I hope people might change their mind and perhaps we can have some cross-party support on this one. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Cohen.

COUNCILLOR COHEN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am delighted to be able to second Councillor Lamb's White Paper today. I would like to start with a fact, and it is a fact certainly after today's deputation we are all well aware of, that in the coming years, as in this past year, this city faces a genuine school places crisis. I am not trying to be melodramatic. If you look at the birth rate in the city in recent years – and I realise I am contributing to that, so no apologies there – the birth rate is higher now than it has been for many a year and all those children are going to be wanting school places. People moving into our great city are all going to be needing school places where they have young families. There is a genuine crisis on its way and when one is faced with a genuine crisis one has two options: one can either ignore it or one can rise to it and find ways to do what is absolutely best for the city and deliver more school places, irrelevant of what we might feel are our political prejudices or our own personal preferences.

I am afraid to say to date the administration has really gone for more of the former than the latter. If one looks at – and I am a bit boring like this, I like to read old Minutes – if one reads Minutes of the Children's Services Scrutiny Board from previous years you will see that the very wise Chair of that Scrutiny Board was challenging on this very issue and yet officers were giving comfort and confidence that, "Don't worry, we have got it in hand, it is all sorted" and yet after offer day this year my emails were buzzing, as I am sure were colleagues in Roundhay and Moor Town, we were inundated with parents who were apoplectic that they were getting a school that was nowhere near being a local school for them.

As regards this year's debacle – and it was a debacle – too many parents are still wondering why it was only after offer day that the Council was able to find and persuade local schools to find these 90 places. What on earth was the administration playing at? Why on earth did we not get those 90 places in place before? I am afraid it is unforgivable.

Let us look to the future because, frankly, the future is where it is at. As a Council I have always believed it is our first duty to act in the best interests of the people of Leeds, not just our old prejudices. I am therefore a bit disappointed to see Labour's amendment today because to me the amendment shows that denial is not just a river in Egypt. I know that for Members opposite the words "free school" are enough to cause apoplexy. I know that because of misinformation that is peddled you are under the misapprehension – some of you – that the Council has no choice or say in relation to free schools, but actually as a Council we can invite free school providers to bid in areas we identify need a school. I know for many Members opposite the thought of schools not under Local authority controls are anathema but free schools are one solution that we should not just rule out. They have the opportunity to provide the

places this city needs and I urge you to look at them in a far more sympathetic light because they are one answer to an incredibly difficult problem that this city faces.

I hope you will look at them favourably; for the good of the city I really hope you will. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Bentley.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. We found much to agree with in this White Paper because I think everyone in this Chamber is probably looking for the same thing – that every child can go to a good school and that every parent has the confidence in the allocation process that means their child will go to a good school.

We could not quite come to second it and agree with it wholly, mainly based on the sort of things that Councillor Cohen has just said in terms of changes in governance and taking away some Local Authority control, but we do agree with a lot of the sentiment, particularly the need to be able to match where there is growth with the correct infrastructure to support that growth. How often those of us in Plans Panel or within our own wards when confronted by applications for housing developments have asked, “Is there capacity in local schools?” Often the answer is “No, the local school is full” but the development goes ahead anyway and we are just creating that problem for ourselves.

Simply having a financial contribution from the developer does not necessarily solve the problem because that contribution seems to go into a black hole within the system and does not result in school places at the right time and in the right place, so I very much support Councillor Lamb’s call for a review of the system used to plan the school places more effectively.

To plan for school places more effectively Local Authorities must have full control of the process. It is difficult for Local Authorities to plan effectively if their hands are tied by Central Government as to how they can build schools and funding is top sliced and given sometimes to vested interests that do not necessarily want to be part of the plan.

We need to look at other reasons why some parents are not getting their children into their first schools. I am sure we all know schools in our local area which are oversubscribed every year and then others in the same area which can never meet their full intake, or fill up with children from parents for whom it was their fourth, fifth or even no preference at all. Parents and children then start off at that school with a sense of disappointment and low expectation, which is no way to start education.

Of the 550 families in the city who did not get any of their preferences, 78% did not put their nearest school as one of their preferences. We should be asking ourselves why some parents are not choosing their local school for their children. We should be looking at the question of parental preference differently. Rather than asking ourselves are parents getting their first, second or third preference, we should be concentrating on changing the environment so that the local school becomes the natural choice. We should be working to make parental preference a bit of an

irrelevance really, because every Leeds school should be a good school that a parent would be happy for their child to go to.

A lot of this comes down obviously to the quality of the school. The last Coalition Government made a huge investment in education that enabled schools to raise their attainment, Pupil Premium made a significant impact and is narrowing the attainment gap between disadvantaged and advantaged pupils. Free school meals for infants has improved concentration and attainment levels. Investment in nursery provision and Early Years has led to more five year olds being ready for school and getting a better start. I just hope that this legacy of Liberal Democrats in Government will be detected by the current Government.

Leeds schools have been a beneficiary of this investment together with the dedicated approach of teaching staff and school leaders that has led to 90% of schools in Leeds being rated by Ofsted as good or outstanding. This is the message we should be getting across to parents, especially in areas which historically have poor schools but which now have seen significant improvements. I move the amendment, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Campbell.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Yeadon.

COUNCILLOR YEADON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Having been in my new Exec role for about six weeks now, I am acutely aware of the challenge this city faces to ensure that every child in Leeds has a school place. It is the main issue that Members wish to speak to me about and the main topic that concerned parents write to me about, and it is rightly top of the Children's Services agenda.

Having met with parents I know that choosing a school for your child is a particularly anxious time and we do appreciate the levels of concern that are experienced when your child is not offered a place at the school that you want. Yes, we have a statutory duty but we also have a moral duty to make sure that every child has the best start to their educational career. It is something that we work every day to achieve every year, not just at offer time or when it is hitting the headlines.

Many conversations have taken place both within this Chamber and outside about the magnitude of the challenge and how we are going to meet it. We have to create enough school places in Leeds in the next ten to 15 years to hold the children of another city the size of York. We need 750 primary places next year, of which 600 need to be permanent. In addition, we are facing capital shortfalls of £67m by 2018, answering Councillor Lamb's point, coming from our Basic Need Budget, which is a specific budget aimed to meet this issue where the funding for the increased places in the North of Leeds have come from. This will not be an easy challenge and it is not a mountain that Children's Services can conquer on its own and we must continue to have a consolidated corporate approach.

We already are working across a number of directorates, including Children's Services, Asset Management, Highways, Planning and Finance and a cross-party steering group has been in place since 2012.

This work, with the support of many schools in the city, with a variety of governance models including free schools, has already achieved the creation of an additional 1,273 new places since 2010, but we must keep up this momentum.

As an Authority we are very happy to work alongside all potential providers, but we do believe that we should be an active participant in the process. We have experienced the impact of a school being opened in the wrong place and we want and need to be fully involved in the free school process so we can work alongside providers to ensure the right school is in the right place.

We have good relationships with a whole range of providers and we should be able to build on this. However, national policy and procedures still limits local Councils' engagement, influence and ability when it comes to schools. It is simply ridiculous that we are no longer allowed to open new community schools. We still have the responsibility but we do not have the means.

Our view is that without changes to Government legislation, meeting this challenge will become increasingly problematic but we are not alone in this view and Leeds is not being intentionally difficult. As Members are aware, the cross-party LGA Children and Young People Board, chaired by Conservative Councillor David Simmons, has been vociferous in their appeal to Government to reinstate the power of Local Authorities to open new community schools. It is this cross-party approach that we are asking for here today. Let us move forward fully behind calls from the LGA. If there is mixed economy of schools let Local Councils be able to participate on a level playing field so that parents have true parental choice and Local Authority Community Schools are a realistic alternative.

Councillor Smart earlier outlined the importance of Leeds positioning itself as a child and family friendly city. A massive part of that is education provision. If we want to attract families to the city then we need to be able to offer the best possible education. We have over 90% of our primary schools rated as good or outstanding and are at the top of the Yorkshire and Humber Region.

Councillor Lamb, I do believe that this is an issue where our intent and our ambition is broadly the same. I recognise that in the wording of your White Paper. However, this particular issue of national policy is a particular sticking point. We know the LGA has a cross-party line on the issue and we are asking for the same cross-party line to be adopted here. I move the amendment. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Just a confession. I still bear the scars from 2003 when we were advised very strongly by Mr Chris Edwards about how many school places we needed. I am sure people over there know it. This is very, very difficult territory. I think at that time I remember Keith and Judith and myself said, "Surely we can leave these schools open." "No, you must close these schools." It is one of those times when officer advice still sticks in my throat.

If I can just get on to the main points, and I was trying to be helpful. I do not agree with everything he has said. To give a couple of examples where I have been involved in education issues recently. One was actually in East Leeds and it was

Temple Moor wanting to set up a school in Halton Moor. The ward Members were incredibly pragmatic. Mick Lyons, would you believe, was pragmatic, helpful, progressive. They were very, very pushy because they knew that they needed a school. I was involved from an Asset Management point of view. Everything went very well until the EFA got involved, the Education Funding Agency. Wonderful people they were, they came along to a couple of meetings, did not say anything and then suddenly out of the blue a letter came – and I cannot remember the details but it was effectively, “Yes, of course we are fine with all this. The only thing is you have to ringfence all Section 106 and planning gain funding for the next ten years within a mile of this school site or else the deal is off.” Now is that helpful? Is that Central Government actually trying to achieve anything positive for a community? Fortunately they wrote back and we were able to get on with it, but that was classic EFA involvement.

As I said previously, in West Leeds where, ideologically driven by Mr Gove who was desperate to see as many free schools as he possibly could, they were going around searching for any site that they possibly could whether there was a need for a school in that area or not, they even looked at West Park. Now West Park, which people may remember was pretty much falling down, would have cost an absolute fortune to bring up to any fit state to put children in and they were suggesting that be used. That was not half as bad as when we got to over Fir Tree where a conversation that should have been fairly civilised with Government about the school building that was not being used and its future became a nonsense where they sent in effectively the bailiffs to change the locks, went in, squatted in the building and then could not do anything with it. They are not even going to touch it and they are not going to have it ready until September next year. That is ludicrous and that is because we have a Government that is not sorting out our problems, it is about making gestures. That is a problem to me that we do have that kind of approach from Government Ministers and Civil Servants that actually frustrates the things that we are all trying to do together.

There are a few problems. I think some were pointed out and I have to again declare an interest because I would have got Dan Cohen doing the schools appeal for me because one of my family lives on Shadwell Lane and did not get a school place, but there are problems, and Neil Buckley raised it in the cross-party working group the other day. He said, “Look, we have actually got spare places in my ward, how come?” Well, because we have got Brodetsky and we have got Khalsa. Those schools do present a problem because, I have to say, and a child in my family is of mixed ethnicity, those schools do not offer the kind of education that his parents want. There is a problem where we as an Education Authority (if I dare say that any more), we have a need to sort out problems for all our kids, not just for sections and not to sort out particular interest groups but we are utterly frustrated by a Government that is ideologically driven when we in this Chamber all want to sort out problems. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Firstly, I will just pick up on what Richard was saying about ten years ago. It is an interesting conversation I had in my ward some months ago when I was told, “There is no problem in your ward with entry into schools. There is a problem in Morley and there is a problem in Armley and we are extending schools there. We should be all right.” I have got

about two classes' worth of kids in my ward that are either going to Morley, Beeston or Armley or have been allocated there and did not get any of their choices.

There is a problem and it comes down to what we were told ten years ago. The fact is, we still cannot get our figures right and I am not blaming anybody because it is probably down to us because we have children and we do not do it logically, we have them when we want to have them and not when it is statistically right to do – and I am not suggesting you change that! *(laughter)*

The thing is, it comes down to this, if you look at where the problem occurs in my ward, we have got two PFI schools there – very, very good PFI schools, both on sites where there were former Victorian schools and if the Victorian schools were still open, there would have been capacity there to actually put extra classes in, but there is not with the PFI schools because what we did under the funding arrangements, we built what we had to do, not what it might be in five or six years' time.

The basic problem as I see it with our schools is that we do not build in spare capacity because what will be happening in another ten years, Councillor Cohen is on another ten years' time – you will probably be still here then but in another ten years' time you will be having to shut schools down because we have not got enough children to fill them. That is the problem and the school population goes up and down and we have got to realise that and the way we fund schools, the way we build schools does not take account of that.

The other thing which is really, really daft in my viewpoint is that where we need to build new schools we cannot build them any more because who better than the Local Authority to do that? They need funding to do that and they need the ability to be able to do it and not leave it to somebody else who wants to put a school somewhere where they are not needed. That is the way forward.

As I say, what we have got to do, we have got to get away from this Act and say that this is what the requirement is now, what we have got to do is we have got to find the mean amount of classroom space in schools so that when we get these bumps of population increase or the drops in population increase, we can cope with both. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Robinson.

COUNCILLOR ROBINSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I was thinking a little bit yesterday about this White Paper motion and when Councillor Blake must have first come in as Leader of the Council some might have perceived the Education brief as a bit of a hospital pass because this potentially is going to be the first issue on somebody's plate. I think that actually Education and Children's Services is one of the great opportunities to score. There is so much potential in this city to work with young people across the board from all sorts of backgrounds, it offers you a great chance to help this city grow and a chance to help them compete in what we so often hear is the global race going forward.

I think that I am going to have to check some of the Minutes back very, very carefully because I want to double check that Councillor Yeadon said that we want to and need to be fully involved in the free school process, because that is a big shift from some of the language that has happened before and I appreciate that from the administration as

well, because it is actually acknowledging that free schools can have a benefit. As I say, I need to check it back very, very carefully.

What we have got is two amendments to White Papers here which in their intention are correct but actually within some of the detail miss some of the key issues. The Liberal Democrat amendment that is in there talks all about supply. Actually there is a flip side to supply, and that is demand and that is where the parents want to send their kids. That also partly goes for the Labour motion that has been put down as well.

I fully acknowledge that the Pupil Premium has had a massive impact on many of our schools across the board that the Coalition Government brought into place and I fully acknowledge that actually we have got 90% of schools in this city that are good or outstanding. That is to be applauded across the board. However – and there is always a “however”, I am afraid, when it comes to some of these issues – what has now had a great impact is a focus on progress. We are moving away from an agenda of attainment of simply five A* - C including English and maths. We are actually moving to progress measures. We are moving to measures where we are going to challenge some of the coasting schools and there will be schools in Leeds that are sat on “good” or “outstanding” that will be classed as coasting and they run a risk for some of us or an opportunity for others of academies moving in and taking over those schools.

I think it is absolutely right that parents have a choice in where they send their children. If there is going to be a full review I would like it to include if there is a lottery system within this city. A lot of people will not like that idea but I have seen it in America, I have been to Chicago and seen Charter Schools, which are the equivalent of free schools and academies and how they run their system. That lottery system is the only fair way to guarantee that every child has the chance to go to either the most outstanding school or the most deprived school in the area and it actually changes the way the educational landscape looks in cities.

I had the opportunity to meet students out there who were travelling across the city, getting up at 5.30 in the morning to go to outstanding schools. I think what Councillor Lamb has proposed, which is a full review of how we look at school places, is essential. If it is brought to Executive Board it is open, is it in the public domain, it gives us all a chance to comment.

I would finally finish, if that is OK, Lord Mayor, by saying that academy chains and free schools are here to stay. They are not going anywhere, unfortunately for some of us, and I think that they are a great opportunity to find additional school places, not across the board but in the majority of cases they are going in areas where they are in the most need. They are not always, I acknowledge that. For me and from the feedback I get from parents, they do not care whether it is an academy, a free school, a faith school, an LA school. They just care that their child is getting a great education, the opportunity to succeed, the opportunity to aspire and the opportunity to change their life. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Buckley.

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I wonder if I can just be a little bit less technical and a little bit more giving an example of a particular family who have suffered from some of these problems.

We have heard a little bit today about economic growth and economic success and we will no doubt hear some later, and how this has affected Leeds in particular. A very good example actually with the problem of school places in Alwoodley was a family with a little girl just starting school age moved into the ward from a completely different part of the United Kingdom. They came to Leeds for this very reason because there were jobs here and opportunities here and economic growth here. He got a better job by moving from, it was either Scotland or Ireland, I can't remember now actually, and his wife got a job in the area which she was involved in, in a district close by.

They researched the schools in Leeds and they actually moved into Alwoodley area because they thought, following their research, that this was the best place for schools. In fact, little did they know all about the nearly 90 families who could not even get their fifth choice.

This little family happen to belong to an ethnic minority but they preferably want a non-faith mainstream school of whatever type, as we have just heard from Councillor Robinson. They are not concerned about technicalities but they are concerned about it being a good school.

They could only afford a small home but this was very close to their number one choice. They can actually see the school gates from their windows. When they were in receipt of an offer it was actually a completely inappropriate school which was a long way away by comparison. They only have one car so the journey with the rush hour traffic is stressful and difficult and cannot be made in time for the mother to get the vehicle back to her to her job.

This whole situation has caused them all considerable stress and upset and unhappiness, so much so that they have been trying to work out what kind of sacrifices they can possibly make, given that they are not well off, in order to have to pay for a private school. This should not have to happen. They should not have to pay twice.

I do not know how this will be resolved in their particular case but assurances are needed that this is sorted out and before the possibility arises of the same thing happening next year. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Dowson.

COUNCILLOR DOWSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would just like to answer a few points which have been coming up which are quite interesting. One is around parents wanting to choose a good school, and I wholeheartedly agree with you, parents should be able to choose a good school that is local to them which is why as a city we hung on to the School Improvement Team when lots of cities actually let theirs go. As you have already commented, over 90% now of our primary schools are good or outstanding so the chances in Leeds, as opposed to anywhere else because we are first in Yorkshire and the Humber, of finding a good school are better than anywhere else in Yorkshire and Humber, so I think thank you to the School

Improvement Team for working with our schools, to the teachers and the Governors for working on that offer.

Alan knows there is already a cross-party working group so we are already working cross-party with you and we actually trust that if you know there are issues in your areas that you will come to us, come to the cross-party group. I know when Councillor Blake was in charge and now Councillor Yeadon of Education their doors were always open, so that goes to everybody. If you know there are issues in your area, come and tell us, we want to know and we want to know as early as possible because it does take time to find solutions.

The other thing is, free schools are not free. The money comes from somewhere and it comes from the capital budget across the country. You asked a specific question about where the money has come from for the expansions we have made in Alwoodley. It comes from that already stretched £67m deficit, shortfall, that we are anticipating on the Basic Needs Budget, so that is where it will come from but no doubt you will get some further information because there will be meetings as you know following this.

In January this year Leaders from across the country warned the Government that the £12m cost of creating places for the 900,000 extra places needed in England's schools over the next decade could push Councils to breaking point. Ever since the Coalition took control in 2010 the Conservative Chair of the LGA's Children and Young People's Board, David Simmons, has been calling for the funding and powers to be returned to Local Authorities to enable them to open community schools. This is a cross-party organisation.

Government funding for Basic Needs is woefully inadequate, as we all know, and we know that by 2018 in Leeds we will be facing a £67m shortfall. We are not alone in facing that challenge, and just a few examples. At the start of this year Reading had borrowed £34.5m to ensure all their children have places; Essex had to find an additional £38.7m on top of their grant; East Sussex say their Basic Needs Funding only covers 40% of their actual needs. We all know that just is not acceptable.

The additional problem we face on top of not having enough money to fully address the need is that we have no power to open new schools. We are working with free schools, there are six free schools in Leeds and we do have a very good relationship with all of them, they are part of the Leeds family. We are the provider, as you know, of last resort and only after everyone else has been offered and turned down the opportunity to open a school are we allowed to do so. We would love to be in a position where we can open new schools in areas where we can see the need but unless the Government changes the legislation, we simply cannot. That is why I fully support Councillor Yeadon's amendment and I hope that colleagues across the Chamber will mirror that cross-party position of the Local Government Association and join with us in sending this message, that in order to fully address the Basic Needs challenge we need to be given the authority and we need to be given the money. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Renshaw.

COUNCILLOR RENSHAW: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking in support of the amendment in the name of Councillor Lucinda Yeadon.

I do not think there is any dispute in the Chamber as to the scale of the Basic Needs issue or the need to tackle it in a cross-Council way. The dispute appears to be around what would be the best solution and the main differences that seem to be in our approach to this.

We believe that Local Authorities are best placed to identify need and provide school places in good local community schools, and that is why our amendment calls for our right to be able to do that to be reinstated. The Opposition seems to have bought completely into the Government line that Local Authorities should not have that power but should still bear the responsibility. I cannot agree with that. I cannot reconcile the wholesale fragmentation of the education system against good, secure local knowledge and understanding of need of what parents actually want.

We have been extremely lucky in Leeds that we have so many good schools who have been willing to work alongside us to expand where we can ensure all children have places but this cannot go on indefinitely; we will run out of options.

I want to be able to tell all the families in my ward that their children will get a place in a local school, as I am sure all of you want to be able to do as well. How can I do that if we cannot build those schools? How can we effectively plan for the future when we can suddenly have a free school open anywhere in our city undermining the work we are undertaking in those areas? What we need is more openness from Government. We have the local knowledge, we have the relationships with schools; stop cutting us out and start involving us. We all ultimately want the same thing so help us to achieve it. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lamb, would you like to sum up?

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Thank you, Lord Mayor. There have been a number of contributions there and I am not going to deal with them in order particularly.

Councillor Bentley, you quite rightly say every parent wants to go to a good school and that is the ambition, that is what you set out. Sadly, every school is not good and at this moment in time it takes too long to change that where they are not good. Interventions need to be swifter and we would not have this problem for the scale it is if every school was good and every parent was happy to send their child to their nearest school.

Councillor Buckley touched on some important issues. He talked about how – and I think this goes to the heart of this whole problem – some parents in his ward had effectively bought their way, even though they are of modest means, to try and get to a good school and one of the key things that has not been said is the vast majority of those schools that are not good or outstanding are in some of the most deprived communities in the city where parents do not have the choice or the opportunity to try and buy their way to a good school. They have to get what they are given and to me that is not acceptable.

Councillor Lewis, you touched on two issues particularly. You told a story about East Leeds and what happened under the DfE and that it was all going fine until the Government intervened. Of course, what you forgot to mention was that was a Labour Government at the time.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: It was a year ago.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: It was not under the current Government, it was under the Labour Government and then you went on to talk about Fir Tree and I think that has been touched on a couple of times.

I have read all the correspondence and one of the things that is to the great shame of the administration in this whole debate was it is less than a year ago that they were telling the DfE that that site was surplus to requirements, there was no need for a school there and they wanted to sell it. That does not sit with all of the other comments that have been made and it does not strike me as an administration that knew and understood what was going on.

Of course, it is not that long ago, Lord Mayor, that this Authority for a decade was not responsible for any school in this city and the record of Local Authorities when they have had exclusive control of Education is abysmal. It has seen us tumble down the international league tables of education and seen millions of children and generations of children let down and left behind. That is not acceptable and that is why the Government I think do not want to allow Local Authorities carte blanche to open new schools but what is most worrying about what we have heard is the opposition is so fierce to any other form of governance that the administration do not actually understand the rules. They do not realise they do have the power to open new schools. They do have the power to open new schools.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Do not lecture us.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: It is troubling in the extreme that they do not understand that. There are a number of imaginative ways they could approach it and they can be a bidder for free schools, they can be the first person to bid. The crucial thing that needs to happen is for this Authority to start to identify pieces of land to open up the process to anybody who is interested in a school – whether it is going to be us, whether it is going to be a free school, whether it is going to be an academy, the key thing is to find where it is going to be, to identify the areas of need and to identify where we could put a school. That is the starting point, and then to look and work up from there, where is the money coming from, who is the best provider to deliver it. That is how we would approach any other thing but in this case we seem to close our eyes and ears and try and blame anybody else.

We have to deal with the world as it is, not as we would like it to be. There was, sadly, an election a few weeks ago. Thankfully for us the Conservatives won it and there is no sign that they are going to change their policy on schools and it would be far more sensible and in the best interests of children and young people and families in this city if we just accepted the reality of the world, worked together in this place and tried to get the best for all our children and young people. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now going to vote on this. The first vote is the amendment in the name of Councillor Bentley. *(A vote was taken)* I am afraid the amendment is LOST.

The second amendment, in the name of Councillor Yeadon. *(A vote was taken)* The motion is CARRIED.

We are now voting on the substantive motion in the name of Councillor Yeadon. *(A vote was taken)* The motion is CARRIED.

ITEM 15 – WHITE PAPER MOTION - VELODROME

THE LORD MAYOR: Can we move on now to White Paper 15 on the Velodrome. I call upon Councillor Cleasby.

COUNCILLOR CLEASBY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Council, I have placed our White Paper as a move to improve the access to all forms of cycling in our region by all at all levels, hopefully leading to more medals in the future.

Cyclists from across our region have complained to me about the difficulties of accessing and then booking Manchester. These are the adult club cyclists, of course. There are many more youngsters who could benefit from the use of an indoor cycling facility. It would be 24/7/364 capable, unlike our northern outdoor tracks – unusable at times and rarely at night.

Little old Havant in Hampshire has a velodrome with a full programme of training and involvement for the whole community, leading youngsters from twelve years old towards achievement. They also have a programme of other events in the building. Manchester Velodrome, the National Cycling Centre, has this year hosted the Cheerleaders' championships, the indoor rowing championships, beer festivals, Councillor Campbell, I believe, as well as Bradley Wiggins, our record. Derby Velodrome, it has the capacity of 2,500 for cycling events but it has a capacity of 5,000 for concerts and other events.

I hope you see where I am coming from here. A velodrome is simply a name – talk about a building that could be multi-use in our region that could enhance our cycling.

We need partners and let me give you some examples, Council. Durham County Cricket Club needed a stand as they developed their ground. Duncan Bannatyne's company (he of Dragons' fame) stepped in and built the stand in exchange for the ability to build a fitness centre on to it. That is real partnership working, enhancing sport in that area.

Tesco wished to open a superstore close to Twickenham, the home of rugby union. Their partnership allowed the store, but it can only open on match days an hour after the match has ended and that shows true partnership and how it can work and how funding is capable.

Council, I am asking you to consider a partnership not only with our Leeds City Region Councils but with others who have access to funding and a desire to create something of immense use to our communities.

Manchester and Derby are too far away to travel to and from, possibly only for the dedicated and those who can afford to and have booked six months ahead. Otley and Ilkley Cycling Clubs have thousands of members between them. That is just two of

the cycling clubs of our area, two of the clubs of our region. A core of support to make a velodrome in our region viable – now add ambition, imagination and commitment and we would have a facility to be proud of, a facility of enormous use for our city and region.

On Sunday I discussed the idea with Brian Robinson. Brian Robinson, of course, is our famous Tour de France yellow jersey winner. Apparently an indoor velodrome has been his lifelong ambition. He finished by saying, “Could you make it happen in my lifetime?” Thank you, Council, thank you, Lord Mayor. I move my motion.
(*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Campbell to second.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am slightly bemused by Councillor Mulherin’s amendment because it seems to have come out of the current Labour manual which is whatever anybody on the Opposition says, we have to put an amendment in so we can get our own way. (*interruption*) Somebody has woken up! (*laughter*) I will speak more quietly, Lord Mayor.

It is ironic really because when you read this amendment the one thing it does not mention is a velodrome and that is the whole crux of Councillor Cleasby’s resolution. What it does, of course, is fill up a considerable space with inane platitudes, I suppose really is the best word. We all support the Tour de France and good on you, Gary, you should have got your knighthood a good deal sooner than this, in my opinion. If you look at the second paragraph, which is what is the great thing the Council is going to do? It is going to celebrate the fact that the Rugby World Cup in 2015 and the World Triathlon Series in 2016 might get here. Later on it goes on to tell us that Leeds University is thinking about something to do with cycling – that is really interesting, I am glad you know, it was worth waking up for that, wasn’t it?

The problem really, I think with this amendment – the resolution is basically simply saying that we as an Authority should lead on producing a facility for West Yorkshire and our region which is the envy of – why not the envy of the world, because it is about vision, isn’t it? If you think about it, I will tread on a few toes now, if you think about vision, when the Council was run by a different group of Councillors and different parties, we have a vision and it is out there. It is a huge great building which we all went to in May, not for a concert but we all went there, we all enjoyed it and it was part of that vision we had for Leeds that we wanted to make Leeds a city that was important, a city that had a vision for its future.

Here we are, we have got other ideas, we have got other suggestions about how we should go forward. The Labour response? Oh no, we don’t want to do anything dangerous like trying to make Leeds really important or really significant. Let us not do that, let us just celebrate, OK, let us just note, let us actually not do anything at all because if we do we might actually make Leeds a better place. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Can I call upon Councillor Mulherin to move an amendment, please.

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. How do you follow that inspiring vision for the City of Leeds! It is ten years since the Olympics was won for

London and a year since we had the Tour de France in Leeds. The vision for both was to inspire a generation, to leave a real legacy for the country in the London Olympics and Paralympics case, but for Leeds and the Yorkshire region in our case. The Grand Départ in Leeds was a phenomenal success and I would like to add to Councillor Cleasby's congratulations to everyone who made it happen. Sir Gary Verity, of course, was mentioned in the motion – also Councillor Wakefield, Tom Riordan our Chief Executive and officers from across all of the Local Authorities that took part. I would also like to add thanks and congratulations to the tour makers who made it such a success, including Councillor Cleasby himself, Councillor Lowe, and I am sure many others who took part.

We should remember that Yorkshire won more medals in the Olympics and Paralympics than Australia, so we have quite a tradition to be proud of. Leeds is a very ambitious city, Councillor Campbell. We want to be the best city for Health and Wellbeing and the most active big city in the UK. We want more international sporting events as they have many positive effects, e.g. increasing the physical activity rate in the city with the health benefits that that brings, that it is good for the economy and that it will inspire young people. We have demonstrated that ambition by securing the Rugby World Cup later this year and by securing the World Triathlon series in 2016.

If you overlap a map of the health inequality in Leeds with a map of the areas of physical inactivity you would see very little difference. There is about 40% of the population in Leeds who currently do not take part in any physical activity at all. We need to ensure that we actually increase participation rates across the city and that should be our burning ambition and our legacy for the city.

In terms of building on the Tour de France legacy for cycling in Leeds, the university are in active discussions with British Cycling about their own proposal for cycling facilities which we are keen to support. I am just going to read – it is at a sensitive stage with the university's discussions with British Cycling but what I am allowed to say is that they are in advanced discussions with British Cycling and partners, including ourselves, to build a one-and-a-half kilometre closed road cycle circuit at the University that would serve the whole of the Yorkshire region and the facility would serve the needs of the university, elite athletes and the wider Leeds community. That is something to be warmly welcomed and I am hoping that Councillor Cleasby and his friends in the cycling fraternity would welcome that too.

I think it is important, we are talking about Sport Leeds Board and the partners that we have in the city to acknowledge the importance of partnership working. It is only through working with partners like the universities with the health sector and others that we can secure such facilities. We know that we cannot afford to build new facilities on our own. We have since 2010 seen funding of Local Authorities to sport cut by £400m nationally and we expect more to come. That cut in Leeds was about £6m. That is no way to build on the legacy of the Tour de France or the Olympics and the Government, whilst it says it wants to encourage sport, is clearly doing the opposite in cutting that funding.

We are doing lots of good things in Leeds, I am sure both Councillor Harington and Councillor Lewis will be picking those up, building on events like the Sky Ride, building on the Bike Hub in Councillor Harington's own ward and plans to get grants to communities to have bike libraries. Any real legacy will be to increase and

broaden participation in cycling, inspiring a generation to cycle both for fun and a healthy, active lifestyle. I recommend the amendment to you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: I do understand that Brian feels very strongly on this and his comments were absolutely heartfelt. However, I have to take issue with Colin Campbell's sour comments. Let us be honest, when other people were in charge of this Council Andrew Carter delivered the arena, not the Liberal Democrats. Let us be straight about that, shall we? *(Applause)* Let us think before that, Brian Walker delivered the Millennium Square which I think was against a huge amount of opposition from other parties but it was a huge achievement. Look at the achievements we have come up with in the few years that we have been in control. You have a look at Victoria Gate, John Lewis, massive change to the city. *(Applause)* We are actually saving the city from flooding and nobody else has achieved that. We are actually modernising the market, which nobody has managed to do for about 50 years. We are rolling out our ambitious plans on the South Bank to regenerate that whole area. Sovereign Square, we have got Grade A office buildings on Sovereign Square where we have not had any for ten years and you talk about oh well, we have not achieved anything. Colin, just have a look around the city and you will see plenty going on. Perhaps you ought to take a walk, take your group with you. *(Applause)*

To get back to the serious bit that Brian raised, I think Brian is saying something absolutely heartfelt, he has talked to cyclists, but we do have to think about how that crosses with other ambitions that have been found for the city. We do have to work with partners and it would be crazy if we had two competing bids for similar facilities, because it ain't going to happen, let us be honest. It is not going to work.

Velodromes are expensive and you always have to balance ambition with cost, running costs and all the rest and you have to really do your sums to make sure that you have got something that works. Then you get Colin talking about we are doing this for West Yorkshire. Do you think they want it necessarily in Leeds, because I do not think they will. They will happily have it in Wakefield or Bradford or somewhere.

On the cycling side we are doing a huge amount and that is up and about basic stuff. As I came in today I passed the kids at the end of my street doing the cycle training. That in many ways is to me far more impressive than any of the concrete things that we do. Look at what we have rolled out in terms of the cycling superhighway, the cycling network that we have got, the continuing work that you will see going on on that over the coming years. We are making a difference in cycling, we are getting a lot of people on bikes and that is something that we have not seen in this city for decades. That is a real achievement and that you should be praising, not being miserable about. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Wilford.

COUNCILLOR WILFORD: Thank you very much, Lord Mayor. Follow that! The principle of having a velodrome is a great idea. I suppose the only thing we worry about is affordability and sustainability. Is it appropriate in these current financial times?

We would like to build on the success of the Tour de France and Tour de Yorkshire but we think that perhaps the amendment would best serve, in our opinion, to developing sport and cycling in the city. We also agree about healthy lifestyles as well, so, yes, we are all for it I think. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Anderson.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. The more observant amongst you will notice I am not Cohen. I arrived in the Chamber this afternoon and Councillor Cohen says, "I am going early, can you do the pro cycling bit?" Me?

That said, nobody, certainly north of the border, can be prouder than seeing Sir Chris Hoy in the record cycling that he did and the joy that he brought to all of us certainly in Scotland but most importantly probably throughout the whole of the United Kingdom in terms of what he has done. Also, the other day at the Local Government Conference the Chief Executive and I happened to be in the same room at the same time when Sir Gary Verity was explaining to Councils throughout the country the success we had with Yorkshire Forward and the videos were absolutely fantastic, the response from the Councillors present was excellent and so as a city we should congratulate ourselves on what we have done in terms of cycling and the partnerships that we had with various Local Authorities in terms of what we have been doing. *(Applause)*

To return back to the motion, you can tell the Liberal Democrats are back in Opposition again because they come up with uncostered proposals yet again and are trying to be more left wing than you are in order to try and get some of the votes back again because they are back on the harebrained variety now. If they had costed this out, fine.

The Labour amendment as well, there is no mention of the City Region in this and there is no mention of West Yorkshire in it. Bearing in mind the debate we had earlier on about trying to work together, I just think it might have been better to have kept that in because in my view one of the major mistakes we made as a city when it came to Supertram was we tried to keep everything to ourselves and if we had opened it up to other Authorities nearby we might have been able to be successful at the time, so if we had really believed in working with our neighbouring Authorities it might have been better to keep that in.

What is the demand for usage going to be, bearing in mind that our noisy friends from across the Pennines have already got one of these centres? Is there enough demand to actually meet it in terms of what we are doing?

To come back to my friends the Liberal Democrats, this is again another perfect example of the Lib Dems wanting to go round and round and round and get nowhere. *(laughter)* It was Councillor Cohen's joke I had to try and fit in! Seriously though, it will be interesting to see what the report actually brings forward. We as a group are actually open minded about this, that we are quite happy, believe it or not, despite what I have just said, to support the Labour amendment on this occasion because we think it is the better way of taking the city forward in terms of trying to do things, so with that I support the amendment on behalf of the Conservatives. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Harington.

COUNCILLOR HARINGTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. One of the key words, of course, in the motion is the word “legacy”. Certainly, as Councillor Cleasby knows, I am as passionate about cycling competitively as he is but in 20 years’ time, say, when we look back, if we are still alive, what would we like to see? Actually I would hope there is still a Tour de Yorkshire but what I would most of all like to see is more people on bikes in the city and for me that is the absolute key thing that we have to be working towards. I do not think that is in contradiction to having a velodrome but you will notice that in the paper it says that the paper will come to the Exec Board to see how we can develop cycling, so it is not necessarily in contradiction.

Nothing is going to happen in terms of more people on bikes unless we do it more safely and, as you know, we are on with that. We have got the Cycle Ambition Track One, we have got Cycle Ambition Two which will be improving the tracks coming into the city from the south out towards perhaps not quite as far as Morley but coming in from that direction, and also tracks coming in from the north through the Sheepscar direction so that the access to the city is improved. In terms of relationships with other Authorities, Barry, of course we are working with Bradford in order to improve the Cycle Ambitions Track but also we are in constant contact with other cities – maybe the next one will be from here to Wakefield so I can assure you that that is happening.

The new tracks are only a start. There has got to be a cycle network over the whole city and even that will not be any different if at the same time we do not have access to cheaper bikes, all sorts of schemes to do up bikes so that they can be available either free or as loans. As Richard said we have a scheme in our ward opened by Sir Gary, as it happens, last week, as a bike library at the Fearnville Centre. The Works Skatepark in Hunslet is another example and we are trying to do a deal with children looked after so that they can have access to a bike.

There is a whole heap of things as you probably know that are happening in the city just to encourage people to get on bikes. The Sky Ride this year is estimated to involve around 7,000 people but it is not just that one-off event; there are Sky Rides all over the city during the year, at least 30 other Sky Rides. There is the Bikeability events in schools. Last academic year nearly 6,000 sessions organised, this year it is up to 8,000, special projects run by British Cycling to target the people who most often are not on bikes at the moment, namely children and people with disabilities and BAME communities. Also projects with Sport England to link up schools with clubs.

Two bylaws have been relaxed in parks and if that goes well then we hope we can extend that and increase the 20 mph limits. Increasingly good relations with Sustrans cycle touring club, British Cycling, Sport England and also I hope with cycling campaigners. I chair the Cycle Forum, obviously campaigners exist to complain so it is not always easy but I hope that they feel that the relationship with the Council, their opportunity to engage with Council officers so what we call cycle proofing can happen, so that when something is designed cyclists do not come in at the end when it is finished but they can come earlier on.

Driving all this is the newly funded partnership board, Cycling Partnership Board, which means officers from all the key Departments at senior level, Public Health, Children’s Services, Highways, Culture and Sport, representative from campaigners, we do not want the Board to be too big, we have not got an exact composition sorted

yet but anyone who is not on it, whether it be a Councillor or a campaigner who thinks they ought to be on it, then our key task obviously is to engage properly so people can contribute to the vital decision making.

We have got a draft plan, the basic plan obviously is to increase the number of people who get on bikes, and a whole series of workstreams to try and make the things that I have already listed develop even further.

There will need to be a short term plan but also what we can do, and we are on with a lot of it already, in five years and then in ten years, 20 years and that is right at the heart of what sort of city do we want to have, not just about bikes but how green do we want our city (I am just coming to the end). It is not just about the bike, it is what sort of city do we really want to have and how are we going to get there. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Castle.

COUNCILLOR CASTLE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Like thousands of people I turned out on 5th July last year to watch the Tour de France passing through our city and felt very proud. I returned home to watch the race on TV and felt well pleased that both our fantastic city and our beautiful county were being displayed to the rest of the world in such a positive way.

Over the past year the city has been building on the legacy of the Tour de France and previous speakers have outlined the many initiatives. There is no doubt that the Tour de France has encouraged more people to take up cycling. Certainly over the past year I have seen a huge increase in the number of people cycling in the country lanes in my ward. The up side of the interest in cycling is that there is no doubt that cycling is a healthy form of exercise and a sustainable form of transport. The down side is that cycling is not a safe form of transport at present. Two cyclists have been killed every week on the roads of this country since Christmas. Apart from the Superhighway, the funding that is available is being spent on encouraging people to cycle and in developing local talent, which is absolutely brilliant, but the more cyclists on our roads then the greater the need to make cycling safer.

There is a former railway line linking Wetherby to Cross Gates via Scholes and Thorner. Groups have been set up in both those villages with the aim of turning the railway track into a cycleway and I have had meetings with Sustrans along with representatives of the Scholes and Thorner Groups and I believe that the groups are not asking for something that is impossible. Group members have even volunteered to clear the overgrown vegetation themselves.

Unfortunately the part of the track that runs through Bardsey now has houses built on it so there is no likelihood of Councillor John Procter donning Lycra and cycling down to the Civic Hall...

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: What a relief!

COUNCILLOR CASTLE: ...but I would like to think that at some point in the future it might be possible for me to set off from Thorner on the cycle track, pick up Councillor Walker in Scholes, meet up with Paulene Grahame in Cross Gates (as long as she does not wear her killer heels) and all cycle down to the Civic Hall together. I

believe that residents of Garforth are in the process of starting up a group too, so we may be joined by Councillor Dobson.

Let us continue to build on the success of last year's Tour de France but also make Leeds a safer city for cyclists. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Cleasby to sum up.

COUNCILLOR CLEASBY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. First a few quotes from social media, Lord Mayor. David John Burkinshaw: "Yeah man, go for it. Let's not rest on our laurels. Keep building, let's make it capital of the north." B Girdley: "I tried to book a session at the Manchester velodrome and it is fully booked months and is one of the busiest in the world. Of course we should have one and it will make not lose or waste money." Darren Moody: "Let's have it. Some of the brightest cycling talent in the Under 16 category is from Yorkshire. Give these kids a chance to be great." Zac Berriclough: "Yes, our city needs to have a full offer. We are somewhat behind Manchester and even Sheffield sports-wise. I think we are getting hockey near Leeds ground so yes get it done and before some people complain about the money" – looking at Barry – "if our city doesn't have it it means we become a less significant city in the country. We also end up 20 years behind our rivals. For example, the arena, which is great, but which we followed by folk that already had theirs." Just some examples or comments since the Yorkshire Evening Post printed my press release.

Lisa, Roger, you referred to the university in your piece. I am hoping that this document that me and my researcher have managed to pull off their website is not the document you are referring to, which is the University of Leeds Strategy for Sport and Physical Activity 2014-2018. We have managed to find a reference to cycling, Lord Mayor, thankfully. It is the word "cycling" on that page *there*, just below "travel", next to "walking and jogging". That is the entire reference in this document to cycling. University document.

Council, every time we log on to the Council computer system we see a page, I quote, "Our ambition is to be the best Council and the best city in the UK." Well, after today's display of lack of ambition by this Executive and by other Members of the Opposition, they are very hollow words indeed. After today's lack of interest by the Executive it is also an insult to our City Region partners. I hope you will consider and before you vote read my motion. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: I am going to call for the vote. Vote on the amendment in the name of Councillor Mulherin. (*A vote was taken*) The motion is CARRIED.

Now we will vote on the substantive motion in the name of Councillor Mulherin. (*A vote was taken*) The motion is CARRIED.

ITEM 16 – WHITE PAPER MOTION - ECONOMIC SUCCESS IN THE CITY

THE LORD MAYOR: We go on to the final White Paper, Economic Success in the City, to be proposed by Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Fancy calling the Council that delivered the Tour de France a Council that is lacking in ambition. *(Applause)* Good heavens. Isn't this just the problem that we have got, we all should be coming together to celebrate the successes of Leeds.

We are ambitious for Leeds, we have delivered a huge amount and you have heard some fantastic examples today, I might repeat some of them they are so good. Do you know what, we need to come together to actually work out how we can tell the story of Leeds is and do it loud and do it more, and do let's repeat ourselves.

Let us look at the economy. Fastest year on year private sector jobs growth in any city in England; the highest proportion of knowledge intensive jobs in the North; the largest concentration of data scientists in any UK city outside London; and something hardly known, the third largest manufacturing sector in the UK; the second highest number of scaled-up businesses outside of London.

Let us just build that up to the Leeds City Region and we are sitting on an economic output of £56bn, larger than Wales, with a population of three million and one-and-a-half million workforce. I think we need to think about the astonishing impact of the Tour de France in financial benefit. £17m for Leeds, £102m for wider Yorkshire and all the sporting events that we have had listed earlier. On top of that we have got the British Art Show coming in October and, of course, the bid for the European Capital of Culture that is bringing everyone together to talk about what we do. Yes, Trinity, Victoria Gate, on the back of these 4,000 new jobs in the city centre but do not forget out in the outer areas Kirkstall Forge and for us in South Leeds the White Rose extension, Thorpe Park and also that Google chose to open the first Google Garage outside of California in Leeds.

We have supported 4,600 unemployed into work and improved 14,600 skills for residents. We do have a great deal to celebrate but against all of this we know that too many people in this city of ours are not able to benefit from all the great things that we are doing in the city. If you look at in-work poverty, we have talked about this a great deal today, over 70,000 workers earning less than the minimum wage and the point that Councillor Anderson earlier mentioned about the ageing population, how can we progress the Better Lives Programme.

19% of neighbourhoods in Leeds are in the top 10% of the most deprived neighbourhoods in the country and we have an estimated 160,000 people living in poverty, 64% of children in poverty living in a household with at least one member in work. You know, we have talked about this earlier today and a theme running through Council that we are committed to the Low Pay Charter, we have signed UNISON's Ethical Care Charter, the first Authority in the country and other cities are coming to Leeds to find out how we have managed to do this. We are a key supporter of Leeds Credit Union.

Tackling inequality must remain our top priority in this country. While celebrating everything that we are doing to support strong growth in the city, we need to address inequalities by investment in health, employment initiatives and our educational outcomes. The widening income gap we know is bad for growth and it is down to us working as a City Council to pull everyone together to deliver the benefits we need for the people of Leeds. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lewis to second.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. One of the privileges of my, I suppose, slightly changed portfolio has always been to visit businesses, factories, building sites and the like to see what is going on and to talk to employers and anybody who is about. One thing that shows you is how the city is booming. I was out at Thorpe Park only yesterday where the civils have started again, they are digging big holes in the ground, digging out coal to take to Drax and the infrastructure is starting that will eventually provide the East Leeds Orbital Road. Every week I have an opportunity to go somewhere and see good things happening, often on the Enterprise Zone and you see a month after going and seeing one factory you go back and you realise there is another one appeared next door to it. The speed of change is incredible.

It is not just about the new stuff that is happening. I also get the chance to go and visit small firms, medium sized firms. People are always interested, you would be surprised, people are not interested in seeing us here but they quite like seeing us out there. When I do talk to firms, one of the things I do get back is quite heartening because we obsess about those parts of the city that have missed out on prosperity and those people in all parts of the city who have missed out on that prosperity through lack of education, through lack of opportunity and all the rest.

Many of the firms I talk to absolutely get what we are trying to do. They understand our aspirations to pay people a living wage. Many of them already do it. They are ahead of us. They understand when we start talking about ensuring that anybody who they employ gets training all through their career and that they need to nurture their staff. They understand when we talk about the value of local employment in a sustainable way, how that sustains communities, how it brings benefits. They understand that there is a win-win on many of the things that we talk about.

I have been very heartened that when I recently did an event on Corporate Social Responsibility, which is a horrible title, the businesses I was talking to were way ahead of us in saying, "Yes, we need to do make sure that we are not just taking on people who have been through university, we need to use every member of our staff, we need to get full value out of them." It is the lesson that I think we probably learned 20 or 30 years ago when equal ops was kind of in its infancy, when we got hammered and told "Look, if you do not ensure that everybody has a chance of getting that job, how do you know you are being fair, how do you know that you are getting the best person for that job?" They have learned those lessons.

I think what we have got is a position where now I think it is largely due to Keith's leadership, I will be honest, we have got a good reputation out there in the city. People are willing to listen to us and they actually see our leadership as being important. It is not about how much money we can spend, it is not about how we can do favours or make things happen. They actually see us as having a useful role and as raising the level of the debate and they have their asks of us but we have our asks of them. I think what Judith is articulating is very much how we, when we cannot do the things we used to do, which was often about spending money, it was often about trying to benefit people through the back door, we can do other things but that is through using our influence and our leadership within the city to actually change the kind of city that we have and bring benefits to all our communities for everybody in

the city to make sure they get some opportunities out of the prosperity that there is in the city. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Yeadon.

COUNCILLOR YEADON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. As Councillor Smart outlined earlier in the meeting, children, young people and families have a pivotal in Leeds Growth strategy. This administration is determined that all members of our community should benefit from Leeds as a vibrant, strong and economically resilient city. We have ambition but we also have compassion.

However, we know that for some children and young people in Leeds poverty is still very much part of everyday life. Austerity and inequitable growth in the economy have hit many families hard. Currently 30,000 children in Leeds are living in poverty – that is 30,000 children who from birth are already fighting a disadvantage in life, a disadvantage that impacts on their health outcomes, academic attainment and career prospects; 30,000 children who would not recognise that the economy of the country is in recovery; and 30,000 children who may not see their future as bright. However, as a Local Authority it is our role to give them that bright future.

This is the fourth successive year that the number of children living in households with an income below 50% of the UK average has risen. Significantly, the last time this figure fell was under a Labour Government. The situation nationally is appalling and the figures for Leeds also show the devastating impact of Government policy with 6,680 lone parents who are out of work and claiming benefits, 61% increase in the last year in the use of food banks in Yorkshire and the Humber and £7.2m spent by the Council in providing discretionary housing payments or emergency support to families since 2013; over 38,000 households living in fuel poverty.

We are also seeing an increase in the number of children living in what is termed in-work poverty, busting the myth that only people who are unemployed are impacted by poverty.

However, the Government has recognised that they will fail to hit their own targets and until recently the legally binding target to eradicate child poverty by 2020. The Government has now gone one step further and redefined the terms. It now rests on a much more judgmental measure including indicators such as family breakdown, debt and addiction and suggesting that these indicators are not caused by poverty but are the cause of poverty themselves, further stigmatising groups such as single parents families and deflecting attention from the real issues of the devastating impact of welfare reform and low paid jobs.

However, if we ask the 30,000 children in Leeds what poverty means to them they will probably not look to Government definitions. For them poverty is a reality and changing the goalposts will not change this.

I am proud to support this White Paper. Compassion is what has sadly been lacking in Government policy and we have a duty to the people of Leeds to demonstrate that our actions continue to be led by their needs. We have demonstrated and continue to demonstrate our compassion through our Citizens @ Leeds programme. The programme is developed to help address the challenge faced to help us tackle poverty and deprivation across the city.

Over the past twelve months we have tackled high cost lenders, low pay, increased and improved Credit Union services, provided emergency support, tackled food poverty and used discretionary housing support to help people stay in their homes. Over the next five years we aim to achieve a number of high level outcomes, all of which are designed to help the most vulnerable households and families live better lives in the face of ongoing savage cuts from Government. We have a caring and compassionate plan that will guarantee the future of Leeds by ensuring this generation of children and young people are not abandoned to a lifetime of poverty and deprivation. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I want to speak in favour of the White Paper moved by Councillor Blake and particularly talk about the work we can do as a Council, we can do in the city, on tackling low pay and improving employment.

Tackling low pay is incredibly important but also making sure people are not just getting a fair day's pay but they are also in a good job that has security and has opportunities for training and development, so people who are in low pay can progress out of that position if they want to. Some people might choose, if they have got family commitments, caring commitments, whatever, to work in jobs with limited hours and low pay but some people might be in those jobs because they simply do not have the option or do not think they have the option to move on. We need to make sure as an employer we give all our employees that option and we need to do some of the work that Richard talked about, which is making sure that employers in the city, those that cover the 85% of the workforce that are not in the public sector, are also doing the same. That is how we can improve employment, that is how we can improve people's chances in the city.

I think looking at low pay in particular, it is one of those issues that not only affects lots of people in Leeds but when you look around the country, it is one of those issues where, as always, there is a massive North-South divide. Only one in ten workers in London is classified as low paid, whereas you come up to the North of England and many parts of the North of England, that is up to one in four employees can be low paid. That is why we need to do a fundamental piece of work we are doing with the LEP, with the Combined Authority, with partners on our economy to make sure we are getting people into those good and better jobs.

Again, it is awful looking at how people work and where people are low paid. 50% of people in part-time work are earning below the living wage but I think even more shockingly 20% of people in full-time work are in that position. That is something that we have got to tackle if we want to improve people's lives and people's chances and people's environments in this city.

What can we do about it as a Council? I think as a Council we can do a number of things. We can use our influence as leaders in the city and through not only the people employed but the work we commission to take a direction on that way. We can try and work with our private sector partners, our voluntary sector partners in the city to try and encourage good practice around pay and jobs. We can also work again in the wider sense about who we are working to attract to the city, are we attracting

the right trainers, do we have good universities, do we have good colleges and make sure the infrastructure is there to attract employers and good jobs to the city. That is what we can do as a Council, that is the leadership we can show.

We have already shown some of the things that can be done, people have talked about UNISON's Ethical Care Charter so people working in the care sector in the city, whether they are working for us or our contractors, are not going to be on exploitative zero hour contracts and are going to be paid the living wage.

We have shown by supporting the Credit Union we can give people who need access to financial products their products and do not force them into the arms of the pay day lenders or loan sharks. We are committed as a Council that we will, as an employer, deliver the living wage and we know there are a hundred or so other employers in the city will do so and I am sure there are more who can.

There are some things we cannot do and some things we do need to make sure are addressed over the next five years. We cannot as a City Council change the minimum wage in this city and I am sure we will be hearing about whatever warm words the Government have made today about the minimum wage, but let us not forget, I know there are 19 people in Leeds who believe every word George Osborne says – they are all sat in the Council Chamber today – but we have heard these promises before from the Government. Remember last time the Government were under pressure over low pay they said that the minimum wage would be over £7 in 2015. We are half way through 2015 and it is still £6.50. As we have seen with other infrastructure projects, sometimes it is better to see what the Government does, not what it says it will do.

I think we can all agree about what are the key things we need to do to tackle this, what we can do as a Council and we have set out as an administration what we will do but we need the rest of the city with us and we need a Government to take low pay seriously, not just bring up warm words because they are under pressure but actually move to raise the minimum wage so it is a proper living wage and people are taking home a fair day's pay. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. There is lots and lots of really good stuff in this motion but the fact of the matter is we have been here before, over and over under different administrations, under different Governments. Even going back before the recession before the sub-prime situation, we were having problems of getting things to trickle down to parts of our community.

Everything within that I can support but what we need to do is we need to deliver and find ways of delivering and up to now we have not been successful in that.

We are going to support the motion but we want to see some delivery. If we can get some delivery, you have got our support. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Carter.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Yes, my Lord Mayor. I should thank Councillor Blake, the two Councillor Lewises, I think, for doing my job for me and spelling out what the success of the last five years of the Government has brought to

this country. *(interruption)* Does anybody seriously believe that Leeds City Council, virtually on its own, apparently, has engendered some sort economic miracle within the city of Leeds and nowhere else? My Lord Mayor, the reason Leeds is doing so exceptionally well is that it has a broad based economy that reacts positively to a stable and prosperous national economy and the simple fact is that this country has come out of recession remarkably quickly *(interruption)* – go and visit your mates in France – remarkably quickly and remarkably successfully. Only people like Councillor Truswell, locked in a 1970's timewarp...

COUNCILLOR TRUSWELL: I wish I was!

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: ...could possibly have made the speech he made a little earlier today. The city is doing well and I am extremely proud of that and actually the City Council has behaved extremely responsibly and has encouraged business. It has, but please, please, do not go away deluding yourselves again that somehow you lot have created an economic miracle.

Let me remind you that only five years ago there every crane in the city came down, unemployment rocketed, school standards were all over the place and, by the way, Councillor Truswell, when you were a Member of Parliament, you sat in Parliament between 1997 and 2010 and left office with child poverty worse than when you went in. That is what your Government's record was...

COUNCILLOR TRUSWELL: And the economy growing by 2%.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: ...so you talk about nasty – how about hypocritical.

My Lord Mayor, what worries me is that this lot over here still have not smelled the coffee, still have not faced reality and the fact is you lost the General Election three weeks ago – I give you a prediction *(interruption)* like the one I gave you about five years ago, that you would lose the General Election in May, you will lose the next one in five years' time. Nothing surer, you will lose the next one so start working with the Government, start working on devolution. If you really want to deliver some of these things that are in here, you will have to work in partnership with a Government you are going to have to get used to. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Procter.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I have to say, this is one of the strangest White Paper Motions I think I have ever seen, actually.

COUNCILLOR LYONS: You have not been here long. *(laughter)*

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Councillor Lyons shouts out I have not been here long – I have been here a damn sight longer than most of the Members over there, that is for sure.

Anyway, Lord Mayor, what this says very clearly is we want economic success as a Council, as an administration, and we want employers but we want them on our terms. That is what this White Paper clearly says.

The reality is, and I accept that Members opposite might not know many employers (*interruption*) but the reality is that 90% of all employers and business in this city get on with their everyday life, get on with business without ever knowing understanding or having any care whatsoever about Leeds City Council or its actions.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: That is not fair.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: That is not true.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: That is true because whilst many of the Labour Members of the administration thinks the world revolves around this Council, it does not. Business does not revolve around this Council. It actually feels in my view, this is my experience of employers I speak to, that this Council hinders what they are trying to do, it does not help, and I hear “No, no, no” so here is a challenge for you then, here is a very simple challenge and I am sure the Economic Development Unit of this Council can get on with this straightaway. All you need to do is write out to employers and ask them two very simple questions – “Do you think Leeds City Council has helped your continued business in this city? Yes or No.”

COUNCILLOR: Yes.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: You are not an employer, are you? The second question seems to clearly be, “Has Leeds city Council done anything to help you employ any more people?”

COUNCILLOR: Yes.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Because those are the two elements that are key here. I can understand part of the sentiment that is here in this White Paper Motion but it is interesting that the two people who both say “yes” and “yes” have not been employers at all in their lives and do not connect with all of the mass numbers of people who are employers.

Again, here is an offer for anybody who wants to take me up on it. Anybody who wants to come and meet a diverse range of employers only needs to call into the Bingley Arms public house in Bardsey (free publicity!)...

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: That is not where they all live.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: ... on a Thursday evening, I will buy anyone a pint or a drink of their choice who is a Member of Council who chooses to come so you can actually see a diverse group of real employers, real employers who face problems on a day to day basis employing people in this city things that you never know about, never want to understand, never want to know.

Lord Mayor, this is a White Paper Motion – I hope you will add some time for me, Lord Mayor, for the abuse I am having to put up with opposite – here is a typical White Paper Motion that started life no doubt in the hands of officers and was tampered around with by politicians because to the end of this motion it gets very confusing indeed.

“Mindful Employer’s Initiative” – some may know what that is, I cannot find any reference to it anywhere – “fully meeting planning process obligations” – that is the point of a planning process, isn’t it? – “for community infrastructure and providing affordable housing.” The only reason why developers do not provide affordable housing, I am not quite sure that is the business of the employers but the only reason why affordable housing is not implemented fully in this city is because Labour Members vote to let the developers off the hook. *(Applause)*

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: We should think ourselves lucky it is not cast in stone, this.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. It is never good to follow John Procter! I have to say, for about 70% of his speech I actually agreed with him.

I do not know what you intended to achieve through this White Paper Motion. I assume Councillor Blake wants to set her vision in that she knows she is the Leader of a very successful city but she also has to recognise that within that city there are inequalities. It is the “so what” bit at the end that is really the problem. The problem is also exemplified by the different speeches that we have had from different parts of your Cabinet because actually your speech was very rounded and it was very encouraging, it said we need to work in partnership, business is really essential, thanks very much. He then went on to mention some of the areas that you are tasking Tom Riordan to solve. Let us put it this way, he has got to come back with a paper that is going to solve the living wage – well, he might have been superseded today in the Budget, for some – he has got to reduce tax avoidance in the corporate sector – I was not sure that we were actually able to have any influence on that personally on the Council – our local businesses are supposed to support local schools and employment initiatives. Do you know what, I think they do that quite well and I think that is down to a lot of the work that took place under Councillor Yeadon and other Members, Sue Wynne as an officer, in terms of getting local businesses involved in delivering apprenticeships.

The big problem, actually, in that area and was actually admitted by Councillor Yeadon is that this Council needs to provide the basic education so that those young people can access those apprenticeship opportunities that our local businesses are providing, and unfortunately too many of our young people are entering that jobs market and they are not able to access those apprenticeships.

You are right, it is your responsibility which is why I could not understand the conclusion in the last paragraph in terms of every inequality in this city is down to the private sector. Do you know what, I am glad the private sector are not listening to this because they are not interested in this debate because if they actually saw what that said there, it is an exemplary of predator capitalism which is the old Ed Miliband rubbish that did not win you the election. You should not be carrying it on just because you won the local election. *(interruption)*

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: 58 becomes eight.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Have you counted how many you have got locally?

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Councillor Lewis pointed it out, Councillor Lewis admitted, he said our privates sector partners are well ahead of us in so much. Do you know what, they are. They are well ahead of us in delivering the living wage, they are well ahead of us in delivering diversity within their workforce, there are more private sector operators that fulfil the Stonewall Index – we have actually fallen down as a Council.

In terms of accessibility for disabled people, do you know what, the private sector is much better than we are in making sure that their facilities are actually amenable to the disabled. We should not be hectoring and preaching to them. Please do not send Tom Riordan off on an impossible task to try and sort out these predator capitalists...

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Put him on a bike to do it!

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: ...which actually do not exist in our city very much. The only ones that we really should be tackling are those volume house builders that are not delivering the affordable housing. The way that you do that is by encouraging local areas to take more decisions for themselves. The more places that have Neighbourhood Plans they can actually put restrictions in that stop the business model that these big volume builders depend upon and you should be doing more about that and encouraging that, more about encouraging your local Members, as mentioned before, to talk to their local businesses and get jobs locally. *(Applause)*

COUNCILLOR R GRAHAME: Tell them about Yorkshire Forward, Tom. Tell them about what they did to Yorkshire Forward. They took the money away from Yorkshire Forward.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Put your name down to speak.

THE LORD MAYOR: OK, please. Can I call on Councillor Campbell.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: I was cut to the quick by Councillor Lewis earlier who described me as “sour” but I have risen above it and so I am standing now. Can I just start by, it was remiss of me earlier, not congratulating Councillor Blake as being promoted to Leader of the Council. It is always nice when one of your constituents gets ahead *(laughter)* and I think she is an example.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Campbell, could you speak up a bit because I cannot hear you. *(laughter)* I am being absolutely serious.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: We know you are, we cannot hear him at all.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: I assume I am getting a couple of extra minutes for this, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: You can have ten seconds.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Ten minutes, right, that is fine! I will repeat it again because it is a true self-evident that we all like to see our constituents do well and therefore I would like to congratulate Councillor Blake on her promotion, her elevation, if that is the right word, to the Leadership of the Council.

I thought actually when we started and Councillor Blake got up we were going to have something – I do not know what happened at the tea break, I thought something had gone in the tea and you suddenly got up and you were being positive because you were being positive about the city and saying how well the city is doing, and the city is doing well, let's face it, it is. Business is booming, people are in employment, house prices are rising which might be a problem, everybody seems to be getting on a little bit better.

Judith said that and it was a very positive statement. Even Richard was quite positive about the way the city is going and then the new kids on the block collapsed back into let us have a go at the Government, we have said all the positive things that are around, let us have a go at the Government.

It worries me that we end up in a situation where we have got a resolution here that appears to be a bit of mum and apple pie but a lot of stuff that I think you said, David, that I thought we were doing. I suppose I ought to rise to the defence of the previous Leader of Council, Councillor Wakefield, because on the second paragraph it says, “all communities in our diverse city to share in the benefits of the city's economic growth.” I thought Keith was actually quite on board for that and to be honest I thought we had all supported that, we were all doing it, but apparently new group taking over, looked at the books, apparently we were not doing that. I am surprised.

The other thing is, the third paragraph, “work to transform Leeds into a compassionate, caring city where all its residents benefit from the effects of the city's economic growth.” Again, I seem to recall that we were doing that, or I thought we were because everybody on this side thought we were and everybody on this side were trying their best to do it and I am sure Keith and his team were doing that as well.

The third thing, we get to, “The Council therefore calls on the Chief Executive to bring forward a ... report on a strategy to enable elected Members on behalf of Leeds City Council to work with businesses and organisations...” Everybody on this side does and did. I am assuming that that must mean that the people on that side did not and now have to be told that they have to do.

Again I was slightly mesmerised by the last part of that and Tom Riordan, you have got my support if you can do any of those things. It is a sad reflection, really, on the Labour administration about their vision for Leeds that – I thought you would give me a couple more minutes, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I said I would give you ten seconds. Could you just complete this sentence, please.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Thank you, Lord Mayor. It is a sad reflection on the Labour administration that they are in fact rehashing a vision for Leeds and can I say thank you to Councillor Procter for his offer of a free drink. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Can I ask Councillor Blake to sum up please.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Sorry, can't you turn my mic off again! *(laughter and applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Can I tell you something funny before you start?

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: If you add the time.

THE LORD MAYOR: Yes, you can have some extra time. They went out and they have just been a switched Councillor Campbell's mic up so I can hear him!

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Let us just sum up the last few contributions. We have had a lecture from Councillor Golton on how to end up with more Lib Dem Councillors on Leeds City Council than sitting on the green benches in Westminster. Hurrah! *(Applause)* A lesson from ambition from Councillor Campbell. There you go. Councillor Carter proving that the Tories make time go backwards.

Do you know, on a serious note, their response, seriously, on behalf of all the people that we have been talking about today shows why they are Tories (I am disappointed in the Lib Dems' response but why they are Tories) why we are Labour and why we as this administration will continue to stand up for the most vulnerable people in the city. *(Applause)*

What they failed to comment on all the way through this is how much better the economy would be performing in this city if we had equality. It is inequality that holds so many people back, it is inequality that stops the city from moving forward.

I am talking about the IMF study that has proved and is coming out and talking about across the country, across Europe, that the widening income gap between rich and poor is bad for growth, that trickle down does not work. "If Government want" – and I am quoting here – "to increase the pace of growth they should concentrate on helping the poorest 20% of their citizens" and have we seen the Tories' response to this evidence in their Budget statement today. I think we should despair of what they are saying.

We know that people are struggling with the technological progress that is happening. There are people who are being left behind. Weak trade unions, globalisations and tax policies that favour the better off are all playing their part in widening inequality, an issue that they say is the defining challenge of our times. You heard what they think about that and how little they care about the people in this city who are not benefiting from the success that we have managed to achieve here.

Andrew always tends to forget that he was running the city until 2010. Let us remind him continually of what they did then.

We have demonstrated that we are a caring Council, we have demonstrated this time and time again. It is now time to galvanize the whole city, all of our partners, to prove that we can match the strong economy that we have got by a commitment to ensure that as we move forward developing our city as safe and inclusive, welcoming and compassionate, meaning that all of our residents can benefit from everything that the great city of Leeds has to offer. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: I will now call for a vote on the motion.

COUNCILLOR: Then we can all go to this pub where John's buying! *(laughter)*

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Tomorrow.

THE LORD MAYOR: All those in favour. *(A vote was taken)* The motion is CARRIED.

Thank you for attending and have a safe journey home.

(The meeting closed at 7.20 pm)