

VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF LEEDS CITY COUNCIL
ANNUAL MEETING ON MONDAY, 28TH JUNE 2004

THE LORD MAYOR (Councillor N. Taggart): Good evening, Members of Council and guests.

MEMBERS OF COUNCIL: Good evening, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Please be seated. We apologise for the slight delay in the start. There has been a serious road accident on the York Road and it has led to the late arrival of some people here tonight. I know we have got many guests and visitors here tonight; you are all most heartily welcome, I can assure you of that. Can I just repeat what we always say at the beginning of the Council Meeting, just to make sure everyone has got their mobile phones and pagers switched off. Thank you very much for that.

ITEM 1 - ELECTION OF LORD MAYOR

COUNCILLOR HARRIS: Lord Mayor, for the aficionados of Mayor-making, people will know that the last time I spoke I began my speech in exactly the same way, and I spoke then about twists and turns in a person's life that take them in one direction and take them in another, and I want to resume that theme, if I may, in talking about Chris Townsley today.

When Chris asked me to speak, and I should say it is only the third time in 20 years that I have been asked to speak at Mayor-making, he asked me to keep it straight, he said, and I began to think about what he meant by that and, of course, it occurred to me that, having only been asked to speak three times in 20 years, as opposed to Les Carter over there, who appears to be asked every year, perhaps somebody was trying to tell me something about my style of speaking, and my monotony. So I thought to myself, well, is it possible for me to be anything else but straight? I mean, after all, everybody now knows that I am really called Killjoy Harris and, if it is up to me, come tomorrow morning everybody will be dressed like a Puritan and just like that other famous leader, once upon a time, Benito Mussolini, the first thing I will do is I will make sure that anybody in the Council or holding office is no longer allowed to smile or laugh, which incidentally is true; that is a law that Mussolini passed.

Lord Mayor, if I may, I just want to briefly depart slightly at this juncture, because this is about twists and turns but I feel there is something I must say at this juncture which would be remiss

of me, and it is a personal thing not directly associated with Chris, but it has to do with this idea of twists and turns and how a person comes to be where they are, and I feel I have to say that there is somebody here today who I wasn't expecting to be a guest, not a guest of mine but in fact the husband of a newly elected Councillor, who had the most profound effect on me as a schoolboy, and who I feel some of you may feel it is a pity in fact he didn't teach me and I might not have got to where I am, causing the trouble I am, but I really do have to say that Terry Elliott, who is in the gallery, I am so pleased to see him here today, and I have to tell you on the day I hope, if things don't go too wrong, that I become Leader of Council, I am immensely proud that he is here to witness that some 30 years on and more since I left school.

Anyway, Lord Mayor, twists and turns. I believe I have set a series of firsts in speaking at Mayor-making. As far as I know, I am the only person to have made a speech in absentia and in fact it was my colleague Bill Winlow 15 years ago who read a speech for me whilst I wasn't here, and I do think that is the only time that has happened.

I think perhaps I am the only incoming Leader of Council to speak from the opposition benches, but I am not too worried about that because that won't last too much longer, and I am certain that I am the only person ever to propose somebody for Lord Mayor twice. Now, we may recall the last time I attempted it there was a little bust-up between us and the Conservatives when we wanted Chris Townsley to be Lord Mayor some years ago. Now, that was in the bad old days (Laughter). That was in the bad old days when Councillor Carter used to call Councillor Harris names and vice versa, but no longer, because, as we all know, Andrew (Laughter) Sorry, sorry, Andy --- (Laughter)

COUNCILLOR A. CARTER: Don't ever call me "Andy".

COUNCILLOR HARRIS: Sorry. Of course, what few people know is actually his favourite nickname is "Rew", and Rew and I now are best friends, although I have been warned off already by Amanda, who is telling me things are getting altogether too pally. I am used, when I am sitting in my own office, to see one of my officers from my office, Alan Kimber, peer through my window to see what I am doing, but I was most disconcerted this morning sat in Andrew Carter's office to see Amanda peering through the window to see what we were doing.

Lord Mayor, not only do I think I am setting up a first in proposing Chris Townsley to be Lord Mayor twice, and I will stand corrected on this, but I think I am the first person to propose

somebody for Lord Mayor who has been defeated at the polls, left Council and come back again, but I will stand to be corrected on that, but I wanted to make a particular point of that, that Chris Townsley, who came on Council in 1991, was defeated a year later, and you may think that is a bizarre thing for me to say, bearing in mind he is a member of our party, but the fact that he stayed the course and came back in '94 I think says much about the person, because there are lots and lots of Councillors who have never experienced the personal rejection and disappointment of losing. I have to say I have never lost an election as a Councillor, although I have lost two elections while standing for Council, so I think it says much about a person, because I am not sure exactly how many of us would have the courage and determination after facing such a personal rejection to stay the course, to wait those two years, and to come back again as he did in 1994, and since when he has been a Member of this Council, a full-time Member of this Council.

Chris gave me an envelope last weekend, it was a brown envelope, but all it had in it was about 20 pages of notes about every committee he had ever been on, and he said he wanted me to tell you all what those were. Well, I have no intentions of telling you, but suffice to say, as far as I can tell, in his 11 years on Council he has served, certainly in the days when we had committees, on just about every committee there was to serve on, and that, too, says a lot about a person who is so devoted to the job of being a Councillor that they are prepared to do that, because I have to tell you, I was never prepared to do it, whatever that says about me, but Chris was always willing and always happy to take his part. Of course there were, and still are, some jobs that he is very keen to take. He is very, very keen on the Grand Theatre, for instance, but we won't talk about that too much, but he takes the rough with the smooth, has done his bit for our party but, more than that, has absolutely done his bit for Council as a whole and for the city.

Chris is a Leeds boy, although he comes from an area of Leeds I would not normally have considered to be Leeds. It is one of the nether regions somewhere, I think, not far from where my mate Andy comes from, but nevertheless he is a Leeds boy and he is committed to this City, and he is intensely proud of the City, and I know he is intensely proud of the honour we are about to bestow upon him.

Finally, Lord Mayor, I think, too, I must say, because it says much about the man that we all know that Chris has not been in the best of health and has struggled at times with his health, but in all those years going in and out of hospital he has never once - not to me, anyway - he has never moaned, he has never complained, he has never said, "Why me?" He has always sought of laughed and shrugged it

off and just got on with it, and again I think that speaks so much of the person that, faced with difficult circumstances like that, he is able just to get on with life, get on with being a Councillor, and doing his best, so, Lord Mayor, I am very pleased indeed, of course because Chris Townsley is a LibDem but just for Chris himself I am very pleased indeed, to move that Councillor Chris Townsley be elected as the Lord Mayor of the City of Leeds to hold office until the date of the Annual General Meeting of the Council in 2005. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR ATHA: My Lord Mayor, ladies and gentlemen, I was delighted when Councillor Townsley asked me to - to use his words - speak for him at the Council. I thought, "My God, there is going to be a magnificent change, that Council Meetings are going to begin in future on time and we don't have to wait until the Lord Mayor has made his introductory remarks, which take much longer than the speeches allowed anyone else", so I was very pleased. But then I had reservations, strong reservations. I nearly decided to change my mind about doing it, because I went into the Travel Shop in Horsforth, the Co-Op Travel Shop - excellent place - and there was Councillor Townsley. I said, "What are you doing?" He said, "I am booking a trip to Spain." I thought, "Oh my God". (Laughter) I had immediate reservations and thought, "I shall withdraw from this gracefully", but he assured me, because I thought he was actually making preparations before he had even taken up the post. Now, I thought that showed a prescience that is not open to most, and so he reassured me he wasn't, in his phrase, doing a runner, so here I am standing on my feet supporting the nomination which was moved by Councillor Harris ultimately, I may say, because the first part of the speech I thought was on the wrong item, but --- All these firsts you had done, and the seconds you had done and thirds you had done - fantastic.

I would like to say in speaking here it is lovely to see so many friendly faces, because it is not always friendly in a place like this. I think I will pick out just two, because we talk about the Lord Mayors and Lady Mayoresses. We have got two distinguished Lady Mayoresses in the audience here, Dr. Waterman over there, Freeman of the City, and the latest Freeman. We are delighted to see you here, and Bridie Duggan who was the Lady Mayoress who carried the Roll of Honour with equal honour and with equal distinction. There are others, too, and that is what makes the Mayor-making, this part at least of Mayor-making so friendly and such a nice occasion to come to.

I recollect many years ago, and it was about 1959 or '60 when at a meeting in this Council Chamber someone got up from where Councillor Harris is and it was a nomination and he said, "I move

formally" and then sat down, and I thought, "That is a real recommendation." The trouble is I was next and I had not really prepared anything, thinking that I normally had to say, "I formally second". However, today it is not quite like that, because I am not following Les Carter. Anyone that has followed Les Carter knows it is not the place to be. It is like walking up behind a horse - well, not quite, that is an inelegant simile, I'm afraid, but it is difficult to follow him. He is so loquacious, he is so liquid with his prose - you don't know what he is saying but, by God, he does say it well, and if you don't believe me, you listen to him when he gets up because he has got a genius for the long-winded phrase, beautifully phrased, and meaning absolutely nothing. (Laughter)

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: You taught me, Bernard!

COUNCILLOR ATHA: My skills as a teacher are renowned.

As you might have heard, had this thing been properly introduced, because you said you weren't going to list the committees, Chris has been on very many committees and I think gained very wide experience of the Council, and in my case I was Chairman - this is where I go on to the mode of Councillor Harris - I was Chairman of Culture for some time, and we decided, because we thought Leeds should have a City Museum, the only way to do that was to not put the City Museum back into the refurbished Library building, which we agreed not to do, and that caused a furore. We could not have done that had Chris Townsley not had the courage to back us and say, "I will go with you right down the line." As a result of that, Chris can legitimately claim some right to ownership of the new museums when they go up.

He was educated in Hawksworth, Hawksworth County Primary, which is still there. It is a lovely area. Its people are very discriminating; it elects every year that we have had elections Councillor Minkin, Councillor Illingworth and Councillor Atha. I wasn't going to mention that, but I want to stress the connection with me and Chris. He went to that school and they did a good job, then sent him to Moor Grange. Again, the contact between us continued because it was I who was Chairman of the Education Committee had to go to Moor Grange in order to shut it because of falling rolls and encountered opposition from Chris Townsley, who stressed what an important school it was and what a good job it had done for him.

And so we move to his other activities - well, some of them because some of them I would not wish to reveal in public. He is a fellow member of Equity, another contact, another relationship, and if you look closely at some of the soaps that are shot in and around

Leeds you will see Chris Townsley. He is not doing this (Demonstrated), he is doing that (Demonstrated), but something like that. He is an expert extra on these films, and he has now done quite a lot. He does tell me on one occasion he actually shared a bed with the most delightful-looking lady called Kristin Scott-Thomas in the course of duty, as it were. They were on location in a hospital that is being closed, but it was very, very cold and he had found a bed and a paraffin stove, so he got on the bed to keep warm. She came along and said, "Do you mind if I join you?" and he said, "Yes, come aboard and we will both be warm." Now, I am not sure, actually, what the story is going on from there, but I do know they both kept both feet on the ground, and his interest in theatre is intense, as we heard.

He has been a member of the Board of the West Yorkshire Playhouse. He is a member of the Grand Theatre Board and, more particularly, along with Councillor Feldman, another respected colleague on that committee, he has been a very strong supporter of the City Varieties, and hopefully when the City Varieties does get the Lottery grant we are hoping to get, again some of the credit for that will go to Chris Townsley.

I am sure he will make a splendid Lord Mayor. He is highly sociable, very gregarious. That means, Councillor Les Carter, much the same thing as sociable, just in case you think I am saying something unpleasant about him and you are going to tackle me about it! He is very gregarious in attitude and very independent in attitude. I am sure the Lord Mayor's Secretary, our very respected Lord Mayor's Secretary, is going to have an awful lot of trouble with Chris because of his independent mind and what he is going to do and what he wants to do, but I must say, given recent history, he would be wise to listen to some good advice.

I am sure he will highlight the importance of the Arts in his year of office, and we offer him every good wish for success, and that success I think is reinforced, the possibility of it, by being supported by his wife Margaret, and also I think by a Deputy Lord Mayor whom we all acclaim on her being appointed. Brenda Lancaster is someone I think who has engaged the affections of almost everyone who has met her, and we wish her every success in her role, and we hope that her husband - I understand is not well - is soon recalled to full fitness and that you can enjoy the year as much as my colleague here has enjoyed --- The sights you see when you stand up! (Laughter) I am glad you are facing this way. And so, with those few words, and great praise for Chris, I hope he has a splendid year, and I hope we all in a year's time are able to say with equal honesty as we can say

to our current Lord Mayor, thank you very much for what you have done for the City. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: My Lord Mayor, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, Members of Council, it is a privilege today to support the election of a new Lord Mayor, Christopher Townsley, to hold office until the next Annual General Meeting of this Council.

Can I say it is always difficult following my good friend Marky, and Councillor Atha at the other side, of course. In fact, before asking for your support, I think it is important that we actually examine and look at this man who is going to hold this great and noble office. As you should have been aware, but other speakers didn't seem to tell you much about the man himself, Chris was born on 24th August 1949. I am told the sun shone brightly that day. I am told that he was a goodly and godly child. Indeed, so good, unlike George Washington, Christopher would never have cut down the tree in the first place.

My Lord Mayor, I am certain I speak for everybody in this Council when I say we are delighted that Chris has got over a very serious problem as far as his back and the number of hospital situations he has been in recently. I was talking to Chris the other day and Chris told me now those operations have been a success, and I am certain all Members of this Council will wish him good health during his year in office. (Applause)

He was telling me a few stories, actually, recently, my Lord Mayor. He was saying when he went to the Outpatients Department at the hospital he was listening and earwiggling at the guy next door in the next cubicle where the doctor had come in to see the particular man. The doctor said to this patient, he said, "Tell me, I have got some good news for you and some bad news. Which do you want first?" And the patient said, "Well, give me the good news." And the man said, "Well, you have 24 hours to live." "Oh my God", he said, "That's the good news? What's the bad news?" "Well, I have been trying to contact you since yesterday." (Laughter)

Indeed, when Chris was in hospital he was a very, very popular man. One day a gentleman phoned and said, "You have a Christopher Townsley in Room 101. It is a matter of great importance that you tell me how his health is and how his progress is." "Well", the nurse said, "He is doing very well. In fact, he has had two full meals, two movements, and his blood pressure is fine. If he continues his improvement, the doctor is going to send him home very shortly." "That is wonderful, absolutely marvellous news", said the gentleman. The nurse said, "Tell me, from your enthusiasm, you must

be a close family friend or a close member of the family." "No, no, no", he said. "No, no, no", said the gentleman, "I am Chris Townsley phoning from my hospital bed trying to find out how I am going on."
(Laughter)

As we all know, my Lord Mayor, Chris joined the mighty Pru as an agent in 1975, working from the Horsforth and Otley area. I have to say, my Lord Mayor, that this bodes well for a successful mayoral year for, if my memory serves me correctly, and I am thinking back very hard, some of our finest, most eloquent and distinguished Lord Mayors have come from the insurance industry.

COUNCILLOR ATHA: Name one!

MEMBER OF COUNCIL: And you as well.

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: During the many years he served in the insurance industry, Chris helped a great deal and a lot of people. He had some very interesting claims and some very interesting risks that he insured. Indeed, Chris is extremely famous through the whole of industry for the case of the man with the wooden leg. This man, who remains obviously anonymous for confidential reasons, had a wooden leg and asked Chris to insure the leg for fire. Chris phoned the Prudential Underwriting Department and was given a price of £500 per annum, based on the actuarial consideration that the leg would only catch fire every 20 years and it would cost £10,000 to replace. Now, Chris could not accept such a large amount of premium for this poor, disabled man and, after a great deal of thought, Chris hit on a new way of describing the risk to his underwriters and, indeed, was successful in reducing the premium from £500 a year to £50 a year. I am certain you will all be delighted at that, and I can see from the faces of the Members who are still awake in Council that they are wondering how he managed to do this. Well, it is all in the words he used to describe the risk. Our resourceful Lord Mayor described the risk as a wooden structure with an upper sprinkler system.
(Laughter)

Chris dealt, over that period of time, with many, many claims and he told me about some of these claims, some of the claim forms that came in, like the man who wrote, "The accident happened because I had one eye on the lorry in front of me, one eye on the pedestrian, and the other on the car behind me." Now, my Lord Mayor, I think our Public Health people should be going up to Horsforth and finding out what is causing three-eyed people in that area. Mind, it will be useful to them because any of them that drives along the A65, the road from town to Horsforth, will realise there are a lot of yellow monsters all the way up, and these yellow monsters are really tax-

collecting, they take £60 each off the poor motorist all the way up, so that third eye could come in very useful.

There is another one of his claim forms: he was on his way to the doctor - this is what it said, "I was on the way to the doctor with rear end trouble when my universal joint gave way, causing me to have an accident." My God, they have some funny things in Horsforth.

During his successful career in insurance, he also had one other great interest, and Bernard has referred to it today, and that is the question of the performing arts and indeed, as Bernard says, he is an actor with an Equity card which you have, haven't you, Bernard? You are an Equity card actor, aren't you?

COUNCILLOR ATHA: Yes, I will take your subs.

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: Pardon?

COUNCILLOR ATHA: I will take your subs later.

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: Well, there you are. Bernard, did you know --- I will just ask you this question, did you know that an actor with two brain cells has to be pregnant? (Laughter)

COUNCILLOR ATHA: I didn't understand that.

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: Think about it.

Chris, holding his Equity card, has been in soaps such as Emmerdale, Coronation Street, Heartbeat, and has supported many other amateur dramatic organisations.

My Lord Mayor, I couldn't resist when I found out about his acting career, especially as being one of the shyest Members of this Council, to ask him if he could give me any tips at all as far as the acting profession is concerned. He actually produced a list for me called, "The Principles for the Actor". Have you read this, Bernard? "Principles for the Actor". There are too many for me to share with you today; however, I thought a few may give just a flavour of the actor's principles. Evidently, actors say, "Do not listen to their fellow actors." It is a bit like this Council Chamber, isn't it? You never listen to anybody. And, Andrew, one for you to bear in mind. Bear this in mind, it says. This is from the Principles of Acting, which says, "Don't look your partner in the face, you may not see what you want." (Laughter) There is also one for you, Keith, Keith Wakefield. This is out of the same thing, Keith. It says, "Never change anything that is working." What do you think of that,

Keith? Marvellous. It actually did go on to say, "No matter how wrong or phoney it may be."

My Lord Mayor, you will know from my comments today that our new Lord Mayor is a talented actor, a very good and kind person who, with his wife Margaret and their children, will fulfil the duties of Lord Mayor with the utmost dignity, and therefore it gives me immense pleasure to support the resolution that Christopher Townsley be elected to hold the office of Lord Mayor for the City of Leeds to hold the office until the next Annual General Meeting. Thank you, my Lord Mayor. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Lord Mayor, distinguished guests, fellow Councillors, I won't add "comrades" at this particular point; that might be a little controversial. It is inevitable that whenever people are watching a film or watching a piece of theatre, you get to a point where you get those high peaks, like you do with Bernard Atha and Les Carter, and then you hit the trough which regrettably is my good self, so I shall try and make it as short as possible before we hit those new peaks with Councillor Blackburn.

The Morley Borough Independents are delighted, delighted, to support the nomination for Councillor Chris Townsley to be Lord Mayor of Leeds. We are in a situation where we are regarded somewhat inaccurately as part of the awkward squad, as either a major or a minor irritant, and I understand from Councillor Townsley's past that he has been regarded similarly, and we are happy to be associated and affiliated with him under those circumstances.

Certainly the Morley Borough Independents will be here behaving well, like we have done year in, year out, making sure we make a contribution in our own quiet way, and Councillor Townsley will be there, I am sure, to help and assist us with that.

One of the things that interested me when Chris asked us to support this nomination is the fact that he had worked in the theatre and TV industry, and certainly looking at that I was thinking about making some sort of crack about the rainbow alliance and trying to take into account who was Zippy, who was George and who was Bungle, but under those circumstances I was quite clearly advised by my agent that that would not be entirely appropriate, so we will not bother with that.

We are delighted from Morley to support Chris Townsley as Lord Mayor of Leeds. We are in a situation where we do know he has an affection for our area and that he has an affection for the rest of Leeds as well. We fully support this particular nomination, and I

will sit down and hopefully you will reach another peak. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR D. BLACKBURN: Lord Mayor, Councillor Finnigan is right, it goes downhill from here! As usual, going last on these occasions, all the previous speakers have pinched all the best bits so I must apologise to you if I repeat some of what has already been said but, as is my way, you can be assured that what I say is short and to the point.

Chris, who is a Leeds lad born and bred, was first elected to the Council for Horsforth in 1991. As previous speakers have said, he sat on 27 main Council committees and sub-committees, as well as the West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Authority and the West Yorkshire Fire Authority. It was on one of those Council committees, Recreations and Services, back in 1998 I first got to know Chris.

Chris Townsley is respected on all sides of this Council as a working Member and a good colleague and a friend. Chris might be a nice guy, but he will not be a soft touch. One of his previous jobs was Chair of the former Horsforth & Cookridge CIT, which I have got to say must have been quite a challenging thing to chair, and he did that well, and I definitely don't think he will have a lot of trouble with us lot.

Previous speakers have mentioned Chris Townsley's acting exploits. In fact, him and Councillor Atha are the only TV stars I know, and I have actually got a video, which I keep telling Bernard about of him. Well, I can say that Chris is the only person that has ever got me to watch Coronation Street voluntarily. It was so I could see him stood there, as I recall stood in the Rover's Return.

Anyway, seriously, I do hope Chris and Margaret have a really good year and, on behalf of the Green Party Group, we would like to offer our support to the motion that Councillor Chris Townsley be elected Lord Mayor of Leeds. Thank you. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you very much. Members of Council, the motion in front of Council is that Councillor Christopher Townsley be elected Lord Mayor of the City of Leeds to hold office until the date of the Annual Meeting of this Council in the year 2005.

(The motion was carried unanimously)

I therefore declare Councillor Townsley elected as Lord Mayor. (Applause) Some of us will now depart the chamber. Thank you very much.

(The Lord Mayor and Party Leaders left the chamber and returned with the Lord Mayor Elect. Following the chaining ceremony, the Lord Mayor Elect made the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and signed the register)

THE LORD MAYOR (Councillor C. Townsley): I will try to stand up and read this. I am not so sure, if I fall down, you will have to excuse me.

High Sheriff, Honorary Aldermen, Members of Parliament, Distinguished Guests, ladies and gentlemen, first of all let me thank you for being here on this our special occasion. I am sure tributes have already been paid to Neil Taggart, his wife Sylvia, sister Laura and other members of his family, as well as Alison Lowe and her Consort, for doing fantastic jobs during this last year in carrying out the mayoral duties, but let me take this opportunity to add my name to that list and thank you, Neil.

The first community leader in Leeds other than clergy was created in 1626 when Sir John Savile became our first Alderman. 1661 saw Thomas Danby installed as first Mayor of Leeds, but it was not until 1897 that the City of Leeds saw its first Lord Mayor in Sir James Kitson, MP. These first three names alone show the quality of incumbents which I have to follow and this, believe you me, is most humbling. And here endeth the first history lesson.

However, I am thrilled and proud that you, my peers, have seen fit to bestow this honour upon me. Those of you who have had the privilege of holding this office will know the feeling. Those of you present who are or have been Councillors of this wonderful City of ours will be privileged in becoming members of a very special family. Yes, you do work hard and sometimes the days are long, but the rewards are fantastic. The phrase "unsociable hours" must have been coined by one of our predecessors.

Every year at Mayor-making, you hear each Lord Mayor say they have absolutely no idea what their sponsors have said about them. I have to tell you this is absolutely true. Therefore, ladies and gentlemen, I assure you that if my friends Les Carter, Bernard Atha, Mark Harris have said things about me which you thought could not possibly be true, then I assure you it must be true because I trust them all explicitly - well, for now, anyway, at least. But I will get my own back if that isn't the case, because I will be in the chair next time round.

Neil, I was having a quick look at last year's minutes of Mayor-making, and I found out the answer to your question. You asked how your brother could get off the Leeds Loop Road, as he had been stuck on it for some time. Well, if you read the rules, which you yourself probably compiled, there is only one way and one way only - you have to throw a double six! I have tried it. (Laughter)

As previously stated, I am incredibly proud at this moment, as is Margaret, my wife, your new Lady Mayoress, but I have to say that probably even more so was the delight of my parents when I announced it to them, and they are both here with us tonight. Thanks, mum and dad. (Applause)

Many of you know that I have been somewhat plagued with illness, particularly during the early part of this year. Well, let's hope that I have now had my share. I have often thought there are more pieces of my anatomy in pickle jars in hospitals than there are attached to my skeleton. In fact, I am sure I should be at least 3 inches taller. Amazingly, it appears to go with the job, as I have visited former Lord Mayors in hospital during their term of office, and this year this quirk seems to have been extended to Neil, and I hope you are feeling much better, Neil, now. Incidentally, I have heard it said that with Neil being in office for 13 months and me for only 11, that I would be one of the shortest Lord Mayors on record. Well, that is an odd way of putting it but, yes, I understand, I think.

Let me take this opportunity to say a little bit more about Margaret and I. We have known each other since infants school. To you younger people here, I apologise if I use some old-fashioned terminology. In fact, infants school was Hawksworth Wood now Primary, and I started my school days there in I think it was '53 or '54, first encountered Margaret when she joined in 1957, and incidentally two of our former classmates who are still very good friends are with us tonight, so welcome to John and Marion. I am not too sure whether John actually made it, but he will certainly be with us down at The Armouries.

When we left school and were first employed, I was an office junior with a firm of office equipment suppliers on The Headrow, and Margaret worked a couple of hundred yards down the street at the Prudential on Park Row. We both attended the same church, St. Mary's at Hawksworth Wood, and both became Sunday School teachers. There either seemed to be some inevitability about us sharing the rest of our lives together, or maybe it was just me being a pest. I think I know which Margaret will say it was! Whichever way, we have now been married for 34 years, have two wonderful children in (?)Edan and

(?)Adelaide and two beautiful granddaughters, Charlotte and Echo. We both come from fairly large families and the majority of them are here to share and celebrate with us this evening.

I am also delighted that Brenda Lancaster and her husband Ralph have agreed to be my Deputy Lord Mayor and Consort. We already appear to be joined at the hip, and I am absolutely positive that all four of us will make a good team.

I was actually going to raise this later in the proceedings but I think now is probably appropriate. Some of you will know or will not know, in fact, that Brenda's husband Ralph was taken into hospital in the early part of last week and underwent surgery on Friday or Saturday, I forget now, for a gall bladder removal. I am sure you will all join me in wishing Ralph a speedy recovery.
(Applause)

The chosen charities for this year, I have chosen the Leeds Childrens Holiday Camp, known to many of us affectionately as Silverdales, and it is celebrating its centenary this year. Originally referred to as the Poor Children's Holiday Camp, it was established to provide holidays for under-privileged Leeds inner city children. You could be forgiven for thinking that this form of Victorian institution could not possibly be used today in the 21st century. However, you would be quite wrong. Between 250 and 300 children each year take a 5-day break here. The organisation is always in need of funds to enable it to continue to provide these holidays. I will give a few more details a bit later on in the evening.

Many of you know that Margaret and I have been involved in amateur dramatics for well over 30 years and I am sorry, there are some of our group here, it is, it is over 30 years. We were known as the Slack and Tight Minstrels, and some of you know because we have actually raised money for former Lord Mayor's here. Yes, that's what we were. We were performing shows at Silverdales on at least a couple of occasions. I don't think we will be doing any more now, I think we will be far too old for it - well, I am, anyway. Although you never know, if we are asked.

The second charity which I would like to support is the Parkinson's Disease Society. This is a particularly debilitating disease, and again my wife and I have, in the past, helped to raise funds for the Society with the aforementioned Slack and Tights. Although there is no known cure for this condition, drugs are now available to control the symptoms. I know that the Society is trying

to raise a further £30,000 for a specialist nurse in Leeds, and I will try and certainly help them if I can to achieve this goal.

I think I have said enough, except to thank you all once again for your support this evening. Thank you very much.
(Applause)

ITEM 2 - VOTE OF THANKS TO THE RETIRING LORD MAYOR

COUNCILLOR MCKENNA: My Lord Mayor, may I firstly congratulate you on your election to office. I am sure you will do a great job and follow very well in the footsteps of Neil.

My Lord Mayor, Lady Mayoress, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, it gives me great pleasure to move the vote of thanks on your behalf to the Retiring Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress, Neil and Sylvia. We all knew that Neil's reign as Lord Mayor of Leeds would be colourful, exciting, eventful, and would considerably enhance the value of local political life to the Citizens of our City, and I am glad to say Neil has done that and he has not disappointed us.

Who can forget the Lord Mayor addressing 4,000 loyal football fans in Millennium Square during the England -v- Switzerland match, flags of St. George waving everywhere proudly, England fans from our diversely rich communities chanting "Engerland" in their England replica shirts? As colourful a spectacle, Lord Mayor, as I have ever seen in our fair City, and Neil on stage explaining to them the finer points of our beautiful game, while the crowd watched in awe and stunned silence. My Lord Mayor, I can't help thinking that Leeds United missed a great opportunity in not appointing Neil, one of the most original and tactically interesting football thinkers the game has yet produced, as their new manager.

As you know, Neil worked tirelessly in supporting his two nominated charities, the Yorkshire Air Ambulance Services and EMAUS, and I know he will want to share this adventure with you himself, so I will leave that to Neil. I can say, though, Neil was Lord Mayor more or less seven days a week for thirteen and a half months, busy morning, noon and night. He visited every ward in Leeds; nowhere has escaped a visit from Lord Mayor Taggart. He conducted tours of schoolchildren around the Civic Hall, making a point of leading the tours himself, and he was ably assisted by his wife and family members, Rosemary, Helen, Laura, Edward, all of whom are here tonight, Lord Mayor.

But, you know, for Neil this was also a politically difficult year, due to the fact that he was selected to contest the marginal

Labour/LibDem ward of Bramley. His activities were not helped by his hospitalisation due to a serious foot injury, but Neil persevered and won his seat for Labour, the only gain in the City. Well done, Neil. (Applause)

I know during this period Neil has cause to be thankful to his Deputy Lord Mayor, Alison Lowe, who ably deputised for him while he was in hospital during his illness and, incidentally, Alison has just told me she has lost 3 pounds during her term of office. I think that is a record. I don't think anybody has ever lost weight before while they were Lord Mayor or Lady Mayoress. I look forward to Neil matching that when he speaks.

Neil will also be thrilled that no British National Party candidate was elected to the Council of Leeds, and I am sure everybody in this chamber will agree. (Applause)

Now, Neil is fond of telling us that his period of office as Lord Mayor, thirteen and a half months, makes him the longest-serving Lord Mayor of Leeds in recent times, and this is true if it relates from 1950, but I have to tell you that in fact George Brett served as a Lord Mayor from 1947 to 1949, a period of 2 years, which makes him the longest-serving Lord Mayor in the post-war period. Councillor Brett's term of office was extended a full year by the post-war Labour Government under the Representation of the People's Act 1948, and I know that most of my colleagues on this side of the chamber would have liked the current Government to have been as generous as the post-war government to us, as they only extended our office by one month. But, Neil, you are the longest-serving Lord Mayor so far this century, and thirteen and a half months will take some beating.

As I said, Lord Mayor, Neil was a splendid Lord Mayor and we can be justifiably proud of him. He was also graciously assisted by his wife Sylvia, the Lady Mayoress, his daughters Rosemary, Julia, Helen, and by his sister Laura, and wherever they went in support of their office they brought joy and happiness to the people of Leeds.

Neil, you will be a hard act to follow, and your understanding of Standing Orders - whoops, sorry, Neil, Council Procedural Rules, will be hard to equal. In your role of chair of the Council you brought order, dignity to the chamber, and I will always remember fondly the Chief Legal Officer nodding vigorously in agreement with each and every final ruling you made. At least, I think that was what she was doing, Neil! (Laughter)

To conclude, Lord Mayor, I will read out a message from one of my constituents from Armley. "Neil, you have been a great Lord

Mayor. Congratulations and well done, Sandy Melville." Now, senior Members of the Council will know that Sandy Melville served on this Council as Liberal - he was a Liberal - and a Tory Councillor, so everybody realises how valuable your contribution was. Well done, Neil and Sylvia, and thank you for all the joy and happiness you brought to us in the last thirteen and a half months. I so move, my Lord Mayor. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: My Lord Mayor, in seconding this motion, can I start by first of all congratulating you on your appointment. I am certain you will have an excellent year. I hope your family and everybody with you enjoys it; I am certain they will.

Last year, Lord Mayor, I stood here and asked this Council to support the election of Neil Taggart as Lord Mayor of this city. I said he would be different, I said he would be innovative. I said all sorts about him, actually, and that may be why he has never invited me to anything all year round, but I don't know. But one thing I can say, and I am absolutely convinced, he has performed his duties with dignity and respect in the office and the way that he has held this particular office.

Can I also say, Neil, I didn't see you but I did see some wonderful pictures in the YEP of you, but even nicer ones of Alison. Pardon? If anyone wants to challenge that, I am willing to go outside with them now.

Now, the only thing that is going to be a problem now is that Neil is shortly going to become a pain in the bottom for the joint administration, because he will return to his own fold, and he will no longer have this wonderful independence which he did every time he chaired the Council. He was a superb chairman, totally impartial. Indeed, Neil, I was wanting tonight to put another resolution down to keep you for another 5 years, but we can't do that, and you are going back over there. I hope you can behave yourself, but even if you don't ---

COUNCILLOR A. CARTER: Over there.

COUNCILLOR J. PROCTER: He will be going over there, actually.

COUNCILLOR J. L. CARTER: Oh there. It is confusing when you get to my age, Andrew, which side is which, but we seem to be changing seats like - well, I wouldn't like to say.

But, Neil, can I just say on behalf of the Conservative Group, thank you for all the effort you have put in. Thank you for

your whole civic team. They have done an excellent job for the City, and that is what it is all about; it is serving this City, not serving this Council, not serving these Councillors but serving this City, and you have done an excellent job on that, and we would like to thank you for that. Thank you. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR LANCASTER: My Lord Mayor, may I add also my congratulations tonight as well. Thank you.

Lord Mayor, I am delighted and privileged to support the vote of thanks to Neil, Sylvia, and their family, for the excellent way they have carried out their civic duties. There have been various events from, I understand, Neil chatting to me the other day and said he had actually been invited to open a car park, which turned out a lot more interesting than it sounded, and also to bestow the Honorary Freeman of the City to Dr. Fanny Waterman, and I think a lot of people in Leeds will remember when we welcomed Jane Tomlinson back from her wonderful feat that she had ridden, you know, all that way, was it 2,000 miles? Yes, thank you.

The two excellent charities that you have supported this year, the Air Ambulance, I was lucky enough to go to an event yesterday afternoon with Alison Lowe there modelling hats, did a wonderful job, and I don't really think that the Banqueting Hall will ever be the same again, Alison. There were some wonderful models modelling swimwear, weren't they? It was a sight to behold, and I was so glad I went, despite obviously my husband being in hospital, because there was a presentation of the Queen's Medal to two paramedics, and I thought that was wonderful for you to do, Alison, wasn't it, and we had a smashing afternoon.

Also, the EMAUS Project, under the circumstances, I am really glad I didn't wait for an invite, Les - we gate-crashed the evening with Terry Waite - but I have to say I did pay for my tickets, and under the circumstances, as I say, with my husband not being here tonight, we had the most wonderful evening, and you have a knack of making people feel included, and I know there were some gentlemen that had been formerly homeless and who were a little bit uncomfortable at first but you have that knack of making people feel welcome and, at the end of the evening, what I took away from it was the way that they had said to me that they had listened to Terry Waite who had been imprisoned for 5 years and, whilst they had been homeless and had nothing, they said that at least they had had their freedom, and I think, you know, it is important to acknowledge that, that these people were made welcome and they have got a chance through the project to change their lives and be involved, and I think at this

point we need a plug, don't we? If you have got any furniture that you don't want, the EMAUS Project will be very welcome for it.

So on behalf of the Liberal Democrats, thank you for your year of office and the way that you have carried out your duties. Thank you. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR D. BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. May I also add to the congratulations. On behalf of the Green Group, I would like to support the motion of thanks to the retiring Lord Mayor, Councillor Neil Taggart. During this year he has worked conscientiously for his adopted City, bringing credit upon it wherever he has gone.

Being a member of the Lord Mayor's Charity Committee, I also know his chosen charities have benefited substantially, and that he has worked tirelessly to that end. I have also got to say that his Deputy, who is extremely good at persuading people to do things, we wouldn't have got as much without her. Thanks. (Applause)

I also must say that his chairing of Council has been exceptional in his fairness and that sort of quiet, Taggart charm. It is brilliant.

COUNCILLOR ATHA: What kind of charm?

COUNCILLOR D. BLACKBURN: Well, I have been sat opposite him so I could see it, you see. The Green Group hope that you have had a wonderful year and have not put on too much weight, although he told me the other day that he had very much kept his weight down, but I don't know about that. I don't know if he has been as good as Alison. Anyway, Neil, well done. (Applause)

(The Lord Mayor presented the past Lord Mayor's badge to the Retiring Lord Mayor) (Applause)

(The Retiring Lady Mayoress presented the Lady Mayoress with her insignia of office) (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: The Lady Mayoress will now present the Retiring Lady Mayoress with the past Lady Mayoress's brooch. Have you done that? You know what you are doing. Thank goodness. I have said that once.

The Retiring Lord Mayor to reply on behalf of himself and the Lady Mayoress.

COUNCILLOR TAGGART: Lord Lieutenant, High Sheriff, distinguished guests, Members of Council, can I firstly congratulate you, Chris, upon your election tonight. It is a great honour to be elected as the Lord Mayor of Leeds.

I am going to start with some thanks. I would like to thank Sylvia and Rosemary and Helen and Laura and Edward. They have all been fantastic in assisting me carrying out duties. Sometimes, when you go to an event, you may have to mingle with up to 300 people, and one person, one Lord Mayor, simply can't do it, and we would sometimes have to divide them up between us, and they have all been absolutely superb and professional, not just in representing me as Lord Mayor, but representing this great City of ours. So thank you very much from me.

I would also like to thank some other people without whom the job of Lord Mayor would be impossible: Steven (?)McHew, Erica, Ros, Audrey and Barbara. They run the office, and they have an unusual job because they have to get used to a new set of bosses every year, and I think John Wilson has had 24. He has now left the room, I don't blame him, but they have done a fantastic job. Very professional. They are probably the best Mayor or Lord Mayor's office staff in the country, in my opinion.

I would like to thank John Wilson, John Gallagher, Steven, Mark and Alan, all the drivers. They make sure we get from A to B, we get there on time. They are always good on points of etiquette and protocol when you need to know, and they effortlessly do their job and they suddenly appear at your side and help you. They are a magnificent team; I can't praise them too much.

I would like to thank all the catering staff, particularly Ann and Michelle. Without them we would go hungry and thirsty many times because sometimes, despite the image people sometimes have about Lord Mayors, sometimes you aren't fed, sometimes you aren't watered, and Ann and Michelle always look after us well.

I must thank Alison. She has done an absolutely superb job as my Deputy. (Applause) During the year, they said it couldn't be done. We had a target to get Alan Titchmarsh to Leeds to speak, "An Evening with Alan Titchmarsh" for the Lord Mayor's Charity and they said, "Oh, you will never get him". We met his agent and he said, "Oh, you must be joking. No chance". But I knew that Alison was going to meet him, I think at Leeds University, and so she was our secret agent. I put her on the case and, lo and behold, he agreed not just to come but to waive his fee. Thank you very much, Alison. You have done an absolutely magnificent job. It is up to you when

you are Lord Mayor of Leeds but, if you decide to do it, you will be an absolutely great, magnificent Lord Mayor. Thank you very much indeed.

I would like to thank the late Norma Hutchinson and the former Councillor Eileen Moxon for looking after Chapel Allerton whilst I have been Lord Mayor. I think sometimes Members don't realise how absent a Lord Mayor can be from their patch, no matter how hard they try.

I would also like to thank Denise Atkinson and Ted Hanley for taking me under their wing in Bramley. They didn't have to but they did, and it is difficult, as everybody knows, when you are Lord Mayor you are not supposed to openly campaign for office. I didn't ring a single person asking them to vote for me. They did all the work, and I need to thank them and Steven Simpson, my agent, because without their efforts I would still be here today as a former Lord Mayor but I wouldn't be in front of you as Councillor Taggart, so thank you to all of those people.

I have learned many things during my year. One of them is not to make assumptions, and I will give you two examples of this. We were trying to explain on one particular occasion about protocol and precedent, and I have to say before I became Lord Mayor I only knew a little bit about it, but I soon learnt. Sometimes you are in a procession and you have to know absolutely where your place is, and I learnt that the only person who is normally in front of me in a procession is the Queen or her representative. It might be another member of the royal family, it might be the Lord Lieutenant, of course, but then it is myself, because I was Lord Mayor of Leeds, and we had a school visit here, and a little boy --- By the way, we let them sit in the Lord Mayor's chair and they have a mock Council Meeting - they love it - and this little boy said in protocol terms, "Well, what about Tony Blair?" And I thought that is a really good question, isn't it, for me as a member of the Labour Party, and I thought about it and I thought, well, he may be Prime Minister of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, but he is not the First Citizen of Leeds, so if we have a procession it is the Queen, then it is the Lord Mayor of Leeds, and then it is Tony Blair, because that is his rightful place in a procession in Leeds, you see. Absolutely true.

Something else I have learned during the year is not to mention the city of Birmingham. David has already mentioned that I am an adopted Citizen of Leeds, and when you go round and do talks you will often find, Chris, you will mention where you came from, it is a way of breaking the ice, and it would inevitably crop up that, you know, I was born and brought up in Birmingham and came to Leeds as a

student, and I used to support Birmingham City Football Club as a boy, which I know last year, when you learned that, you would have had a re-vote and not voted me in, although I do support Leeds United. It is a pity Leeds United aren't in the Premier league, same as Birmingham City, isn't it?

Anyway, I learnt not to mention Birmingham because at one particular event my daughter Rosemary, who is sitting up there, said, "Dad, you realise what the drivers are doing?" "What are they doing, Rosemary?" "They are all taking bets at which particular point in your speech you are going to mention the Birmingham connection. You know, they have all got money on this." So I thought, "Right, I'm not having this", so I didn't mention Birmingham once that day, and not for weeks and weeks - I am looking at the drivers now. I wasn't having them betting on me, although recently I have started to mention the Birmingham connection again. In fact, I opened one conference I think with 3,000 delegates, a huge conference. It had never been to Britain before, let alone to Leeds, and there were people there from all over the world, distinguished people in their own right. You could only admire them, and I was so glad they were in the City, all these people, and I had spoken and then we had a coffee break about half an hour later and this person came over to me and said, "Excuse me, Lord Mayor, but which part of Birmingham do you come from?"

The charities have done really well. EMAUS has opened during my year and we have done well for the Yorkshire Air Ambulance as well. It seems to have struck a chord with the public of Leeds. There has been a huge amount of support, so can I thank everybody here who has been involved in raising money for either of the charities or the Lord Mayor's Charity.

This, as we all know, ladies and gentlemen, is a truly great City - truly great City. Leeds is a really great place, and you really see it well when you are Lord Mayor and go everywhere, and we have got many fine people living here and, of course, we have the lowest unemployment, we have the fastest growing City centre, largest number of new jobs. I mean, all of that, this is what you do when you are Lord Mayor, you are an ambassador for the City, but actually without a cultural and artistic life any city would be dead, and we are so blessed in Leeds that we have got so much available in that regard. We have got music, and we are so glad Fanny is here today. We have got the Piano Competition as part of that. We have got the theatre, we have got the ballet, the opera, lots of things going on with young people, Breeze Festival starts tomorrow. Aren't we lucky to be living in such a great northern city that has got all these facilities available?

Leeds is also great because of its diversity of people. We know that, don't we, and to some extent we see that represented here today, but we have got people living in Leeds from all over the world, from different backgrounds, different racial origins, different languages, different religions, different beliefs, all living together in peace and harmony, and that is something very precious that we need to value, because, as we know, ladies and gentlemen, in many parts of the world people attack one another or repress or kill one another because of their beliefs, and we don't have that here; we have something very different.

It is very difficult, of course, when you are Lord Mayor, you are meant to be non-political; you are meant to be above party politics, but can I just say in closing then, how particularly glad that very nasty, unpleasant right-wing racist, Fascist, anti-Semitic party, which stood 23 candidates on 10th June, that the people of Leeds had the good sense to make sure that not one of them got elected. That is absolutely marvellous. (Applause)

Whatever the political differences in this chamber, what unites us overwhelmingly, I know, and that is Members from all parties, is we have no time for people who divide and who don't value people, and we need to celebrate the differences that unite us all in what is, in my opinion, the greatest City in this country.

It has been a pleasure to serve for over the last 13 months, an absolute pleasure, and delight. Thank you so much, all of you, for your support. Thank you. (Applause)

ITEM 3 - DEPUTY LORD MAYOR

THE LORD MAYOR: So to Item No. 3 on the order paper. I would like to move that Councillor Brenda Lancaster be appointed Deputy Lord Mayor of the City of Leeds to hold office until the date of the Annual Meeting of the Council in 2005.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: I second, Lord Mayor.

(The motion was carried unanimously)

(Councillor Brenda Lancaster made the Declaration of Acceptance of Office) (Applause)

ITEM 4 - ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 4, Announcements. I made my announcements during my speech. I don't know if there are any others?

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: No others, Lord Mayor.

ITEM 5 - MINUTES

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 5, then, Minutes of the Council Meetings held on 1st and 28th April.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: My Lord Mayor, I move that the minutes be approved.

COUNCILLOR J. PROCTER: I second, Lord Mayor.

(The motion was carried)

ITEM 6 - ELECTION OF LEADER

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

COUNCILLOR HAMILTON: Second, Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR ATHA: Could I, Lord Mayor? I indicated I wished to speak. Thank you. I want to say just five or six points, very briefly and very calmly.

(1) I dislike the wording of this resolution, which is to remove Councillor Wakefield as Leader of the Council. I say that because I think this is a totally and gratuitously ungenerous way of dealing with the matter. It is snide and unworthy, and unworthy of a Council which has been enjoying such good humour up to now. I think it is a pity you have done this. A simple resolution to elect Councillor Harris, and then the date follows on, would have been sufficient to achieve both things, get rid of one and bring in another. That is Point (1) and that is a personal one; that does not come from the Group, that is my own personal view.

The second point is that I point out that this group is still the largest group on the Council, the 26, 24, 6 and 3, and so as such we have obligations as the largest single party. I pay tribute to Councillor Wakefield for his year of leadership, and I think all of you would do the same if we weren't in this particular mode of being gratuitously unkind and ungenerous, because whether one likes the policies of opponents or not, there has always been mutual respect

between Members, and that has been normally enshrined in the language we address each other by, and so I would say, on behalf of us all, Keith, we thank you for your work not merely when you were Leader, but in fact the period in between. We look forward, some of us on this side, all of us on this side, to the time when you resume your normal place in the chamber.

I totally deplore the inadequate notice of the business given for this meeting. Very shortly we will be going through very rapidly a whole range of resolutions endorsing the documents which are these documents. That is the bulk of them, very detailed, double-sided, and some of us got them last night, some of us got them this morning, and that is really not an appropriate way in which to conduct the business.

I feel fairly sure that this is because the problems of setting up the new arrangements have meant this delay, but I have simply put down the marker: we understand it this time but we can't have that again in the future.

I personally deplore the scooping of all but a handful of places with the one coalition party opposite. I would invite the one party opposite, if it is one party, to register as such and then I think you can have your rightful place as the single largest party in the Council.

I deplore the lack of consultation regarding a number of major issues where consultation is appropriate, as is the case in the case of the proposed Area Committees. An enormous amount of consultation took place to determine the Area Committee structure, and that has been brushed aside without any further consultation, the boundaries redrawn. That is not the way in which the new administration should be demonstrating its future approach.

This arrogance extends to Morley, the Morley Independent Group, which, though some of us may not like them or some of us may welcome the independent voice, they have been totally ignored because they are not significant, they couldn't be bought and so let's ignore them, but they are a bigger party than the Greens, 6 votes to 3. It doesn't matter whether you are 3, 6, 9 or whatever, every Member here has been elected by the public and they have the right to that recognition and appreciation.

Now is not the time to develop these points.

MEMBERS OF COUNCIL: You have just done it.

COUNCILLOR ATHA: No, to develop. I said, and I will repeat, because I am not making the mistake my colleague over there made this morning, I am using the correct words. I will not have time this time to develop these points - develop. I have just listed them because they are not developed at all; they are mere statements. I merely wish to identify them as our silence must not be construed as agreement. We shall oppose the motion for the reason or if not oppose we will - it may well be - I am not quite sure what the instructions are, whether we are going to vote against it or simply remain silent. It doesn't really matter because we don't want to be seen to be playing silly politics. This is far too serious a matter for that to happen.

So we object, as we made clear this morning, to the rotating leadership. We gave our reasons for doing so. We think it is not the best solution. You, in your wisdom, said, "It is going to work." Well, we shall see, but so long as we believe that something is not in the interests of the citizens of Leeds we shall express that view. If you prove us wrong, we may be the very first to congratulate you. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR HARRIS: Lord Mayor, I think I am the 6th or 7th longest-serving Councillor in this chamber, give or take, and in my 20 years I have not previously witnessed what I have just witnessed, and I regret that what has just taken place has.

To Councillor Wakefield, I want to say that I similarly have not seen a situation where the change in power is what we are witnessing tonight, obviously because there has been a Labour administration for more than my 20 years on Council, but to Keith Wakefield, I know he has carried out the job as Leader of Council faithfully and diligently and has worked hard, and I say to him that I am grateful to him for the job that he did.

I don't want to get drawn into what Councillor Atha has said. I just appeal to Council tonight that we let the matter be now and continue with this evening's proceedings as they ought to be. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR A. CARTER: My Lord Mayor, in the light of the comments from Councillor Atha, which I have to say I deeply regret at this particular meeting, I think it is important that as a member of the new joint administration I also comment.

First of all, on the issue of the way in which we are required to pass a resolution to remove a previous Leader, I think it is pretty barbaric, to be honest. There was another way, of course;

a resignation could have been tendered after the result of the election, but to be forced to put a resolution down of this sort because the law - not my law, by the way, not their law but your law - stipulates is not a very nice way of doing things, and I would like to use the opportunity, as I have been presented with one, of saying that I was able to work, I think, pretty well over the last 12 months as Leader of the Opposition with Councillor Wakefield, and I think it is fair to say that both he and I have some considerable time for each other.

I now want to comment extremely briefly on Councillor Atha's performance. For the benefit of our guests, we had a Special Council Meeting at 10 o'clock this morning called by the Labour Group, Councillor Atha being the prime mover. It was a Special Council Meeting. All Members of the Council turned up apart from four absentees from the group that called the meeting.

We then had a debate, fairly heated debate, and the vote was taken and the vote was cast and the decision was made. That was done on the basis that it was far better to deal with our debates in a proper debating Council Meeting and not in a meeting when it is largely ceremonial and we should be celebrating the election of a new Lord Mayor. (Applause)

Not only should we be celebrating the election of a new Lord Mayor, but we should be thanking an outgoing Lord Mayor, one who has done an excellent job, and one who will do an excellent job. It is demeaning that Councillor Atha has sought to open the debate up again in this chamber. I have known Bernard for many years. I have to say, that is the most regrettable performance I have ever seen him give. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (Applause)

(The motion was carried)

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

COUNCILLOR J. PROCTER: Lord Mayor, 7(a), I move in terms of the notice.

COUNCILLOR HAMILTON: Second, Lord Mayor.

(The motion was carried)

ITEM 7(b)-(d) - APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE BODIES

COUNCILLOR J. PROCTER: Lord Mayor, I move in terms of the notice, with the addition of Councillor Keith Wakefield to the Council Business Committee detailed in Item 7(c).

COUNCILLOR HAMILTON: Seconded, Lord Mayor.

(The motion was carried)

ITEM 7(e) - CONSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

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

COUNCILLOR HAMILTON: I second, Lord Mayor.

(The motion was carried)

ITEM 8(a) - EXECUTIVE ARRANGEMENTS

COUNCILLOR J. PROCTER: Lord Mayor, 8(a) I move in terms of the notice.

COUNCILLOR HAMILTON: I second, Lord Mayor.

(The motion was carried)

ITEM 8(b) - LEAD MEMBERS

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

COUNCILLOR HAMILTON: I second, Lord Mayor.

(The motion was carried)

ITEM 9 - PROPOSED CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

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

COUNCILLOR HAMILTON: I second, Lord Mayor.

(The motion was carried)

ITEM 10 - THE COUNCIL PLAN

COUNCILLOR J. PROCTER: For the final time, Lord Mayor, I move in terms of the notice.

COUNCILLOR HAMILTON: For the final time I second, Lord Mayor.

(The motion was carried)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Right, I think I am now led to believe that dinner will be served at The Royal Armouries shortly. The salad is getting cold, and therefore I ask you if you could make your way outside. We are, indeed, I suppose, honoured in the fact that the transport will be at the front doors rather than at the rear doors, so if you would like to make your way to the front doors, please. I will see you down there later.

(Council rose at 7.35 p.m.)