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LEEDS CITY COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Held on

Wednesday, 10th January, 2018

At

THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
CIVIC HALL,
LEEDS

In the Chair:

THE LORD MAYOR
(COUNCILLOR J DOWSON)

VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

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VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF LEEDS CITY COUNCIL
ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 10th JANUARY, 2018

THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon everyone. Those of you who are listening carefully will notice my voice is not in too good form and I understand that the dreaded colds and flu have hit several of our numbers, so please go easy on me today, don't have me shouting at you too much today!

If I could just remind, you, please, to have all your mobile devices switched to silent.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE LORD MAYOR: We have just a few announcements to make. The first thing I would like to do is wish you all a very Happy New Year, the first Council meeting of the New Year.

Obviously the meeting is to be webcast – for those in the gallery it is those four black things on the walls. That is quite good.

2018 is shaping up to be quite a momentous year, lots of really important commemorations and celebrations coming up. Obviously we have got the 100 years commemoration of the Representation of the People Act, but also the formation of the RAF and, towards the end of the year we are going to be looking towards commemorating 100 years since the end of World War I on 11th November.

You will also see on your seat an update from Candlelighters. We thought as we are just over half way through the year it might be useful for you to see how we are actually getting on. We have actually so far raised just over £132,000 (*applause*). However – and we are so lucky on this – we have actually had an organisation called the Kentown Wizard Foundation who are actually matching that pound for pound up to £250,000, so that figure was actually £265,000, which is a phenomenal total and a big thank you to all of you and also to all of the organisations around the city who have actually done things to help us raise that amount of money. The people of Leeds never cease to amaze me with their generosity of time and money, so a big thank you to everyone who has helped with that.

I would also like to take the opportunity to extend our congratulations to the following residents of Leeds who were honoured in the Queen's New Year's Honours List. We have:

Mr David Earnshaw, who was awarded a CBE for services to education;

Miss Diane Winder, who was awarded an OBE for services to community safety;

Mr Peter Heald, who was awarded an MBE for service to business and the community in West Yorkshire; and the following four people were also awarded a BEM, a British Empire Medal:

Mrs Sheila Miller, for services to the community in Leeds;

Mrs Phoebe Ethel Revill-Johnson, for voluntary services to police officers;

Mrs Steven Robinson, for services to people with disabilities and the community in West Yorkshire; and

Mrs Margaret Stead, for services to women suffering from breast cancer in West Yorkshire.

I am sure we would all like to show our appreciation to them. (*applause*)

ITEM 1 – MINUTES OF 2 MEETINGS HELD 8th NOVEMBER 2017

THE LORD MAYOR: We are going to move straight on to the meeting. Minutes of the two meetings held on 8th November. Councillor Ogilvie.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I second that, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I would like to put that to the vote. I call for votes to receive the Minutes. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

ITEM 2 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

ITEM – COMMUNICATIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 3, Communications. Chief Executive.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: I have just got one to report, Lord Mayor, which is from the Minister for Employment at the time, Damian Hinds, who has just been promoted to Education Secretary of State. It was about Universal Credit and that has been circulated to all Members.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you.

ITEM 4 – DEPUTATIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: Now we move on to Deputations. We have four Deputations today. Tom.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. The first is Chapel Allerton 20 is Plenty, regarding 20 miles per hour zones; the second is a group regarding the cost of using public conveniences in the city, particularly Leeds bus station; the third, a group regarding a public space protection order near to the Marie Stopes Centre; and fourth, a group asking for more Changing Places facilities in the city.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I second that, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I would like to call for the vote to receive the Deputations. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED, so if we could receive Deputation one, please.

DEPUTATION 1 – CHAPEL ALLERTON 20 IS PLENTY

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

MR R WARD: My Lord Mayor, Members of Council, we are three of the Members of the Chapel Allerton 20 is Plenty Group. I am Bob Ward, this is my colleague Neil Hollingworth, and Heidi Farrar.

We applaud Leeds City Council's endorsement and promotion and expansion of 20 mile an hour zone limits throughout the city. Are these zones effective, however? There is a very high level of public concern about excessive speeds within our zones and the need for something to be done to make them even more effective.

Measurements carried out by LCC Highways Department have shown mean speeds of around 25 miles per hour at several locations in our zones but, of course, a mean speed implies that approximately half of the recorded speeds are well above that figure and the Highways data does confirm this. The speed limit of 20 is, with its red circle, a maximum, it is not a mean. Our own measurements carried out in co-operation with West Yorkshire Police using their official hand-held speed gun – or our own speed gun which we purchased at enormous expense from Amazon – has been calibrated against the West Yorkshire Police gun and to within plus or minus one mile an hour, and that shows quite conclusively that over half of motorists are exceeding 25 miles an hour in a 20 zone.

This very morning we were out, bitterly cold, freezing our proverbials off, with Radio Leeds and they confirmed that 41 cars out of the 54 that we recorded were in excess of 20 miles an hour – that is 75% were exceeding the official speed limit – and 27 of them (that is 50%), were above 25 miles an hour.

So we ask ourselves why are the zones apparently not working? Informal (shall we call them) interviews by the West Yorkshire Police Constable in our area showed very clearly that when people had been caught by his speed gun the majority of them genuinely thought the speed limit at that point was 30 miles an hour and, frankly most people he interviewed could not be described as your boy racers or terms which are even more graphic. They could be excused for not being sure what the true speed limit was.

The signs at the entrances to the zones are often placed very high and often partly concealed and can be difficult to read. The red circle is often ten feet or more above the ground.

My Lord Mayor, I would now like to mention a document called Traffic Signs Rules and General Directions 2016. I really would hesitate to recommend this 547 page document as relaxing bedtime reading, but if you want to, fine. It does make it crystal clear what Local Authorities are compelled to do and also what they are allowed to do.

Traffic calming measures of 4ft squares of tarmac, or full width humps, are exactly the same in a 20 zone as in a 30 zone so it is quite excusable that motorists are a little confused what the speed limit is at that point. However, if each of those traffic cushions or traffic full width – what are they called - thingies, the situation would be crystal clear if they had a 20 roundel painted on the road surface immediately in front of them. They would make it crystal clear for the motorist and the cost/benefit equation would be very compelling. TSRGD 2016 would allow that.

Within any 20 zone, no point in that zone is allowed to be more than 50 metres from a traffic-calming measure, but that is a maximum distance so a Local Authority, if it so wished,

could reduce that distance from 50 metres down to something less to increase the effectiveness of the zone.

My Lord Mayor, when you are driving I am sure that you are looking at the road surface in front of the vehicles – at least I hope you are. This would in our view be the best place to put reminders of what the speed limit is on the road. 20 roundels painted on the road cost about fifty quid. This compares to estimates we have had from Highways of £150 for a vertical sign, £600 for tarmac cushions, £1,500 for a speed hump and £2,000 for a flashing neon sign.

What we are requesting, finally, working in co-operation with LCC Highways, West Yorkshire Police and any other interested parties such as ROSPA, we would like to see and participate in a properly designed scientific trial to measure the effect of the measures which we are suggesting. We would therefore respectfully suggest that a working party be set up with the Council Departments that are appropriate to investigate and implement this proposal.

The benefits to the people of Leeds and later, perhaps, to the more wide country, could be beneficial and very significant. Thank you all for your kind attention and for the opportunity to address Council. Thank you. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I second that, Lord Mayor.

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

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

MR R WARD: Thank you, Lord Mayor, thank you, Councillors. (*applause*)

DEPUTATION 2 – PUBLIC CONVENIENCE CHARGES AT LEEDS BUS STATION

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

MS J PORTER: Lord Mayor and Members of the Council, I would like to introduce Simon Copland, who is the Chair of the Older Persons Engagement Group of Age UK Leeds; Mark Clayton, who is also a committee member of the same group; Nigel Swann who has been a resident of Leeds for 45 years; and myself. I am Janet Porter, I am a former teacher and senior journalist with the Pudsey Times newspaper, which is part of the Harrogate Advertiser series. I campaigned for a number of community issues at that time including the drainage scheme for Rodley in the 80s, working with Councillor Andrew Carter and the Rodley Residents Action Group. I later became a community journalist with the Oban Times in Scotland. For 22 years I worked for Leeds City Council's Adult Social Care supporting vulnerable adults. I have also achieved some improvements to the Buslingthorpe area of Leeds with the support of the Lord Mayor, Councillor Jane Dowson, and other local Councillors.

I am here today because I feel strongly that toilets should be accessible for all who need them when they need them, and not restricted by locks, charges or turnstiles or by discrimination on the grounds of registered disability or otherwise. In particular, the toilets at the Leeds bus station were free until just over a year ago when a new charging system came into place. The charge is 20 pence but it is not the amount which is the issue; it is the nuisance and embarrassment of the turnstile system and the fact that it affects older people; the less well off; the people trying to lessen the impact of cars in the city by using public transport; people who may not be registered disabled but who still may have difficulties with bladder function or with standing; pregnant women who need to make more trips to the toilet.

It is a basic human need to go to the toilet yet here is an example of a punitive system which at the very least causes stress and irritation, and what if a person does have a toilet accident? What system is there in place to deal with this? Have the turnstiles been risk assessed? I presume they have but I did witness a frail old lady knocked to the floor by a turnstile as someone exited a toilet in a Leeds shopping mall.

Lack of facilities also deters and prevents some people with problems from being able to access this beautiful city. I contacted Gerry Laverty, the Leeds bus station manager, who wrote that disabled toilets were locked so as not to be abused by those not registered as disabled. How can using a toilet for the correct reason be classed as abuse? Can we not share?

I am here to gain support from the Councillors of the City of Leeds and urge them to take action on this matter. Leeds is a prosperous city in a wealthy country. It is important for residents and also for visitors who will judge the city not just for its vibrant culture and wonderful architecture; more importantly for decent, accessible toilet facilities.

I understand this needs to be funded but what would happen if we funded the ambulance at source, or the fire service? Of course we do not, it is funded before the emergency happened. So it would be with toilets. Please find another way to fund the toilets.

I appeal to the Members of this Council to work towards the City of Leeds becoming a fine example to the rest of the country by enabling free, accessible use of all toilets. This is in everyone's best interest, shoppers and traders alike. At bus stations it should be made easier, not more difficult, to get on with the journey, especially as most buses do not have on-board toilets.

I have just returned from a trip to India. The Title was Tigers, Temples and the Taj Mahal. Sadly, we saw not a single tiger but we did see the Taj Mahal and scores of temples. Your alliterative skills may help you work out the places that we actually visited the most; yes, the toilets were the most memorable – some excellent, some less so, but all very welcome.

I learned Latin at school and this famous quote of 1872 stuck - *Sanitas Sanitatum Omnia Sanitas*. It was used by Benjamin Disraeli, who wisely took the health of the people as a serious issue and legislated for access to pure air and water.

THE LORD MAYOR: Final sentence, Janet, please.

MS J PORTER: Thank you. I would like to urge the Members of Leeds City Council to follow his lead by using their powers to make a start now towards enabling everyone to have free and uncurtailed access to toilet facilities throughout the city so that any trip into Leeds can be really positive. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: I move that the matter be referred to the West Yorkshire Combined Authority for consideration.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I second that, Lord Mayor.

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

I would like to thank you all for coming to today's meeting. Officers from the relevant department will be in contact with you in due course. Thank you, good bye.

MS J PORTER: Thank you. (*applause*)

DEPUTATION 3 – PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER

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

MS G MONTGOMERY: OK, thank you. My name is Geraldine Montgomery and my friends at Leeds Labour Women have joined me while I make a speech today.

MS W WINTERS: I am Wendy Winters.

MS J FURLONG: Julie Furlong.

MS E ROWBOTTOM: Ellen Rowbottom.

MS G MONTGOMERY: We have come here today to request that the Council set up a Public Spaces Protection Order or similar safe buffer zone to prevent protests taking place at the Marie Stopes Clinic on Barwick Road in Leeds. We have come to speak today because we are very concerned that these protests, which ultimately aim to dissuade women from accessing available healthcare, put Leeds women at risk, including vulnerable, disadvantaged and distressed women.

You may be aware here that the UK 1967 Abortion Act provides legal access to abortions but this Act does not allow women to access an abortion at their request. The decision rests with two doctors and it is according to their judgment about the impact of abortion versus the impact of childbirth on a woman's physical or mental health.

According to the most recently available figures from the Department of Health in 2016, legal abortions 2,957 were carried out on behalf of Leeds CCGs, mostly for women in their twenties but one in seven were also teenagers. To give a sense of the common nature of this procedure the Royal Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists estimated in 2011 that at least one third of British women will have had an abortion by the time they reach 45, and the majority of abortions are performed on women who have not previously had the procedure.

You may not be aware of anti-abortion protests in Leeds but anti-abortion groups originating from the United States, such as the Centre for Bioethical Reform and 40 Days for Life have been organising protests in Leeds in 2017 and further protests are planned. The Centre for Bioethical Reform's secular consumer protection programme, the Abort 67 project, is conducted outside UK abortion clinics and aims to show prospective clients a viewpoint on what abortion is and to provide abortion risk information that includes studies the campaign believes are concealed from clients of abortion services. In contrast, the 40 Days for Life campaign organises focused 40 day non-stop round the clock Christian orientated prayer vigils outside abortion facilities in a given community, including the Marie Stopes Clinic.

Over the last ten years their organisation has celebrated international actions that prevent people from accessing abortions. They also celebrate leading workers to quit their jobs and reported have closed 90 abortion facilities and there are other similar groups operating in the UK.

If we do not act you may be aware that at the time that the UK Abortion Act was introduced 50 years ago, unwanted pregnancy was a clear public health problem. Abortions had been carried out before the Act was introduced and while we do not know how many, estimates vary from 10,000 to 250,000 abortions per year in the UK. Some of these abortions were performed openly by doctors relying on the defence they preserve the life of the mother, but others were performed in back streets, so impeding or delaying access to legal abortion may not actually reduce the level of abortions carried out.

Before the Act the medical consequences of legal abortion were significant maternal morbidity and mortality. Official figures note 35 to 50 maternal deaths a year but it is generally agreed the real figure is likely to have been higher as doctors will not have recorded this as the cause of death. There are also contemporary concerns about health risks of illegal abortion pills now available online.

In addition the UK has one of the harshest penalties for unlawful abortion in Europe. The broader consequences of not doing anything is that mothers may be unable to cope with their pregnancy, may be prosecuted for accessing illegal abortions, may be injured through unwanted pregnancy or in an illegal abortion and women with the least resources and the least choices are likely to be the most disadvantaged and their children may be taken into care as families will be unable to cope.

The reason why we are asking for a Public Space Protection Order is these are broad powers currently available which allow Councils to criminalise particular non-criminal activities taking place within a specific area. Preventing protests from taking place close to medical facilities will help protect anonymity of people using these services including those at risk of domestic abuse and honour-based violence.

It is not a radical choice. The solution of a buffer zone is something that has been considered by Councils nationwide with similar access zones established internationally from Canada to South Africa. Ealing, Birmingham, Portsmouth and Southwark Borough in London have all voted to explore PSPO in response to calls from the public to ensure women do not experience intimidation or interference in accessing medical care, that employees can access work without fear of reprisal or regular harassment and that the locality will not develop into somewhere with a negative quality of life.

Leeds City Council provides advice for the people living in the ward that they represent and they are aware of the needs of their community and in touch with the issues that local people face. This is an issue where Leeds residents can currently experience intimidation while accessing legal medical care and treatments. It is not an issue of silencing the views of any group but of creating an appropriate space to do so where the beliefs and views which everybody has the right to express cannot interfere with the services being provided. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I second that, Lord Mayor.

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

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

DEPUTATION 4 – CHANGING PLACES

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

MR C McDONNELL: Ladies and gentlemen, my name is Colin McDonnell and to my right is Nathan Popple. We are here today to talk to you about the importance and the need for changing places around Leeds train and bus stations. Changing places are more than just a disabled toilet. They are facilities that provide a lifting hoist, an adult sized height adjustable changing bed to allow disabled children and adults who are unable to transfer independently to still go out because they can be hoisted safely on to the toilet or, should the person be incontinent and wear pads, they can be safely hoisted on to a changing bed so they can be laid down to be changed and their personal care needs met.

Without Changing Places, loved ones are often cared for on dirty toilet floors, in the backs of cars or using inappropriate and unsafe baby changing areas, or in some cases, not at all. These options are unsafe, unhygienic, undignified and unacceptable but the alternative is to stay at home. I cannot speak for everyone - however, I am not willing to do this.

As a prime example of the struggles we face, last year it was possible for me to go to London by train because I was aware that they have a changing places at King's Cross station. The train journey is two-and-a-half hours long and everyone else can either use the toilet on the train or immediately when they get off. However, as Leeds does not have a changing places, I have to wait until an extra hour until I got home. This is unnecessary and puts myself and countless other people with disabilities in an uncomfortable situation with regards to the train station.

It has been reported that over £500m is to be spent redeveloping Leeds train station over the coming years. Leeds City Council has said that passenger numbers are expected to double, meaning more passengers with disabilities will also be visiting. Therefore, if we want more people to visit Leeds we should ensure that we can provide the facilities required to cater for everyone's needs, regardless of their limitations.

With regards to the bus station, in an article concerning September 2016 refurbishment of the toilet facilities in the Leeds bus station, the West Yorkshire Metro Transport website reported in March 2017, and I quote:

“The West Yorkshire Combined Authority is committed to maintaining and improve the comfort, safety and quality of its bus stations.”

The refurbishment could have presented the perfect opportunity to create a changing places facility, as I believe there is enough space to do so. However, the money was spent on cosmetic alterations and it is clear that little thought and research was put into the needs of disabled bus users, e.g. needing extra equipment to use toilet facilities rather than just an average disabled toilet.

In the last twelve months I have expressed my views and concerns about the lack of changing places facilities at the train and bus stations at every opportunity. I realise and appreciate that Leeds City Council has made a huge effort to make this city more accessible and many changing places have been installed across the city. Thank you. It is appreciated by all that need to use these facilities. My concerns are that there is not always time to travel somewhere else to use the toilet when catching a connecting line.

I understand that the installation of changing places at the train and bus stations is down to the individual developers at Network Rail and West Yorkshire Metro. We would like to request the Council's assistance to insist that these companies add changing places to their future redevelopments in Leeds. Thank you for your time. *(Standing ovation)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I heartily second that Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Latty. I would like to call for the vote to refer the Deputation. *(A vote was taken)* That is unanimous. CARRIED

Thank you for coming to today's meeting and officers from the relevant Department will be in contact with you in due course, Colin. Thank you so much for coming. Good afternoon. *(applause)*

ITEM 5 – RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD – AMENDMENTS TO THE LEEDS SITE ALLOCATIONS PLAN

THE LORD MAYOR: I would like to tell you I have considered the amendment to item 5 and consulted with Legal Officers, so I am asking our Legal Officer and City Solicitor to explain the legal rationale for my ruling that it is unfortunately out of order.

THE CITY SOLICITOR: Thank you, Lord Mayor. In summary, the Lord Mayor was advised that the amendment is not in order for the following reasons.

First, it is not relevant to the original motion at Item 5, which is to move recommendations relating to the Site Allocations Plan. Amending housing numbers to which the amendment refers is not part of the Site Allocations Plan process. The SAP Report does not relate at all to amending, lowering, the housing requirement. The required consultation referred to in the report refers only to the specific revisions to the SAP. The report refers to the housing requirement only as background information in the context of the Leeds Local Plan. Amended housing requirement figures do not form part of the SAP revisions or the report recommendations.

The appropriate mechanism to consult on housing targets is through the relevant plan making process. As the housing target is addressed in the adopted Core Strategy, the correct process is through the Core Strategy Selective Review.

To date the Council has not formally considered or come to a view on its position in relation to amending the housing number or what that should be. The earliest date when a formal position on

the housing requirement will be taken by the Council is on 7th Feb when Executive Board will consider whether to resolve to undertake public consultation on the Core Strategy Selective Review which will include a proposed housing requirement figure.

Second, if the amendment was held to be in order, Council would need properly to dispose of it, including taking a vote. If the vote was carried Council would be taking a decision to do something inappropriate as it would be agreeing to undertake a public consultation on a matter that the Council has to date not formally considered. That would be premature and improper.

Finally, to allow an amended motion which is not relevant to the substantive motion would set a potentially unlawful and therefore unacceptable precedent for the future. Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: So in summary it is out of order as it has no relevance to the original motion. If it were to be allowed the Council may make a decision to do something that was inappropriate, premature and improper and it would set a potentially unlawful precedent of being allowed to introduce amendments which were not about the subject of the motion.

Councillor Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Lord Mayor, in advance of that it surely is appropriate to comment on the ruling on the advice we have just been given.

The fact of the matter is what we are considering here is all about this matter, it is all about housing numbers.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Procter, I do appreciate that you would like to say something on this particular thing and you will have your opportunity during the debate. I am afraid that the debate on this is finished. I have made my ruling. I appreciate what you are saying.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Lord Mayor, why are we considering it then, if it has been ruled out?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lewis is now going to speak, Councillor Procter. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Lord Mayor, I think people will be scratching their heads at this pantomime that we have got and that John is indulging in at the moment.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Running scared at what we are scratching our heads at.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: For most of us feel that we have debated this enough over the past few months.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Rubbish.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: We have had special meetings, we have had all sorts and I do not expect, to be honest, to hear anything new to day.

This particular amendment that the Tories have come up with, for those who have not been in the loop, I will just explain a little bit about what has happened because what is clearly going on is an attempt by the Tories to portray this as them being shut down by the administration and us not wanting the debate. Far from it. What happened was the amendment was questioned by officers who had the view that Catherine has expressed a few minutes ago. Legal Officers came to us and said, effectively, "What's your view on this?"

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: No they did not.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: John, stop waving your hands about, let me finish.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lewis, please. The Legal Officer.

THE CITY SOLICITOR: Can I correct that factually. Actually a Member – I do not know whether they would mind me naming them but a Member...

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: I will name him – James Lewis.

THE CITY SOLICITOR: ...emailed me at 14 minutes past three yesterday afternoon.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Withdraw, Councillor Richard Lewis.

THE LORD MAYOR: Could we please allow Catherine to finish what she is speaking.

THE CITY SOLICITOR: Actually the issue was raised by that Member and following that I considered the position and felt that because of that a definitive ruling had been asked for by that Member and the only person capable of giving a definitive ruling was the Lord Mayor and that is why I spoke and briefed the Lord Mayor.

Following that I am sure the Lord Mayor would confirm that her view was that she was to rule the matter out of order, the amendment out of order. That is the sequence of events and I think it is very important to be clear about that.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: What a disgrace. You should resign.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: I apologise for getting the order wrong – however, the reality is that we as elected Members were quite happy for the amendment to go because we did not want to stifle debate, we were quite happy even though it was out of order we were relaxed, it was not our problem as far as we were concerned and we were more than happy that a form of words was devised – and I hope Catherine will support me – a form of words was offered to the Opposition that would have enabled effectively the amendment to come here and it would have been in order, it would have been acceptable.

The Opposition chose not to go along with that so when we have all this righteous indignation from the Tories, the reality is all they are doing is trying to stage manage something to make it look as if we are trying to stifle debate so you have got some fodder for your next leaflets for the local elections. It is a nonsense and you should be ashamed of yourselves.

We have talked often enough about this issue. We have debated it time and time again, I can see that there is a long Order Paper here of people who feel they have not said enough but it is time to move on. It is time to go to consultation. Clearly as a Council we do not want to be in a position where effectively we have open debate for ever more. You might enjoy this navel gazing; we are an administration that has to make progress on this. If you really think you are being responsible by behaving the way you are, you are completely wrong.

Lord Mayor, we need to move on with this. Support the motion. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Procter, if you would like to comment, please.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Well, Lord Mayor, what a farce. What an absolute farce. The fact of the matter is, Lord Mayor, that you have been given duff advice. The very first document that you picked up, what does it talk about? It talks about the amended numbers. It actually states here what we are approving is “Add in to table 1 additional column.” What is it doing? It is doing exactly what we are saying. The view of the Legal Officers is wrong, Lord Mayor – pure and simple, wrong.

The conversations I had with them yesterday and today, I might say, accuses us of seeking to force this Council to go out to public consultation on a figure that ultimately will set the housing target for this Council. That is not what we have said at all. That is not what it says. We are actually saying we should consult on the Government’s target, and what’s wrong with that? What exactly is wrong with that? Nothing at all but the fact of the matter is that for some bizarre reason the housing target figure is a huge embarrassment to this Labour administration. I do not know why. I do not know why and I have said throughout, if you were happy with 70,000, fine, say it, go to the people of Leeds and say you are proud of it. There is only one person who said that they were in this Council Chamber and that was Councillor Michael Lyons. At least he has got some guts. I disagree with him on this issue but at least he has got an honourable conviction. The rest of you, “Oh well maybe not, maybe not.”

We go to DPP Panel to talk about numbers in actual fact and what then happens? Lots of shuffling goes on and, “Oh, well, we are not really sure” and nobody likes the fact that actually this Group was the only Group at DPP who suggested a lower housing figure and now you are trying to move away from the one you have adopted, which is closer to 50,000. What this document does that you are looking to approve right now fixes that approach. That is what it does, otherwise why do you think we abandoned the public inquiry? Why? Because it was in line with the Government’s figures, that is why. That is what we know is absolutely the case. You are in a hole and goodness me you keep on digging, don’t you?

Lord Mayor, this is a straightforward proposal that is saying to the people of Leeds do you think the Government’s figure – the Government’s figure – of a little over 42,000 is the right figure to adopt and to actually allocate sites to. We have always said it is a nonsense to allocate sites and then go about trying to unpick that and say we have allocated too many sites. It is ridiculous. We need to allocate sites to the requirement. That requirement in our view is 42,000 houses, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Andrew Carter to comment, please.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. When Councillor Lewis made his comments there are only two ways to construe his opening remarks. One, he was either deliberately trying to mislead this Council or, two, the Deputy Leader’s namesake, Councillor James Lewis, had failed to tell him that he had lobbied the Legal Officer to get this taken off the table. That is no way to run a Council, it is no way to treat the people of Leeds, it is wholly unacceptable and what it underlines is the fact that Members over there are still determined to press ahead with a housing target figure which is unsustainable, undeliverable and extremely unwise.

My Lord Mayor, the people of Leeds have every right to be thoroughly concerned about the whole charade that has gone on and in particular the behaviour of the controlling Group of this Council.

At the last Executive Board meeting Councillor Blake looked at me in ominous tones and said, “Andrew, we know what you are doing.” (*laughter*) Well, one thing is for certain, we now know that you lot haven’t a clue what you are doing (*laughter*) and that is for sure.

My Lord Mayor, why do they want to stop the people of Leeds commenting on a range of figures? Why is that? There is undoubtedly in my mind a determination by some Members opposite to

press ahead with the maximum possible number of houses, and be warned, those of you who have been taken in by the Development Plan meetings and what was said by these people – it is a con trick and the people of Leeds are being denied a proper chance to comment thoroughly.

Before Councillor Lewis goes on about us not wanting to build houses for people who need them, that is an untruth and a downright lie so do not say it again. I am proud to say under the leadership of a former colleague of Councillor Golton's and myself, we delivered the housing numbers required by the then Government, the Labour Government, on a number of occasions. You have failed to deliver the housing numbers on the right sites and now you are proposing to deliver them on the wrong sites, destroying our environment for generations to come. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor David Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I have got to say I am disappointed that the amendment was not allowed. I think the East Leeds Independents and the Garforth and Swillington Independents and the new Independent – welcome aboard – are in the same boat as we are in the Green Party in that we do not have a representative on the Development Plans Panel so we have not been involved in that discussion, although I think I have made it quite clear what our position is and the housing numbers are too high. It seems stupid to me that we go ahead with a document where effectively the Core Strategy still says there is 70,000, so we are still talking about 70,000 houses, we have not changed anything. How can we go ahead with something that has these strange pieces of land that are Green Belt but not Green Belt in them? Is it PAS land? No, it is not PAS land, it is Green Belt but it seems very much like PAS land to me.

I think the actual document is premature. Clearly we have got to get on with it but what we have got to get on with, we have got to get on about revising housing numbers first and that should be and I think it is totally wrong that an opportunity to consult on a different housing number – one actually I share the same kind of figure with the Tories – is that we should be going ahead with that. I do not see how that is affecting what you are doing by consulting on this document.

Quite clearly I am not going to support the recommendations. We are going to vote against it and we will be consistent. The numbers are too high, we need to do something now. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Leadley.

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: My Lord Mayor, for ten years City Town and Country Planning in Leeds has been stuck in a mire of inflated housing targets, costing the taxpayer millions of pounds and this Council thousands of hours of Officer time. No-one has got an extra house out of it; supply of new houses may even have been reduced by encouraging land banking and speculative land dealing. This is not something new revealed only by recent statistics. Councillor Andrew Carter called an Extraordinary Council Meeting to look at it in December 2007 and we have been rightly consistent about it in Morley since that time.

At last there seems to be widespread agreement that we are in a mire and must find a way out of it, which may be easier said than done without falling into a even deeper bog.

For ten years housing targets have been as motional as the standing glaciers. It is odd that you wait for ten years and then two glaciers begin to move at once. Major public planning consultations are complicated enough and I am not sure how people are going to cope with two linked but different consultations running more or less side by side.

From 11th January until 26th February we will have the latest Site Allocations Plan or SAP consultation the subject of today's report, and from 9th February until 23rd March we will be consulting on the Core Strategy Review. As well as overlapping the consultations are arguably cart before horse. The centrepiece of the latter will be reducing substantially the 16 year housing

target from 70,000 without carrying forward any accumulated backlog. It would have been better to have sorted that out before making the SAP housing allocations.

At Development Plans Panel on 19th December I proposed that we accept the lowest Officer recommendation that under the new 16 year time should be 51,952 and that was seconded by Councillor Jim McKenna. Ideally it should have been a bit lower – between 46,000 and 50,000 – but 51,952 was as good as we were going to get on the day – less than 4% above the top of the ideal range, so well within the bounds of reason and it might be adjusted downwards. Even Councillor Walshaw, Mr 70,000 himself, supported the motion (*cheers*) but with a glum enthusiasm befitting an East European Politburo member voting to abolish himself in 1989. (*laughter*)

Officers have pointed a way out of the mire which would mean making enough dummy SAP allocations to satisfy a 70,000 target and then voting backwards to 51,952 in a later Core Strategy Review. I am not sure that a Planning Inspector would be convinced by decoy ducks in the form of Broad Locations which have been set out by Officers to allow the backward leap. If that strategy was challenged successfully they would fall like a card house.

We suggested a better and safer way out during the last SAP Review in November 2015 which would have saved more Green Belt, so I will be updating that in our formal response this time.

We note that some humble pie has been eaten and that a most important corner has been turned, but we will be abstaining from today's vote and setting out our revised comments in detail during both consultation periods. Nonetheless, we welcome the progress so far.

The Government figure of 42,384 is remarkably close to our best preferred 46,000 which we promoted for some years. A mid-point between 42,384 and 51,952 is closer still at 47,168.

Councillor Procter's amendment would add to confusion by bringing forward into the first consultation something which clearly belongs to the second. The required trick is to bring in a much reduced target without being pre-empted by site allocations based on the discredited old targets. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: That is lovely. Councillor Finnigan, please.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to open up by paying tribute to my colleague. Councillor Tom Leadley has been a John the Baptist type character who has been banging on about housing numbers since his election in 2003. Whether that was through the Labour Party's Regional Spatial Strategy or future strategies it has been clear to him and to us for many, many years that the housing target was unrealistic, unachievable and one that needed to be reduced quite significantly. I would pay further tribute to him because he has led that action which has led to a more realistic target, notwithstanding some of us feel that it is still too high and should be reduced slightly more, and that is what we will be looking to actually achieve.

One of the things that we think the people of Morley deserve is an apology from this Labour administration for the situation that they put them in as a result of backing those higher targets. We have seen green field site after green field site lost as a result of this ridiculous and unrealistic and unachievable target – whether that is Lane Side Farm in Churwell or Daisy Hill in Morley or the sites in Drighlington, sites on Bruntcliffe Road.

We are in a situation where this administration has capitulated to developers, putting their priorities first instead of the local community, and the local community has to bear the brunt of this failure. That means that schools are incapable of coping with the demand that is placed upon them as these green field sites are ripped up. The health centres cannot cope, the roads cannot cope.

We deserve an apology but ultimately will we get an apology? Will anybody be held accountable for this failure? The answer will clearly be no, nobody ever accepts that they fail; nobody ever accepts an apology; nobody ever accepts responsibility. They just go on spending taxpayers' money, whether it is on this, whether it is on Supertram, whether it is on NGT, whatever it might actually be, spending other people's money foolishly instead of dealing with the realities and the situations that they find themselves in.

Ultimately somebody is responsible and accountable for this and somebody ought to be offering their resignation. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Barry Anderson.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. The reason I am wanting to talk is – and it is something I apologise to my colleagues on the Development Plans Panel because you have heard this before. What are you actually consulting about, because various of your Members have been talking about putting press releases out about 70,000, 66,000, 55,000, 52,000, let us criticise 42,000. It is not us that have been putting this out, it is you and the public are well and truly confused.

You say you are going to reduce down the numbers yet you are still consulting on the same figure. Which statement was correct? You don't really know yourselves as to what you are planning to do.

The documentation is totally, utterly confusing that you are putting out there. Does anybody, maybe with the exception of one or two Members of the Development Plans Panel, actually understand the Green Belt assessment that has been carried out and why it has not been put alongside the individual sites so that we can actually see whether you are or are not sticking to the principles that are meant to be set out.

If we who are relatively knowledgeable in these things do not understand it, what chance has the public? You keep going on about you want to consult – well, why don't you consult in a way that people understand? You are not doing it, you are making a total fool of everybody.

Then we have got the debacle of the legal advice on the Broad Locations. We are told that you have counsel's advice. Who has seen this counsel's advice, other than maybe Councillor Lewis and I do not even know whether he has even seen the counsel's advice as to whether or not this is on solid ground or not.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: It will be useless.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: We have asked for it in Development Plans Panel, we have even said can it be taken beneath the line. We have not been allowed it so we cannot tell you whether it is good, bad or indifferent.

Also, be careful with the figures you are quoting. I have asked for other information, as some of you are aware, and that has come back with different totals than you have got in Table 1. You have actually got a different number being allocated for Green Belt on the figures that I have got using a different method of calculating than you have got, and other people are going to be doing exactly the same out there. You are leaving yourselves open to all sorts of problems.

You keep saying you want the Government to listen more. Why don't you show a lead by listening more to what people are saying? Let us go forward and try and do something together. We need to get housing in place. You are causing untold problems when there is no need to because you will not listen to people who are trying to put forward a constructive way forward.

Please look again at what you are doing. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thanks, Lord Mayor. Councillor Leadley has hit it on the head, really. We are in a mire and we need to find a way out of it. Unfortunately, there is no way out of it because it was inevitable from the very beginning when that target of 70,000 homes for the city was chosen and you have to ask yourselves why was that figure chosen. We have had this in debate before, there were a whole line of targets that could have been chosen by the administration from the very low round about 40,000 right up to 90,000 and the administration chose to choose the figure below that which the Federation of House Builders preferred.

Why did that happen? Why did they go for the very top end in targets? Was it because the city needed 70,000 houses, or was it a target out to the development community to say “If you want to build, come to this city” and the reason why they were welcomed so wholeheartedly was because each house built is another Council Tax income for the Council; each house built was rewarded by Central Government with a New Homes Bonus.

Unfortunately for the people of Leeds the entire Housing Strategy was built on municipal greed. It was to get as much income in as possible and unfortunately for the population in Leeds, the Council did not have the capacity to live up to the deliverability to the target that they chose, which means that we are in the position that we are now.

We have never achieved any in each year of this target that has been set, we have never achieved the number of houses that we have needed. Because we have never achieved the number of houses that was needed, because they did not have that close relationship with the development community that they so wanted and they did not develop it, because those houses were not built the development community could then challenge the Council to build where they wanted.

We have been through a whole process of the Site Allocations Policy where we have looked in minute detail at so many pieces of land that have been put forward by so many different landowners, and now that is up in the air. Now the Council goes back with these Broad Locations for Growth and all that they have done is they have created a period of instability whereby landowners can bring forward land that was not even included in the Site Allocations Policy confident in the expectation that they will actually get rejected by Leeds City Council Plans and then get approved by the Inspector, because this city cannot demonstrate that it actually has a housing policy.

We cannot blame any of this on our legal advice and I know it would have been very convenient for the Conservative Group to have had that amendment in and then it looks like the Government is coming over the hill like the cavalry and saving the city by bringing in a lower figure.

Unfortunately we are in the position where we are and for the next 18 months it is open season for those developers out there that want their land to be developed because this Council has not got a policy that can stand up to scrutiny. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Colin Campbell.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I was not going to get involved in the spat until John re-wrote history but I think it is useful to remind ourselves about why we are here and that is to do with the vote on the Core Strategy.

I recall that two Groups on this Council supported the original Core Strategy of 70,000-plus and it was not the Independents and it was not the Morley Independents and it was not the Greens and it was not the Liberal Democrats, so I will leave you to work out who it was.

COUNCILLOR R GRAHAME: It wasn't the Coalition neither, was it?

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Having said all that I suppose we ought to just ask ourselves a question.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Why did you abstain at DPP? That is going to come back and haunt you.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Having said that, we talked about St John here (*laughter*) and I suppose in some ways this is Saul on the way to Damascus (*laughter*) and I will try and get another Biblical quote in if I can.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: I have never been to Damascus.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Being a Liberal we have met you there many times!

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Thank you, thank you. Having said all that, Lord Mayor, what are we being asked to do today? What we are being asked to do today, if you strip away all the rhetoric, is to agree discussions on site allocations for 70,000-plus houses. We have decided to call one or two of them a fancy title, which is Broad Locations for Growth. All that means is this is a site that is suitable for development but we are not going to take it out of the Green Belt just yet.

Even if the Inspector accepts this fiction that we are providing for them, what we are actually saying is all these Broad Location sites are developable sites and they will be developed, because developers will look at those sites and say "Well, just a minute, the Council said we can develop that site." OK, they are technically Green Belt and it may be a few years down the line, so it is worth somebody like Persimmon who has got a bit of loose change around at the moment to put their hand in their back pocket and put a bid on those sites.

We all had an email from Parlington, the Save Parlington Group. Actually I am sorry to say this but because certain people voted for 70,000, all the Parlington estate is still at risk and will continue to be at risk because what we are saying is all these Broad Locations – all these Broad Locations – are developable.

We do not agree with that and so we will not be voting for this. Thank you. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jonathan Bentley.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. If any members of the general public are watching this, people in the gallery, people on the webcast etc, they really must think what is going on, what are we talking about, what are we trying to achieve.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: That is what we are thinking as well.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Councillor Lewis, Richard Lewis, says we have talked about this enough, it has been here before. The reason it keeps coming here is because they keep getting it wrong and every time they get it wrong and come up with yet another fudged solution they have to bring it back here, and then we have the debate again. It is another Council meeting, another debate on the Site Allocations Plan and we have had them time and time again. It is like Groundhog Day.

It always comes back to the same issue – the 70,000 figure was wrong. The Opposition Parties (most of them) have always said it was wrong. The administration now wants somehow to understand that it is wrong but still examine on it and at the same time removing thousands of houses from the Site Allocations. I do not know about Groundhog Day, it is like Alice in Wonderland.

Weetwood Councillors though, coming back very parochially, do welcome the fact that the site known as Tetley Field on Weetwood Avenue has been removed from the Site Allocations for the foreseeable future. Members may recall that this Green Belt site was put into the SAP at a very late stage to facilitate its sale to fund the Headingley Stadium improvements, but thanks to the resilience of local residents that plan was thwarted, otherwise that piece of Green Belt land would now have been lost, and lost for ever.

Because of the vested interests and the secretive discussions that went on around that particular site, residents are still very wary and very suspicious that now that it has been allocated as a Broad Location it might not be safe and they still have concerns for its future and that needs resolving as well.

We have common cause with Councillor Dunn in Ardsley and Robin Hood. We and our residents worked together to oppose that inappropriate use of Green Belt land by the same applicant in both our wards and I am sorry if Councillor Dunn's principled stand on that has led to his deselection, but he is very welcome to the Opposition Benches and I would like to thank him for his support for the Weetwood residents. *(hear, hear) (applause)*

Lord Mayor, the fudge and confusion shown by the administration in the handling of the Site Allocations Plan does it no credit and is yet another reason why not just the Opposition but its own Members are losing confidence in it. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Brian Cleasby.

COUNCILLOR CLEASBY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Council, my concern over this is that we, the Opposition Parties and Members of the Executive are being placed in the same position that Members of Parliament were placed in over Brexit.

I refer to page 5 at (xi): "Delegate authority to the Chief Planning Officer in consultation with the Executive Board Member."

Are you not listening, Richard? What is constantly being said around the Chamber is that the Council is concerned about this and the Council wishes to make this decision on behalf of all our residents. This task has been made so complicated.

Look, if we were to choose, for instance, Lord Mayor, a figure of 45,000 homes and if those 45,000 had four residents each, we are talking about a large village or a small town which would only be 180,000 residents. If we found the land for that in one place, or maybe in two places, we could plan that from underground up. My concern is in the villages of Aireborough and mine of Horsforth, the problem is that all our effluent and all the effluent of new properties will go to Esholt. All the new build across the other side of the Aire Valley in Bradford also goes to Esholt because Esholt is a Bradford sewage works. You do not have to be a brilliant sailor, yachtsman or whatever to realise that if you put things into water upstream of a city, the danger is it will pass through the city. That is a problem. We have already had the terrifying experience of Kirkstall, not just the city centre, flooding. It is at risk, yet you want to put it at more risk by putting more water usage, more flood creators there.

Recently, in the last fortnight, Lord Mayor, there has been talk about money being made available for a Northern Forest. Let us consider a Northern Forest. Let us consider it as part of our Leeds and then look for a sensible place to put the houses in one or two, maybe three places but not affecting every resident in every ward in the whole of our city. Thank you, Lord Mayor.
(applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: It should have been Councillor Lay but unfortunately he is unwell today, so please send our best wishes and hope that he gets better soon, and similarly Councillor Walshaw, I understand your voice has gone as well, so Councillor Caroline Gruen is going to speak next.

COUNCILLOR C GRUEN: Firstly, it is worth pointing out that this Government's recent consultation document on housing targets is causing an outcry not just here in Leeds but across the country and across the political parties. Many Conservative-led areas in London and the South-East appear to have been asked to double their targets whilst a fair few Authorities – around 130 out of the just over 300 that are countable – have a change that is less than 100 homes per year plus or minus, and approaching half the Authorities actually see a decrease.

The housing target issues that we are facing in Leeds stem from the deeply unsatisfactory thinking and equally unsatisfactory planning policy of this Tory Government.

I want to talk about the positive and pragmatic approach that this administration in Leeds is taking to tackling the issue, and particularly with regard to the protection of Green Belt land. The introduction of Broad Locations, which has caused much heated debate both within this Chamber and outside, has, I believe, introduced a degree of flexibility which previous absolute definitions have not.

Paragraph 47 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that:

“Housing requirement can be met in Local Plans through the identification of specific sites or Broad Locations.”

This approach, using the ideas of Broad Locations, identifies an amount of existing specific proposed housing allocations or safeguarded land for housing which are currently in the Green Belt and ensures that they remain in the Green Belt and are not released until a new SAP Review is undertaken. These areas remaining in the Green Belt would be known as Broad Locations and with an adjusted housing target the Broad Locations would only be released if needed and, if they were needed, they would be released over a much longer period of time within a 16 year planning period.

The overall result of using the Broad Location approach is that of the total amount of Green Belt land identified for immediate release in the SAP, only 45% of this will need to be released, with 55% of it being retained in the Green Belt. It would also enable the Council to demonstrate a five year land supply, which is absolutely crucial if we are to have a real influence in the quest to resist the continued speculative and unscrupulous development of inappropriate sites throughout the city. Surely this must be good news and a much better position than we were in prior to the proposals in this paper, which I welcome, Lord Mayor.

We must act diligently as a Council in managing a clear way forward, despite the hurdles and nonsense presented to us by the Government because we are responsible for housing growth in our city and we want the best for the people in Leeds.

I believe this approach goes a long way towards ensuring the right balance of fulfilling housing need and maintaining the best possible town and country mix. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jim McKenna.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Before I start can I say how glad I am that your health has recovered, particularly your voice today, because I was down for stand-by and a very late day and I was looking forward to John Procter's amendment and dealing with it. I hope I would have dealt with it as efficiently as you did, Lord Mayor, but you did very well on that.

A little correction, John, if I may, Councillor Bentley. Half of the people up *here (indicating the public gallery)* are Labour Party candidates for the May election. (*applause*)

Back to business. In some ways I do echo what Barry has said earlier that there is only a small group of us who sit on the Development Plans Panel and it would benefit if there were much more, but it is quite impossible to do and so we have a smaller group who have the understanding and the expertise of that process. There are more than two, there are quite a few more than two – we are a group of about eight, I believe. Yes, Councillor Latty (*sic*) did propose that we accept the numbers that are before you today and I was more than happy to second that. It was a real honour to second that one from Councillor Latty (*sic*) so it is not necessarily a Labour policy, it is also supported by another significant group in the Council.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Leadley, not Latty.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Leadley, I am sorry. Leadley. As I say, another significant Group in the Council who number five, compared to some that only number one and two, so I am glad to bring them on board and we had a very sensible discussion.

There has been perhaps more than enough discussion on this topic previously, not least at the Extraordinary meeting in November. However, I feel it is important to highlight again the prudent and responsible steps this Council has taken to review new information that came to light last autumn and its implications for Leeds.

As you will be aware following new proposed Government methodology for calculating future housing figures announced in September, we have completed a technical review of Green Belt housing allocations. We have taken stock of our approach to Green Belt releases and as a result 55% of Green Belt land that was originally earmarked for housing will now remain in the Green Belt as classified Broad Locations for Growth. Now surely that is something that we can all celebrate, 55% less intrusion into the Green Belt.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: You could have 70% less.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: OK, we are playing double figures but it is still 55% less, however you look at it.

THE LORD MAYOR: Final sentence, please, Councillor McKenna.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: I have finished. Thank you, Lord Mayor, and please support this. Leeds needs to move on, we do need housing, the city needs to grow and we have come up with a sensible figure in sensible locations. Please support. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Peter Gruen.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: Lord Mayor, may I request my name does not appear in the Minutes in the context that it was just raised.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: I do apologise.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: We have had enough with Councillor Richard Lewis. Don't you start.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Peter Gruen.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Oh my God, what a debate. It is clear to me that Allah has not sent you his blessings for 2018 because I very rarely heard a more repetitive, angst filled, hypocritical, exaggerated, sensational load of nonsense from these benches.

We have had this debate five or six times. It reminds me... (*interruption*)

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Your benches. You are supposed to point over here, not there.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: It reminds me of the recent exchange between the President of North Korea and the President of the USA. The first says, "I've got a nuclear button on my desk" and the second one says "Mine is bigger and better than yours" and that is what this debate is all about. You are trying to squeeze, as Richard Lewis says, every last ounce of political kudos that you think you have got out of this debate. Have you nothing else to talk about? Don't you want to talk about Universal Credit? Of course you don't. Don't you want to talk about homelessness? Of course you don't. Don't you want to talk about private sector train failures? Of course you don't. The only thing you want to talk about over and over and over again is Green Belt and it is your obsession and you think you are going to get credit...

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: It is your report on the Executive Board, not ours.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: Our report is clear. Now look at Barry. Barry is smiling like hell. (*laughter*)

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: Sorry for being entertained.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: He is trying to work out which you are, the North Vietnamese fellow or Trump.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: He has been telling us for three months he is a confused man. This is a Scrutiny Chair of ten years' standing and for three months he has been confused. I will tell you what, he enjoys being confused and he adds to the confusion and so when Councillor Bentley also says our residents do not know what is going on, well they don't because you make sure they don't know what's going on. You fuel the confusion.

The consistent person and the one person who actually moved the new housing target figure was Councillor Leadley.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Well done, Tom!

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: How can you move in a committee the new figures which we say we will accept and adopt and then you come into Council and say "I am going to abstain"?

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Because you are backing 70,000.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: This is a farce. The whole debate is a farce and you will not take responsibility as we have to, and we accept that. You do not want to take responsibility, you want to be on the good side of everybody and you can't be.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Get your facts right. Fake news.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: We will carry on with the business that has to be carried on and we will do the best for the city. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jack Dunn.

COUNCILLOR DUNN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to say first of all in all honesty as part of the Labour Group I voted for the original numbers and I think it seemed sensible. The reasoning put forward was that if we have the over-availability and there is a need in the future that will be built in for the availability. I am not sure that we were all convinced about that but we went along with it.

Since then we have to-ed and fro-ed, both sides, and in the meantime my ward, as well as Morley, has suffered the consequences of non-deliberation. Church Fields is one of them in East Ardsley where the Communities Secretary gave permission because here again the war cry, this city has not enough availability housing land for houses. That is the yardstick that these developers are using and while we are we going on today, these developers will be watching anxiously because while we are deliberating they are moving in and taking the Green Belt.

I am not sure that this new number is the right one either, if we can get it to a lower figure I would be happy, but either way – and I am really open-minded about the figure as long as we get it determined because last week, and I know Morley Councillors were at the Public Inquiry for another 779 houses between our two wards and we have no real defence if we do not get it sorted out today. Whichever way we go it needs deliberating. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(applause)*

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

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I assume that everybody in the interests of recycling has recycled speeches that they have made many, many times before. They make less sense now than they did previously. Actually, I think all of us need to consider how we could convey complex messages and describe complex processes to the public, to the voting public out there, and we can either do that or we can actually confuse people and try and actually create more confusion in people's minds than there was in the first place. That is exactly what the Tory Group in particular has done and I think that the farrago that we had at the beginning of this debate underlines that for the Tories there is nothing they will not do to create a smokescreen of nonsense around this issue rather than having a proper debate.

One of the things we have been doing recently is actually talking to the community groups that have opposed us on schemes like Parlinton, and the dialogue is quite useful because they are starting to understand that while they might not agree with us, they have been led up the garden path by you lot, and that is the truth of it.

I will just pick out a couple of things because, to be honest, out of everybody over there I think I have had about two-and-a-half people saying anything sensible but I had to laugh at the Morley Town Council take from Robert Finnigan talking about us spending other people's money.

Have a look at the Evening Post a couple of days back where Councillor Elliott is talking about Morley Town Council doing up Glen Road. Are they doing up Glen Road, or is it Leeds Highways Department which is paying for Glen Road to be done up? Who is being honest there? I know who is being honest and you are not being honest. You should be ashamed of yourself, Robert. You should have joined the Tories many years ago. *(hear, hear) (interruption)*

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Morley housing tenants are the ones who are paying for it. You're not paying for it. That's who is paying for it. Morley residents are paying for it.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: We are getting on with this process. We have to do the difficult - Robert, would you please shut up when I am talking? (*applause*) Peter has summed it up in actually saying what we have to do. We are the administration, we have to get on with the difficult stuff, the stuff that you can all avoid, and we have to actually provide the housing need and this debate will always come down in the end to an issue of housing need which you deny. You are housing need deniers and you should be ashamed of yourselves. I move, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Rubbish.

COUNCILLOR CLEASBY: Well done, Donald! (*laughter*)

THE LORD MAYOR: It has come to that point where I need to call for a vote on the Report.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Lord Mayor, could we just be clear because the Order Paper clearly states at the bottom of pages 6 that the vote will be on the motion that I actually have put on this Order Paper.

COUNCILLOR COULSON: Lord Mayor, can we ensure that when people are speaking the mic is on, or I might as well go home.

THE LORD MAYOR: Right, I think we need to take the point, Councillor Coulson's point, on board. We do have people here who do have to use the loop system, so if we can all respect that and use the microphones.

I am not going to take point after point.

COUNCILLOR CLEASBY: I am more than happy to swap my seat with Councillor Coulson if he cannot hear.

THE LORD MAYOR: I am sorry, Brian, I did not hear a word that you actually said. Would you like to repeat that?

COUNCILLOR CLEASBY: Yes, Lord Mayor, to be helpful, I am more than happy to swap my seat with Councillor Coulson if he cannot hear because I can hear quite well.

THE LORD MAYOR: No, I am afraid he is already kitted out with all the equipment at his seat, but thank you very much for the offer.

Now, could everyone just be quiet for one second. As I thought, it was ruled out of order so that falls, so it is actually the original Report that we are actually voting on. (*A vote was taken*) That is CARRIED. Thank you.

ITEM 6 – RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE –
COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW – FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: We move on to Item 6 and if you would all please quieten down a little bit I would like to call on Councillor Blake.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lewis.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Leadley.

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: This report is mostly to do with Parish and polling district boundary housekeeping and not especially contentious, but three matters did arise at Elections Working Group which provoked concern.

The first was that Ledston Parish Council had got into a bit of a tangle. Although it had not published audited and approved accounts for some time, it had continued to raise and draw a precept and no-one there seemed especially keen to do much about it or to accept Officers' help or training. More or less as a last resort Leeds electoral officers had suggested abolishing Ledston, or at least its Parish Council, but it is to be hoped that commonsense will prevail and that the Parish Council will either be reformed or merged with neighbouring Ledsham, which is smaller though better managed. Ledston does have at least one valuable asset, which is the Ledston Luck Recreation Ground.

The second was a proposal to divide the Barwick and Scholes Parish into separate parishes, one for Barwick and the other for Scholes. Consultation yielded a surprisingly high level of response which was strongly against division in both villages.

The other was a proposal to set up a Parish or Town Council in Garforth. In principle this was welcomed as Garforth is now an unparished black hole surrounded by parishes, but it would have to be done properly. I played a close part and did most of the paperwork in setting up three parishes – Drighlington, Gildersome and Morley – which provoked little opposition and oversaw a fairly large extension of Morley as recently as 2014, which provoked even less, so I am well aware of what needs to be done. Setting up or extending a parish is a serious business, if only because almost every household within the parish has to pay for it.

In Garforth, as with the proposed Guiseley Parish two or three years ago, a boundary had been drawn which took in neighbouring areas some of which were lived in by people who did not see themselves as being part of the community covered by the new parish at all. Also, the level of support reported from some parts of the proposed parish was not particularly convincing. As with Guiseley what we suggested was that there should be a reconsultation based on amended boundaries which would have to be done in a proper way. Guiseley never came back but that must have been due to some local choice of lack of follow-through.

It seems that people in Garforth have gone back and made amendments but it would be wrong to be bounced into approving a new parish based on two all-member emails sent within the past week which Electoral Services do seem to have some difficulty with.

Today's report to Council should be accepted as it stands. There will be enough time to amend Garforth before the parish elections in 2019. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(applause)*

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

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. There is not really much to say on that one. Ledston is in Kippax and Methley ward and myself and Councillor Harland and Councillor Wakefield are working very closely with the Parish Council and they are working through a list of actions to bring themselves back right. On the other two issues I think Councillor Leadley has very well summed up the discussions we had at General Purposes Committee, so I think we move the recommendations of the report.

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

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: I support moving the recommendations of the report, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Right, I would now like to call for the vote on the Recommendations of the General Purposes Committee on the Community Governance Review. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

ITEM 7 – REPORT ON APPOINTMENTS

THE LORD MAYOR: We now move on to Item 7, Report on Appointments. Councillor Ogilvie.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I second that, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I would like to call for a vote on Appointments. *(A vote was taken)* That is also CARRIED.

ITEM 8 – REPORT ON THE CALCULATION OF THE COUNCIL TAX AND BUSINESS RATES TAX BASES FOR 2018/19

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 6, Calculation of the Council Tax and Business Rate Bases for 2018/19. Councillor James Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I move in terms of the Notice.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I would like to call for the vote on the Report of the Chief Officer Financial Services. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

PROCEDURAL MOTION SEEKING LEAVES OF COUNCIL

THE LORD MAYOR: I now have a procedural motion. Councillor Bentley.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. This is a motion to seek leave of the Council to suspend Council Procedure Rule 11.2 (Notice of Questions) to allow the question in my name (Question 2) to be replaced with the question set out in italics on the Order Paper. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

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

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: If I could call for the vote to replace that question of Councillor Bentley's. *(A vote was taken)* CARRIED. Thank you, that means that question will be put.

ITEM 9 – QUESTIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: I would now like to move to Questions. It is for a period of 30 minutes and you can ask questions of the Executive. Councillor Wood.

COUNCILLOR WOOD: I hope everybody can hear me. It is one of the advantages of being only five foot seven tall! Can the Executive Member for Communities set out what the Council is doing to prevent illegal street traders from disrupting community events across the city, and particularly at the ward light switch-on events?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Coupar.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Thank you, Lord Mayor, and thank you for the question, Councillor Wood.

I would like to let you know that Council officers will take action where illegal street trading is suspected. Individuals are advised in writing that should they continue to trade on the street, then the Council will take the appropriate legal action against them, which may involve a court appearance and a fine of up to £1,000 per offence, or a fixed penalty notice of £150.

Writing to individuals in this way has helped to disperse and deter such activities. Peddlers who turn up to Christmas light switch-on events with neon flashing lights and toys are not necessarily illegal traders. If they hold a valid Peddler's Certificate and if they keep moving rather than staying still in a fixed position, then they are acting within the law. If they do not hold a valid Peddler's Certificate then they are written to in the same manner as any other suspected illegal trader.

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

COUNCILLOR WOOD: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Given the problems experienced at these events across the city and at the recent Farsley Christmas light switch-on, where about twelve such illegal traders operated and intimidated members of the public, does the Executive Member agree with me that this is a problem which the Council needs to be doing more to address, and will she undertake to ensure that all fellow Members of Council and Council partners are made aware of what powers exist to combat such illegal trading?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Coupar.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Councillor Wood, your written question to Council actually was the first that I had heard about this concern with Members so I am more than happy to meet with you and to discuss the issues that you have relayed to Council here today, and then more than happy to let fellow Council Members know what has come of it. Thanks, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Jonathan Bentley.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Would the Executive Member for Environment and Sustainability explain the reasons for the delay to the refuse route reorganisation and the additional cost it has led to the service incurring?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Yeadon.

COUNCILLOR YEADON: Thank you. Just checking it is the question you want, I can do the other one if that is OK. I will do this one then.

Yes, we are working closely with front line staff and trade unions to complete the route review within refuse collection and to make the efficiencies that we have identified. Given the complexity of this work, any changes need to be designed in consultation with our collection crews and introduced where possible with the buy-in of those crews. From the outset we are therefore committed to fully involve crews in the redesign of routes.

The service has therefore spent the first part of this project agreeing the initial principles for route review and redesign with trade unions, and identifying the routes that can take extra work. The consultation process is large and complex and to date has involved 66 crews and more than 200 staff. Draft days of work have been presented to crews who have then had the opportunity to feed back and input into the redesign.

The complexity of the process has unfortunately led to it taking longer than we expected it to. It could result in a change of collection day for around 75% of the city and we therefore want to get it absolutely right before we change anything.

The refuse service is performing better than it has ever in terms of missed bin collections and we want to make sure that this high level of performance is not affected by any changes we make to the service.

As it stands and as the budget position reported to Exec Board in November, the delays to the route redesign work means that the refuse collection is currently projecting an overspend. However, this has been offset by significant management savings in the service and savings relating to waste disposal and business rates. That means that in overall terms the waste management service is in effect currently projected to make an overall saving of around £600,000 at the end of the year.

Because I have only got a couple of Council meetings left and I am feeling generous, I am going to answer your first question as well. I have been given the figures for fly tipping in December and I am pleased to say that the figures continue to show a downward trajectory for fly tipping. Your first question asked me am I happy with the decision regarding bulky waste. I do not think “happy” would be the word I use to describe it, but satisfied. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Supplementary, Councillor Bentley.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to thank the Executive Member for taking my amended question at short notice. It was very good of her.

The Executive Member talks about overall savings in the waste management service but, of course, had the re-routing scheme come in on time those savings would have been even greater, so would the Executive Member confirm that these route changes involve no amendments to operatives’ terms and conditions or contractual working hours or working practice and as such it is totally unacceptable that delays have cost Leeds Council taxpayers probably over £1m by the time the routes come in? (*hear, hear*) The Labour administration always claims that its £500,000 subsidy to the trade union ensures good industrial relations. In view of the cost incurred now through these negotiations, does she still think that is money well spent?

COUNCILLOR HESELWOOD: Definitely.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Yeadon.

COUNCILLOR YEADON: Thank you. I think any of us who were a Councillor in 2009 during the three months refuse strike which was overseen by the previous Coalition administration (*applause*) or in fact was a resident of Leeds during that time do recognise the importance of

getting on board trade unions and working closely with them to be able to deliver efficient and effective refuse services, and services across the entire Council.

I do not want to be disrespectful to Councillor Bentley because I do not think you were an elected Member during that period but I understand the importance of industrial relations very deeply and I will continue to support our trade union colleagues and work closely with them to deliver the services that the city needs and deserves. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Pryor.

COUNCILLOR PRYOR: Can the Executive Member please provide an update on the state of A&E in Leeds?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Charlwood.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Thank you, Councillor Pryor. There is a well documented crisis in the NHS. I think we all know that. Everyone in this Chamber is aware of it.

Today in Prime Minister's Questions Jeremy Corbyn raised that 17,000 people have been left waiting more than 30 minutes in the back of ambulances in December alone. Theresa May has apologised for cancelling 55,000 operations in January, there are four million people waiting for operations – that just adds to that. Incredibly, she stuck to her claim that the NHS was better prepared than ever for winter and she repeated this a number of times, which is bizarre to on one hand apologise for the parlous state of our NHS and then claim that the NHS is better prepared than ever. However, that is the national picture. Your question is about Leeds and how we are coping in Leeds.

I would just like to put on record first of all our thanks and gratitude to all the staff working in the NHS and in social care. With such unprecedented levels of demand and at such difficult times they are doing an incredible job. Some people have mentioned the difficult state that the NHS is in. A Kirklees ambulance driver said it is the worst he has ever seen in a four decade career. 26 operations cancelled at Huddersfield, the Huddersfield Examiner said the Minister apologises for patients sleeping on the floor at Pinderfields Hospital. We can say we are not in that position but that is a very close neighbour of ours and clearly it is a great deal of pressure.

LTHT was at OPEL 3 recently, last week, which is the second to the highest. 24 Trusts nationally have declared OPEL 4, which is the highest level of concern and where they are concerned that care is unsafe. We are not there.

A&E has targets to meet nationally, so the 95% four hour waiting at A&E, and they are routinely pressed by national regulators on this, by the Government, to achieve this target, 95%. What it can do is fill the hospital full of people who come through the front door. Elderly patients are admitted to hospital when they get to that four hour target, so actually performance is reduced to about 80, 85% in August to meet that 95% target and it has gone down to 70, 75% over the last two weeks.

I would say that in some ways having a little bit longer in A&E and not filling up the hospitals so that operations are cancelled, there is a balance there, isn't there, and I think we have to just applaud our staff for dealing with a really difficult situation.

Clearly more money is needed, more workforce is needed, better facilities are needed, more investment is needed to allow the flow through of hospital to be better and for operations to continue and outpatient appointments to continue and people in A&E not to be waiting too long.

Overall apparently the number of patients has not grown that much since last year but the acuity of patients has generally been higher. We are expecting that because of an ageing population so none of this is shocking, none of this is new. Having been the best plan for winter ever they could have planned for this. We have an ageing population which we know about.

What have we been doing locally to tackle this? Partners in Leeds, as people on the Health and Wellbeing Board and anybody involved in it will know, we have a very strong partnership in Leeds between Social Care and the NHS, so together we have done quite a lot of things to plan for winter which actually, without that, could have been a lot worse in the middle of winter.

We have established a GP service in A&E to assess and manage patients who can be treated in primary care, so not going through the A&E door but seeing a GP. We have also established a new multi-agency unit to enable speedy assessment of frail elderly patients at St James's. That is called the Frailty Unit and often we will get elderly people who can avoid admission to hospital but just need that bit longer of assessment and care at the front door. We have funded that through the Better Care Fund and the Social Care aspect of the Better Care Fund to support the NHS in the winter.

We have also partly funded and gone into partnership with them on the Integrated Discharge Service which operates within the hospital and the Frailty Unit to avoid admission and it helps to signpost and funnel people away from hospital and perhaps into a community care bed, an intermediate care bed, which we will talk about in the next question as well.

We have done an awful lot to stem that demand in Leeds and hopefully not made, in Leeds, it to be as bad as it could be and as it is clearly elsewhere. I will just stop there, thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Supplementary, Councillor Pryor?

COUNCILLOR PRYOR: Yes. As this is the sixth NHS winter crisis that Jeremy Hunt, the Secretary of State, has overseen, how does the Executive Member feel about his brief being expanded to cover Adult Social Care?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Charlwood.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: Thank you, Councillor Pryor. Absolutely, yes. I think the word on the street is that he went into the meeting with the Prime Minister thinking that he might be demoted or sacked and actually got promotion. I do not know how that happened, it is some strange and bizarre things that actually in the reshuffle that she has just done there are some strange appointments at the top level, a lot of right-wing Brexiteers getting ever more senior positions and, for example, the Education Secretary, a comprehensive educated woman living in a same-sex relationship giving entirely the wrong message to be effectively sacked from her position while other people like Jeremy Hunt, who have clearly failed in their brief to provide a good NHS system for two winters now of devastating crisis. Last year there were 100 people on trolley waits in the hospital. This year it is better but they have cancelled operations for the whole of January. How can that mean that he gets a promotion to get Social Care as well?

I would just say, bringing Health and Social Care under the Department of Health is an interesting move and it is not one that we would not have predicted because this year they have actually tried to, the Department of Health through the Better Care Fund has tried to direct the spending of Social Care and we have spent money that should have gone to Social Care on health services, and things we should be spending on our Social Care have gone into the hospital for the Frailty Unit, which we do not mind doing because it is necessary and it is the right thing to do, but actually we should have had a properly funded NHS and a properly funded locally accountable Social Care system, so what are they trying to do? Are they trying to centralise the Social Care spending?

40% of our budget is on Social Care in this Council. Are they trying to direct that to have more say over that? I am not sure that is where we would want to go with it.

I am concerned, actually, both about his performance as Health Secretary to get Social Care and about the direction that they are taking for our most vulnerable people in the city. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Arif Hussain.

COUNCILLOR A HUSSAIN: Thank you. Can the Executive Member please update Council on the recent launch of new services under the Better Lives Strategy?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Charlwood.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: Thank you very much. Yes, this kind of nicely dovetails in. As a result of the changing demands and the expectations of care and also the pressures that we have faced as a Council because of the Government eight years of austerity, we have had to update and modernise the services that we offer. I am really pleased that we have had some refreshed, renewed services to open in recent months.

We have launched a range of key services recently developing on our work to modernise and improve services. These are the new community beds services, these are our recovery hubs, our community beds I was just talking about. 109 beds in the city. We have some complex needs hubs as well which are dementia facilities and complex needs for elderly people, day centres, and our black and minority ethnic health and wellbeing hub in Chapeltown.

The community care beds, our recovery hubs, we have one in the north-west of the city, that is Suffolk Court; we have one in south Leeds, SLIC, which each provide 40 nursing beds outside of hospital. They are homely environments and they are recovery based and actually we are getting people out of hospital and back home really, really quickly.

Since the end of November there have been 215 people accessing the three services and they have discharged 113 people, of which 60% of those individuals went home, so that is working out at about a four week stay. An elderly person going into one of our units is staying about four weeks having that rehab and going home, whereas otherwise they would have been in a hospital bed, so that is really, really wonderful.

I would just like to say that I think Councillors have shown a great deal of interest in these services, including The Green in East Leeds. They are providing an excellent service and the staff, by the way, when you speak to them are so proud and pleased with the work they are doing to support people in a different way.

I would just like to say we should have an event where we open the doors to Council Members and anyone who is interested to come and see that and speak to members of staff and just see the wonderful work that is being done there.

We also opened a complex needs hub dementia facility in Gipton and Harehills which is a supportive, stimulating day environment for people with really complex dementia, so their carers can have a break, they can go to work, they can do what they need to do so they can then support their loved one when they are not there, and I am so proud to open a new, beautiful facility for that very needed group of people.

I was also really pleased to open the BAME Health and Wellbeing Club in Chapeltown with the Lord Mayor. This service brings together the Apna Centre and the Frederick Hurdle Day Centre providing city-wide really relevant ethnically culturally specific services to those people who need it. It is just wonderful, isn't it, that we can show how we are a compassionate city doing these

things in really tough times, managing to open new services for helping our citizens in the hardest of times financially. Thank you. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Supplementary Councillor Hussain? Councillor Andrew Carter.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Does the Leader of Council, like I do, fully support the pilot of 100% business rate retention in Leeds?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Thank you for the question, Councillor Carter. Yes, we do support the pilot. It would indeed be strange if we did not as we actually applied to take part in the pilot and we submitted that application and were very pleased that it was successful in December, just immediately before Christmas. I think sometimes the timing of these announcements, the settlements and times like this is dissatisfactory in the sense that it does not give us the sense to get out there and really publicise.

Just to be clear, what we are talking about is a pilot around the additional growth income through business rates and particularly the expansion seemed to be only going to those areas that had achieved devolution deals, so for Leeds to actually be included in the pilot for next year I think is a real achievement for all of those people who put the bid together.

We do not know yet how long it will go on for but what we do know is that we are looking at an estimated growth of around £30m, and that is across the seven districts, so it is not just the West Yorkshire District, it is also the business rate will include Harrogate and York. 50% will go to those Local Authorities and we are estimating a net gain for Leeds of around £7.5m and a pot of around £15m that the seven Authorities can then bid into. We look forward with interest to the analysis of this direction of travel around business rate support. We have found that actually getting some clarity on how Local Government funding in the longer term is going to take place very frustrating, so hopefully we will be able to contribute to that debate.

THE LORD MAYOR: Supplementary, Councillor Carter?

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Yes, Lord Mayor. A supplementary in I think three, four parts, really. First of all I think it is a tribute to the Leeds City Region that the Government has recognised that is the basis on which this arrangement has been come to and I am sure you will agree with me.

Secondly, given your comments about the length of time it has taken and the fact that we were favoured despite not having a devolution deal, why did we not apply earlier, like Manchester, in which case we would have had a decision earlier, wouldn't we, and more money sooner, wouldn't we?

Finally, as yet we have not had clarification on whether this is a one year deal or a two year deal. We believe it is a two year deal. Would she agree with me that we need to get that clarify from the Government as soon as possible and that we need to spend the money wisely in order that the Government is convinced that this should not be a pilot, it should be a permanent part of Local Government financing?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: I think I have already expressed our need to celebrate our success in getting this coming forward.

I just think, before we get too carried away, just to set this in the context of what has actually been happening to Local Government finance. When you actually see that the Government grant to Leeds since 2010/11 has been cut by £239m, we are facing a further £18.5m reduction in 2018/19, another reduction of 28% including spending pressures of £59m when we are actually looking at a total of £257m cut from this Council since 2010, I think we will be doing a lot more than talking about how we are going to spend this particular amount of money wisely which, of course, we will do. We will also be continuing to press for this Government to put more money back into Local Authorities, whether it is directly to us or through devolution deals to make sure that we can get out and protect the vulnerable and do the basic work that we need to do in this city.

(applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Does the Exec Board Member feel the Council should do everything in its power to avoid families facing eviction losing their home?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Coupar.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am sure it is no surprise to Councillor Golton that, yes, I do agree that the Council should do everything in its power to avoid families facing eviction and losing their homes.

I can confirm that Leeds Housing Option Service, as part of a wider housing Leeds service, is focused on preventing homelessness wherever possible. Homeless prevention is defined as assistance to help a person either retain their existing home or make a planned move to an alternative accommodation. Helping a person to either avoid eviction or delay eviction so as to give them time to find alternative accommodation are key parts of the overall prevention approach.

It is forecast that approximately nine-and-a-half thousand households will have the threat of homelessness prevented through an intervention on the part of Leeds Housing Options in 2017/2018. This equates to over 80% of cases closed at Leeds Housing Options Service.

Back in 2006/7 the Leeds Housing Advice Centre managed to prevent homelessness in 420 cases. This gives a clear illustration of the change in service focus and outcomes over the last eleven years.

One of the keys to homeless prevention is to intervene as quickly as possible. The longer issues are left then the less likely we are to be successful and, for example, we intervene as soon as we receive a Notice to Quit, which is two months' notice, rather than telling people to come back when the notice period has expired or they have been evicted. We can often persuade private landlords to rescind notices or to defer taking possession action to give us time to find alternative accommodation.

Another key part of this work is to ensure that landlords fulfil their legal responsibilities relating to taking possession action and we have prosecuted landlords who have carried out unlawful evictions by changing locks or harassing tenants.

I would also like to highlight the excellent work we have done in reducing the number of long-term empty properties in Leeds, meaning that there are more homes available for Leeds citizens. I know that Councillor Golton's party have done some work highlighting what an issue this can be nationally, and I know that Councillor Barry Anderson put out a press release last week based on the Lib Dem research, saying that our work in Leeds has stalled. This is not the case, Councillor Anderson. You really should have checked your facts before putting that out.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: I did check them out, yes.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Those figures included things such as student accommodation and was not the way in which we measure empty homes in Leeds. Since 2010 we have successfully reduced the number of empty properties in Leeds year on year and from a high of 6,721 in 2010 to just 3,091 in November 2017. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Golton, supplementary?

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. On that full response from Councillor Coupar, would she agree with me that if the situation arises where people face eviction due to their homes being demolished by a landowner, that she as the Executive Member for Housing, would be willing to meet with such a landowner to try and preserve those homes in question through the powers the Council has as potential property owner and purchaser?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Coupar.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Thank you, Lord Mayor and Councillor Golton, I think you are referring to the Sugar Hill Development.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: I am not referring to any particular development.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: In which case then I am always available to meet with anybody to negotiate on behalf of the Council. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Heselwood.

COUNCILLOR HESELWOOD: Can the Leader of Council please update Council on what Leeds is doing to celebrate the centenary of the first women getting the vote and obviously the first women being allowed to stand for Parliament? *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: I was just going to say could we have a round of applause for the question, please! *(applause)*

Just by way of a little background, it is quite staggering that it is 100 years on the 6th February that the Representation of the People Act became law but, of course, it was not for all women. It was only for women over the age of 30. It is quite staggering to think back, but nevertheless it gave around 8.4 million women the right to vote. It also at the same time gave all men – all men – over the age of 21 the right to vote, but we will move on. It was a good move in terms of suffrage, I have to say, for those men who had not had the vote before. We had to wait another ten years for all women to get the vote on equal terms with men

On 21st November 1918 the Qualification of Women Act became law, which meant that women over the ages of 21 could actually stand for Parliament and that year, due to a bye-election, we actually saw the first woman to take up her seat in the House of Commons, Nancy Astor, who actually came on at a bye-election before the General Election that took place that November, taking the seat of her husband, who had just resigned.

A huge amount to celebrate and I am delighted and just want to thank everyone involved in this, that Leeds has been chosen as one of seven centenary cities, which means that we get a share of £152,500 from a pot of just over a million to celebrate events throughout the year, so well done to all those teams who helped us to achieve that.

There already is a programme of events but do you know what, we just have to reflect on this. At the moment we reckon that 50.9% of the population in this city are female. We are on the increase! Leeds City Council is one of the biggest employers in the city and 61% of our employees are women, so we are looking for a whole raft of events and Jools, Councillor Heselwood, is very active in this, as has been the Lord Mayor and we will be communicating all of these things to you.

Obviously a big milestone, International Women's Day. The "Woman's Place?" exhibition at Abbey House opening already in Kirkstall. We also have the Leonora Cohen archive in our collection and we will be bringing the exhibition to life with real stories about Leonora and many other things, and we are looking to have outdoor screenings of the film *The Suffragette* out in Millennium Square over the summer.

The really key thing for me is about all of us, every single Member in this Chamber, using this opportunity to go out into our communities to celebrate the achievements of women in our communities but also to recognise and acknowledge the enormous amount of work we still have to do to achieve true equality in our city.

This is a real call to arms and I have to say, going out campaigning as we will be doing up to May, I have to say it breaks my heart every time a woman comes on the doorstep and says, "Oh, I don't vote because it doesn't make a difference." I think over and over again we have proved it does make a difference. Let us really increase the number of women who go out to vote in our elections and let us go out and celebrate.

I would like to just say, talking to Councillor Heselwood, that she would like to set up a cross-party working group to help move these programmes forward and I know she will be looking forward to volunteers who would like to join her in taking this great initiative forward. Thank you. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Supplementary, Councillor Heselwood?

COUNCILLOR HESELWOOD: I think it has all been said.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you very much. In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.6, any unanswered questions will receive a written response.

ITEM 10 – MINUTES OF THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD AND THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now moving on to Item 10, to receive and comment upon the Minutes of the Health and Wellbeing and Executive Board. Councillor Blake.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Consideration of comments on the Health and Wellbeing Board Minutes will be for a period of up to 20 minutes. If Councillor Finnigan would like to start off – he is not here. Councillor Groves.

Health and Wellbeing Board

COUNCILLOR GROVES: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking on Minute 39, page 132. It is absolutely vital that we align the Inclusive Growth Strategy to our Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Leeds.

Firstly, there is emerging evidence of close links between skills and education, supporting good health and secondly healthcare and medical will be one of the fastest growing sectors.

Leeds Health and Wellbeing Strategy is a bold, ambitious plan that Leeds will be the best city for health and wellbeing. I am pleased the strategy recognises the value of a strong economy with quality local jobs as one of the twelve priorities that contribute to outcomes. "Outcomes" for me is the key word, and the challenge for all of us in this Chamber is delivering those real tangible outcomes for our citizens on health.

I know all of us personally recognise the distress and life-changing circumstances when our constituents or family members suffer with their health or disabilities. Inclusive Growth and the Industrial Strategy will simply fail if we do not recognise the scale of challenge needed. It is simply wrong that parts of society have been let down by Government in terms of funding, policy and failure to recognise the need for a radical change, so therefore at a local level I am pleased to see we all recognise connectivity and commissioning is key to meeting the need.

Health and Wellbeing is generated outside the health system by how people interact with the economy, with the environment and with their communities. Housing, employment, social mobility influence outcomes. It cannot be right that we are still stuck with the fact that our poorer communities with shorter lives, in poorer health with lower skills and less economic opportunities.

Sadly, the gap is widening across many parts of the country and other factors are emerging in every part of the country - the recognition of the scale of the challenge on treating and supporting people with mental health, for one.

Importantly, the Health and Wellbeing Strategy has a vision for Leeds to improve the health of the poorest the fastest and sets key outcomes to improve people's lives and care outcomes. Looking also at the wider health sector, Leeds has leading assets in health. The City Region is home to 22% of digital health jobs in England. We are at the forefront of innovation, allowing people to gain more control of their own health. 57,000 people work in the health and care workforce. However, Brexit and an ageing population plus retirement of the existing workforce is highlighting a need to develop a local workforce that understands and reflects our communities in Leeds.

Locally we understand this. Sadly, the Chancellor's comments recently which have been criticised blaming those people for low productivity, points to why we must continue to make the case that there is a need to ensure growth should be inclusive and should not exclude groups who can make a valuable contribution to the wider community. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Ann Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking on Minute 40, pages 135 and 136.

This report states quite clearly that air pollution in Leeds contributed to 680 deaths annually and was a factor in the number of recorded cases of respiratory and chronic vascular diseases. What about asthma and what impact air pollution has on that?

I remember some years ago now in the 1990s it was, long before I got elected, that there were reports coming out from my Party about the connection of children who lived near main roads and asthma, and this was the case and of course it continues to be the case. We see more children

needing inhalers now and, as I said, it is because of air pollution. I accept air pollution is not just traffic but certainly traffic is a large part of it.

What can we do about it? This report I am pleased to say does acknowledge the need to increase the uptake of public transport. It also mentions cycling and I think what a lot of people do not realise again, which has been stated in this report, is that cycling, even in high polluted areas, was still better than being in a car because you are still breathing the fumes in even if you are in a car and, as I said, I think a lot of people just do not realise that.

Also, we must mention walking. This has two-fold benefit does walking because, yes, you can walk instead of using the car but also it is very good for you when it comes to health matters. How many people do we see and how many children do we see that rely on the parents to ferry them about in cars? I have seen it myself, children that I would say maybe are overweight or slightly chubby, shall we say.

THE LORD MAYOR: Final sentence, Ann, please.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: What I am saying with this is, can we have more walking buses and get people walking more as well as the other measures that is mentioned here. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: That is lovely, thank you. Councillor Ghulam Hussain.

COUNCILLOR G HUSSAIN: Lord Mayor, I am speaking on Minute 41, page 139, the report which was brought at the November Health and Wellbeing Board last year relates to the financial position of the health and care organisations in Leeds.

The report highlighted that NHS partners are predicting that they will meet the financial targets set by the national regulators. However, this is heavily dependent on the identification and delivery of local saving plan for the latter part of the year.

Lord Mayor, I am sure everyone here recognises the great value and important contribution our health and care organisations make in the city and across the country. Unfortunately when it comes to one of if not our most important institution in National Health Service, poor handling by this Government and the inability to listen to the calls for essential funding has meant our National Health is under significant pressures.

Indeed, the pressure facing the NHS nationally during the winter period only provides more evidence that this Government has failed to protect the institution millions of people across the country rely on. Now I know the Prime Minister last week apologised for the operations which have been postponed nationally as a result of winter pressures, but the Prime Minister also claimed over the weekend that Government had planned for this winter. I think most people reading about events over the last few weeks would not say that the Government has come up with an effective plan to meet pressures during the period. What is astonishing is that calls year after year for more money needed for the NHS and Social Care have not been listened to. Indeed, the Chancellor in the autumn Budget failed to respond to the pressures on Social Care and did not provide the full funding that was required for NHS.

These are not separate issues. Both the pressures on the Social Care and the NHS must be tackled together because they are so closely connected. This side of the Chamber has been warning for years of the consequences of the Government policies on the NHS and Social Care. The Government is finding that its programme of cuts and funding squeeze on key services is piling pressure on to a system which is at bursting point.

Despite the Government's failure to listen, we on this side of the Chamber will continue to make the case for better funding of our NHS and for Social Care. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Christine Macniven.

COUNCILLOR MACNIVEN: Lord Mayor, I speak on the Leeds Health and Care Quarterly Financial Report, Minute 41, page 139.

Over the last few weeks I have been alarmed, as I am sure have most of you, to witness the pressures on the health and social care systems nationally and locally. The Leeds Health and Care Quarterly Financial Report was prescient in highlighting the risks associated with non-recurrent funding. In 2016/17 all health and care partners in the city met the required financial targets. This was due to non-recurrent investment rather than sustainable continuous change.

In 2017/18 partner organisations are predicting that they will again successfully achieve their financial responsibilities, but are simply once again relying on a range of non-recurrent funding measures to achieve this.

The Association of Directors of Adult Social Services has warned that this could be the year of no return for social care, the final days. Margaret Wilcox, President of ADASS, said recently, "The crisis facing us is so acute that we fear that social care could pass the point of no return in 2018 unless decisions are made to routinely and effectively fund it."

The £2bn one-off emergency funding announced for the sector in the Budget last spring merely skims the surface and will do little to address the sector's prevailing funding gap. By the end of March 2018 Councils in England and Wales will have made cumulative savings in Adult Social Care of more than £6bn since 2010 and the consequences of this are becoming increasingly apparent on a daily basis as we move relentlessly through winter.

Daily we face reports of harrowing failures occurring in the health sector. They dominate the media, yet Conservative Government Ministers react with surprise and denial.

It is probably too late but surely realisation will dawn soon amongst national politicians that there is an obvious solution – there is even a complete solution. A sustainable NHS is dependent on a sustainable complementary social care system realistically funded. Lord Porter, the Conservative Chair of the Local Government Association, said recently:

"Councils have long warned about the impact of an under-funded social care system."

Realistic, consistent funding for social care can empower Councils to prioritise prevention work both during winter crises and all year round. This is personal to us all. For some of us our parents are already suffering the lack of provision of integrated care. Some of us are next in line, but for all of us, unless this is dealt with urgently, the future looks increasingly bleak.

THE LORD MAYOR: That is lovely, thank you very much, Councillor Macniven. *(applause)*

Councillor Graham Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Lord Mayor, I wish to speak briefly about Minute 43 on page 139. This is relative to delayed discharge from hospital, something which has caused great problems and continues to, but I do wish to bring to Members' attention the fact that our Adult Social Care Department has actually taken great steps in improving this situation.

One of the big problems is that the people who are in hospital who either had a care package before who are going to need a care package when they come out, the situation was that they effectively had to be out of hospital before anything real happened in order to set them on their way outside. Social Care are now embedding, as you might say, social workers within hospitals so that people are being eased out of hospital, shall we say. The Social Workers are preparing – not only preparing the patient for release but also preparing what is going to happen to them outside.

This is having such success that, as we all know, there have been occasions when delayed discharges have been running into the hundreds. Only the week before last I am informed – reliably, I think – that that figure was down to single figures in Leeds. That does not mean to say it is going to be the same all the time, but right now we are doing it. If we can do it now we can continue doing it and I think that our Adult Social Care Department deserves all our praise and support in maintaining this work. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: I would like to call on Councillor Charlwood to sum up, please.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: Yes, thank you to everyone who has commented. I would just like to take this opportunity to share a piece of general good news about Leeds. We always like to have good news, especially in January. It is about the health and wellbeing of the city. There is a new report, which is this, and it is initial analysis of data from Public Health England and the Office of National Statistics and it shows that, compared to other Core Cities, Leeds for health and wellbeing comes top, which is amazing and wonderful, so well done to everyone involved. (*applause*)

I think it shows that actually our approach works. We have a prevention bottom-up approach as a city, and bear in mind other cities we were compared to were places like Manchester, Bristol, Newcastle, place which are talked about in terms of health and wellbeing a lot, devolution and things like that. Actually what we are doing already to stop people from becoming homeless, to prevent ill health for people to be cared for and happy and have more quality in the city. We come top, it is a brilliant, brilliant achievement.

I think the debate also showed the power of our Health and Wellbeing Strategy in the city in that it covers so many of our strategic aims in the city – transport, the economy so Inclusive Growth that Councillor Groves talked about. We have got to get more people who are disabled, who have physical disabilities, actually into work and it just shows the misunderstanding of Government and Government Ministers to talk about lack of productivity because of disabled people in work. Actually, if more disabled people were in work we would have fewer people on benefits, we would have a stronger economy because then people could go out and spend their money. It is that sort of thing that shows their lack of understanding entirely, so Inclusive Growth is absolutely vital.

Councillor Blackburn talking about cycle routes and air quality and all the work we are doing on air quality is precisely for the reason she describes. Actually on the Health and Wellbeing Board the cycle routes, the good partnership working that we are talking about, we actually had a discussion about a cycle route from the hospitals, from the redevelopment of the site, maybe that can support their staff to cycle to work because they can cycle between the routes between St James's and the LGI. That is just an example of how we work together on those sorts of issues.

Councillor Latty, just to thank you for your really positive comments about Social Care and the work we are doing. It is really good to have that cross-party support and we are doing a lot in hospitals to get people out. The DTOC figures are of huge concern nationally across the country. We are doing well at the moment. Our Social Care aspect of that is very, very small, yes, in single figures. The DTOC figures are bigger than that but that is the wider system. Our contribution to Social Care is very small so that is really good news, so well done to them.

The comments from Councillor Hussain and Councillor Macniven on the shocking financial situation that we are in, we can see how after eight years of under investment in our NHS and hospitals the shocking state that we are in and is there any wonder there is such poor practice and things happening in our hospitals. Actually we need things like more nursing care, we simply need more nursing care homes in the city. We are not allowed to provide them ourselves although we are going to look at creative ways that perhaps we could in some way. That is the sort of thing we need and that requires investment, so we do need extra funding.

Thank you everyone for your comments and I am really pleased that we have come top in our Core Cities. Thank you. (*applause*)

Executive Board

THE LORD MAYOR: Right, we now move to consideration of comments on the Executive Board Minutes, which will be heard until ten-past four, at which point the relevant Executive Board Member will be allowed to sum up followed by the Leader of the Council.

If we would like to start, please, with Councillor Golton.

(i) Resources and Strategy

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thanks, Lord Mayor. I am speaking on two minutes. I will be speaking very briefly on the first one which is Treasury Management, just wanting to put my own Party's support and hoping that the business rates pilot that we were talking about, that 100% business rates for the city, so important to our future prosperity and that, of course, is mentioned. It is part of the backbone of the financial reporting that we have got here and the promise of that new business income coming in just points out what a precarious position we are in now that we have to consider new replacement borrowing, which I will not try and explain to those who have not come across it because I have got three minutes, and it is just to put down in writing we appreciate the very particular position this Council is in financially at this tight point. In the meantime of having the purse strings tightened from one end and then the promise of business rates at the other, there is a particular period where we are very much on our uppers and it is appreciated the management which is there for financial reporting.

I am actually going to concentrate more on the Best Council Plan which also, of course, talks about making sure we have that strong economy and that is where that business rates income comes through.

More to do with the fact that in the new Refreshed Best Council Plan there is a proposal that the Child Friendly City emphasis be deprioritised and you will notice that we have a White Paper Motion coming towards the end of the Council meeting. I appreciate the reasons which have been put forward in that the Council feels that Child Friendly City has been wholeheartedly embraced by different parts of the Council and the city at large. However, just because it is embraced it does not mean that it does not need to be continually updated and refreshed itself, and this Party believes that the increasing disparity between the outcomes for our poorer children and those children from more well off citizens and families in the city is one that could do with that extra focus as part of Child Friendly Leeds, so we do ask for the Council to reconsider that being a priority in the Best Council Plan. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jonathan Bentley.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Before I address these minutes I would, with your permission, just like to take a moment to mention the explosion that occurred in Silk Mill Drive in Weetwood on the Friday before Christmas. Members may be aware that an

explosion destroyed a block of four flats in Silk Mill Drive. Thankfully there were no fatalities but two people were taken to hospital.

On behalf of the Weetwood Councillors I would like to pay tribute to the emergency services for the speed and nature of their response and the professionalism they showed and also particularly to the staff from Housing Leeds who spent all weekend up to Christmas dealing with the consequences of that explosion, reassuring the community, making sure that the tenants who were made homeless were adequately housed and supported, so a big thank you to all involved.
(*applause*)

Thank you for your indulgence on that, Lord Mayor. I am speaking on Minute 93, page 142, the Treasury Management Strategy, and Minute 110, page 153, Financial Health Monitoring.

The Report on Treasury Management does make reassuring reading. I am on the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee where this is also looked at and the controls and procedures in place, together with the professional management scrutiny, gives assurance that there is a prudent but effective approach to Treasury Management within the Council.

I wish I had similar assurance from the Financial Health monitoring. The headline in the report is that there is no projected budget variation but looking more closely we see that the only reason that Children's Services is within budget is because our already meagre reserves have been raided to the tune of £1.4m. Well, you can always meet your budget if you keep dipping into your savings.

Further on we see the budget is also being propped up by bringing forward into this year an additional £1.7m from the Department for Education's Partners in Practice Fund that is allocated to next year's activity. This is simply putting off this year's problems until next year.

I know and I think we all appreciate the tremendous pressures that Children's Services are under and we are going to be discussing those, debating those later, but really it does none of us any good and it does the Department no good to make it look as if we are meeting the budget when we are not, and I would really appeal for a bit more transparency around these numbers. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Just a note on that particular item, Councillor Bentley. Tom has just been telling me that Council staff have arranged a collection for the tenant lady who lost absolutely everything in that explosion. Quite a lot has been raised already and some of you may want to contribute to that fund and, if so, Tom is actually going to send out details and if anybody who is watching on the webcast would like to donate, the details are going to be available on the web for that, so thank you for raising that, Councillor Bentley. Councillor Andrew Carter.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. First of all again on Minute 93 on page 142, we have always been very fortunate in this Authority to have a robust and vigilant Finance Resources Department but as has been pointed out, the borrowing situation and the need to borrow more – and we are talking about capital here, not revenue funding – with uncertainty about interest rates I think calls for even more vigilance than usual. I was reassured at Exec Board that we are actually getting that. Nobody easily wants to predict where interest rates are going to go over the next twelve months. They can go quite easily up and down or a combination of the two. It makes it very difficult to judge short-term against long-term borrowing and I look forward to our staff, who are sitting over there taking in every word, being as vigilant as ever, but it is a tricky operation and it is a tricky operation for them so they have our support.

On the second Minute, very quickly, Minute 110 page 53, I would like to thank Councillor Keith Wakefield who was Leader at the time when I approached him with an idea to purchase from Bradford University the playing fields at Woodhall, seven pitches in total, something which I am

very pleased he was able to support, much as I had supported his former Leader, Brian Walker, with a project of a similar nature in Rothwell a number of years ago.

That has now come to fruition. It has taken a number of years and come under the remit of Councillor Blake, so again I thank her for her support. There is a major opportunity here and it has actually moved on a stage from the original idea, which was to get the seven playing fields to benefit local sports teams in the west of the city, and that is an absolute must. It now moves into a park-like project which, if it goes ahead, will be of huge benefit to all residents supporting youth sport in particular but also open age football, not just in Pudsey, Calverley, Farsley but in the whole of West Leeds where we have for some considerable time been playing field poor. You have only got to look at the state of the football pitches when they are overplayed and the actual cost there is getting them up to scratch to be able to be played at all, to realise how important that is. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Carter. Councillor Harper.

COUNCILLOR G HARPER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to speak on Minute 94, page 143, on the Capital Programme Update Report and in particular the capital injection to support the Grand Quarter Townscape Heritage Scheme and the bid for Lottery Funding to complement that.

This is an area of the city which is of great importance and historical significance but has been sadly declining in recent years due to under investment and vehicle dominated infrastructure. Not only has this led to a poor pedestrian environment, there has been a loss of valued historic features. This is not what this area of Leeds should be. As a member of the Grand Theatre Board I cannot stress enough the role that the Grand and the area surrounding it holds for Leeds as a whole.

The cultural importance of this part of the city should be reflected in the infrastructure and the overall offer in the area but unfortunately at the present time this is not the case.

I am delighted that we are making the most of the opportunity to bid for funding which could transform the area. The scheme would provide the restoration of heritage assets, encourage new business and employment opportunities and give the chance to improve connectivity to the rest of the city centre. It would be fantastic if this could happen.

If this scheme gets the go-ahead it would complement initiatives within the city centre including highway improvements along with New Briggate and the City Centre Public Realm Strategy, which aims to reduce unnecessary traffic in the city centre, meaning a better environment for pedestrians.

It would also build on the other township heritage schemes which we have been successful in completing. Indeed, we are the only Authority in the country to have completed two – one in Chapeltown and one in Armley – and work is also progressing on a third in Lower Briggate.

To conclude, this opportunity this bid for funding presents would be great for the Grand Quarter and I look forward to hearing about more developments and the outcome of the bid in the future. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ritchie.

COUNCILLOR RITCHIE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking on Minute 95 of the Report relating to Financial Health Monitoring, addressing the situation of the Children's Services budget.

It is no surprise to hear that the Children's Services budget is under constant pressure. In addition to the core service delivery and our investment in early intervention work, we have the reactive elements of a demand-led service to manage. This Council continues to put the needs of vulnerable children and families above financial considerations and I would like to think that everyone in this Chamber agrees with me that is the correct thing to do.

However, continuing to meet the needs of these vulnerable groups is becoming more and more difficult as the Government's ideology of austerity means savage cuts in funding continue to be handed down. The Opposition bemoan the fact that we continually criticise the Government for cutting funding for vital services. However, the criticism is justified as Whitehall analysis shows money for Early Years education has fallen by more than £650m since 2010, in addition to the Early Intervention Grant being cut by almost £400m since 2013.

Whether a Local Authority is Labour, Conservative or Lib Dem controlled, they are all struggling to cope with the financial position they are finding themselves in.

The Local Government Association has predicted that across the country children's social care will be facing a £2bn gap in funding by 2020. Of 85 Local Authorities who responded to a questionnaire by the Association of Directors of Children's Services, 68 reported an overspend on their high needs block, totalling approximately £140m. This funding is being cut at a time when the number of children with special educational needs and disabilities is increasing. The money given by the Government for these children is simply not keeping up with demand.

The Conservative Government has taken over 40% of Leeds core funding between 2010/11 and the current financial year. Nationally spending on children's social care has outstripped budgets by close to £1bn over the past three years with up to 90% of councils reporting an overspend. These cuts are having a devastating impact on children's services across the country as they struggle to provide vital services to vulnerable children and families.

Leeds Children's Services has seen around £43m in Government grant stripped away since 2010/11. That is money the Government has taken directly from vulnerable children and young people in this city. This Labour administration has continued to prioritise spending on vulnerable children and adults by allocating 66% of our entire Council budget to Children's Services and Adult Social Care.

We cannot stand by and watch some of our most needy children and families pay the price of savage Government policy. This Government needs to act now to adequately fund Children's Services before a whole generation of children and young people are let down. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Truswell, please.

COUNCILLOR TRUSWELL: Lord Mayor, I am speaking to Minute 95, page 144. Lord Mayor, the Red Cross last year described the state of our health and social care as a humanitarian crisis. Why? Because this Government's under funding and cuts are unprecedented in the history of those services. In his latest budget Philip Hammond allocated less than half the £4bn the NHS urgently needs. He allocated nothing more to social care. The £2bn previously announced was less than half the £4.6bn cut since 2010.

A recent study in the British Medical Journal suggested that Government austerity policies have already caused 45,000 extra deaths since 2010. That figure could grow to 120,000 by 2020. Many of those deaths were people reliant on social care and one of the co-authors of the report, Professor Lawrence King of Cambridge University, called it economic murder.

The human cost of austerity policies in Leeds is clear. Infant mortality is increasing – shameful. The number of people taking their own lives is increasing – shameful. Women's life expectancy

is reducing – shameful. That is hardly surprising when research shows that women are bearing the brunt of Government austerity.

In addition to NHS under funding and massive social care cuts, the Government have slashed our public health budget by over £5m. Theresa May, as has been said, laughably claims the NHS has never been better prepared for winter. That so-called preparation entails cancelling all routine operations in January. Instead of sacking or moving Jeremy Hunt where he could do less damage, she leaves him not only in charge of the NHS but extends his death grip to social care. Lord Mayor, we should be afraid, very afraid of what that means for social care.

Lord Mayor, the casualty list of austerity goes on and we have had it referred to earlier. More people are waiting increasing lengths of time in ambulances outside A&E; longer waits in A&E; waiting times for inpatient treatment increasing; the 62 day target for cancer treatment continually missed.

Lord Mayor, the Tories promised 5,000 more GPs. Last year the number actually fell by 1,100. Nurse recruitment in Leeds we are told is down by 40%. The Tories blame patients for misusing services, or they blame delayed discharges, though it was refreshing to hear what Councillor Latty has to say. In Leeds we have a good record on delayed discharges, we are below the regional average and almost half the national average. Despite national cuts of £4.6bn to Adult Social Care, this Labour controlled Council can hold its head high. We have raised our net Adult Social Care budget by £26.5m since 2010. Lord Mayor, I will finish by saying this.

THE LORD MAYOR: Final sentence.

COUNCILLOR TRUSWELL: It cannot go on, our services are held together solely by the dedication of staff. We owe it to them and the people of Leeds to demand this Government tackles the crisis or makes way for a Labour Government. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lowe.

COUNCILLOR LOWE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking on Minute 109, page 152, which refers to the Best Council Plan Refresh. In relation to this clearly the Refresh will take account of Safer Leeds priorities and how we as a Council fund this. Obviously under funding and cuts are a theme of today.

There is no doubt that here in West Yorkshire we need policing resources to keep people safe. The demand on our police service is significant and increases in demand include things like domestic abuse, child sexual exploitation, cyber crime, human trafficking and terrorism - many of these new crimes that have emerged over the last 20 years or so, yet since 2010 the Government has cut West Yorkshire's policing budget by a third at the cost of over 2,000 police jobs and yet the cuts keep coming.

Policing Minister Nick Hurd talks about an increase to local police forces in his budget announcement just before Christmas, but the same cash grant of 2016/17 next year is in reality a significant cut to West Yorkshire's budget. There has been no taking into account of inflation or the well deserved pay increase for officers announced by Government that needs to be paid for out of the current Local Policing Allocation. There is no uplift from Government for this well deserved pay increase.

West Yorkshire Police are having to absorb an extra £9m worth of costs this year. The Government has decided to give PCCs additional flexibility around the police precept of up to £12 a year on a Band D property but that means more people who are already struggling in West Yorkshire are penalised. By the way, Tory shires are very happy about this additional flexibility and Conservative PCCs are on the record as welcoming it, but be under no illusion, Members of

Council, the Government is not paying for our safety but is instead unfairly transferring the cost burden to local taxpayers. The Tories are in fact the party of high taxation and it is right that this Labour administration makes that known to people who are struggling without pay rises year in and year out, but the nasty party just don't care.

West Yorkshire is an area of some of the greatest policing need and some of the highest levels of deprivation. Even by raising the police precept, if, in fact, that is what we decide to do, we will not be able to resource our policing effectively if you take into account the decimation of budgets and staffing numbers over the last seven years.

According to Government, we need to be more efficient and effective but with over 93% of police workforce on the front line, that is a well worn and unwelcome Government mantra. The fact is West Yorkshire needs a fairer funding deal and what the Tories really need to do is allocate central moneys to police forces based on demand and need, and until they do that we will be demanding more. Thank you. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Salma Arif.

COUNCILLOR ARIF: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I will be speaking today on Minute 109 page 152. Nelson Mandela once said the true character of a society is revealed in how its treats its children. Lord Mayor, the sad truth is that in our strong and stable country we are living in a society where children are being forced into poverty as a result of this Government's policies. I do not say that lightly.

The upward trend in child poverty in our country has continued to grow for the third year running. There are £4m children living in poverty, that is 30% of our children or nine in a classroom of 30. Furthermore, the disturbing research according to the Institute of Fiscal Studies predicts that children living in poverty will soar to a record of 5.2 million over the next five years.

Child poverty is manifesting itself to such an extent that a study for the Nuffield Trust based on hundreds of thousands of patient records over a decade reveals that for condition after condition the poorest fifth of young people are admitted in greater numbers than the richest fifth. In cases of tonsillitis, viral infection, abdominal pain, even head injuries the poorest young people were admitted for emergency treatment at rates of 40% higher than the richest.

Lord Mayor, the Best Council Plan Refresh underlines our commitment to making Leeds the best city in the UK, a child friendly city and the best city to grow up in. These are bold ambitions and ones I am proud to support. However, they do not come without their challenges and I have to be honest when I say the Government policy often makes it feel as though they are working against us.

We often speak about the positive impact of a hot, healthy meal on a child's learning, but when it may be the only meal that the child gets that day it becomes even more important. The Children's Society are warning that Government plans to use Universal Credit to limit eligibility for free school meals could leave a million school children in poverty going hungry. Standing in front of you today is someone who benefited from free school meals and I would hate for other children to use this right.

The Government talks about being family friendly and wanting a country that works for everyone, but their continued unrelenting attacks on the most vulnerable sectors of our society demonstrate a completely different set of priorities. It cannot be right that a prosperous city like Leeds has over 26,000 children living in poverty. Let's be clear that 66% of these children are from working class families.

It saddens me that whenever these Government policies are mentioned people on the opposite benches try or start to deflect from the reality of what we are facing. Frankly, families across Leeds do not care about us in here arguing back and forth about who we think is to blame. All they care about is feeding their children, keeping them warm and putting a roof over their heads. It is therefore incumbent on us all to ensure predictions from the Institute of Fiscal Studies do not become a reality. Thank you. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Helen Hayden.

COUNCILLOR HAYDEN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I too am speaking on Minute 109, the Best Council Plan, in particular on the Best City Outcome that everyone should be able to enjoy happy, healthy lives. I will highlight two of the significant challenges to achieving this outcome, the first being access to GP services.

The recent YEP Big City Survey, which was reported in December 2017, highlights the pressures on the health service and in particular GP services in Leeds. Almost half of all people who responded to the survey reported that they struggled to make an appointment with a GP in the last year and I think that is something that everyone in this room could probably identify with.

Almost a third of respondents struggled to get an appointment at a hospital or to see a specialist in 2016. The figure for dentists is better but still one in four of respondents said that they had problems getting a dental appointment. Dr Richard Vautrey, Chairman of the British Medical Association's GP Committee and a Leeds GP, said that there is now a shortage of GPs in Leeds and doctors are under increasing pressure to meet the growing demand for services. Dr Vautrey said, "In Leeds we are at crisis point. We do recognise that lack of investment is having an impact."

GP and dental practices top the list in a survey of areas where Leeds people wanted to see increased spending. In fact, 71% were prepared to pay more in income tax to achieve this.

Going on to the second challenge of NHS funding which we have heard a lot about, or lack of funding that we have heard a lot about today, the news of routine hospital appointments to be delayed until the end of January to free up capacity for the city's patients. We have heard that this will lead to 55,000 deferred operations. This was warned. Simon Stevens said that we needed £4bn. The autumn budget gave £2.8bn over three years, this winter £350m. It is no surprise where that figure came from. We have had no extra, as has been mentioned, for Adult Social Care.

We have had the apologies from Jeremy Hunt and Theresa May but that is cold comfort to the thousands of people who have booked time off work, organised child care and geared themselves up in many other ways for their operation.

Can I join Councillor Charlwood in thanking all our healthcare staff for working so hard across the health system in Leeds. Staff have taken on extra and different responsibilities to get us through this crisis and are working in very difficult and pressurised circumstances.

I want to express our gratitude for their commitment, flexibility and dedication to our National Health Service and the people of Leeds. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Karen Bruce.

COUNCILLOR BRUCE: My Lord Mayor, I would like to speak on Minute 109 page 152, on the Best Council Plan.

The United Nations reported in 2016 that the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere increased at record speed to hit a level not seen for more than three million years. It is vitally important that we play our part in Leeds to keep global warming below the potentially catastrophic two degree threshold. I am glad, therefore, that cutting carbon is outlined as one of the Council's breakthrough projects in the Best Council Plan.

I am glad to announce that the Cutting Carbon Breakthrough Project clearly displays the number of ways in which we as a Council and as a city are continuing to work towards reducing our carbon footprint. In spite of a lack of clear direction towards tackling climate change from the Tory Government, Leeds City Council has adopted cutting carbon and improving air quality as one of its priority breakthrough projects and has been working on a range of projects and initiatives that are making a tangible difference in this city.

We have managed to deliver a significant reduction in our carbon footprint across Council buildings and operations, with CO₂ emissions down by over 16% since 2010. This is a vast improvement, I have to say, on the previous administration's efforts between 2005 and 2010 when you guys were in. You barely managed a 1% overall emissions reduction.

Construction is now under way on the city-wide District Heating Network. This will connect almost 2,000 Council flats as well as public sector buildings and private sector businesses with heat taken from the city's new incinerator facility at Cross Green. We have made significant progress through out LED lighting in schools initiative which has seen a reduction of 246 tons of carbon and almost £65,000 of overall savings as well for the schools involved. We have also updated a number of old street lamps at Chapeltown and Belle Isle with LEDs and we will be installing these throughout the city with new energy efficient lights as well.

The nature of the challenges associated with tackling climate change mean that the Council cannot do this in the city alone and one of the most important developments over the past year has been the formation of the Leeds Climate Change Commission, designed by the Council in partnership with the University of Leeds. The Commission helped to bring together private and public sector organisations throughout the city who are committed to effectively reducing the carbon footprints. The Commissioner has helped with projects such as Northern Gas Networks proposals for Leeds to be the first city to convert its natural gas network to hydrogen and has helped other key partners such as Yorkshire Water, Leeds Beckett University and Leeds NHS...

THE LORD MAYOR: That is fine, that is wonderful. Glad to have so many partners.

COUNCILLOR BRUCE: I am pleased that we are progressing and will continue. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Illingworth.

COUNCILLOR ILLINGWORTH: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I rise to speak on Minute 109 page 152, updating the Best Council Plan. I am delighted that the Executive Board adopted the Health and Wellbeing Strategy without any changes. Leeds will focus on improving public health and narrowing the unacceptable health gap between rich and poor areas of our city.

Key elements are the need to cut cigarette smoking and to increase physical activity in the general population. Current guidelines envisage that every child achieves one hour per day of vigorous physical activity. It is important that we provide our young people, and in fact all people, Lord Mayor, with safe, convenient, affordable and pleasant places to be physically active.

In Kirkstall we are delighted to be making progress towards the Kirkstall Valley Park on the back of the Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme. The most attractive parts of Kirkstall riverside have been designated as Passive Flood Storage Areas, which is exactly the right designation. It will make

them available to the public for walking and running, cycling and canoeing, not only for Kirkstall residents but for neighbouring wards as well.

Lord Mayor, I would like to mention another piece of good news since our last meeting. On 30th November NHS England announced that the Leeds Children's Heart Surgery Unit would remain open indefinitely, having met all the required standards. (*applause*) In doing this, Lord Mayor, I would like to pay tribute to Bob Ward, who led the first Deputation to Council today, Lord Mayor. He also played a key role behind the scenes in the fight to keep the Children's Heart Surgery Unit open.

The attempt by NHS England to close the Leeds Unit explored the worst and the best aspects of our democracy. Their proposal was based on false news that the Leeds unit was unsafe and that combined units would be safer. Neither claim was actually true but they were echoed by every major newspaper and media outlet.

An expert panel was convened to assess the proposals. It eventually came to light that several members of the panel had close connections to the eight units selected for survival, but there were no panel members linked to the units selected for closure. We asked to see the individual scores awarded by the expert panel but NHS England refused to disclose them.

We were ultimately successful for three reasons: one, we were able to unpick the scientific and medical case for closure; two, Leeds campaigners made a successful application for judicial review; three, politicians across Yorkshire and Humberside co-operated cross-party to bring an effective case before the NHS Review Body.

Lord Mayor, fighting as a single unit all of Yorkshire proved amazingly successful. Perhaps there is a lesson for us here, Lord Mayor, in the ongoing devolution debate. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Illingworth. Councillor Mohammed Iqbal.

COUNCILLOR IQBAL: My Lord Mayor and fellow Councillors, I would like to speak on Minute 109 page 152. The Best Council Plan includes commitment to targeting interventions to tackle poverty in priority neighbourhoods. It is the work that I will be talking about today.

Priority neighbourhoods constitute a new flexible place-based approach to tackle poverty. Following a successful pilot in New Wortley, the Council has identified six priority neighbourhoods, one of which is my ward. There are many often related factors which can lead to an increase in poverty. These include national policy austerity, the economic recession post 2008, deteriorating housing conditions, welfare reform, migration and public sector budget reductions. Sadly in Leeds there are some neighbourhoods that have seen poverty increase over the last ten years. This means that a new approach is needed to ensure that everyone in Leeds is able to share in our city's prosperity.

A key benefit of this approach is that it prevents people working in silos. There will be a greater integration both within the Council and with our partners. This work is being done in collaboration with partners including the police and Public Health. It is also seeing the Communities Team working alongside Adults and Children's partners to give a whole picture approach to the problems of poverty. Whilst this approach focuses resources on some of our poorest communities, the universal offer with our ten Community Committees will remain.

I have spoken at Council in the past about our work to tackle poverty. This is an important goal contributing to a strong economy and compassionate city. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Sharon Hamilton.

COUNCILLOR HAMILTON: Lord Mayor, Councillors. I would like to speak on Minute 109 page 152.

As the report sets out housing is being given great prominence in the Best Council Plan on a page whereas this was always prominent in the full Best Council Plan. It is a positive move to highlight our commitment even further.

The draft plan on a page talks about providing housing of the right quality, type, tenure and affordability in the right places. This is what I will be talking about today. I have spoken in Council many times about our work to bring new affordable homes to the people of Leeds. Whilst many of us have long championed the cause of affordable housing, the Government seems to have only discovered housing as an issue in the last year. However, their response at the Budget was wholly inadequate. Considering we are seeing the worst rate of house building since the 1920s, the numbers promised are very, very poor. It is noticeable the Government promised to build 200,000 starter homes three years ago and so far to date none have been built, whilst it is estimated that our housing revenue account will be £283m less income over the next ten years as a result of the Government rent reduction policy to 2020.

There is, however, much positive work that we are still able to achieve including our investment in fire safety. We are making £10m available to retrofit sprinklers. (*applause*) We are also calling on the Government to make more money available to fund the full £30m costs for Leeds. Making our own £10m commitment now means we can get started on this important work without delays.

We are also making key investments in the areas of health and affordable warmth and on low carbon energy efficiency. We are also investing in our Decent Home Programme to ensure we deliver modern, fit for purpose homes and neighbourhoods. In Leeds our commitment to affordable housing is strong. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Neil Buckley

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking on Minute 109 also on page 152, the Best Council Plan Refresh for 2018/19 to 2020/21, Initial Proposals.

To relate my comments specifically to the Best Council Plan priority, “Housing of the right quality, type, tenure and affordability in the right places.”

Lord Mayor, providing the appropriate housing is no more relevant than when discussing the Council’s approach to providing accommodation for the gypsy and traveller communities, so I wonder whether the administration can clear up some confusion. As many Members will remember, last summer there were various incursions involving travellers in Alwoodley and in Moortown for a given number of weeks, and in other wards. The point is this, at Development Plans Panel on 18th July it was stated, or a stated aim, that, quotes, “A discrete pool of sites providing a range of geographical locations and site sizes” and went on to say, “The list will not be a public document.” It would not be made public.

At Full Council in November Councillor Coupar said, “Councillor Buckley is missing the point. There is no list, there is no secret list.”

Perhaps, Lord Mayor, we can have this contradiction cleared up and although we are cold and wet at the moment in January, perhaps before the summer of 2018 where these things are likely to happen again, perhaps we can have some clarity on this and I would be very grateful for some kind of response in clearing this up. Many thanks. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Right, unfortunately we have run out of time so apologies, Councillor Blackburn and Councillor Wadsworth. We move on to Councillor James Lewis to sum up, please.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I listened to Councillor Buckley's contribution with great interest and I completely agree with what Councillor Coupar said last time at the meeting. *(laughter)* I do not know what could be clearer than the statement Councillor Coupar made and hopefully that has resolved that issue.

Turning to the Minutes, it is a bit of a mixed bag. I will start off with Parklife and the sports area because that is one the easier ones that Councillor Carter raised earlier though I do not really think the time on my Minutes is the place for praising Councillor Wakefield in this Council Chamber. I do think the Parklife scheme is within the area of sport in my portfolio and is a really important one about some of the things that Councillor Illingworth touched on about encouraging people to be fit and active.

We all in wards across our city know that we have got football and rugby teams that need pitches to play on, we do not have enough pitches to play on at the moment. Quite a lot of the grass ones we have are unusable for times of the year when they are flooded, some of them are not the greatest quality, so actually having a proper programme, working with the FA, working with the Football Association in one of the richest sports in the country to actually bring money into grassroots sport and develop much more useable pitches right across the city. Councillor Carter referred to one in the West of the city but the paper refers to a network across the city as a starting point. I think it is something really positive and actually it is part of our role as a Council, one of the things we do as a Council, we are going to spend all our own money on, we are going to work with other organisations to bring the things we want into the city and I think that is an excellent example of that one.

I will move on to a couple of the other papers that people spoke on, and I am sorry we did not get Councillor Golton's thoughts on borrowing and the Council's financial strategy, I am sorry he ran out of time. I am sure they would be fascinating had we had the time to hear them. Certainly the Members who spoke on that were very clear about the perilous state it could sometimes appear the Council finances are in and I think, as Councillor Blake pointed out earlier, the reductions in spending we have had have really put us in that place.

Councillor Bentley particularly referred – I am sure we will come on to the detailed Children's Services in this afternoon's White Paper debate and I do not want to get people over excited too early about that *(laughter)* but the one thing I was a little bit puzzled to hear about, the lack of transparency around the reporting on the financial information. As Members know we have a monthly update on the Council's financial position with a huge amount of detail there. As Opposition Members I think forgot to mention but I will, the Council budget was balanced for the last month, we had a report on it that shows we are sticking to our financial plans. If Councillor Bentley wants to know any more about that he can maybe ask the Lib Dem Member of Resources and Strategy Scrutiny, Councillor Mrs Bentley or, if he is particularly interested in Children's Services and thinks there is more work to be done there, he could ask the Chair of the Children's Services Scrutiny Board, Councillor Mrs Bentley, to help him out there. *(laughter)*

Really, it is difficult times but if Members are concerned they are not seeing the right information that is something we want to take forward.

Just to turn on I think to the Best Council Plan consultation, which is a consultation – I was scribbling down what people were saying for when we come to the Best one. I think actually it was a bit of a theme that came through there from all Members who spoke on that and I think it is our ambition as a city to tackle some of the big problems we face, to be able to tackle the problems with housing that Councillor Hamilton referred to. I know the responses I think lots of Members have come up with on the housing one is focusing on the issue of not just the numbers

of housing delivered but the numbers of affordable housing and social housing that we are able to deliver in the city. Obviously we are limited by the Government's cap on the Housing Revenue Account on the amount we can actually spend on building new Council houses. We hope to agree a housing deal to take that forward but that is a really important point.

Some of the other things as well – I can see I am running out of time but to pick out Councillor Iqbal's about poverty. We often talk sometimes about the impact austerity has on our spending as a Local Authority but actually the issues for the neighbourhoods Councillor Iqbal spoke about, for the first time we have neighbourhoods in Leeds that are in the poorest one per cent in the country. That is the impact the poverty is having on the city, that is the impact that austerity is having on the city, whether it is our spending or whether it is the impact of things they have brought in like Universal Credit or just simply the weakness in the economy and the poor pay and vulnerable work in the economy that is endemic. That shows we are prepared to tackle those issues as an administration.

We always welcome the small bits of funny money we get from the Government when they arrive but they have not put back the tens and hundreds of millions of pounds that are missing from our budget, and just imagine what we could do to tackle some of these problems if indeed we were treated fairly and had that resource in the budget. I move my Minutes. (*applause*)

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

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Of course, it is a bit tricky following on when we have just had one portfolio covered at Minutes today from Councillor Lewis, who has done a comprehensive job, as he always does, but there are a couple of things I would perhaps like to go into in a little bit more detail, if I can.

Particularly picking up on Councillor Golton's concern about the Child Friendly Leeds work. Obviously the Best Council Plan is a consultation, I think we had quite a good discussion about this at Executive Board if I recall. I would actually say that the approach that has been looked at is actually the complete reverse of what you are saying. Rather than keeping it as a separate entity I think the idea is that it becomes fully integrated into every single piece of work that this Council does but I think we are all mindful in the same way that we have endlessly discussed about where you put equality issues, do you have it in a separate part or do you integrate it to make sure that it gets the attention that it needs?

I am delighted to say that Councillor Mulherin in particular is picking up the child poverty aspect of the whole issue of our focus for every child in this city to have the opportunity to grow up to become successful adults. She has set re-established, I think, the Strategic Working Group on Child Poverty and she really wants to make sure that it does remain a key priority. If people do not feel that within the plan that ambition of ours is reflected, then let us look at the wording of it because I think every single one of us in this Chamber recognises that for our ambition as a city, putting children and young people at the heart of absolutely everything we do is paramount.

The other issue I just want to pick up on is Jonathan referring to the gas explosion in his ward in the Silk Mills. We actually had a gas explosion in Middleton some years ago, actually in again a terraced house, but the impact of that explosion was unbelievable. I really think when you start to hear about these events unfolding and you see the response from the emergency services – absolutely extraordinary. This case has followed the pattern of other serious incidents in this city that the emergency services do their work, they make sure there is no more threat to life and then the Council services really come in and come into their own.

There is a particular lady that I am sure you are aware of who literally was pulled out of her flat and lost absolutely all of her possessions. I think she was in her pyjamas, I think that is all she had with her when she left. I am delighted because of the initiative that you have heard via the

Lord Mayor that working with Council officers, actually many of them putting their hands into their own pockets, have actually got enough money to furnish her flat. We in the Labour Group have put round a collection to contribute to the funds to give her support and I hope all Members here today will do the same.

I was wracking my brains, John, to know why Bob was so familiar in the Deputation. It is very strange when you see people in a different context. I was absolutely thrilled to hear the news about the Children's Heart Unit and I think it really showed the Council at its finest, all of us coming together supporting NHS colleagues in Leeds but also beyond, and Council colleagues across Yorkshire, as you quite rightly say, doing an extraordinary piece of work. Bob actually has been in touch with me very recently because of this because I actually did write to the Evening Paper and I did actually comment – he is going to be embarrassed now – the work that John actually did in this. For years we have been wracking our brains to find an issue that John could use his forensic interrogation skills in an incredibly constructive way – not that I am saying you are not constructive in others, far be it from me (*laughter*) but if we wanted to put anyone on that job then we had the right person, so well done. (*applause*)

The themes running through I think the debate that we have just had is really just picking up on what we as a Council in Leeds really have given our focus to, and that is around ensuring that we still fund early intervention; that we still fund prevention. I mean early intervention in the sense of in the life cycle of a problem, not just Early Years as it is obviously important but every single problem that this Government allows to develop by taking money out of the prevention work that we do then grows and grows and grows and ends up if you go into Armley and find out that so many of the people who are in Armley fell into the Youth Justice system at a very young age because of their family circumstances or because of lack of investment at that age; about adult literacy; about addiction. All of these things, preventable things that actually make our blood boil when you see the cuts that have come forward.

I just want to give a bit of a warning about the business rates work because going down the line I am afraid the Government is looking at the Public Health grant and rolling that up into being picked up by the money that comes out of the business rates. These are the things where we have to be incredibly alert that it seems that we are getting money with one hand but let's be aware of the extra responsibilities that we are given with that process around business rates, but without the extra money coming forward, but really, something to celebrate.

I think Leeds stands out in this. We have over decades always put the most vulnerable people in our city first and it has caused criticism from people who would like to see us put more into pot holes or whatever their particular issue is, but I think we can hold our heads up with pride and particularly now getting the recognition for, in very, very difficult circumstances, as has been outlined, that we are still prioritising services to our most vulnerable.

Sharon obviously mentioned housing which is a top priority for us all. Alison, your comments about the police, absolutely bang on. I think this is true across all of our public services. I have never known a time when so many people working on the front line are actually prepared to stand up and tell it like it is and talk about the impact that the cuts are now having on their services, on them as personnel, the sheer levels of stress that we have witnessed on our television screens from those medics in particular and nurses in A&E.

To hear – I am sorry, I cannot remember his name – the Conservative who is in the House of Lords who speaks on policing saying that he does not understand that there is a connection between community policing and the fight against terrorism, it absolutely beggars belief. We have felt the impact from a reduction recently in numbers in PCSOs when we thought the budget was going to go. I am very pleased to see that those numbers are coming back on the streets and they really make the difference that they need to make.

The Council Plan Refresh really highlights our priorities as a Council, working across the piece, making sure that we have got the economy to help us deliver on our priorities, but making sure that as a key partner in the city all of our public services can grow and thrive and really deliver for the people that we represent.

I just want to tell you that the LGA has launched a Bright Futures campaign. This is Tory-led LGA calling for services that change children's lives to be properly funded. Every single Councillor in this Chamber has a responsibility to stand up, demand the money that is due to us so that we can deliver for the people in this city. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

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

Before you all move off I have got an announcement to make. The gremlin that has affected my voice has also affected the webcast as well, so whilst people can actually hear your voices, instead of having that very fetching close-up that they do like to do, there is an overview of the Chamber, so mind what you are doing because we can see everything we are doing now before we go to lunch!

It is just after twenty-five past, so if we can have you in the Chamber for five-to, please, so that we can actually start on the Devolution item. Thank you.

(Short break)

THE LORD MAYOR: You will all be pleased to know that instead of getting an overview of whether you are in the Council Chamber or not, we have now fixed the problem and apparently you will be in Technicolor on the webcast as a close-up, if you can be prepared for that.

If you can all be quiet, because this is a really nice announcement. I heard over the lunch break and it is my great pleasure and I am sure we will all wish to congratulate Matthew Robinson who has recently become engaged to a young lady called Rosaria. (*applause*) Of course we wish you every happiness going forward on that.

ITEM 11 – REPORT ON DEVOLVED MATTERS

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now going to move to Item 11, Report on Devolved Matters, and we are going to hear that for up to 30 minutes. If Councillor Blake would like to start, please. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. The Report that you have all got in front of you gives an update of the activity that has been undertaken by the Leeds City Region Local Enterprise Partnership and through the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA).

I do not propose to dwell too much on the details within the report unless anyone wants to comment on those. We have had a bit of a round-up of impact that we have had over the last year that includes opening Wakefield College's £7m Advanced Skills and Innovation Centre, attracting the highest number of foreign direct investment projects in 20 years and a very significant development for Leeds in opening the offices for Burberry, all the office staff, 400 office staff moving up to Leeds from London, as well as the transport. Although he was unwell, Councillor Wakefield actually I think should have, at the Transport Awards dinner, been on his feet three times to win awards for transport initiatives for West Yorkshire, so I think he needs a bit of a round of applause as well. (*applause*) Cruel timing, then, being ill so you cannot actually go and pick them up.

The main thing really that I want to talk to you about is our aspirations around devolution. Clearly you will be aware from the significant press coverage there has been recently that the Coalition of the Willing is holding firm, still looking to develop proposals around One Yorkshire. Doncaster and Barnsley very much want to be part of the bigger Yorkshire footprint and to that end they decided to hold community consultations so they could actually go out to the people in their communities and ask for their view. The consultation result is not binding but I think is a very clear indication of how the people in those two boroughs actually are feeling.

They achieved turn outs of 20% just in the run-up to Christmas, and if you think that is higher than PCC elections that we have known, sometimes certainly higher than some of the Parliamentary bye-elections we have been through. 84.9% of those who voted in Barnsley voted for One Yorkshire, the wider Yorkshire deal, and 85.2% in Doncaster also voted for the wider Yorkshire model.

I said to you last time we have established the Yorkshire Leaders' Board, we are still working on a range of different issues across Yorkshire so on housing, on Brexit, on industrial strategy, transport for example, and our simple request to Government has been that the Secretary of State holds a meeting with us to talk about our ambition for devolution in Yorkshire. I am very, very disappointed and sorry to report back to Council that after all this time we still have not got a meeting in the diary.

The all-party Parliamentary Group is actually meeting this Friday in York, not in Westminster, and we are following on from that with a meeting of the Yorkshire Council Leaders, so we will be in a position to update you from the discussions taking part in that. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor James Lewis.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Tom Leadley.

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Councillor Blake has actually covered part of my script anyway!

Devolution is a difficult topic. Many agree that it is needed to oversee regional infrastructure projects and to ensure joined-up thinking on highways and public transport and general investment.

We are seeing a serious debate about regional devolution in South Yorkshire with creditable percentages of the electorates in Barnsley and Doncaster turning out to give support for a Yorkshire-wide region rather than a city region based on Sheffield. In both cases the turn-out was over 20%, quite a lot to answer a fairly abstract question posed during the run-up to Christmas and the votes in favour of Yorkshire-wide were well over 80%.

Even so, we need to tread carefully. There are some signs that the West Yorkshire Combined Authority is beginning to act like some of the regional development corporations and similar bodies of the 1960s and that those bodies were democratic only at second hand, they were only vaguely accountable with large budgets, wide-ranging discretionary powers, staffed and controlled by people who had ended up there more or less by chance and they began by looking slightly daft; they passed from incompetence to recklessness and ended up being positively corrupt. We do need to be a little bit cautious and, as we have heard before, within 100 yards or so of this Chamber we have the proposed Hilton Hotel, construction of which was abandoned part way through due to bankruptcy after its sponsors had received money which is acknowledged to be irrecoverable and that had come from the Combined Authority through the LEP. The hotel is

about to be rebuilt and finished as student flats, which is good news in one way but that will be of no direct benefit to any aggrieved taxpayer.

Further worries have been turned up in the press and have prompted a Combined Authority Scrutiny Inquiry but I will not comment on those as no formal report has been published.

We do need a regional strategic Authority, preferably Yorkshire-wide. Smaller ones might be unpopular if they were thought to be dominated by Leeds or Sheffield. Such an Authority would have to be staffed and run by carefully chosen people who are up to the job. If it were not it would soon fall into disfavour. Thank you, my Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: First of all can I welcome the news from Barnsley and Doncaster. I think it is great. Clearly you have got our support in all you are trying to do to achieve devolution on a Yorkshire regional basis. One thing that we have always said is that that is the way forward as far as we are concerned. I think a message should go out to Government that we want our Council Leaders to talk to them about a way forward and that way forward must be that we have some kind of Assembly of democratically elected Members that is accountable to the people. We do not want a Mayor, we do not want a series of Leaders. We want a proper Authority. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Stewart Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thanks, Lord Mayor. I did start to watch the reshuffle recently because I was looking forward to this bright new world of diversity and new faces and opportunities and, of course, I stopped watching after a while as more and more middle class white people from the Home Counties trooped forward and got given the same job that they already had.

The interesting thing that came out of the reshuffle was that some people seemed to be given extra responsibilities that we always thought were their responsibilities anyway but then all of a sudden it turns up in their title, which means the Prime Minister thought that it was an important thing. The Health Secretary, of course, got Social Care which we knew that they were roughly responsible for as well and then, of course, the Local Government Minister gets given Housing in front of their title, even though we knew Housing was already part of their portfolio.

One of the really disappointing things was that nobody got given the title of Devolution Minister and I think that just goes to show where the focus is on this present Government and where the priorities are in terms of where they think they should put their talent and identify people who are there to get things done, because they do not really want to get things done on devolution, it seems.

The unfortunate thing for me is the debate yesterday, that Dan Jarvis said the clock is ticking, I seem to see in the newspapers. It just got me thinking, where have I heard that expression before, and wasn't it Michel Barnier talking to David Davis about Brexit? It is all about if you do not actually get your noggin on and start thinking about it and start deciding and doing things properly and talking to the right people, then actually somebody else is going to be doing that for you and it will not be the conclusion that you require.

I really do think that some of the more assertive language that is coming out of the region like "the clock is ticking" and basically taking the challenge to the Minister that is supposed to be responsible for Devolution but does not seem to want to actually do anything about it, is more and more needed because I think that is what is going to generate the popular discontent and the popular support which is necessary to actually get Westminster politicians listening.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Andrew Carter.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Yes, Lord Mayor. It is certainly a funny old world when people can give so much credence to a referendum with a turn-out of 20% and some of those same politicians try to give no credence at all to a referendum with a turn-out of over 74%, but I will say no more about Brexit.

As regards the situation with the Combined Authority, Tom Leadley is right, there is an accountability and transparency issue and that has recently been highlighted significantly, certainly in the pages of the Yorkshire Post. There is an issue that when you get a larger Authority in being, whether it is a Combined Authority, a LEP, you name whatever, there needs to be quite clear transparency and decision-making and everyone needs to understand that, particularly the public. That is the only way we will get their support in large numbers for what we are trying to achieve. If the general public believe it is a bunch of politicians, businessmen and trade union officials who want to take decisions at a higher level out of the sight of public scrutiny, then we will have a problem justifying what I think all of us ultimately want to try and achieve, which is a regional body Yorkshire-wide, with the exclusion of Sheffield and Rotherham, that can deliver on a strategic basis. That is something I think we should increasingly focus our attention on, that accountability.

As regards the situation, there have been some interesting comments coming out of Government about their willingness to look at now, which is a step further forward than we were before, the all Yorkshire deal with Barnsley and Doncaster included at some stage. All I would say on that is we need to keep that door open and what we do not need to see is too much complaint from Doncaster and from Barnsley and push it too far and jeopardise a deal for the rest of us that they could then have taken part in. I am very concerned – very concerned – that that could jeopardise our position.

Finally, I just want to say – and it is interesting that we do not have a Devolved Mayoral Authority yet we have got the deal on business rates, and that indicates that the Government does look at Leeds and the Leeds City Region in an important way as driving the economy forward in this area. That is very important that that remains the case because in the interim we have to ensure that we continue to get these different funding streams still coming to us before the Devolution deal is done, because that could be, with respect, 12, 15 months away yet and some of those funding streams are going to start drying up but they will not for the Mayoral Authorities. *(applause)*

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

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I think the issue running through all of the contributions so far has been around accountability, transparency and governance. Certainly the Leaders Board are very mindful of the fact that we will have to set up a Combined Authority at a regional level and that was a sticking point for some time but things have moved forward.

I do want to recognise that Government has moved significantly on this and I think that is something that we will be picking up on Friday, that the original talk about there never, ever, ever being a Yorkshire-wide deal has gone and the discussion really now is about a two-stage process, and I think that actually represents an enormous change. We keep saying to colleagues in South Yorkshire that we do not want to hold up them getting the money that they have got in the deal that they have got at the moment, so anything that we can do to enable that to happen, but there is a precedent in Greater Manchester. They had an Interim Mayor who actually was the Police and Crime Commissioner at the time and perversely has now gone back as an MP taking up one of the seats in Greater Manchester.

I think there is a growing determination. I think the fact that the Archbishop of York has actually come out very clearly and talked in favour of Yorkshire has given a huge boost to everybody who is working on this agenda.

Yes, we need to make sure it is accountable. Actually in the West Yorkshire situation it is going through a real period of change and we have had to do quite a lot of work with business leaders in particular to make sure that they understand what it is to work with public sector bodies, come to open meetings, declare your interests and, I have to say, we are making a lot of progress on that. That is a good fore-runner.

I hope every single one of us, wherever we get the opportunity, will highlight, and obviously I look to you Andrew and people on your side who have got influence – we want a meeting. It used to be that we used to talk with George Osborn over the phone. Who knew in two years' time you would be reminiscing about those days? *(laughter)* We should be negotiating at the level of Sajid Javid, the Secretary of State, and the Treasury. They need to take us seriously because without Yorkshire there is no Northern Powerhouse and all of their ambition to rebalance the economy won't materialise. Thank you. *(applause)*

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

WHITE PAPERS

THE LORD MAYOR: Now we move on to the final section of the meeting, White Papers. We have three White Papers this evening to debate. Each debate will last no more than 45 minutes and will conclude with votes on the motion and any amendments.

ITEM 12 – WHITE PAPER MOTION – CAPITAL OF CULTURE

THE LORD MAYOR: We move first to White Paper Motion number one, Capital of Culture. If I could call on Mr Neil Buckley, please, Councillor Buckley.

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. City of Culture – I have never felt as popular! Everybody wants to agree with me so I think one thing we can all rely on is that that won't last! However, I hope it lasts today – I think it will.

City of Culture – we know where we are with this. The EU said some time ago that the five UK bidders in the Capital of Culture process will not now be allowed to take part in the whole thing. Beyond initial shock and disappointment and anger and so on, we are where we are now. There is no point in dwelling on what might have been. The decision has been made and it is unlikely to be changed, despite the best efforts of MEPs including Councillor Procter and others.

We are at a crossroads, really; we have two choices. We can either burst into tears and go and sit in the corner and sulk and do nothing, or we can say come on, let's do this, Europe or no Europe.

In recent years, if we all think about it, Leeds has had some setbacks as a city - let us just say the transport-related knock-backs which we have had. When we compare ourselves to Manchester, they have managed to secure for themselves over the last decade, let us say, a higher profile than ours. This really must change because it is not a natural order of things.

We can change this, but how can we and how should we do it, to go ahead with a year of culture? I have written down about three reasons – there are many, many more but if you take the numbers one to three: the Hull effect. If you look at their Capital of Culture, the UK, I know Hull quite well, we have got friends there, we go from time to time and the atmosphere there has been completely transformed. They used to be rather downbeat and subdued about their city, they did not think a great deal of it and now it is completely transformed. They are a much more

confident, go-ahead, progressive city and the same thing, of course, happened in Liverpool some time ago.

Number two, what you might call the wellbeing effect. A happy ship, community cohesion, work-life balance, a rounded city – all these things are great. We are not just talking about the opera, the ballet, big orchestras but all kinds of small events, small groups, big groups, local events of all different types and sizes.

Thirdly, and probably the most important is what this could bring us. A potential massive boost to the economy and the international profile it should develop if it goes to plan. Visitor numbers and investment could really be a big, big success story.

We need to be confident that we can do the following thing, because there is no point in having this big event and talking to ourselves. If we amuse the people of the city that is fine but it needs to be national and it needs to be international, an international profile. The EU Capital of Culture and the UK Capital of Culture are enormous brands with massive marketing powers at their disposal. Leeds must get hold of this and it must sell the whole year of culture and be ultra positive about it. This is vital possibly with other bidders or possibly on our own – these things I know are all up for discussion. Could there be collaboration of some different types? Yes, I am sure there could. Could it be the City Region and the Yorkshire brand as per the cycling triumphs? Absolutely yes, why not? Let's get on the back of that because people already think about Yorkshire and if we can make them think the same thing about Leeds in particular, so much the better.

There must be a brand put out there in the run-up to an event. There must be big sponsorships, a big sponsorship buy-in. Do we want to see taxpayers' money wasted which the Liberals have hinted at? Of course we don't. We are Conservatives, we are quite good at saving public money, actually! (*laughter*) We do not want to waste it!

Let us have a great plan and let us just say that all right, Europe has said this, fine, they have done it, we cannot change it, it is a great opportunity in the making. Let us grasp the nettle, Lord Mayor, and let us get on and do it. Thank you. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Buckley for your comments. Councillor Blake, if you could second, please.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am happy to second this White Paper in the spirit that all the way through the process of making the decision to bid for Capital of Culture we have worked cross-party and I think that has been a real strength of our bid going forward. Of course, it was just after the last Council meeting that we got the news that the EU Commissioners – not the politicians, the Commissioners – had decided to pull the plug on the competition.

I believe, taking soundings from so many people who have been involved – the steering group, the sponsors, the universities, the people out in our communities who benefit from cultural investment. I do not think this is a choice. I think this is absolutely necessary that we find a way of harnessing the incredible energy that has been released through this process and move it forward. Particularly running through our bid, that theme about investing in our young people in the city, the creativity that we can unlock and enabling them to take up the best chance in life.

The wellbeing aspect, just how many people came out for the Tour de Yorkshire, Tour de France, the triathlon, the sports events – the crowds actually coming out and beforehand getting together on the cultural side, knitting jumpers for the statues in City Square, for example. That huge appetite for people to come together. A really strong theme running through about the benefit to the economy of Leeds and the jobs that a vibrant cultural scene will bring.

We have not been idle, we heard the news and I have to say that all of the bidding cities, the five cities, were in a state of equal shock to us. Straightaway within days we got together with those five cities, we went down to Government, we have been working with the officials in the Department of Culture and Sport and really looking at all the different options open to us, and we are still having those conversations. It is a bit of a shock to turn on the radio this morning and hear Councillor Buckley's dulcet tones coming through from Radio Leeds but I was very pleased to hear as well that they had the Leader of Dundee on Radio Leeds talking about how they had worked incredibly well with Leeds over the last few weeks, so we have gone from being rivals in the competition to being best friends and working out how we can move our way forward.

We know that we have spent the equivalent of seven pence a year for every Leeds resident so far but we know that every pound of public money that has been invested has been matched to a tune of four times by the private sector and the public sector. It is incredible pay-back. Liverpool estimated an uplift to its economy of £750m and you only have to go to Hull to realise the increase in confidence and ambition amongst all of the people.

I think the thing to stress for me at this point is that we need to take the people of Leeds with us when we make the next decision. We went out and got permission to put the bid in the first place; we need to make sure that we are taking the people of Leeds with us, because the thing about our bid that I believe would have been the stand-out in helping us to win it, was that it was rooted in our communities through our Community Committees, going out and celebrating culture in all of our wards with all of our people, different ages, events that people would not necessarily badge as culture but really helped to determine the profile of the city.

I would say let us look at the way forward as an investment in what we need to do to benefit our economy, to benefit the health and wellbeing of our city and really to get the notice and attention that the city of Leeds deserves and needs. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jonathan Bentley.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I do not want to be characterised as the killjoy in this, far from it. I agree with everything that Councillor Buckley and Councillor Blake have said and you can see from our amendment that we broadly support this White Paper but with some slight provisos. I certainly agree with Councillor Buckley his opening lines of the White Paper where he expresses disappointment with the European Commission to prevent Leeds from competing for the Capital of Culture title. Should we be surprised that the organisation that promotes and runs the competition does not want the involvement of a country that is shunning everything to do with the European Union?

It need not have been like that. Let me ask Members to cast their minds back to June 2016 when they were putting their cross on the referendum ballot paper. Those people who voted Leave, let me ask you this, if you had really known that Brexit meant that Leeds would not be able to be the European Capital of Culture, would you have still voted Leave? If that big red Brexit bus said on the side not the false information about £350m a week to the NHS but had told people the truth, that voting Leave meant that we would be wholly excluded from ever being the European Capital of Culture, things may have turned out differently. We have here an example of why the whole referendum vote was so unsatisfactory. Those who voted Leave did not know the consequences of what that Leave vote meant. There is still chance for people to change their minds. As David Davis, the Brexit bulldog himself said, "If a democracy cannot change its mind it ceases to be a democracy."

So what do we need to do? Well, you need to lobby your MPs, you need to lobby the leadership of your political parties, to support the Liberal Democrat policy of having a public vote on the final deal and, who knows, Leeds may yet be able to be the European Capital of Culture.

If that does not work (*laughter*) we will go along with Councillor Buckley's proposal and we will go it alone.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: You are not even taking yourself seriously!

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: A cultural festival would be the showcase for the vibrancy and innovation of the city but we do need to have some concerns about spending large sums of taxpayers' money on this event.

The rewards to businesses in the city and in the region from the success of such an event would be huge, and therefore we should be looking to businesses and sponsors to finance such a festival. We should be looking for more sponsors from across the whole region.

There is a huge voluntary and amateur cultural sector in Leeds as well which has currently been a bit marginalised by the Council upping the fees on the Carriageworks and other Council premises for them to use, but they could have a really substantial role, so we would have to have something to make such a festival accessible and relevant to all our citizens, and I think that relevance to everyone is something that has got to be key. Councillor Blake mentioned the inclusion of the whole community, which is fine, but we have got to ask ourselves the single parent living in a Council flat somewhere, how relevant is the Capital of Culture to them and how can we make it relevant and accessible?

There has been some Council taxpayers' money already committed and we would not necessarily want to reduce that, but we have got to look at the other pressures on our residents. We are forecasting a £38m black hole for 2018/19, we know about the financial time bomb of the NHS and Children's Services, which we have discussed already this afternoon, so we have got to be careful how we present this to our residents, that it is not yet another burden and we have got to demonstrate that there is money coming in from outside and that will be for everyone's benefit. I move the amendment. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Colin Campbell.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dan Cohen.

COUNCILLOR COHEN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am absolutely delighted to speak in support of Councillor Buckley's White Paper, brilliantly seconded by Councillor Blake.

Following the very late decision by the European Commission not to allow the UK to bid for Capital of Culture in 2023, that our city hosts its own Year of Culture by 2023.

Along with Councillor Blake and Councillor Golton I have sat on the steering group that put together the Leeds bid for 2023 and because of the lateness of the Commission's very bizarre decision, a huge amount of work had already been done to put that whole programme for the year together. Equally important was the fact that a huge amount of sponsorship had been either raised or promised and many of those sponsors have been saying to us "We still want this to go ahead" and I think that is hugely important and hugely significant.

Having seen the very wide range of support for the Leeds bid, I have less than no doubt that with the right marketing our amazing city is more than capable of putting on the most amazing year of events and activity, showcasing ourselves for what we truly are. Whatever one's take is on Brexit – and despite Councillor Bentley's comments – by 2023 the UK is going to have left the EU. That is, I think, a political reality, whatever your view is on that. Equally, there is no doubt that a high profile year of culture is a superb vehicle to invite the whole world to our city to attract investment

of every kind and so to the world we say, “Welcome, yokoso, üdvözljük, dobro pozhalovat, khush amdeed, witamy, brochim habayim, ahlan bik, vilcommen and bienvenue to our great city. Come and see why Leeds truly Leeds when it comes to culture, innovation and vision.” Thank you, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Andrew Carter.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Follow that, Lord Mayor! I will stick to English. I am really sorry that the Liberal Democrats have sought to amend this and when I heard Councillor Bentley I was even more disappointed. I have just got one message for Councillor Bentley - get over it!

Let us get back to reality. This is an opportunity for a city to come together in the face of a decision none of us wanted to see made by people living thousands of miles away. My only complaint is that it took 18 months for the Commissioners to tell us. Why were we not told before we went on? My other complaint is I find it difficult to swallow that countries that are not in the EU are allowed to bid for City of Culture, and I highlight particularly Turkey because Turkey cannot claim to have a trading relationship like Iceland and like Norway, which were also allowed to bid. Turkey has no such arrangements but hopes to join the EU. I suspect with the state of German politics at the moment that is a long, long way away. It was mean and mean-spirited of the Commissioners to do what they did at the time they did it.

It does give us an opportunity and I entirely endorse the comments of Councillor Buckley and Councillor Blake. I have been very impressed by the reaction of local community groups to the decision from Europe and the reaction has been unanimously, as far as I could tell, “Well, can’t we do something on our own? We are not going to throw it away, are we? This is an opportunity”, and it is an opportunity and we need to take it.

The money side of it, Councillor Buckley quite rightly makes the point, we are hardly likely to be talking about throwing millions of pounds of Council taxpayers’ money around but there is huge support from the private sector and from local communities for us to press on with something that we can really put Leeds on the map culturally. I am sorry for what I am going to say about Hull but Hull has been hugely successful but their cultural base from which they began is not like our cultural base, with respect to Hull. They have done a great job and good luck to them, but we have already got a series of much more solid foundations on which to build, particularly in the communities around the city and I know that organisations in my ward have been involved with the process, I am sure other communities – Morley, Otley, you name it – have as well and it could be a great catalyst for bringing all those communities together.

We must move ahead and I was very pleased to hear from Councillor Blake the talks between the other bidding cities, because of all of a sudden we are not in competition with each other any more. Let’s not pretend we have cornered the market on good ideas because we have not. They have plenty of good ideas as well. Let us swap those ideas, work together and make sure that by 2023 we have delivered a real year of culture for this city and, I think for this country, and I hope too for Europe and they will think about what we still have to offer. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor John Procter.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am not quite so sure if I need to declare an interest at this point. I will maybe seek the advice of a Legal Officer but I sit on a European Cult Committee – Culture Committee – and I am also the UK Delegation Spokesperson on Culture and Education in the European Parliament. Maybe I do, that was a joke!

THE CITY SOLICITOR: No, you do not! I was just going to say, you definitely do not! *(laughter)*

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Good.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Carry on.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Extra time, Lord Mayor, extra time. Even though my name was down I was not actually going to speak, I was going to withdraw my name until Councillor Bentley spoke. To be quite frank, the notion that people would have changed how they voted when they came to the referendum whether to stay in or out of the European Union based on whether Leeds got Capital of Culture or not I think rather debases the electorate, actually (*hear, hear*) of Leeds and elsewhere. People voted in different ways because of what they personally believed in and I respect each and every person who did vote, even though, I make no secret about it, I was and am a Remainer. That said, the vote has happened and we have got to move on and do something different now.

Councillor Blake mentioned some time ago that she was seeking, I think she said that she had got a meeting with other Council Leaders with M. Barnier. I hope when you go to that meeting, Councillor Blake, you will specifically ask him why he – he – issued the instruction for the Commission to write the letter, because that is the fact of the matter. With that in mind, it was plain and simple a negotiated position that he adopted and it was one of a series of things that came out of the Commission. There is no doubt about it whatsoever and an amount of work has already been done in the Cult Committee in the Parliament.

I might say that the decision and the grounds upon which it was taken are questionable. I am grateful to the Chief Executive, who I passed some papers to, and got a legal view out of there that I was able to go back, in actual fact, to the Cult Committee and start to challenge the basis upon which the Commission took the decision. It is, frankly, outrageous that they should arrive at that view at that moment in time. It was nothing other than, in my view, a political stunt, Lord Mayor. Thank you. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ann Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I note Councillor Buckley's enthusiasm on not wanting to lose the work that has already gone into Leeds's bid for the city to become the European Capital of Culture in 2023. He mentions about the Council working in partnership with organisations that have already pledged support of the Capital of Culture for Leeds to host its very own Year of Culture by 2023.

I am mindful that next month we will be sitting in this Council Chamber discussing the Budget and what cuts need to be made to make the Budget balance. Bearing this in mind I ask if we should be proposing spending Council money on such a project when I am sure there are more needy things to spend such money on. I think not. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Brian Selby.

COUNCILLOR SELBY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. In response to Councillor Ann Blackburn, can I just say that we got a lot of benefit from the work that we did so far. Arts Council England increased its annual funding to Leeds' organisations by about a million and a half a year since that bid was put together, and the Arts Council have made it clear that it will invest in Authorities that show some commitment to the arts.

Our bid, not only did it show the development of culture strategy but showed very firm commitment and it is important that we continue to show that because, Councillor Blackburn, I think what we do in this city, what we do in bringing people to the city, culture, all our history, all

the things that have happened are important and I think with respect you have failed to understand that.

We should not under-estimate what the bid did and the work that it is being proposed that we do will improve the profile of the city. Leeds was the only city in the UK in the Lonely Planet Guide in the top ten European destinations. We have tourism which benefits this city and it is very significant, it creates over 18,000 jobs and if we were to proceed we would hopefully have got more. Jobs not just in tourism but also that raise the profile of other aspects of the city as well.

It enabled the unique city-wide partnerships to develop between different sectors. We had, as far as education is concerned, all the further education and higher education institutions backed the bid. The business community which is important to this city also stepped up with over 15 private sector businesses backing the bid with money. The Council only put forward a small proportion of what would be required.

The people of Leeds did get behind the bid with over 3,500 pledges of support and out in communities there was some central support even after the referendum. Community events were visited and many people were in favour of carrying on as before.

Community groups in Armley, in Chapeltown, in Holbeck, in Seacroft very much were behind the bid and we must see to it that the benefits that we had aimed for will still be there. If I take, for example, Chapel FM in my ward, heavily involved. They have a scheme going to get outside funding for training for locally based artists to work with young people. There are substantial proposals like that from Chapel FM.

As a city we are proud of the many people who have played an active role in the arts and in culture. We are all proud to see people like the Kaiser Chiefs headlining at Leeds Festival, we are happy to see other people involved in arts and the like, but what we also want to do is to help them to develop and to train people for the future so that the Kaiser Chiefs are not the only Leeds group headlining Leeds Festival in 20 years' time. We would like to see new groups as well. The same with people on television and the theatre, to encourage young dramatists as well. The bid gave them that opportunity.

We must not ignore the benefits so far, we need to work on them. I support Councillor Buckley's White Paper. I have no comment to make about the Liberals. I think it has all been said. *(laughter)* I make no comment any more about Councillor Blackburn. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Salma Arif.

COUNCILLOR ARIF: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to speak about the importance of culture to young people in our city. In particular I want to talk about why we should not lose all the fantastic work that was put into the 2023 bid because of what it will mean to children and young people in Leeds.

The big document that was presented to Executive Board really is worth a read if you have not seen it just yet. It contains some really inspiring ideas and makes clear how central children and young people were to the bid. As part of the city's commitment to becoming a child friendly city, one of the central strands of our bid was given entirely to children and young people. The strand, called Voice, was to have been created and co-produced with young people from across the city. Here are just a few of the ideas in the bid that now will be lost if we do not work together to make something happen.

The bid proposed a new festival called I Predict a Riot – that is named after the famous Kaiser Chief's song – produced and promoted entirely by the young people. There would have been a European Youth Summit which would have invited young people from across the world to share

their experiences and create new cultures here in Leeds. We would have had Leeds Children's Cinema, a new dedicated city centre hub where children, young people and their families could watch, make and play and learn with film. The power of engaging young people in cultural activities such as these is immense. They can have a real lasting effect, inspiring and broadening the horizons of young people from all areas of our great city.

The economic effect and job creation of something like Capital of Culture is equally important to today's young people in Leeds. School pupils in Leeds today would be the ones to benefit from the new jobs and opportunities created. In Leeds tourists currently help sustain over 18,500 jobs in the visitor economy sector and this figure was predicted to increase significantly with the 2023 bid. We have a responsibility to make sure these opportunities do not disappear and we must not forget another key aim of the bid for the benefit of young people today was to celebrate diversity and promote inter-cultural and inter-faith dialogue. This is essential for the future if we want to promote a fair, peaceful and inclusive society.

Lord Mayor, I fully believe we owe it to children and young people both today and in the future to make sure we do not lose the valuable work that went into this bid process. We must do all we can to harness the energy and excellent work done today. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: I would now like to call on Councillor Neil Buckley to sum up, please.

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. They were very helpful and interesting contributions from everybody, which I would like to thank them for.

I will take them in order, actually, if I may. Councillor Blake in particular stressed the five bidders as having been competitors, if you like, and are now potential friends. I think that is a very interesting point. Also, the point which she made about taking the public with us. This is a good point, actually, because people do not want to think it is going to be a sort of financial splurge, because that is not what people want to see. I will come on to the Liberals in a minute on that basis. Taking the public with us is important.

Councillor Bentley started off by saying, "Well, we do not want to be killjoys" and is just exactly then what he was, because to go on well, yes, in a very grudging sort of way, to go on actually the whole point about this is to put the negativity behind us and move on to a positive and to go on about Brexit, admittedly in a humorous way, was really missing the point.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: He believes it though. *(laughter)*

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: He does believe it.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: I don't get much opportunity to say it!

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: Councillor Cohen also emphasised the need for sponsorship and I know this is going to be one of the great things. A great city like Leeds should be able to get all this together.

Councillor Carter, of course, emphasised, quite rightly, the late notice that we were given by the Commission - quite rightly, it is totally wrong – but also made the point about bringing people together. This is so important, there are so many different creeds and races and religions in the city, they need to be all part of this and not excluded in any way. Some of those points were made as well by Councillor Procter.

I must say, I was disappointed by Councillor Blackburn's contribution because, let's boil it down to a phrase, man cannot live by bread alone, nor can woman. *(laughter)* Occasionally I would just urge the Greens to just lift their sights a little bit. Occasionally we need something to look

forward to that will not necessarily mean taking money from other parts of the budget, as she suggests.

Councillor Selby mentioned his enthusiasm for the arts and he and Councillor Arif, in particular, mentioned how important this was to all the young people. They are exactly the kind of people who need to be enthused on this and taken into consideration.

Of course, I have been instructed not to forget Councillor Lamb's Scrutiny Board and all the work that they have done in this regard.

I do thank all the contributors. It is great to have a consensus – nearly a consensus – and, as I said before, let us just get on with this and make it work. Thank you. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Buckley. I would now like to call for the vote and firstly we will call for a vote on the amendment in the name of Councillor Jonathan Bentley. (*A vote was taken*) I am afraid that is LOST, Councillor Bentley.

We now call for a vote on the substantive motion in the name of Councillor Buckley. (*A vote was taken*) That is CARRIED. Thank you for that debate.

ITEM 13 – WHITE PAPER MOTION – RAIL NETWORKS IN PUBLIC OWNERSHIP

THE LORD MAYOR: We now move on to the White Paper on Rail Networks in Public Ownership and I would like to call on Councillor Richard Lewis, please.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. There is a bit of a division of labour on this one in that Councillor Wakefield will talk about buses and I will talk about – sorry, he will talk about rail. I nearly got that wrong because I have been talking about rail for ages and not twigged! I will be talking about the bus side.

There is a Green amendment which we are happy to support, we think it adds something to our White Paper.

It says here, “Say something nice about Chris Grayling.” I know that is quite difficult in many ways. However, he is a man in need of a fan club is perhaps something you could say. I think on this particular issue he is a Tory politician who is actually getting away from that mantra that we have heard so much over the past few years of no elected Mayor, no deal. He is being a little bit pragmatic, it is not what I expected from him but on this issue I think he is certainly going in the right direction and we should be positive about it.

I would just like to talk about where we have got with bus deregulation because I think as some Members will know I have very much got the tee-shirt along with my colleague, Jim McKenna, having lived through those years both pre-deregulation and post-deregulation and seeing how the world of public transport changed in this city. I was thinking, what was promised to us? What was going to be the great new future that we were going to see with bus deregulation? We are going to have lots of new bus routes, we are going to have minibuses coming up our streets, everybody will have a minibus coming up their street. Fares will be cheaper, everything will be wonderful, no more evil Council-run monopolies like Metro used to be.

What actually happened? The truth is we have had 30 years not of steady decline because sometimes it seems to bottom out, but it has been inexorable decline in bus services in this country and the product of that has been increased congestion for us all, everybody has been the loser. It is not just bus passengers who suffered, it has been every citizen of this city and I think every other city probably in the country.

What have we had? We have had fewer bus miles run, fewer journeys made, slower bus journeys and there's an interesting one because increasingly bus journeys are getting slower and that increases the cost to the bus operator who, of course, passes those costs on to the people who use the buses. We have got increased congestion which we have all experienced. We have got isolated communities. I know Councillor Wakefield is going to talk about the Cross Green area but again many of us have experience that, even Andrew, who is not listening, will have been aware that the services that we used to get that went from Pudsey through to Calverley no longer exist. Where I am in Pudsey, we had about ten years when you could not get a bus direct from Pudsey to Bradford at night time or on a Sunday at all and it is only in the past year that that has been resolved. I think for many communities it is those links that have been broken that make using public transport far less attractive.

Of course, we have got the new mega monopolies. We got rid of the evil local bus companies that were publicly accountable, democratically accountable and replaced them with First, Stagecoach and the like - organisations which were intent on using the most cut throat methods to get rid of their competition.

We destroyed the concept of integrated and co-ordinated public transport when you could get simple ticketing that took you from one mode of transport to another. Here we are, what are we talking about, something that we should get back. We have had 25 lost years on this one and we desperately need to get that because if you do not have that you are never going to have an integrated transport system and you are never going to get people back using public transport.

We have had increased fares. This is perhaps an exaggeration but buses stopped being part of the solution to our transport and mobility in the issues in the city and started being part of the problem. They started being a barrier to people travelling, they started discouraging people from getting around and visiting people and the social interaction that went with it.

It does not have to be that. If you actually look back to the era of even Leeds City Transport when you had that connection between the publicly accountable services that are still provided by us and bus services, you used to see Leeds City Transport provided a park and ride service; Leeds City Transport provided express bus services to our peripheral estates which made those estates that were on the edge more part of the city. All that stuff has gone.

THE LORD MAYOR: Final sentence, please, Councillor Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: I would say everyone knows there must be an alternative; there is an alternative. I think everybody here knows it, even those people who champion deregulation know it and it is about time we did something about it. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Wakefield.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor David Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. When I saw this motion I thought, oh, there's lots there I agree with but it had one weakness. I think as somebody who most of his life has been a bus passenger or used the railways to go further afield, the last 30 years have been a disaster for bus passengers. Things have just got worse and worse and worse. Lack of reliability. If you go to a place quite regularly and you do not go for another three months and you go back, the bus you get on does not actually go where it used to go because they are regularly changing services. Fares are going up and up and up where services are declining.

Certainly in West Yorkshire the public transport system is not fit for purpose and I think we do need regulation, but anybody who went on the trip with Councillor Leadley and Councillor Lewis and I to Reading will tell you where Reading are one of the few bus companies owned by the Council in the country, what advantage they have got, their real advantage is that one of the main providers is owned by the Council and can actually put something in, because even if you have some form of regulation you are still dependent on private companies supporting you and we can then lead the way. This is long overdue, this should have been dealt with years ago but our public transport system is a total mess and we need to do something about it and that is by taking back control of the railways, regulating bus services and allowing those Local Authorities who want the opportunity to start their own bus companies up. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Leadley.

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: My Lord Mayor, in seconding Councillor Blackburn's amendment, an addition which I hope Councillor Richard Lewis would accept, I would like to draw attention to the political interference which has eaten away at municipal bus undertakings over many years.

Fifty years ago there were about 100 municipal bus undertaking from ones like Leeds to small ones like Todmorden; now there are about ten. Most of them were well run and profitable. The surviving ones, such as Blackpool, Nottingham, Warrington and Reading are widely acknowledged to be among the best bus operators in the land, regularly winning a disproportionately large number of bus industry awards.

That is the case in Reading which we visited a couple of months ago. Since our visit the bus company wholly owned by the Borough Council has grown further by taking over a London Greenline service abandoned by First as not being profitable enough. Much growth of patronage has been among Reading University students, who do not seem to be in the same league as the bus operator. Last week they received a truly Norwegian "nul points" on University Challenge, which seemed almost impossible. Perhaps they could not even remember their own names!

The municipals have been the victims of political dogma, political prejudice, political stupidity and even political spite. By no means all of this has come from hatched-faced Thatcherite Tories. The first and largest culls of municipals were made by the Labour inspired Passenger Transport Authorities in some of the major conurbations in the late 1960s and early 1970s. I remember that when I lived in Coventry there was some outrage in 1974 when the bus undertaking was forcibly taken over by the West Midlands PTA based in Birmingham, even though Coventry had a profitable, compact and self-contained set of routes which was not connected to the rest of the PTA network. It is fair to say that there was a rapid deterioration after the takeover.

The second major assault was during the Thatcherite era of privatisation and deregulation. Some small municipals were driven off the road by large groups such as Stagecoach which ran buses in Darlington free of charge until the local undertaking became insolvent. Nothing was done to stop that by National Government though in Warrington the free buses were seen off by public boycott. Compulsory setting up of Council bus operations at arm's length companies rather than as municipal departments made them easier to sell off and many have gone that way.

Although Labour were in Government from 1997 to 2010 they did nothing beyond a bit of principled Socialist hand wringing. Almost the final nail in the coffin was driven in by Mrs May's Conservatives who brought in legislation to make it unlawful to set up any new municipal bus undertakings. Whether that was political spite or dogmatic stupidity is uncertain – probably both.

Some of the big groups have stopped growing. First are analysing their networks route by route and abandoning those which do not pay well enough to meet corporate targets. There may be some communities which will finish up with no bus services at all, especially as the backstop of setting up a Local Authority owned operation has been made unlawful.

Recently First abandoned the Seacroft to White Rose part of the Leeds Outer Ring Road number 9 service because it did not pay well enough, though they kept the more profitable White Rose to Horsforth part. A small company, Square Peg, took over from White Rose to Seacroft but those private operators are becoming fewer and often end up being squashed by the big groups. My Lord Mayor, I second the amendment. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: I would now like to call on Councillor Colin Campbell to move a second amendment.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can I just start by thanking Councillor Lewis for his comments in relation to First, which I think he described as “evil”, which is slightly ironic given that the Council has just signed a deal with them to help provide the transport solution to Leeds, but what the heck.

I have to say, Lord Mayor, Britain leads the way in how not to run a public transport network. I think that is fair to say. Privatised in the dying days of the Major Government in response to a political dogma rather than practicality, with multiple companies, multiple responsibilities and, more importantly, no overarching transport plan.

Nationalisation, which is now touted perhaps in a wave of nostalgia as the answer to all our prayers. I have to be honest with you, I can remember when the rail network was nationalised and I can remember when Leeds ran its bus service that would not come to Otley.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Or Pudsey.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: I think it is fair to say that things were not perfect in the days of certainly the nationalised rail service. We had got falling passenger numbers, a shrinking network and more important, I think, no investment whatsoever in the infrastructure.

I am not sure that simple nationalisation will cure the rail network’s ills. Nationalised trains have the same problem with it as private ones. Leaves on the line affect a private train in the same way that they affect a nationalised one, but what is clear, I think, to all of us, is that what this country needs is a publicly run rail/bus network responsible both to local and national priorities and, more importantly, passengers, rather than the current profit led system that we have at the moment.

I suppose our amendment seems to move that forward by putting local need at the centre and I could use here, perhaps, an example from Germany and at that point I was going to make an ironic remark about Europe but I do not want to upset Councillor Procter again.

If you look at the Deutsche Bahn model in Germany, which is in effect a company owned for the public good, it is actually a Government company but it is run as a non-profit making organisation, it is run as a public benefit company. They, in consultation with the regions and the local municipalities, run an integrated transport system that provides a simple, easy method of moving round the entire country and that, I think, is the major issue in relation to our problems here, both in Leeds and across the country. I think it is therefore important that rather than simply go down one line or another one, is to say what is the best solution for our area, and I am not sure that nationalisation *per se* is that because I think that actually there is a much better model in the not for profit company because it gives the company itself the power to go out and make the appropriate investments without then being hide bound by Government dogma or in fact Government spending limits.

For that reason, Lord Mayor, we were attempting to be positive in our addition to the White Paper and I would recommend it to Council. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jonathan Bentley to second.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Second, Lord Mayor, and reserve the right to speak.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Andrew Carter.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. In moving the amendment - I wonder why I have landed with this but never mind – Councillor Campbell referred to people having short memories. He is quite right, really. When I started work I used to travel by train from the old Stanningley Station into the centre of Leeds. That is when they were there. Time keeping, timetabling a nonsense, trains dirty, staff some good, some very indifferent, some downright rude to passengers. That was British Rail in the 1960s/1970s. That is why British Rail became a music hall joke and still are to many people who remember it.

A simple return to a nationalised railway system would not resolve the problems and it is interesting, isn't it, that for 13 years over the past 20-odd years we had a Labour Government. Did they do that? There's a man here who sat on the Labour Benches. Did they seek to renationalise the railways? Did they heck as like. Did they plough billions of pounds of investment into the railways like the Coalition Government and now the Conservative Government have been doing and will continue to do? Furthermore, which part of the rail system causes the biggest problems? It is the permanent way, isn't it? It is the part that is owned by the public that causes half the problems at least with the railway system in this country, so please do not come along here lecturing us or anybody else because you have had an instruction from the Politburo that is the Labour party's headquarters in London telling you you have got to start tabling resolutions you never tabled for 13 years of a Labour Government and one of you sat there amongst them in those 13 years.

Let us come to the buses. It is very difficult really to accept lectures again on this issue because I recall serving on Metro when all parties decided we were going to go for franchising. Everybody was agreed, we still agree. What has happened on Metro now the Transport Committee of the Combined Authority since then? It has all gone extremely quiet about franchising and please do not say, oh well, Mayoral Authorities can do it and we cannot because we have not got a Mayor. Actually, you put a proper bid together and go to the Secretary of State and ask for the franchise and we will support you, as I have said before.

If you want to talk about the transport ills of this city let us talk about the first time we discussed having a light rail system, a Grenoble type system, as I recall. Michael Simmons who wanted it chaired Metro; George Mudie who led the Council did not, they did not get on with each other so George stopped it.

Next we had Supertram. Your Secretary of State – your Secretary of State – turned down Supertram when I was Leader of the Council despite all the work being done, the public inquiry that won, the lot, and said get a bus system. Now you lot, under your Leadership, Councillor Lewis, conducted the most inept public inquiry on NGT and lost us that and we had to get you the £173m which now you are giving to First Bus who you have just criticised. You have got no record on which to lecture anybody about a transport system in this city. I move the amendment. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Neil Buckley to second.

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. In seconding this motion, Councillor Carter is absolutely right but let us start with the positive. There are Members in this Chamber who know from other bodies that over the last two years ago I have actually been quite critical of bus companies in this neck of the woods. I think that is perfectly well documented and on record.

A franchising arrangement which will give the public a better service, I have got no problem with that at all and it is entirely a good thing.

Really, when you actually read this White Paper Motion, it is just a rant about nationalising the railways and it is a complete load of nonsense. When you actually look, as others have referred, between 2010 and now the railways have had a massive increase in passenger numbers and since 1995 the number of passenger journeys has gone up by a billion – a billion. It is multiplied by a factor of three.

Prices have increased in order to fund a vastly bigger, better, cleaner and faster network but there are some Members – various Members of various ages - in this Chamber some of whom are too young to remember when the railways were nationalised, as Councillor Carter has referred to them.

I jotted down a couple of figures here about what the situation was at that time when they were in public ownership. 1975, that was a good year for Labour, wasn't it? Oh yes. 44% increase and it took them three goes to get it. 1976, a further 12% increase. 1977, 13% more. 1978, 15% on top of that. In all these years there were two common factors: number one, the railways were nationalised; number two, there was a Labour Government in power. The trains were late, slow, dirty, overmanned and old and the whole system was in decline.

Nationalisation means going back to the curled up BR sandwich. It is the days of the Austin Allegro and Red Robbo and British Leyland and having to wait nine months for a telephone. Do we really want to go back to that? We do not.

COUNCILLOR HESELWOOD: Yes.

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: Yes, somebody said yes! This magic nationalisation that they say, “Oh, we will nationalise it”, what do they actually mean by that? Would they sack all the existing staff? No they would not, obviously. Would they sack all the middle management? No. Would they change the actual track? No, clearly not. Would they change the trains? No, there would be no money for that, that is the first thing.

What they would do, as their spokesman said on the television the other day, “Oh, we would stop paying dividends to the shareholders.” Well, who are the shareholders? Prudential, Standard Life, all the pension providers; presumably all that lot want pensions for their local electors. That is not the way to do it.

This is a political stunt, it is ignorant of the facts and it is really a pig-headed attempt to defy logic, and I second this motion, Lord Mayor. Thank you. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Keith Wakefield.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Thank you, Lord Mayor. If Councillor Carter does not get a knighthood for this piece of rubbish that he has come out with I will eat my hat! (*laughter*)

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: You might.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Because it is a real smokescreen. It comes on a day when the National Audit Office has just condemned the running of the railways for poor performance, it has just condemned value for money for the Thameslink and it comes after a week later when Christopher Grayling cost the taxpayers of this country nearly £2bn by doing a sweetheart deal with Virgin and Stagecoach.

Now, what I dislike most about these Tory leaders in Government is they privatise anything and everything, whether it is health, whether it is education and whether it is transport and that ideology, that obsession with privatisation stops people genuinely looking at good public Authorities that are running buses. Three out of the top four bus companies or bus services come from Reading, Nottingham and London – all of them publicly owned.

If you think privatisation and franchises are working on rail, just look at the evidence. In 1996 when GNER and Sea Containers picked up the franchise, went with the second period, collapsed in year 2 because it did not make enough profit. Christopher Garnett at the same time said franchises is flawed.

Fortunately when it did collapse the Labour Government brought back the East Coast Main Line into public ownership and surprise, surprise it made a billion pounds profit (*applause*) to put back in the Treasury. That is the evidence, that is not ancient history, that is 2015.

Instead of looking at the evidence, what does the Government do? I will tell you what it does, it rushes out and does a deal with Virgin and Stagecoach without looking at some of the fantasy projections and figures on passengers and on income. Two years into that franchise, what have we got? Virgin handing back the keys with Stagecoach saying they cannot run it any more because it is not making enough profit and that is what is costing taxpayers £2bn.

What have we got in this country run in cities under this franchise system that we have got? We have got an East Coast Main Line that actually has cost the taxpayers £2bn. It has lost 9.8% of season ticket holders. We are now unsure of routes they promised to deliver that affect Bradford, Leeds, Wakefield and Horsforth and, frankly, on the same day that they handed the keys in, their shares went up 12%, so that was the kind of deal and frankly the deal that he pulled off is the most shabbiest, deceitful deal done under this so-called thing called Partnership with Network. Nobody understands it, it was an excuse and an alibi for Virgin and Stagecoach to walk away from their responsibilities to the passengers of this country.

I say this, if we are OK with nationalised industries running our buses from Italy and France and our trains, what is wrong with looking at the option of having nationalised companies or State owned companies, Local Authorities, running our buses and trains here? I think it is time now that we actually looked at the whole way the franchising system is run because there is nobody here yet that would justify the cost to passengers both in terms of the experience.

One of the things you talk about in your investment – I will tell you where the investment has come from.

THE LORD MAYOR: Your last sentence, Councillor Wakefield.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: It has come from passengers who have been paying hiked up prices on these privatised companies. I move and support the White Paper. (*applause*)

COUNCILLOR R GRAHAME: Nationalise rail lines as well. Keep them running.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Fiona Venner.

COUNCILLOR VENNER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to speak in support of Councillor Richard Lewis's White Paper. A modern and responsive and attractive transport network is absolutely vital to the success of our city, transport is not just about roads and cars and trains and buses. It can support communities and tackle poverty by helping all residents to benefit from economic growth as well as attracting employers and businesses to a city, thus increasing employment opportunities. It can help make a place more people friendly by giving people access to the wider labour market and other vital services.

As the Chair of the Inner West Community Committee I wanted to particularly highlight the importance of an efficient and accessible bus network to local communities. At our November meeting our Community Committee received an update on the Leeds Transport Conversation and this highlighted just how much people want change and deserve it. We need much better connections between local areas across the city and between key services such as schools and hospitals, and we need better connection with areas outside of Leeds too to support people commuting into the city.

There is also a great desire for more sustainable travel and to make improvements to the environmental impact of buses and public transport in general, as well as making economic improvements as a result of a better transport system.

In Leeds we are ambitious and we are working hard. Transport for the North is publishing its Transport Plan in a matter of days and the Combined Authority is launching a range of initiatives including Bus 18 where they are working with bus operators to make buses easier to use, reduce emissions and improve passenger experience.

There is, of course, the Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme which aims at increasing the range of choice of transport options but focusing very much on improving bus services across the city. I cannot stress enough how much that is needed.

At the Inner West Community Committee it was very stark how much in areas of high deprivation like the wards of the Inner West people are completely dependent on public transport, and particularly buses, and what people are getting at the moment is just not good enough. Buses are not frequent enough, they are not reliable enough.

Communities deserve high quality transport so they can fulfil their potential. We are doing all we can to provide this but we need more local powers, as has been very eloquently described by my colleagues. I am a hundred per cent behind the Council working with its partners to develop proposals as soon as possible for bus franchising in Leeds, but I absolutely support Councillor Blackburn's amendment. It would have been so much better if the Bus Bill had allowed Councils to set up our own municipal bus companies.

We very much need the Government to stand up, stick to its promises and work with us to get a better transport infrastructure for the people of Leeds. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Denise Ragan.

COUNCILLOR RAGAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor and fellow Councillors. I am speaking in support of Richard Lewis's White Paper. If there is one issue that illustrates the longstanding north-south divide it is the gap in transport investment between the two regions. Although the Transport Secretary insists that this is a myth, the Government's own figures show that the capital spent per head in Yorkshire has shrunk compared to London in the last four years. This has to stop. We deserve more.

Nowhere is the issue highlighted as clearly, I believe, as in relation to local bus services. Local people are having to face so many barriers to using buses that it is becoming nigh on impossible or, at the very least, impractical for many to do so. The lack of reliability, availability and frequency of service, as well as the amount of time taken to get to destinations, are all obstacles which people are having to face.

Residents living in my ward of Burmantofts and Richmond Hill (specifically Cross Green like Richard alluded to) experience these difficulties on a day to day basis. Our research has shown that those in the more deprived areas where car ownership is low will feel the impact of poor

public transport links more. People cannot rely on buses to turn up on time, or even at all. There are often not enough buses available throughout the day or at a suitable time and it often takes so long to reach a destination that it is not worthwhile waiting for a bus to turn up.

This is not to mention the cost of services, which so often excludes people from using them and the effect of such poor services is huge. People are far less able to access jobs and educational opportunities as well as vital services as GP surgeries and hospitals. We want to make sure that this is no longer the case but we need to be allowed to do more to work towards this. It is only right that Chris Grayling has asked for Councils to put forward proposals for bus franchising arrangements. Local Authorities are best placed to have more control and we would be able to provide the amount of public accountability needed to ensure improved bus service for everyone. The Government should show us more respect for this.

I only hope that Grayling keeps his promise that he will not stand in the way of bus franchising in Leeds and that we see the promised guidance from his department quickly so we can get on and continue working to improve bus services for local people and visitors to our great city alike. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Barry Anderson.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. One thing just occurred to me, although it did not occur to me until we came here. One of the great things that you as a Government did the last time was you introduced PFI. Probably if Brown and Blair had kept going you probably would have PFI-ed the whole rail network as well and where would that have got you?

Anyway, to answer some of the questions that have been raised, the Government has listened on the East Coast Main Line. They are introducing a public private partnership. That is surely a chance for everybody to show how that works. That is an opportunity for this administration and for WYCA to work to move these things forward.

Let us look at some other comments that we have had here. It was said that when it was nationalised East Coast Main Line made a bigger profit. My understanding from the research that was done was that that was because they were not asked to pay premium access to get access to the tracks, so they did not have the same costs that were there. It is very good if you suddenly remove a cost, then it is quite easy to manipulate the figures to make things look better than anything else.

Then we go down to look at some of the problems. You talk about prices going up. Between 1979 and 1994 prices rose under British Rail by 108% in real terms.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Tory Government for you.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: Under British Rail? What are you talking about, man?

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: 1979 to 1994, Tory Government.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: No, it was British Rail. You wanted to renationalise. That is the sort of thing when you have a nationalised operation? Don't you understand? Simple economics. Dearie, I do wonder sometimes, I do wonder. I do wonder.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Stop winding him up, James.

COUNCILLOR: Go on Barry, you haven't lost your place have you?

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: This afternoon we have heard bleating all over the place about costs that the Government are doing. If you were to renationalise anything, where are you going to get the money? Are you going to suddenly reduce the National Health Service spending? We have heard today from you all across here how the National Health Service needs money spent on it. We have heard from you how Adult Social Care needs money spent on it, so that is a valuable resource. I am sorry but the money tree does not exist. Someone has to pay for it. (*interruption*) If you continue to borrow, how would you pay for the renationalisation? How would you compensate people? You do not even understand what your policy would have to do. It would have to take away money from things that we all agree money should be spent on. You do not understand...

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Not a penny for Europe now that we have given them £39bn.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: ...you just cannot keep spending the same money over and over again.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: £39bn to the EEC.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: You also love spending everybody else's money in terms of what you are doing.

You have the chance, you can do something about this. You can show leadership and get us a Devolution deal. You can show leadership and get WYCA to come forward, as Councillor Carter says in his amendment. You are the ones who sit round with the Northern Rail economy. You are the people who have got your hands on the control mechanisms. Instead of carping on, start delivering and start doing why you were elected in the first place. Thank you very much, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

COUNCILLOR ROBINSON: I thought we had run out of time there, Lord Mayor. Thank you very much for your very kind comments earlier as well, Lord Mayor, I really appreciate that, and thank you for the round of applause from the Chamber earlier. I particularly appreciate you announcing that I am now off the market, so that is very, very kind of you! (*laughter*)

As we turn to the White Paper motion I speak in favour of the amendment from Councillor Carter. Back in 1989 when privatisation was first being mooted of British Rail I was but three years old, and I am sure some people in this Chamber were already on Council at that time. Things have changed drastically. There are hands up already! Things have changed drastically in that time. Actually what we have seen through privatisation is that there has been an increase in passenger numbers, an actual increase that was recorded in 2014 of 117% from those earlier figures. We have seen that rail patronage is now at its highest level ever in the history of the rail service.

We have seen that actually if you look at studies, and the study came out from the European Commission analysing the figures from 1997 to 2012 and what that suggested was that the UK was the best rail service in the whole of Europe. It was also the most improved but it was the best rail service and it was the best rail service when taking into account 14 different areas. It was not just a blip, it was not just hidden figures, it was actually looking at the whole range of things.

If you take other organisations and think tanks like the Adam Smith Institute, they have suggested that while they may prefer more competition in the market, privatisation which has introduced that competition has been of huge benefit to the rail service.

I would disagree with some of the Members opposite who would like to see further investment in the north of England and further investment in transport in the north of England, and I will be one of the first ones championing that because actually we need that, that is what will help social

mobility, it will help reduce income inequalities, it will help people get to work, it will help investment. Nationalisation just is not the route.

There is a whole raft of articles that appear in every newspaper, not just The Telegraph. I have got quotes here from The Guardian saying “On balance privatisation has been a huge success.” I am not a regular reader of The Guardian but I might start if they keep coming up with quotes like that.

COUNCILLOR: That is not The Morning Star, Matthew.

COUNCILLOR ROBINSON: No, in 2015 they had a further editorial which said, “To renationalise the railways would be an act of political dogma when patronage is going up.” There are actually some very fair and balanced comments that are coming out here.

If you look, renationalisation of the railways would be a costly mistake for three very, very simple reasons, the first one being that it would be prohibitively expensive to do. At a time when we are trying to negotiate and navigate Brexit, at a time when we naturally need to look at our health service and reforms that our health service needs with an ageing population, to start going down a route of nationalisation and the complexities involved in that would be utterly ludicrous.

The second area is that actually many of the trains and the train vehicles are not actually owned by these operators. They are owned by third parties and leased back. To unpick some of these deals is just not going to be possible and actually there will not necessarily be any improvement when the State runs it.

The third area, and the area that I would urge the Labour Party to look into most, is that actually under EU law it enshrines that under the single market there has to be open access and operators such as Grand Central and others actually have to operate free from Central Government control so I fully expect the Labour Party to be coming out and saying that they are going to lobby Kier Starmer, they are going to lobby their Front Bench to be able to say that actually we should be leaving the single market if we want to nationalise the railways.

COUNCILLOR: Their MPs can’t do that, they are not going to be able to do it.

COUNCILLOR ROBINSON: Because the policy at the moment, your Brexit stance, is completely contradictory to your transport stance. It just does not make sense, I am afraid, Lord Mayor, and I back the amendment in the name of Councillor Carter. *(applause)*

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

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thanks, Lord Mayor. I did not understand what Councillor Robinson was saying because clearly after Brexit we are going to be awash with money, aren’t we? The country is going to be flying. Everything is going to be wonderful. The Health Service is going to be awash with money, it will be heaven on earth, won’t it? That is what you told us. Have you changed your minds on that?

COUNCILLOR STEPHENSON: That’s what people voted for.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Is it perhaps reality actually dawning for you? Can I get back to what it is on here? It says “Council therefore calls on the Secretary of State to return the East Coast Main Line to public ownership without delay.” That is what it says. That is what we are talking about. I know you might want to talk about something else but that is what we are talking about.

I always enjoy listening to the Tories in debates like this and I love listening to Andrew Carter’s selective use of facts from history. The £173m which we are giving to First Bus. Keith, can you

tell me how much we are giving to First Bus because I know I have been asleep through a few meetings but can you tell me how much? None? I think, Andrew, you have missed it. You need to talk to some of your colleagues who come to the cross-party working group and you might have a better idea.

Let us perhaps talk about the services that First Bus does provide contractually for us and Metro on our Park and Ride where they get 95% satisfaction. If you can get 95% passenger satisfaction on a park and ride between Elland Road and Leeds and Temple Green and Leeds, there is a message there that First Bus should be able to understand. If you can do it on that route you can do it on other routes and I think often for First as a big operator they always try and boil the ocean and solve all their problems and end up solving none. Actually, there are ways that they can improve their services and we are very keen in the short term to work with them to help them do that. The work that Keith is doing on Bus 18 and all that with all the operators is actually about change now, because you cannot wait. I think what we had at Metro was certainly, we were always talking about franchising and for year after year you would be looking at some other document that Metro had produced or the bus operators had produced together and we got absolutely nowhere. We cannot have a situation where we just sit back and just talk about what we are going to do in the future. We have to talk about what we are going to do now.

Another little point was, I did have to think about when the Tories ran Metro in the late 70s and I know it is ancient history, but if ever there were a time when an organisation – late 70s Andrew, yes, you ran it – before Labour took over. When Labour took over you might recall they introduced 30 pence fares off peak, free fares for old aged pensioners, all sorts of things, drove up patronage by 50% over a very short time, reduced congestion in the city. Before that Metro was a basket case.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: You are talking 40 years ago.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Sparling was one of them, wasn't he? I can't remember the others who were kicking around at the time.

COUNCILLOR: Your lot went back 40 years.

COUNCILLOR: They went back 50 years.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: You go back to 1960 for Stanningley Station.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: John, I only raise that because Andrew is so good at clutching bits of selective history. If he can do it, I don't see why we shouldn't do it!

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: I learned it from you!

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: To get back to the serious bit, I think there is a clarity perhaps on the bus side. We have all got to that point where we know that we must have change and we know that there is a way forward. I hope that the Tories over there will think about the East Coast Main Line and read up a bit on that because that is an absolute disgrace and a scandal what has happened for the second time and it is ripping off the people of this city and this nation. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: I hope you are all sitting down and listening very carefully because we are now moving to the vote.

Firstly I would like to call for a vote for the amendment in the name of Councillor David Blackburn. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

Now I would like to call for a vote on the second amendment in the name of Councillor Campbell. *(A vote was taken)* That is LOST.

I would now like to call for a vote on the third amendment in the name of Councillor Andrew Carter. *(A vote was taken)* That is also LOST.

We move to the substantive motion in the name of Councillor Blackburn. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED. Lovely, thank you very much.

ITEM 14 – WHITE PAPER MOTION – CHILDREN’S SERVICES

THE LORD MAYOR: We now move on to White Paper Motion on Children’s Services. Yet again illness has meant that Councillor Downes has been replaced and Councillor Golton is now going to propose the White Paper. Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. You will note it is quite a lengthy White Paper Motion, primarily because there is a lot of detail to get in to make the case for our young people in the city.

I think the majority of us here think that our first obligation as elected representatives is to try and ensure a certain amount of social justice in the outcomes that we achieve through our decision making. One of the inevitabilities is that if we are to create true social justice you need to start early because if children are disadvantaged, then they are held back from the very beginning and it is the interventions that we make early on that make the biggest difference in terms of changing our society and equalising opportunities.

That is why it is with some regret that the Liberal Democrats are bringing this White Paper Motion here today because one thing that we do not want to do is to denigrate the story of improvement and success which has occurred in Children’s Services, especially since we knew what it was like to be in a very ignominious position of being inadequate by the national authorities and we recognised what needed to happen to improve that situation. We started that journey and it was fulfilled through this administration, and I think that level of partnership is one of the things that got us through.

One of the things that also got us through was our realisation that self awareness was key to actually succeeding in all those areas that we had ambition for for our young people and, unfortunately, being considered to be a good organisation by Ofsted and being the only good organisation out of the Core Cities, which is something that we should celebrate time and again, can perhaps mean that we take our foot off the pedal and that improvement that we had intended and worked for can start to reverse, and that is one of the reasons why my group is bringing this White Paper forward.

Lord Mayor, you know the Liberal Democrats hope to make a difference to the outcomes of young people through the creation of the Pupil Premium in the Coalition Government. It was universally accepted, I would think, afterwards to the point where the Tories now consider it one of their policies and they have continued its implementation up to now. The Pupil Premium is based on good intentions. It is how we spend that money which makes the difference and, as is pointed out when we brought this issue up before at Executive Board, we get told by our Chief Officer for Learning and Improvement well, it is so much more difficult these days because our schools are all independently run and we cannot tell them what to do.

However, since we do have a Chief Officer for Learning and Improvement and we do actually have a department of Children’s Services which includes Educational Services, whose primary purpose is to improve the educational outcomes of all of our children, then I would like to think

that we do try to intervene and that when we find out that our intervention is actually outcomes which are lesser than those of our neighbours and our comparative Local Authorities, that we will look again at what we are doing in the expectation that we could hopefully improve that situation.

I am afraid sometimes we do not pay attention until other people point it out so if you will excuse me I will read – which is not my usual delivery mechanism – and just give you a few highlights.

“Primary education is particularly worrying in Leeds. The city ranks as the second worst Council area for Key Stage 2 results in Yorkshire and the Humber with just 56% achieving expected standard. Only Doncaster, on 54%, ranks lower than we do. Furthermore, this is in the context that Yorkshire and the Humber is the worst performing region in the whole of England on this measure. The county is a full 10% behind Inner London, where 68% of pupils achieved expected standards. Performance is particularly bad for boys in Leeds with 51% reaching standards compared with 61% of girls and only three Council areas recorded a bigger gap.”

Lord Mayor, when those of us who are still Governors went to training recently that was put on by our Learning and Improvement section and it was there to make sure that our Pupil Premium is spent to the best way possible. I have hit red. I will continue this anecdote when it comes to my summing up but what I will say is please do listen because this is a motion which is passed in the true spirit of partnership and transparency. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Golton. Councillor Cleasby, please.

COUNCILLOR CLEASBY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Lord Mayor, again I rise in the hope that I can correct history and not have it recorded in the manner it is here. My understanding of the history of education in this city is that the Labour Government took Education from us and as a consequence Education Leeds was created. That was under the Labour Council. The Coalition of this Council inherited that. My further understanding is that that Coalition of this Council were preparing for Education to come back into the control of the city and an LEA created. Unfortunately before that could be fully implemented we lost control of the Council and, Lisa, your Party took control of it. Please, let us not start lashing out with false claims about history when in fact there is a modern claim that I can make and that is the tiny bullet point here which is, “Reduce senior capacity to improve services.”

Lisa, I have sat on Panels with you when we searched the country unable to find the talent that we need to come in to improve the services in this city, and you led on that. If we could not find the talent, maybe it is because somebody like you had booked the wrong headhunters or did not brief them properly, did not brief them satisfactorily so we could find the right people, because that is what is needed in moving forward, not the criticism of the old Coalition, not the criticism of the Government but how we do things.

Also, there must be less regard for our Headteachers’ opinion. Management must have the confidence to manage and Headteachers must have the confidence to understand they are being well managed. I believe at this moment, Lord Mayor, that is not the case in our city and this White Paper that I am seconding is important that we look at it like that and, as Councillor Golton said, that we look at it collectively. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Mulherin to move an amendment, please.

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. The Lib Dem Group are very selective with their facts and, despite Councillor Golton’s weasel words, they are quick to forget the remarkable progress that has been made over the last seven years and the legacy that their Coalition left us here to turn around. For the benefit of new Members and some of the more

forgetful Members opposite, let me outline the situation Children's Service in Leeds were in under their leadership in 2010.

Ofsted found Leeds Children's Services to be inadequate, with inadequate leadership, high numbers of agency social workers with heavy case loads, vulnerable children left at risk of harm and a history of under-investment after six years of your Coalition.

Since then and the change in control of this Local Authority, investment in leadership, effective cross-party support for that work and for maintaining the investment in the Children's Services budgets to continue focusing on upstream prevention, early intervention and working restoratively with families, in 2015 Ofsted described Children's Services in Leeds as good with outstanding leadership and management. *(applause)*

Leeds Children's Services now are recognised as a Partner in Practice by your Government over there and are actively sought out to support other Local Authorities on their improvements journeys precisely because of the strength of leadership and management of the service we have here. Investment in staff and new ways of working since 2010 have paid dividends. Not only are children less likely to come into Local Authority care and more likely to be safely cared for within their wider family, it has also improved recruitment and retention of social work staff, agency costs have reduced by over three-quarters saving over £3.5m per year.

COUNCILLOR: Well done.

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Let us not forget that Leeds had over 40% more Central Government funding as a Local Authority over seven years ago and much poorer outcomes on your watch, Councillor Golton.

Government cuts have led to around 600 Youth Centres and 1,200 Children's Centres closing up and down the country and many Local Authorities have ceased to provide a School Improvement Service as a result of the Education Services Grant having been completely abolished. That alone has led to a £14m reduction to Leeds Children's Services since 2010.

Locally we have continued to invest in our School Improvement Service as we work with all schools in Leeds to bring up standards, despite an increasingly complex school system with fewer powers held by Local Authorities.

We have always said that we value our relationship with all Leeds schools. We have managed to maintain our clusters and have a very strong family of schools across the city. However, we have never and never will support a policy of forced academisation. We have seen only too clearly what happens when it all goes wrong with the collapse of Wakefield City Academies Trust, an organisation that was losing money hand over fist and which its own Chief Executive described as having inadequate accountability and questionable financial practice. To make matters worse, it then appeared that that Trust was asset stripping its member schools and charging them a levy in an attempt to worsen a difficult financial situation.

We heard earlier from Councillor Arif and Councillor Ritchie about the impact of child poverty outcomes here in Leeds and how it is growing as a problem in our city. At a time when the challenges facing families are greater than they have been for two generations, I would urge Members opposite to get behind our work here in Leeds to make this city the best city for children to grow up in. We are open and transparent about progress made and where further progress is required and we positively encourage high challenge and high support, and we work through our existing cross-party arrangements to do that. We have cross-party Executive Board, Children's Scrutiny Board, a cross-party Children and Families Trust Board, a cross-party Good Learning Places working group and Children's Champions from parties across the city. We do not feel your proposed Commission would add value and we strongly urge you to stop playing politics

with children's lives and work with us to lobby this Government to stop cutting the resources we need. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jonathan Pryor.

COUNCILLOR PRYOR: I second and reserve the right to speak.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Wilford.

COUNCILLOR WILFORD: Thank you, Lord Mayor. As Councillors we are all corporate parents with the laudable intention of doing right by our children. We are failing those children by low attainment in their education. The fact that Leeds is the second worst performing region at Key Stage 2 in reading, writing and arithmetic and with Ofsted results plummeting, it is about time we took responsibility for our children. Children are the future of this city and without the basics of an education how can we expect them to flourish and grow as adults entering the workforce and contributing to society and the city in which they live?

We want to be the best city but how can we achieve that if we are not addressing our children's needs, if we are failing those children. Low educational attainment is not good enough, throwing money at Children's Services is meaningless unless we have the structures and wherewithal to address these failings and to put in place genuine improvements.

Our children deserve better. We owe them an education where they can attain qualifications to provide them with the best possible start in life, a foundation to meet their ambitions. Knowledge is power and I support the motion of a cross-party Commission to work together to turn around this decline in academic attainment. We owe it to our children. Thank you, Lord Mayor.
(applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Heselwood please.

COUNCILLOR HESELWOOD: Lord Mayor and comrades – I answer to the Politburo, come on! *(laughter)* I am speaking in support of the amendment in the name of Councillor Lisa Mulherin and I am focusing on education.

Leeds is an exciting and vibrant city with a growing population of just under 188,000 children and young people in our schools. These schools are increasingly diverse with over 20 ethnic groups and nearly 200 different languages spoken. It is a city of great contrast with some of the most disadvantaged areas of the country as well as some of the most advantaged. Approximately 40% of the children in our poorest communities receive Pupil Premium.

We recognise that improvement is necessary and we are working alongside all of our schools to achieve that. We all want the best possible outcomes for our children and young people of Leeds and our Best City for Learning strategy has been developed to show how we are developing a sector-led system whereby we work with schools as a key partner in driving up attainment, achievement and attendance.

However, I need to point out that our per pupil funding is the second lowest in the region. This is disgraceful when you consider the deprivation levels that many of pupils are facing. We know there is a proven link between poverty and educational outcomes and we heard earlier today about child poverty levels in Leeds, yet the funding received from Government does not address this inequality.

The Liberal Democrat White Paper is extremely critical and yet what it does not mention is that over 85% of children and young people in Leeds attend a school that is rated by Ofsted as being good or outstanding. It does not, however, mention the two schools in Leeds where 100% of

pupils achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and maths at Key Stage 2. It does not mention the improvement that has been seen this year in Key Stage 2 results only the second year they were taken under the new curriculum. It does not mention the fact that Leeds children are making as good progress in reading as pupils nationally and better progress in maths than pupils nationally. I feel like I am in a pantomime because it also does not mention that for Key Stage 4 Leeds is in the top 40 of 151 Local Authorities.

The Ofsted results that are referred to – and have been referred to widely – are something that we have raised with the senior Regional Ofsted Liaison Officer and have been looking at within Children and Families and we are aware that this is a regional trend. He is looking into this on our behalf and it would appear nationally that Ofsted have recognised there are issues with the current inspection framework and have proposed that a new framework is introduced from spring 2018. We will, of course, work with our schools to help them adapt to any new framework that is introduced.

Councillor Mulherin mentioned earlier our opposition to forced academisation and used the example of WCAT as a chain that was completely unaccountable and where money was prioritised over the education of children and young people. It was their Chief Executive who was paid £82,000 for 15 weeks' work. I want to break that down for you. That equates to just under £5,500 per week or just over a thousand pounds a day. That assumes he was working full-time five days a week, which I really suspect he was not.

By contrast, primary school teachers are paid an average of £24,500 and secondary school teachers just under £28,000 per annum and that is working full time.

Unfortunately this is the reality of educational landscape today; inequality from the bottom right the way up to the top. It is something that needs addressing but it is something that Education Secretary after Education Secretary has failed to do. I have absolutely no confidence that Damian Hinds, as the latest to walk through that revolving door into that office, will do any better.
(*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Finnigan.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. If we can perhaps deal initially with some of the comments from comrade Mulherin in terms of the Conservative-Lib Dem-Morley Borough Independent Coalition. That is fake news – there never was a Morley Borough-Tory-Lib Dem Coalition, so if we kill off that untrue statement we can work through comrade Mulherin's antagonism towards the academies that exist throughout Leeds.

That is perhaps a bit of a puzzle, taking into account that some of the finest schools she has serving her communities are indeed academies. Indeed, it is somewhat ironic that the person who introduced academies was Ed Balls, upon whose election material comrade Mulherin was happy to pose year in, year out. We cannot really understand why she has this antagonism towards academies who certainly in our area are doing an excellent job.

It is no doubt the case that they are offering the best educational opportunity to the working class communities that we have and certainly the tougher communities that we have are having their educational attainment raised as a result of the fine work that operates in those particular academies, whether we are talking about Newlands Primary or whether we are talking about Morley Academy.

Certainly when we talk about political dogma, what we are interested in in Morley is what works, what will give our kids the best start possible and simply the academy movement in Morley has been nothing but a total and utter success. I note that there is nothing in there from comrade

Mulherin that talks about that particular success and the fact that in her own back yard this works fine.

I am sometimes puzzled by the comrades, what they expect from working class kids. I think that their view is that working class kids can be sacrificed and political dogma is what is important on these occasions. What we would say in Morley, particularly in Morley, is that what is important is making sure that those kids who get very little help and support elsewhere, get the best educational start that they can do and that is as a result of the academies doing the fine job that they do in and around the Morley area.

I think a bit more reflection, perhaps some generosity of spirit from comrade Mulherin may go down better and perhaps the occasional thank you to those academies that are doing an excellent job educating the kids in her area and educating in our area. Perhaps a little bit of thanks might go down well in those particular localities. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dan Cohen.

COUNCILLOR COHEN: Thank you, Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Comrade Cohen. (*laughter*)

COUNCILLOR COHEN: Easy now! Following the lead of Members opposite I would like to welcome our own Conservative candidate for the Moortown ward who I can see in the gallery above and look forward to seeing you down here come May.

I want to thank the Liberals for their White Paper today because it raises issues that we, my colleagues, have been raising for some time because once again, Members opposite are proving that denial is not just a river in Egypt. (*laughter*) It is a fact that at the earliest foundation stage Leeds children are doing less well than children in the Core Cities or compared with statistical neighbours, or even compared nationally. The same is true for our children at the end of Key Stage 1. The same is true for our children at the end of Key Stage 1. Yes, this year we have done a little better than the previous year but so did everybody else, so essentially we are still doing less well than everybody else.

The same is true, indeed, for our vulnerable learners right across the city, right across the piece. The story is far from satisfactory.

Our secondary phase where, as an aside proportionately more of our schools are academies, fare better but how much better still could they do if we were performing better lower down the chain?

In terms of Ofsted there is a very worrying trend that has been alluded to where Leeds schools are having far too many judgments recently of RI and inadequate. I know it is being looked at but it is a worrying trend.

What is Councillor Mulherin's response? It was fairly predictable, wasn't it, like the old broken record. Blame the Government, blame Government funding. Like a three ring circus. She wants us to look anywhere but where the issue really is. She wants to bring failings of the administration on someone, on anyone but not the administration. Not for the first time, though, Councillor Mulherin is missing the point.

Councillor Ritchie made a very important point earlier on in this meeting. He told us that all Local Authorities are struggling financially and, indeed, nobody claims not for one moment that schools do not need more money. I am a Governor of four schools; every one of them would like more money. All of them could use it incredibly wisely but the fact is, in common with those other struggling Local Authorities, we have a problem. The problem is, we are doing worse than

most of them. We are not performing as well as other struggling Local Authorities, and why is that the case? One must conclude that ultimately the responsibility lies with this Labour administration.

COUNCILLOR: Rubbish.

COUNCILLOR COHEN: I support this White Paper. We support this White Paper and its proposals. Lord Mayor, until we take control of this Council in May (*laughter*) it is the only sensible way to restore quality and commonsense to our Children's Services. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*applause*) (*interruption*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lamb.

COUNCILLOR COHEN: At the rate you are losing your Members we have not got to do much.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: I will give them a minute to settle down, Lord Mayor. Are we ready to start the clock now?

THE LORD MAYOR: I think we will start the clock exactly now.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Are all our comrades sitting comfortably? Then I shall begin.

Lord Mayor, I love a good knock-about in this place and goodness knows I have had plenty with Councillor Blake over the years on these very issues. (*laughter*) More on that later!

Lord Mayor, it is a shame in many ways the nature that this debate has followed because I think there is real danger and I was slightly disappointed in Councillor Mulherin's response...

COUNCILLOR LOWE: Because it was bloody good, that's why.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: ... because I think there is a real danger, Lord Mayor, that we are missing the point. In many ways I am very reluctant to support the White Paper and I am kind of sorry that it is here. For nearly all of my time on Council I have been involved in this Children's Services agenda either as a Lead Member in the administration, and I do remember my history and it was the Labour Government that took Education off your Labour Council and it was under Richard Harker's leadership, and I was one of his lead Members, that we got to a position where Education could come back to the Authority. There is nothing for you to be proud of in that, just as there is nothing for us to be proud of in the position Children's Services found itself in in the 2000s, but we collectively, supported by you initially, began the work to put things right and then you, supported by us, continued that. I think we collectively and you should be proud of the work that has been done to turn Children's Services around.

The reluctance to bring this forward and the worry that you are not taking it in the spirit that it is intended, this is genuinely as a critical friend to say there are things we are worried about, that we are in a good place but we do not have the guaranteed right to stay there and there are serious concerns. Education issues have been highlighted; I want to focus on some of the social care issues. Steve Walker is an officer I have got an awful lot of time for. I enjoyed my time working with him, I think he is a real credit to this city, as are so many of the officers who work in Children's Services and we should be incredibly proud that they have been asked to support other Local Authorities and help them to turn things round. The concern remains, do we really have the capacity in the city to do all of the things that we are doing and not take our eye off the ball? There are indicators that perhaps some things are not quite right. The whole point of this White Paper, as I understand it, and the reason I am supporting it, is as people who are desperate for Children's Services to improve and keep improving, we just want to pause and make sure we have got things right.

I think it is the wrong time to have a shrill debate and get a bit yarboo about it. There is nothing more important than getting the best start in life for the children in our city, making sure the most vulnerable area safe and getting the best opportunities to close the gap that all of us want to see closed.

I would urge you to - I am sure you are not going to support the paper but I would urge you to heed some of the warnings that are in it and just take stock and let us make sure we do not let things slip from the position we have got to. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jonathan Pryor.

COUNCILLOR PRYOR: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am delighted to be seconding the Labour amendment to this White Paper. I have to say when Councillor Golton started speaking I became a bit nervous. He began a bit of a *mea culpa* over what things the Tory-Lib Dem-MBI Coalition did over their time and I thought that is most of my speech listing all of the terrible things they did. Luckily he did not make it too far down the list and I can still remind Council, a bit of a recap, about some of the history of under-investment in services and staff.

Let us not forget this was a time when there was a Labour Government which was funding Councils properly in a way that the Government is not now, and yet at the same time there were very high numbers of children looked after with Child Protection Plans, residential care was poor with low quality homes, they were cheap, not a suitable home for vulnerable children. We were in a situation where Children's Services was not fit for purpose. There had been a clear lack of political leadership to drive the improvement that was necessary and it was the children and young people of Leeds who were left to pay the price.

By contrast, we have been judged good by Ofsted with outstanding leadership and management. We are the only Core City to have that. It was a few Scrutinys ago that Councillor Cohen said that we say that we are the only Core City to be rated good too often. I know that does not really fit into the narrative of the speech he made but we should not be afraid to keep saying that.

We are improving investment in Children's Services in the face of savage cuts from Government. It is your Government cutting all this money, let us not forget that, yet we are still doing better than a lot of the comparative cities. There has been a 14.7% reduction in the number of children looked after, compared to a 13% national increase; a 42% reduction in the number of children with the Child Protection Plan compared to a 31% national increase. If Leeds had been moving in line with the rest of the country, instead of saving £4m it would have cost us an extra £10m. When Leeds is doing better and bucking the trend of the rest of the country, I am sorry but we have to look to the national Government.

In May 2010 Labour took back control of the Council and started an immediate improvement journey. Children's Services has become a political priority that it should always have been and is now completely unrecognisable to the one inherited in 2010.

We said many times that we are not complacent. We do say that all the time and we are not and we are keeping working to improve Children's Services. We are aware that improvements are necessary but the White Paper from the Lib Dems, if I am honest it seems a bit of sour grapes. It makes no mention of the huge improvements that have been made after the mess we had been left.

Let us not forget, if we are going back to the other things the Lib Dems have done for our young people, it was the Lib Dems who broke their promise when it came to tuition fees, voting for an increase to £9,000 a year; it was the Lib Dems who said nothing when Education Maintenance Grant was scrapped; it was the Lib Dems who extolled the virtues of the Sure Start Centres and then voted for the cuts that led to hundreds to close across the country. However, I am sure the

people of Leeds can take solace in the fact that while thousands of young people struggle to afford their tripled tuition fees, while young children across the country are missing out on vital early intervention work, the man responsible can relax with his new knighthood, a true reward for his spectacular failure and betrayal of an entire generation of young people. Thank you. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Matthew Robinson.

COUNCILLOR ROBINSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I think that the critical friend narrative is a useful one and I appreciate the Liberal Democrats bringing this forward because actually while there are many areas of success in Education in Leeds, many of them highlighted by Councillor Finnigan as well, there are areas we that need to be concerned about and there, as somebody who works with a lot of teachers, they talk about sweating the small stuff, that actually you cannot ever take your eye off the ball, you actually need to be constantly reaching for higher and higher standards.

While I think there is a huge amount of good, I listen to some of the speeches and it almost feels like we have reached a certain level and we are OK to sit on our laurels for a little bit. Actually, there is a lot more that could be done.

Many of the papers that actually are produced and not debated in this Chamber but debated at Scrutiny, I think that comes out. I understand that there is a lot of knock-about that goes on in this Chamber and I think that some of the narrative that has been suggested from the Members opposite and on this side and the Liberal Democrats and MBIs, actually perhaps now is the chance to have a little review and have a little think about things.

The worrying trend when you see that the gap is widening at primary is that, particularly like Councillor Golton said, it is so hard to close later on – nigh on impossible, actually, once that trend starts you can never close the gap.

That does not matter if those kids are from middle class backgrounds and not making the same progress that they would have done or who are on Pupil Premium and not making the same progress. It is now all about progress. The debate has changed to not just look at A* to C or the levels of SAT results. It is now about progress. Too often we do not look at progress and we actually start to look at just what the headline figures are.

There is a chance now, I think, for us to have some different cross party debate and perhaps to start bringing in others in the city, a little like Councillor Finnigan said, who have succeeded from Academy Trusts, from private schools, from charities, from others and say actually we want a really big conversation and a really big narrative.

A lot of the social mobility agenda that has been seen around opportunity areas has really harnessed those Local Authorities to really think about what they do and they are looking at something that we actually debated in some of the skills and Councillor Groves might remember, we were debating this about T-levels and what that could do and actually what that meant in the future, and the fact that we need more engineers as Governors, we need actually to look at governance leadership in schools as well, not just Headteacher leadership. It is how we hold to account at every single level. It is how the sector itself holds itself to account.

I do not believe that there is any teacher who wakes up in the morning and says, “I am really happy to go in and work at a rubbish school today.” I do not believe that. I do not believe there is any parent who says, “I am quite happy that my kid’s school is inadequate and I am happy to sit there.”

I think that what they do not understand is what needs to be done to improve it and a lot of that is around really, really sweating the small stuff, really engaging, really looking at the issues and

actually thinking to ourselves perhaps now we need to think of our own opportunity areas in Leeds and where we need to put a real microscope on them and really, really set ourselves ambitious targets but targets that we stick to across this whole Chamber. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

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

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thanks, Lord Mayor. I am going to finish my anecdote, actually. I went to training as a School Governor and it was to do with Pupil Premium and how we get the best out of it. Councillor Mulherin was there and, Councillor Mulherin, it was disappointingly defensive the response that you gave in this debate, I have to say. What you did show was your own personal commitment and you mentioned all the different meetings that you go to as the Lead Member for Children's Services to show your commitment and get the message across that we want the best for our kids in this city.

I recall you went to that training and the person who was there who was running the training turned round and said, "We have got quite a good story in this city. As you know we have got good from Ofsted" and as Councillor Heselwood pointed out, 85% of our children go to a school which is deemed good or outstanding. Then the one thing she turned around and said was, "but do you know what, we are the poorest performing Authority for poorer families and children." That was the point that we were all there and there were Councillors who were Tories, there were Councillors who were Liberals, there were Councillors who were Labour and they were all there as Community Governors because they all had a commitment to make sure that those kids that got Pupil Premium who are more disadvantaged and have less opportunities in life, actually that money was spent to the best possible means to make sure that their lives are improved.

We had examples, there was a school, it was Cobden Primary, and they had actually showed how their methods meant that their children from poorer backgrounds did just as well as middle class kids. We need that for the rest of the city. We need to show that ambition that it is not just going to be the outlier school, Cobden. Cobden is going to be the start of a new regime where all the children who are disadvantaged in the city do better. We need to get the message instead of the defensiveness that we have had this afternoon from this administration, that they are good. We are good, Ofsted says we are good. You pointed out that we got called inadequate after six years in administration and for everyone one of those years before that our Ofsted inspection said good. Then the Ofsted changed.

Councillor Heselwood talked about how, well, you know, we have got some bad Ofsted results recently with our schools but actually it might be because the Ofsted system is a little bit skewed. That is the way the cookie crumbles, I am afraid.

The point that you should be thinking about is, we should not be relying on Ofsted to tell us how good we are. We should know how good we are, we should be able to demonstrate that the gap between our poorest students and our middle class students is getting narrower and that we are not depending on our middle class kids to actually up the averages in terms of the results that we expect for this city.

That is the ambition we expect. We do not expect the defensiveness that we have had so far and Councillor Pryor, to bring up the rubbish about tuition fees in a debate which is talking about how we reduce poorer kids not being access things like university by making sure that they are not held behind in the way that they are at the moment in this city, that is what you should be concentrating on. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Now I would like to call for the votes. Firstly I would like to call for the vote on the amendment in the name of Councillor Mulherin. (*A vote was taken*) That is CARRIED.

The substantive motion is now in the name of Councillor Mulherin. *(A vote was taken)* That is also CARRIED.

Just one note before you all start packing your bags to go. Tom tells me that there has been a very bad accident on the M1 so for anybody heading out East Leeds way, it will not be that you will probably be on the M1 but obviously surrounding roads will now be full of other traffic as well, so please all be careful out there. Thank you for another Council meeting. Thank you.

(The meeting closed at 7.20pm)

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LEEDS CITY COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Held on

Wednesday, 10th January, 2018

At

THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
CIVIC HALL,
LEEDS

In the Chair:

THE LORD MAYOR
(COUNCILLOR J DOWSON)

VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

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VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF LEEDS CITY COUNCIL
ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 10th JANUARY, 2018

THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon everyone. Those of you who are listening carefully will notice my voice is not in too good form and I understand that the dreaded colds and flu have hit several of our numbers, so please go easy on me today, don't have me shouting at you too much today!

If I could just remind, you, please, to have all your mobile devices switched to silent.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE LORD MAYOR: We have just a few announcements to make. The first thing I would like to do is wish you all a very Happy New Year, the first Council meeting of the New Year.

Obviously the meeting is to be webcast – for those in the gallery it is those four black things on the walls. That is quite good.

2018 is shaping up to be quite a momentous year, lots of really important commemorations and celebrations coming up. Obviously we have got the 100 years commemoration of the Representation of the People Act, but also the formation of the RAF and, towards the end of the year we are going to be looking towards commemorating 100 years since the end of World War I on 11th November.

You will also see on your seat an update from Candlelighters. We thought as we are just over half way through the year it might be useful for you to see how we are actually getting on. We have actually so far raised just over £132,000 (*applause*). However – and we are so lucky on this – we have actually had an organisation called the Kentown Wizard Foundation who are actually matching that pound for pound up to £250,000, so that figure was actually £265,000, which is a phenomenal total and a big thank you to all of you and also to all of the organisations around the city who have actually done things to help us raise that amount of money. The people of Leeds never cease to amaze me with their generosity of time and money, so a big thank you to everyone who has helped with that.

I would also like to take the opportunity to extend our congratulations to the following residents of Leeds who were honoured in the Queen's New Year's Honours List. We have:

Mr David Earnshaw, who was awarded a CBE for services to education;

Miss Diane Winder, who was awarded an OBE for services to community safety;

Mr Peter Heald, who was awarded an MBE for service to business and the community in West Yorkshire; and the following four people were also awarded a BEM, a British Empire Medal:

Mrs Sheila Miller, for services to the community in Leeds;

Mrs Phoebe Ethel Revill-Johnson, for voluntary services to police officers;

Mrs Steven Robinson, for services to people with disabilities and the community in West Yorkshire; and

Mrs Margaret Stead, for services to women suffering from breast cancer in West Yorkshire.

I am sure we would all like to show our appreciation to them. (*applause*)

ITEM 1 – MINUTES OF 2 MEETINGS HELD 8th NOVEMBER 2017

THE LORD MAYOR: We are going to move straight on to the meeting. Minutes of the two meetings held on 8th November. Councillor Ogilvie.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I second that, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I would like to put that to the vote. I call for votes to receive the Minutes. (*A vote was taken*) That is CARRIED.

ITEM 2 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

ITEM – COMMUNICATIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 3, Communications. Chief Executive.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: I have just got one to report, Lord Mayor, which is from the Minister for Employment at the time, Damian Hinds, who has just been promoted to Education Secretary of State. It was about Universal Credit and that has been circulated to all Members.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you.

ITEM 4 – DEPUTATIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: Now we move on to Deputations. We have four Deputations today. Tom.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. The first is Chapel Allerton 20 is Plenty, regarding 20 miles per hour zones; the second is a group regarding the cost of using public conveniences in the city, particularly Leeds bus station; the third, a group regarding a public space protection order near to the Marie Stopes Centre; and fourth, a group asking for more Changing Places facilities in the city.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I second that, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I would like to call for the vote to receive the Deputations. (*A vote was taken*) That is CARRIED, so if we could receive Deputation one, please.

DEPUTATION 1 – CHAPEL ALLERTON 20 IS PLENTY

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

MR R WARD: My Lord Mayor, Members of Council, we are three of the Members of the Chapel Allerton 20 is Plenty Group. I am Bob Ward, this is my colleague Neil Hollingworth, and Heidi Farrar.

We applaud Leeds City Council's endorsement and promotion and expansion of 20 mile an hour zone limits throughout the city. Are these zones effective, however? There is a very high level of public concern about excessive speeds within our zones and the need for something to be done to make them even more effective.

Measurements carried out by LCC Highways Department have shown mean speeds of around 25 miles per hour at several locations in our zones but, of course, a mean speed implies that approximately half of the recorded speeds are well above that figure and the Highways data does confirm this. The speed limit of 20 is, with its red circle, a maximum, it is not a mean. Our own measurements carried out in co-operation with West Yorkshire Police using their official hand-held speed gun – or our own speed gun which we purchased at enormous expense from Amazon – has been calibrated against the West Yorkshire Police gun and to within plus or minus one mile an hour, and that shows quite conclusively that over half of motorists are exceeding 25 miles an hour in a 20 zone.

This very morning we were out, bitterly cold, freezing our proverbials off, with Radio Leeds and they confirmed that 41 cars out of the 54 that we recorded were in

excess of 20 miles an hour – that is 75% were exceeding the official speed limit – and 27 of them (that is 50%), were above 25 miles an hour.

So we ask ourselves why are the zones apparently not working? Informal (shall we call them) interviews by the West Yorkshire Police Constable in our area showed very clearly that when people had been caught by his speed gun the majority of them genuinely thought the speed limit at that point was 30 miles an hour and, frankly most people he interviewed could not be described as your boy racers or terms which are even more graphic. They could be excused for not being sure what the true speed limit was.

The signs at the entrances to the zones are often placed very high and often partly concealed and can be difficult to read. The red circle is often ten feet or more above the ground.

My Lord Mayor, I would now like to mention a document called Traffic Signs Rules and General Directions 2016. I really would hesitate to recommend this 547 page document as relaxing bedtime reading, but if you want to, fine. It does make it crystal clear what Local Authorities are compelled to do and also what they are allowed to do.

Traffic calming measures of 4ft squares of tarmac, or full width humps, are exactly the same in a 20 zone as in a 30 zone so it is quite excusable that motorists are a little confused what the speed limit is at that point. However, if each of those traffic cushions or traffic full width – what are they called - thingies, the situation would be crystal clear if they had a 20 roundel painted on the road surface immediately in front of them. They would make it crystal clear for the motorist and the cost/benefit equation would be very compelling. TSRGD 2016 would allow that.

Within any 20 zone, no point in that zone is allowed to be more than 50 metres from a traffic-calming measure, but that is a maximum distance so a Local Authority, if it so wished, could reduce that distance from 50 metres down to something less to increase the effectiveness of the zone.

My Lord Mayor, when you are driving I am sure that you are looking at the road surface in front of the vehicles – at least I hope you are. This would in our view be the best place to put reminders of what the speed limit is on the road. 20 roundels painted on the road cost about fifty quid. This compares to estimates we have had from Highways of £150 for a vertical sign, £600 for tarmac cushions, £1,500 for a speed hump and £2,000 for a flashing neon sign.

What we are requesting, finally, working in co-operation with LCC Highways, West Yorkshire Police and any other interested parties such as ROSPA, we would like to see and participate in a properly designed scientific trial to measure the effect of the measures which we are suggesting. We would therefore respectfully suggest that a working party be set up with the Council Departments that are appropriate to investigate and implement this proposal.

The benefits to the people of Leeds and later, perhaps, to the more wide country, could be beneficial and very significant. Thank you all for your kind attention and for the opportunity to address Council. Thank you. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I second that, Lord Mayor.

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

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

MR R WARD: Thank you, Lord Mayor, thank you, Councillors. (*applause*)

DEPUTATION 2 – PUBLIC CONVENIENCE CHARGES
AT LEEDS BUS STATION

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

MS J PORTER: Lord Mayor and Members of the Council, I would like to introduce Simon Copland, who is the Chair of the Older Persons Engagement Group of Age UK Leeds; Mark Clayton, who is also a committee member of the same group; Nigel Swann who has been a resident of Leeds for 45 years; and myself. I am Janet Porter, I am a former teacher and senior journalist with the Pudsey Times newspaper, which is part of the Harrogate Advertiser series. I campaigned for a number of community issues at that time including the drainage scheme for Rodley in the 80s, working with Councillor Andrew Carter and the Rodley Residents Action Group. I later became a community journalist with the Oban Times in Scotland. For 22 years I worked for Leeds City Council's Adult Social Care supporting vulnerable adults. I have also achieved some improvements to the Buslingthorpe area of Leeds with the support of the Lord Mayor, Councillor Jane Dowson, and other local Councillors.

I am here today because I feel strongly that toilets should be accessible for all who need them when they need them, and not restricted by locks, charges or turnstiles or by discrimination on the grounds of registered disability or otherwise. In particular, the toilets at the Leeds bus station were free until just over a year ago when a new charging system came into place. The charge is 20 pence but it is not the amount which is the issue; it is the nuisance and embarrassment of the turnstile system and the fact that it affects older people; the less well off; the people trying to lessen the impact of cars in the city by using public transport; people who may not be registered disabled but who still may have difficulties with bladder function or with standing; pregnant women who need to make more trips to the toilet.

It is a basic human need to go to the toilet yet here is an example of a punitive system which at the very least causes stress and irritation, and what if a person does have a toilet accident? What system is there in place to deal with this? Have the turnstiles been risk assessed? I presume they have but I did witness a frail old lady knocked to the floor by a turnstile as someone exited a toilet in a Leeds shopping mall.

Lack of facilities also deters and prevents some people with problems from being able to access this beautiful city. I contacted Gerry Laverty, the Leeds bus station manager, who wrote that disabled toilets were locked so as not to be abused by those not registered as disabled. How can using a toilet for the correct reason be classed as abuse? Can we not share?

I am here to gain support from the Councillors of the City of Leeds and urge them to take action on this matter. Leeds is a prosperous city in a wealthy country. It is important for residents and also for visitors who will judge the city not just for its vibrant culture and wonderful architecture; more importantly for decent, accessible toilet facilities.

I understand this needs to be funded but what would happen if we funded the ambulance at source, or the fire service? Of course we do not, it is funded before the emergency happened. So it would be with toilets. Please find another way to fund the toilets.

I appeal to the Members of this Council to work towards the City of Leeds becoming a fine example to the rest of the country by enabling free, accessible use of all toilets. This is in everyone's best interest, shoppers and traders alike. At bus stations it should be made easier, not more difficult, to get on with the journey, especially as most buses do not have on-board toilets.

I have just returned from a trip to India. The Title was Tigers, Temples and the Taj Mahal. Sadly, we saw not a single tiger but we did see the Taj Mahal and scores of temples. Your alliterative skills may help you work out the places that we actually visited the most; yes, the toilets were the most memorable – some excellent, some less so, but all very welcome.

I learned Latin at school and this famous quote of 1872 stuck - *Sanitas Sanitatum Omnia Sanitas*. It was used by Benjamin Disraeli, who wisely took the health of the people as a serious issue and legislated for access to pure air and water.

THE LORD MAYOR: Final sentence, Janet, please.

MS J PORTER: Thank you. I would like to urge the Members of Leeds City Council to follow his lead by using their powers to make a start now towards enabling everyone to have free and uncurtailed access to toilet facilities throughout the city so that any trip into Leeds can be really positive. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: I move that the matter be referred to the West Yorkshire Combined Authority for consideration.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I second that, Lord Mayor.

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

I would like to thank you all for coming to today's meeting. Officers from the relevant department will be in contact with you in due course. Thank you, good bye.

MS J PORTER: Thank you. *(applause)*

DEPUTATION 3 – PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER

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

MS G MONTGOMERY: OK, thank you. My name is Geraldine Montgomery and my friends at Leeds Labour Women have joined me while I make a speech today.

MS W WINTERS: I am Wendy Winters.

MS J FURLONG: Julie Furlong.

MS E ROWBOTTOM: Ellen Rowbottom.

MS G MONTGOMERY: We have come here today to request that the Council set up a Public Spaces Protection Order or similar safe buffer zone to prevent protests taking place at the Marie Stopes Clinic on Barwick Road in Leeds. We have come to speak today because we are very concerned that these protests, which ultimately aim to dissuade women from accessing available healthcare, put Leeds women at risk, including vulnerable, disadvantaged and distressed women.

You may be aware here that the UK 1967 Abortion Act provides legal access to abortions but this Act does not allow women to access an abortion at their request. The decisions rests with two doctors and it is according to their judgment about the impact of abortion versus the impact of childbirth on a woman's physical or mental health.

According to the most recently available figures from the Department of Health in 2016, legal abortions 2,957 were carried out on behalf of Leeds CCGs, mostly for women in their twenties but one in seven were also teenagers. To give a sense of the common nature of this procedure the Royal Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists estimated in 2011 that at least one third of British women will have had an abortion by the time they reach 45, and the majority of abortions are performed on women who have not previously had the procedure.

You may not be aware of anti-abortion protests in Leeds but anti-abortion groups originating from the United States, such as the Centre for Bioethical Reform and 40 Days for Life have been organising protests in Leeds in 2017 and further protests are planned. The Centre for Bioethical Reform's secular consumer protection programme, the Abort 67 project, is conducted outside UK abortion clinics and aims to show prospective clients a viewpoint on what abortion is and to provide abortion risk information that includes studies the campaign believes are concealed from clients of abortion services. In contrast, the 40 Days for Life campaign organises focused 40 day non-stop round the clock Christian orientated prayer vigils outside abortion facilities in a given community, including the Marie Stopes Clinic.

Over the last ten years their organisation has celebrated international actions that prevent people from accessing abortions. They also celebrate leading workers to quit their jobs and reported have closed 90 abortion facilities and there are other similar groups operating in the UK.

If we do not act you may be aware that at the time that the UK Abortion Act was introduced 50 years ago, unwanted pregnancy was a clear public health problem. Abortions had been carried out before the Act was introduced and while we do not know how many, estimates vary from 10,000 to 250,000 abortions per year in the UK. Some of these abortions were performed openly by doctors relying on the defence they preserve the life of the mother, but others were performed in back streets, so impeding or delaying access to legal abortion may not actually reduce the level of abortions carried out.

Before the Act the medical consequences of legal abortion were significant maternal morbidity and mortality. Official figures note 35 to 50 maternal deaths a year but it is generally agreed the real figure is likely to have been higher as doctors will not have recorded this as the cause of death. There are also contemporary concerns about health risks of illegal abortion pills now available online.

In addition the UK has one of the harshest penalties for unlawful abortion in Europe. The broader consequences of not doing anything is that mothers may be unable to cope with their pregnancy, may be prosecuted for accessing illegal abortions, may be injured through unwanted pregnancy or in an illegal abortion and women with the least resources and the least choices are likely to be the most disadvantaged and their children may be taken into care as families will be unable to cope.

The reason why we are asking for at Public Space Protection Order is these are broad powers currently available which allow Councils to criminalise particular non-criminal activities taking place within a specific area. Preventing protests from taking place close to medical facilities will help protect anonymity of people using these services including those at risk of domestic abuse and honour-based violence.

It is not a radical choice. The solution of a buffer zone is something that has been considered by Councils nationwide with similar access zones established internationally from Canada to South Africa. Ealing, Birmingham, Portsmouth and Southwark Borough in London have all voted to explore PSPO in response to calls from the public to ensure women do not experience intimidation or interference in accessing medical care, that employees can access work without fear of reprisal or regular

harassment and that the locality will not develop into somewhere with a negative quality of life.

Leeds City Council provides advice for the people living in the ward that they represent and they are aware of the needs of their community and in touch with the issues that local people face. This is an issue where Leeds residents can currently experience intimidation while accessing legal medical care and treatments. It is not an issue of silencing the views of any group but of creating an appropriate space to do so where the beliefs and views which everybody has the right to express cannot interfere with the services being provided. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I second that, Lord Mayor.

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

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

DEPUTATION 4 – CHANGING PLACES

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

MR C McDONNELL: Ladies and gentlemen, my name is Colin McDonnell and to my right is Nathan Popple. We are here today to talk to you about the importance and the need for changing places around Leeds train and bus stations. Changing places are more than just a disabled toilet. They are facilities that provide a lifting hoist, an adult sized height adjustable changing bed to allow disabled children and adults who are unable to transfer independently to still go out because they can be hoisted safely on to the toilet or, should the person be incontinent and wear pads, they can be safely hoisted on to a changing bed so they can be laid down to be changed and their personal care needs met.

Without Changing Places, loved ones are often cared for on dirty toilet floors, in the backs of cars or using inappropriate and unsafe baby changing areas, or in some cases, not at all. These options are unsafe, unhygienic, undignified and unacceptable but the alternative is to stay at home. I cannot speak for everyone - however, I am not

willing to do this.

As a prime example of the struggles we face, last year it was possible for me to go to London by train because I was aware that they have a changing places at King's Cross station. The train journey is two-and-a-half hours long and everyone else can either use the toilet on the train or immediately when they get off. However, as Leeds does not have a changing places, I have to wait until an extra hour until I got home. This is unnecessary and puts myself and countless other people with disabilities in an uncomfortable situation with regards to the train station.

It has been reported that over £500m is to be spent redeveloping Leeds train station over the coming years. Leeds City Council has said that passenger numbers are expected to double, meaning more passengers with disabilities will also be visiting. Therefore, if we want more people to visit Leeds we should ensure that we can provide the facilities required to cater for everyone's needs, regardless of their limitations.

With regards to the bus station, in an article concerning September 2016 refurbishment of the toilet facilities in the Leeds bus station, the West Yorkshire Metro Transport website reported in March 2017, and I quote:

“The West Yorkshire Combined Authority is committed to maintaining and improve the comfort, safety and quality of its bus stations.”

The refurbishment could have presented the perfect opportunity to create a changing places facility, as I believe there is enough space to do so. However, the money was spent on cosmetic alterations and it is clear that little thought and research was put into the needs of disabled bus users, e.g. needing extra equipment to use toilet facilities rather than just an average disabled toilet.

In the last twelve months I have expressed my views and concerns about the lack of changing places facilities at the train and bus stations at every opportunity. I realise and appreciate that Leeds City Council has made a huge effort to make this city more accessible and many changing places have been installed across the city. Thank you. It is appreciated by all that need to use these facilities. My concerns are that there is not always time to travel somewhere else to use the toilet when catching a connecting line.

I understand that the installation of changing places at the train and bus stations is down to the individual developers at Network Rail and West Yorkshire Metro. We would like to request the Council's assistance to insist that these companies add changing places to their future redevelopments in Leeds. Thank you for your time.
(Standing ovation)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I heartily second that Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Latty. I would like to call for the vote to refer the Deputation. *(A vote was taken)* That is unanimous. CARRIED

Thank you for coming to today's meeting and officers from the relevant Department will be in contact with you in due course, Colin. Thank you so much for coming. Good afternoon. *(applause)*

ITEM 5 – RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD –
AMENDMENTS TO THE LEEDS SITE ALLOCATIONS PLAN

THE LORD MAYOR: I would like to tell you I have considered the amendment to item 5 and consulted with Legal Officers, so I am asking our Legal Officer and City Solicitor to explain the legal rationale for my ruling that it is unfortunately out of order.

THE CITY SOLICITOR: Thank you, Lord Mayor. In summary, the Lord Mayor was advised that the amendment is not in order for the following reasons.

First, it is not relevant to the original motion at Item 5, which is to move recommendations relating to the Site Allocations Plan. Amending housing numbers to which the amendment refers is not part of the Site Allocations Plan process. The SAP Report does not relate at all to amending, lowering, the housing requirement. The required consultation referred to in the report refers only to the specific revisions to the SAP. The report refers to the housing requirement only as background information in the context of the Leeds Local Plan. Amended housing requirement figures do not form part of the SAP revisions or the report recommendations.

The appropriate mechanism to consult on housing targets is through the relevant plan making process. As the housing target is addressed in the adopted Core Strategy, the correct process is through the Core Strategy Selective Review.

To date the Council has not formally considered or come to a view on its position in relation to amending the housing number or what that should be. The earliest date when a formal position on the housing requirement will be taken by the Council is on 7th Feb when Executive Board will consider whether to resolve to undertake public consultation on the Core Strategy Selective Review which will include a proposed housing requirement figure.

Second, if the amendment was held to be in order, Council would need properly to dispose of it, including taking a vote. If the vote was carried Council would be taking

a decision to do something inappropriate as it would be agreeing to undertake a public consultation on a matter that the Council has to date not formally considered. That would be premature and improper.

Finally, to allow an amended motion which is not relevant to the substantive motion would set a potentially unlawful and therefore unacceptable precedent for the future. Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: So in summary it is out of order as it has no relevance to the original motion. If it were to be allowed the Council may make a decision to do something that was inappropriate, premature and improper and it would set a potentially unlawful precedent of being allowed to introduce amendments which were not about the subject of the motion.

Councillor Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Lord Mayor, in advance of that it surely is appropriate to comment on the ruling on the advice we have just been given.

The fact of the matter is what we are considering here is all about this matter, it is all about housing numbers.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Procter, I do appreciate that you would like to say something on this particular thing and you will have your opportunity during the debate. I am afraid that the debate on this is finished. I have made my ruling. I appreciate what you are saying.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Lord Mayor, why are we considering it then, if it has been ruled out?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lewis is now going to speak, Councillor Procter. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Lord Mayor, I think people will be scratching their heads at this pantomime that we have got and that John is indulging in at the moment.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Running scared at what we are scratching our heads at.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: For most of us feel that we have debated this enough over the past few months.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Rubbish.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: We have had special meetings, we have had all sorts and I do not expect, to be honest, to hear anything new to day.

This particular amendment that the Tories have come up with, for those who have not been in the loop, I will just explain a little bit about what has happened because what is clearly going on is an attempt by the Tories to portray this as them being shut

down by the administration and us not wanting the debate. Far from it. What happened was the amendment was questioned by officers who had the view that Catherine has expressed a few minutes ago. Legal Officers came to us and said, effectively, “What’s your view on this?”

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: No they did not.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: John, stop waving your hands about, let me finish.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lewis, please. The Legal Officer.

THE CITY SOLICITOR: Can I correct that factually. Actually a Member – I do not know whether they would mind me naming them but a Member...

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: I will name him – James Lewis.

THE CITY SOLICITOR: ...emailed me at 14 minutes past three yesterday afternoon.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Withdraw, Councillor Richard Lewis.

THE LORD MAYOR: Could we please allow Catherine to finish what she is speaking.

THE CITY SOLICITOR: Actually the issue was raised by that Member and following that I considered the position and felt that because of that a definitive ruling had been asked for by that Member and the only person capable of giving a definitive ruling was the Lord Mayor and that is why I spoke and briefed the Lord Mayor.

Following that I am sure the Lord Mayor would confirm that her view was that she was to rule the matter out of order, the amendment out of order. That is the sequence of events and I think it is very important to be clear about that.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: What a disgrace. You should resign.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: I apologise for getting the order wrong – however, the reality is that we as elected Members were quite happy for the amendment to go because we did not want to stifle debate, we were quite happy even though it was out of order we were relaxed, it was not our problem as far as we were concerned and we were more than happy that a form of words was devised – and I hope Catherine will support me – a form of words was offered to the Opposition that would have enabled effectively the amendment to come here and it would have been in order, it would have been acceptable.

The Opposition chose not to go along with that so when we have all this righteous indignation from the Tories, the reality is all they are doing is trying to stage manage something to make it look as if we are trying to stifle debate so you have got some fodder for your next leaflets for the local elections. It is a nonsense and you should be ashamed of yourselves.

We have talked often enough about this issue. We have debated it time and time again, I can see that there is a long Order Paper here of people who feel they have not said enough but it is time to move on. It is time to go to consultation. Clearly as a Council we do not want to be in a position where effectively we have open debate for ever more. You might enjoy this navel gazing; we are an administration that has to make progress on this. If you really think you are being responsible by behaving the way you are, you are completely wrong.

Lord Mayor, we need to move on with this. Support the motion. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Procter, if you would like to comment, please.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Well, Lord Mayor, what a farce. What an absolute farce. The fact of the matter is, Lord Mayor, that you have been given duff advice. The very first document that you picked up, what does it talk about? It talks about the amended numbers. It actually states here what we are approving is “Add in to table 1 additional column.” What is it doing? It is doing exactly what we are saying. The view of the Legal Officers is wrong, Lord Mayor – pure and simple, wrong.

The conversations I had with them yesterday and today, I might say, accuses us of seeking to force this Council to go out to public consultation on a figure that ultimately will set the housing target for this Council. That is not what we have said at all. That is not what it says. We are actually saying we should consult on the Government’s target, and what’s wrong with that? What exactly is wrong with that? Nothing at all but the fact of the matter is that for some bizarre reason the housing target figure is a huge embarrassment to this Labour administration. I do not know why. I do not know why and I have said throughout, if you were happy with 70,000, fine, say it, go to the people of Leeds and say you are proud of it. There is only one person who said that they were in this Council Chamber and that was Councillor Michael Lyons. At least he has got some guts. I disagree with him on this issue but at least he has got an honourable conviction. The rest of you, “Oh well maybe not, maybe not.”

We go to DPP Panel to talk about numbers in actual fact and what then happens? Lots of shuffling goes on and, “Oh, well, we are not really sure” and nobody likes the fact that actually this Group was the only Group at DPP who suggested a lower housing figure and now you are trying to move away from the one you have adopted, which is closer to 50,000. What this document does that you are looking to approve right now fixes that approach. That is what it does, otherwise why do you think we abandoned the public inquiry? Why? Because it was in line with the Government’s figures, that is why. That is what we know is absolutely the case. You are in a hole and goodness me you keep on digging, don’t you?

Lord Mayor, this is a straightforward proposal that is saying to the people of Leeds do you think the Government’s figure – the Government’s figure – of a little over 42,000 is the right figure to adopt and to actually allocate sites to. We have always said

it is a nonsense to allocate sites and then go about trying to unpick that and say we have allocated too many sites. It is ridiculous. We need to allocate sites to the requirement. That requirement in our view is 42,000 houses, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Andrew Carter to comment, please.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. When Councillor Lewis made his comments there are only two ways to construe his opening remarks. One, he was either deliberately trying to mislead this Council or, two, the Deputy Leader's namesake, Councillor James Lewis, had failed to tell him that he had lobbied the Legal Officer to get this taken off the table. That is no way to run a Council, it is no way to treat the people of Leeds, it is wholly unacceptable and what it underlines is the fact that Members over there are still determined to press ahead with a housing target figure which is unsustainable, undeliverable and extremely unwise.

My Lord Mayor, the people of Leeds have every right to be thoroughly concerned about the whole charade that has gone on and in particular the behaviour of the controlling Group of this Council.

At the last Executive Board meeting Councillor Blake looked at me in ominous tones and said, "Andrew, we know what you are doing." (*laughter*) Well, one thing is for certain, we now know that you lot haven't a clue what you are doing (*laughter*) and that is for sure.

My Lord Mayor, why do they want to stop the people of Leeds commenting on a range of figures? Why is that? There is undoubtedly in my mind a determination by some Members opposite to press ahead with the maximum possible number of houses, and be warned, those of you who have been taken in by the Development Plan meetings and what was said by these people – it is a con trick and the people of Leeds are being denied a proper chance to comment thoroughly.

Before Councillor Lewis goes on about us not wanting to build houses for people who need them, that is an untruth and a downright lie so do not say it again. I am proud to say under the leadership of a former colleague of Councillor Golton's and myself, we delivered the housing numbers required by the then Government, the Labour Government, on a number of occasions. You have failed to deliver the housing numbers on the right sites and now you are proposing to deliver them on the wrong sites, destroying our environment for generations to come. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor David Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I have got to say I am disappointed that the amendment was not allowed. I think the East Leeds Independents and the Garforth and Swillington Independents and the new Independent – welcome aboard – are in the same boat as we are in the Green Party in that we do not have a representative on the Development Plans Panel so we have not been involved in that discussion, although I think I have made it quite clear what our position is and the housing numbers are too high. It seems stupid to me that we go ahead with a document where effectively the Core Strategy still says there is 70,000, so we are still talking about 70,000 houses, we have not changed anything. How can we go ahead with

something that has these strange pieces of land that are Green Belt but not Green Belt in them? Is it PAS land? No, it is not PAS land, it is Green Belt but it seems very much like PAS land to me.

I think the actual document is premature. Clearly we have got to get on with it but what we have got to get on with, we have got to get on about revising housing numbers first and that should be and I think it is totally wrong that an opportunity to consult on a different housing number – one actually I share the same kind of figure with the Tories – is that we should be going ahead with that. I do not see how that is affecting what you are doing by consulting on this document.

Quite clearly I am not going to support the recommendations. We are going to vote against it and we will be consistent. The numbers are too high, we need to do something now. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Leadley.

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: My Lord Mayor, for ten years City Town and Country Planning in Leeds has been stuck in a mire of inflated housing targets, costing the taxpayer millions of pounds and this Council thousands of hours of Officer time. No-one has got an extra house out of it; supply of new houses may even have been reduced by encouraging land banking and speculative land dealing. This is not something new revealed only by recent statistics. Councillor Andrew Carter called an Extraordinary Council Meeting to look at it in December 2007 and we have been rightly consistent about it in Morley since that time.

At last there seems to be widespread agreement that we are in a mire and must find a way out of it, which may be easier said than done without falling into a even deeper bog.

For ten years housing targets have been as motional as the standing glaciers. It is odd that you wait for ten years and then two glaciers begin to move at once. Major public planning consultations are complicated enough and I am not sure how people are going to cope with two linked but different consultations running more or less side by side.

From 11th January until 26th February we will have the latest Site Allocations Plan or SAP consultation the subject of today's report, and from 9th February until 23rd March we will be consulting on the Core Strategy Review. As well as overlapping the consultations are arguably cart before horse. The centrepiece of the latter will be reducing substantially the 16 year housing target from 70,000 without carrying forward any accumulated backlog. It would have been better to have sorted that out before making the SAP housing allocations.

At Development Plans Panel on 19th December I proposed that we accept the lowest Officer recommendation that under the new 16 year time should be 51,952 and that was seconded by Councillor Jim McKenna. Ideally it should have been a bit lower – between 46,000 and 50,000 – but 51,952 was as good as we were going to get on the day – less than 4% above the top of the ideal range, so well within the bounds of reason and it might be adjusted downwards. Even Councillor Walshaw, Mr 70,000 himself,

supported the motion (*cheers*) but with a glum enthusiasm befitting an East European Politburo member voting to abolish himself in 1989. (*laughter*)

Officers have pointed a way out of the mire which would mean making enough dummy SAP allocations to satisfy a 70,000 target and then voting backwards to 51,952 in a later Core Strategy Review. I am not sure that a Planning Inspector would be convinced by decoy ducks in the form of Broad Locations which have been set out by Officers to allow the backward leap. If that strategy was challenged successfully they would fall like a card house.

We suggested a better and safer way out during the last SAP Review in November 2015 which would have saved more Green Belt, so I will be updating that in our formal response this time.

We note that some humble pie has been eaten and that a most important corner has been turned, but we will be abstaining from today's vote and setting out our revised comments in detail during both consultation periods. Nonetheless, we welcome the progress so far.

The Government figure of 42,384 is remarkably close to our best preferred 46,000 which we promoted for some years. A mid-point between 42,384 and 51,952 is closer still at 47,168.

Councillor Procter's amendment would add to confusion by bringing forward into the first consultation something which clearly belongs to the second. The required trick is to bring in a much reduced target without being pre-empted by site allocations based on the discredited old targets. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: That is lovely. Councillor Finnigan, please.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to open up by paying tribute to my colleague. Councillor Tom Leadley has been a John the Baptist type character who has been banging on about housing numbers since his election in 2003. Whether that was through the Labour Party's Regional Spatial Strategy or future strategies it has been clear to him and to us for many, many years that the housing target was unrealistic, unachievable and one that needed to be reduced quite significantly. I would pay further tribute to him because he has led that action which has led to a more realistic target, notwithstanding some of us feel that it is still too high and should be reduced slightly more, and that is what we will be looking to actually achieve.

One of the things that we think the people of Morley deserve is an apology from this Labour administration for the situation that they put them in as a result of backing those higher targets. We have seen green field site after green field site lost as a result of this ridiculous and unrealistic and unachievable target – whether that is Lane Side Farm in Churwell or Daisy Hill in Morley or the sites in Drighlington, sites on Bruntcliffe Road.

We are in a situation where this administration has capitulated to developers, putting their priorities first instead of the local community, and the local community has to bear the brunt of this failure. That means that schools are incapable of coping with

the demand that is placed upon them as these green field sites are ripped up. The health centres cannot cope, the roads cannot cope.

We deserve an apology but ultimately will we get an apology? Will anybody be held accountable for this failure? The answer will clearly be no, nobody ever accepts that they fail; nobody ever accepts an apology; nobody ever accepts responsibility. They just go on spending taxpayers' money, whether it is on this, whether it is on Supertram, whether it is on NGT, whatever it might actually be, spending other people's money foolishly instead of dealing with the realities and the situations that they find themselves in.

Ultimately somebody is responsible and accountable for this and somebody ought to be offering their resignation. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Barry Anderson.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. The reason I am wanting to talk is – and it is something I apologise to my colleagues on the Development Plans Panel because you have heard this before. What are you actually consulting about, because various of your Members have been talking about putting press releases out about 70,000, 66,000, 55,000, 52,000, let us criticise 42,000. It is not us that have been putting this out, it is you and the public are well and truly confused.

You say you are going to reduce down the numbers yet you are still consulting on the same figure. Which statement was correct? You don't really know yourselves as to what you are planning to do.

The documentation is totally, utterly confusing that you are putting out there. Does anybody, maybe with the exception of one or two Members of the Development Plans Panel, actually understand the Green Belt assessment that has been carried out and why it has not been put alongside the individual sites so that we can actually see whether you are or are not sticking to the principles that are meant to be set out.

If we who are relatively knowledgeable in these things do not understand it, what chance has the public? You keep going on about you want to consult – well, why don't you consult in a way that people understand? You are not doing it, you are making a total fool of everybody.

Then we have got the debacle of the legal advice on the Broad Locations. We are told that you have counsel's advice. Who has seen this counsel's advice, other than maybe Councillor Lewis and I do not even know whether he has even seen the counsel's advice as to whether or not this is on solid ground or not.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: It will be useless.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: We have asked for it in Development Plans Panel, we have even said can it be taken beneath the line. We have not been allowed it so we cannot tell you whether it is good, bad or indifferent.

Also, be careful with the figures you are quoting. I have asked for other information, as some of you are aware, and that has come back with different totals than you have got in Table 1. You have actually got a different number being allocated for Green Belt on the figures that I have got using a different method of calculating than you have got, and other people are going to be doing exactly the same out there. You are leaving yourselves open to all sorts of problems.

You keep saying you want the Government to listen more. Why don't you show a lead by listening more to what people are saying? Let us go forward and try and do something together. We need to get housing in place. You are causing untold problems when there is no need to because you will not listen to people who are trying to put forward a constructive way forward.

Please look again at what you are doing. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thanks, Lord Mayor. Councillor Leadley has hit it on the head, really. We are in a mire and we need to find a way out of it. Unfortunately, there is no way out of it because it was inevitable from the very beginning when that target of 70,000 homes for the city was chosen and you have to ask yourselves why was that figure chosen. We have had this in debate before, there were a whole line of targets that could have been chosen by the administration from the very low round about 40,000 right up to 90,000 and the administration chose to choose the figure below that which the Federation of House Builders preferred.

Why did that happen? Why did they go for the very top end in targets? Was it because the city needed 70,000 houses, or was it a target out to the development community to say "If you want to build, come to this city" and the reason why they were welcomed so wholeheartedly was because each house built is another Council Tax income for the Council; each house built was rewarded by Central Government with a New Homes Bonus.

Unfortunately for the people of Leeds the entire Housing Strategy was built on municipal greed. It was to get as much income in as possible and unfortunately for the population in Leeds, the Council did not have the capacity to live up to the deliverability to the target that they chose, which means that we are in the position that we are now.

We have never achieved any in each year of this target that has been set, we have never achieved the number of houses that we have needed. Because we have never achieved the number of houses that was needed, because they did not have that close relationship with the development community that they so wanted and they did not develop it, because those houses were not built the development community could then challenge the Council to build where they wanted.

We have been through a whole process of the Site Allocations Policy where we have looked in minute detail at so many pieces of land that have been put forward by so many different landowners, and now that is up in the air. Now the Council goes back with these Broad Locations for Growth and all that they have done is they have created a period of instability whereby landowners can bring forward land that was not even

included in the Site Allocations Policy confident in the expectation that they will actually get rejected by Leeds City Council Plans and then get approved by the Inspector, because this city cannot demonstrate that it actually has a housing policy.

We cannot blame any of this on our legal advice and I know it would have been very convenient for the Conservative Group to have had that amendment in and then it looks like the Government is coming over the hill like the cavalry and saving the city by bringing in a lower figure.

Unfortunately we are in the position where we are and for the next 18 months it is open season for those developers out there that want their land to be developed because this Council has not got a policy that can stand up to scrutiny. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Colin Campbell.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I was not going to get involved in the spat until John re-wrote history but I think it is useful to remind ourselves about why we are here and that is to do with the vote on the Core Strategy.

I recall that two Groups on this Council supported the original Core Strategy of 70,000-plus and it was not the Independents and it was not the Morley Independents and it was not the Greens and it was not the Liberal Democrats, so I will leave you to work out who it was.

COUNCILLOR R GRAHAME: It wasn't the Coalition neither, was it?

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Having said all that I suppose we ought to just ask ourselves a question.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Why did you abstain at DPP? That is going to come back and haunt you.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Having said that, we talked about St John here (*laughter*) and I suppose in some ways this is Saul on the way to Damascus (*laughter*) and I will try and get another Biblical quote in if I can.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: I have never been to Damascus.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Being a Liberal we have met you there many times!

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Thank you, thank you. Having said all that, Lord Mayor, what are we being asked to do today? What we are being asked to do today, if you strip away all the rhetoric, is to agree discussions on site allocations for 70,000-plus houses. We have decided to call one or two of them a fancy title, which is Broad Locations for Growth. All that means is this is a site that is suitable for development but we are not going to take it out of the Green Belt just yet.

Even if the Inspector accepts this fiction that we are providing for them, what we are actually saying is all these Broad Location sites are developable sites and they will

be developed, because developers will look at those sites and say “Well, just a minute, the Council said we can develop that site.” OK, they are technically Green Belt and it may be a few years down the line, so it is worth somebody like Persimmon who has got a bit of loose change around at the moment to put their hand in their back pocket and put a bid on those sites.

We all had an email from Parlington, the Save Parlington Group. Actually I am sorry to say this but because certain people voted for 70,000, all the Parlington estate is still at risk and will continue to be at risk because what we are saying is all these Broad Locations – all these Broad Locations – are developable.

We do not agree with that and so we will not be voting for this. Thank you.
(applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jonathan Bentley.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. If any members of the general public are watching this, people in the gallery, people on the webcast etc, they really must think what is going on, what are we talking about, what are we trying to achieve.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: That is what we are thinking as well.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Councillor Lewis, Richard Lewis, says we have talked about this enough, it has been here before. The reason it keeps coming here is because they keep getting it wrong and every time they get it wrong and come up with yet another fudged solution they have to bring it back here, and then we have the debate again. It is another Council meeting, another debate on the Site Allocations Plan and we have had them time and time again. It is like Groundhog Day.

It always comes back to the same issue – the 70,000 figure was wrong. The Opposition Parties (most of them) have always said it was wrong. The administration now wants somehow to understand that it is wrong but still examine on it and at the same time removing thousands of houses from the Site Allocations. I do not know about Groundhog Day, it is like Alice in Wonderland.

Weetwood Councillors though, coming back very parochially, do welcome the fact that the site known as Tetley Field on Weetwood Avenue has been removed from the Site Allocations for the foreseeable future. Members may recall that this Green Belt site was put into the SAP at a very late stage to facilitate its sale to fund the Headingley Stadium improvements, but thanks to the resilience of local residents that plan was thwarted, otherwise that piece of Green Belt land would now have been lost, and lost for ever.

Because of the vested interests and the secretive discussions that went on around that particular site, residents are still very wary and very suspicious that now that it has been allocated as a Broad Location it might not be safe and they still have concerns for its future and that needs resolving as well.

We have common cause with Councillor Dunn in Ardsley and Robin Hood. We and our residents worked together to oppose that inappropriate use of Green Belt land by the same applicant in both our wards and I am sorry if Councillor Dunn's principled stand on that has led to his deselection, but he is very welcome to the Opposition Benches and I would like to thank him for his support for the Weetwood residents. *(hear, hear) (applause)*

Lord Mayor, the fudge and confusion shown by the administration in the handling of the Site Allocations Plan does it no credit and is yet another reason why not just the Opposition but its own Members are losing confidence in it. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Brian Cleasby.

COUNCILLOR CLEASBY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Council, my concern over this is that we, the Opposition Parties and Members of the Executive are being placed in the same position that Members of Parliament were placed in over Brexit.

I refer to page 5 at (xi): "Delegate authority to the Chief Planning Officer in consultation with the Executive Board Member."

Are you not listening, Richard? What is constantly being said around the Chamber is that the Council is concerned about this and the Council wishes to make this decision on behalf of all our residents. This task has been made so complicated.

Look, if we were to choose, for instance, Lord Mayor, a figure of 45,000 homes and if those 45,000 had four residents each, we are talking about a large village or a small town which would only be 180,000 residents. If we found the land for that in one place, or maybe in two places, we could plan that from underground up. My concern is in the villages of Aireborough and mine of Horsforth, the problem is that all our effluent and all the effluent of new properties will go to Esholt. All the new build across the other side of the Aire Valley in Bradford also goes to Esholt because Esholt is a Bradford sewage works. You do not have to be a brilliant sailor, yachtsman or whatever to realise that if you put things into water upstream of a city, the danger is it will pass through the city. That is a problem. We have already had the terrifying experience of Kirkstall, not just the city centre, flooding. It is at risk, yet you want to put it at more risk by putting more water usage, more flood creators there.

Recently, in the last fortnight, Lord Mayor, there has been talk about money being made available for a Northern Forest. Let us consider a Northern Forest. Let us consider it as part of our Leeds and then look for a sensible place to put the houses in one or two, maybe three places but not affecting every resident in every ward in the whole of our city. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: It should have been Councillor Lay but unfortunately he is unwell today, so please send our best wishes and hope that he gets better soon, and similarly Councillor Walshaw, I understand your voice has gone as well, so Councillor Caroline Gruen is going to speak next.

COUNCILLOR C GRUEN: Firstly, it is worth pointing out that this Government's recent consultation document on housing targets is causing an outcry not just here in Leeds but across the country and across the political parties. Many Conservative-led areas in London and the South-East appear to have been asked to double their targets whilst a fair few Authorities – around 130 out of the just over 300 that are countable – have a change that is less than 100 homes per year plus or minus, and approaching half the Authorities actually see a decrease.

The housing target issues that we are facing in Leeds stem from the deeply unsatisfactory thinking and equally unsatisfactory planning policy of this Tory Government.

I want to talk about the positive and pragmatic approach that this administration in Leeds is taking to tackling the issue, and particularly with regard to the protection of Green Belt land. The introduction of Broad Locations, which has caused much heated debate both within this Chamber and outside, has, I believe, introduced a degree of flexibility which previous absolute definitions have not.

Paragraph 47 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that:

“Housing requirement can be met in Local Plans through the identification of specific sites or Broad Locations.”

This approach, using the ideas of Broad Locations, identifies an amount of existing specific proposed housing allocations or safeguarded land for housing which are currently in the Green Belt and ensures that they remain in the Green Belt and are not released until a new SAP Review is undertaken. These areas remaining in the Green Belt would be known as Broad Locations and with an adjusted housing target the Broad Locations would only be released if needed and, if they were needed, they would be released over a much longer period of time within a 16 year planning period.

The overall result of using the Broad Location approach is that of the total amount of Green Belt land identified for immediate release in the SAP, only 45% of this will need to be released, with 55% of it being retained in the Green Belt. It would also enable the Council to demonstrate a five year land supply, which is absolutely crucial if we are to have a real influence in the quest to resist the continued speculative and unscrupulous development of inappropriate sites throughout the city. Surely this must be good news and a much better position than we were in prior to the proposals in this paper, which I welcome, Lord Mayor.

We must act diligently as a Council in managing a clear way forward, despite the hurdles and nonsense presented to us by the Government because we are responsible for housing growth in our city and we want the best for the people in Leeds.

I believe this approach goes a long way towards ensuring the right balance of fulfilling housing need and maintaining the best possible town and country mix.
(*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jim McKenna.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Before I start can I say how glad I am that your health has recovered, particularly your voice today, because I was down for stand-by and a very late day and I was looking forward to John Procter's amendment and dealing with it. I hope I would have dealt with it as efficiently as you did, Lord Mayor, but you did very well on that.

A little correction, John, if I may, Councillor Bentley. Half of the people up *here* (*indicating the public gallery*) are Labour Party candidates for the May election. (*applause*)

Back to business. In some ways I do echo what Barry has said earlier that there is only a small group of us who sit on the Development Plans Panel and it would benefit if there were much more, but it is quite impossible to do and so we have a smaller group who have the understanding and the expertise of that process. There are more than two, there are quite a few more than two – we are a group of about eight, I believe. Yes, Councillor Latty (*sic*) did propose that we accept the numbers that are before you today and I was more than happy to second that. It was a real honour to second that one from Councillor Latty (*sic*) so it is not necessarily a Labour policy, it is also supported by another significant group in the Council.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Leadley, not Latty.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Leadley, I am sorry. Leadley. As I say, another significant Group in the Council who number five, compared to some that only number one and two, so I am glad to bring them on board and we had a very sensible discussion.

There has been perhaps more than enough discussion on this topic previously, not least at the Extraordinary meeting in November. However, I feel it is important to highlight again the prudent and responsible steps this Council has taken to review new information that came to light last autumn and its implications for Leeds.

As you will be aware following new proposed Government methodology for calculating future housing figures announced in September, we have completed a technical review of Green Belt housing allocations. We have taken stock of our approach to Green Belt releases and as a result 55% of Green Belt land that was originally earmarked for housing will now remain in the Green Belt as classified Broad Locations for Growth. Now surely that is something that we can all celebrate, 55% less intrusion into the Green Belt.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: You could have 70% less.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: OK, we are playing double figures but it is still 55% less, however you look at it.

THE LORD MAYOR: Final sentence, please, Councillor McKenna.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: I have finished. Thank you, Lord Mayor, and please support this. Leeds needs to move on, we do need housing, the city needs to grow and we have come up with a sensible figure in sensible locations. Please support. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Peter Gruen.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: Lord Mayor, may I request my name does not appear in the Minutes in the context that it was just raised.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: I do apologise.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: We have had enough with Councillor Richard Lewis. Don't you start.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Peter Gruen.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Oh my God, what a debate. It is clear to me that Allah has not sent you his blessings for 2018 because I very rarely heard a more repetitive, angst filled, hypocritical, exaggerated, sensational load of nonsense from these benches.

We have had this debate five or six times. It reminds me... (*interruption*)

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Your benches. You are supposed to point over here, not there.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: It reminds me of the recent exchange between the President of North Korea and the President of the USA. The first says, "I've got a nuclear button on my desk" and the second one says "Mine is bigger and better than yours" and that is what this debate is all about. You are trying to squeeze, as Richard Lewis says, every last ounce of political kudos that you think you have got out of this debate. Have you nothing else to talk about? Don't you want to talk about Universal Credit? Of course you don't. Don't you want to talk about homelessness? Of course you don't. Don't you want to talk about private sector train failures? Of course you don't. The only thing you want to talk about over and over and over again is Green Belt and it is your obsession and you think you are going to get credit...

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: It is your report on the Executive Board, not ours.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: Our report is clear. Now look at Barry. Barry is smiling like hell. (*laughter*)

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: Sorry for being entertained.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: He is trying to work out which you are, the North Vietnamese fellow or Trump.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: He has been telling us for three months he is a confused man. This is a Scrutiny Chair of ten years' standing and for three months he has been confused. I will tell you what, he enjoys being confused and he adds to the confusion and so when Councillor Bentley also says our residents do not know what is going on, well they don't because you make sure they don't know what's going on. You fuel the confusion.

The consistent person and the one person who actually moved the new housing target figure was Councillor Leadley.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Well done, Tom!

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: How can you move in a committee the new figures which we say we will accept and adopt and then you come into Council and say “I am going to abstain”?

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Because you are backing 70,000.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: This is a farce. The whole debate is a farce and you will not take responsibility as we have to, and we accept that. You do not want to take responsibility, you want to be on the good side of everybody and you can't be.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Get your facts right. Fake news.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: We will carry on with the business that has to be carried on and we will do the best for the city. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jack Dunn.

COUNCILLOR DUNN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to say first of all in all honesty as part of the Labour Group I voted for the original numbers and I think it seemed sensible. The reasoning put forward was that if we have the over-availability and there is a need in the future that will be built in for the availability. I am not sure that we were all convinced about that but we went along with it.

Since then we have to-ed and fro-ed, both sides, and in the meantime my ward, as well as Morley, has suffered the consequences of non-deliberation. Church Fields is one of them in East Ardsley where the Communities Secretary gave permission because here again the war cry, this city has not enough availability housing land for houses. That is the yardstick that these developers are using and while we are going on today, these developers will be watching anxiously because while we are deliberating they are moving in and taking the Green Belt.

I am not sure that this new number is the right one either, if we can get it to a lower figure I would be happy, but either way – and I am really open-minded about the figure as long as we get it determined because last week, and I know Morley Councillors were at the Public Inquiry for another 779 houses between our two wards and we have no real defence if we do not get it sorted out today. Whichever way we go it needs deliberating. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(applause)*

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

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I assume that everybody in the interests of recycling has recycled speeches that they have made many, many times before. They make less sense now than they did previously. Actually, I think all of us need to consider how we could convey complex messages and describe complex

processes to the public, to the voting public out there, and we can either do that or we can actually confuse people and try and actually create more confusion in people's minds than there was in the first place. That is exactly what the Tory Group in particular has done and I think that the farrago that we had at the beginning of this debate underlines that for the Tories there is nothing they will not do to create a smokescreen of nonsense around this issue rather than having a proper debate.

One of the things we have been doing recently is actually talking to the community groups that have opposed us on schemes like Parlinton, and the dialogue is quite useful because they are starting to understand that while they might not agree with us, they have been led up the garden path by you lot, and that is the truth of it.

I will just pick out a couple of things because, to be honest, out of everybody over there I think I have had about two-and-a-half people saying anything sensible but I had to laugh at the Morley Town Council take from Robert Finnigan talking about us spending other people's money.

Have a look at the Evening Post a couple of days back where Councillor Elliott is talking about Morley Town Council doing up Glen Road. Are they doing up Glen Road, or is it Leeds Highways Department which is paying for Glen Road to be done up? Who is being honest there? I know who is being honest and you are not being honest. You should be ashamed of yourself, Robert. You should have joined the Tories many years ago. *(hear, hear) (interruption)*

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Morley housing tenants are the ones who are paying for it. You're not paying for it. That's who is paying for it. Morley residents are paying for it.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: We are getting on with this process. We have to do the difficult - Robert, would you please shut up when I am talking? *(applause)* Peter has summed it up in actually saying what we have to do. We are the administration, we have to get on with the difficult stuff, the stuff that you can all avoid, and we have to actually provide the housing need and this debate will always come down in the end to an issue of housing need which you deny. You are housing need deniers and you should be ashamed of yourselves. I move, Lord Mayor. *(applause)*

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Rubbish.

COUNCILLOR CLEASBY: Well done, Donald! *(laughter)*

THE LORD MAYOR: It has come to that point where I need to call for a vote on the Report.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Lord Mayor, could we just be clear because the Order Paper clearly states at the bottom of pages 6 that the vote will be on the motion that I actually have put on this Order Paper.

COUNCILLOR COULSON: Lord Mayor, can we ensure that when people are speaking the mic is on, or I might as well go home.

THE LORD MAYOR: Right, I think we need to take the point, Councillor Coulson's point, on board. We do have people here who do have to use the loop system, so if we can all respect that and use the microphones.

I am not going to take point after point.

COUNCILLOR CLEASBY: I am more than happy to swap my seat with Councillor Coulson if he cannot hear.

THE LORD MAYOR: I am sorry, Brian, I did not hear a word that you actually said. Would you like to repeat that?

COUNCILLOR CLEASBY: Yes, Lord Mayor, to be helpful, I am more than happy to swap my seat with Councillor Coulson if he cannot hear because I can hear quite well.

THE LORD MAYOR: No, I am afraid he is already kitted out with all the equipment at his seat, but thank you very much for the offer.

Now, could everyone just be quiet for one second. As I thought, it was ruled out of order so that falls, so it is actually the original Report that we are actually voting on. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED. Thank you.

ITEM 6 – RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE – COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW – FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: We move on to Item 6 and if you would all please quieten down a little bit I would like to call on Councillor Blake.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lewis.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Leadley.

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: This report is mostly to do with Parish and polling district boundary housekeeping and not especially contentious, but three matters did arise at Elections Working Group which provoked concern.

The first was that Ledston Parish Council had got into a bit of a tangle. Although it had not published audited and approved accounts for some time, it had continued to raise and draw a precept and no-one there seemed especially keen to do much about it or to accept Officers' help or training. More or less as a last resort Leeds electoral officers had suggested abolishing Ledston, or at least its Parish Council, but it is to be hoped that commonsense will prevail and that the Parish Council will either be reformed or merged with neighbouring Ledsham, which is smaller though better

managed. Ledston does have at least one valuable asset, which is the Ledston Luck Recreation Ground.

The second was a proposal to divide the Barwick and Scholes Parish into separate parishes, one for Barwick and the other for Scholes. Consultation yielded a surprisingly high level of response which was strongly against division in both villages.

The other was a proposal to set up a Parish or Town Council in Garforth. In principle this was welcomed as Garforth is now an unparished black hole surrounded by parishes, but it would have to be done properly. I played a close part and did most of the paperwork in setting up three parishes – Drighlington, Gildersome and Morley – which provoked little opposition and oversaw a fairly large extension of Morley as recently as 2014, which provoked even less, so I am well aware of what needs to be done. Setting up or extending a parish is a serious business, if only because almost every household within the parish has to pay for it.

In Garforth, as with the proposed Guiseley Parish two or three years ago, a boundary had been drawn which took in neighbouring areas some of which were lived in by people who did not see themselves as being part of the community covered by the new parish at all. Also, the level of support reported from some parts of the proposed parish was not particularly convincing. As with Guiseley what we suggested was that there should be a reconsultation based on amended boundaries which would have to be done in a proper way. Guiseley never came back but that must have been due to some local choice of lack of follow-through.

It seems that people in Garforth have gone back and made amendments but it would be wrong to be bounced into approving a new parish based on two all-member emails sent within the past week which Electoral Services do seem to have some difficulty with.

Today's report to Council should be accepted as it stands. There will be enough time to amend Garforth before the parish elections in 2019. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(applause)*

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

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. There is not really much to say on that one. Ledston is in Kippax and Methley ward and myself and Councillor Harland and Councillor Wakefield are working very closely with the Parish Council and they are working through a list of actions to bring themselves back right. On the other two issues I think Councillor Leadley has very well summed up the discussions we had at General Purposes Committee, so I think we move the recommendations of the report.

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

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: I support moving the recommendations of the report, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Right, I would now like to call for the vote on the Recommendations of the General Purposes Committee on the Community Governance Review. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

ITEM 7 – REPORT ON APPOINTMENTS

THE LORD MAYOR: We now move on to Item 7, Report on Appointments. Councillor Ogilvie.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I second that, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I would like to call for a vote on Appointments. *(A vote was taken)* That is also CARRIED.

ITEM 8 – REPORT ON THE CALCULATION OF THE COUNCIL TAX AND BUSINESS RATES TAX BASES FOR 2018/19

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 6, Calculation of the Council Tax and Business Rate Bases for 2018/19. Councillor James Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I move in terms of the Notice.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I would like to call for the vote on the Report of the Chief Officer Financial Services. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

PROCEDURAL MOTION SEEKING LEAVES OF COUNCIL

THE LORD MAYOR: I now have a procedural motion. Councillor Bentley.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. This is a motion to seek leave of the Council to suspend Council Procedure Rule 11.2 (Notice of Questions) to allow the question in my name (Question 2) to be replaced with the question set out in italics on the Order Paper. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

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

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: If I could call for the vote to replace that question of Councillor Bentley's. (*A vote was taken*) CARRIED. Thank you, that means that question will be put.

ITEM 9 – QUESTIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: I would now like to move to Questions. It is for a period of 30 minutes and you can ask questions of the Executive. Councillor Wood.

COUNCILLOR WOOD: I hope everybody can hear me. It is one of the advantages of being only five foot seven tall! Can the Executive Member for Communities set out what the Council is doing to prevent illegal street traders from disrupting community events across the city, and particularly at the ward light switch-on events?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Coupar.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Thank you, Lord Mayor, and thank you for the question, Councillor Wood.

I would like to let you know that Council officers will take action where illegal street trading is suspected. Individuals are advised in writing that should they continue to trade on the street, then the Council will take the appropriate legal action against them, which may involve a court appearance and a fine of up to £1,000 per offence, or a fixed penalty notice of £150.

Writing to individuals in this way has helped to disperse and deter such activities. Peddlers who turn up to Christmas light switch-on events with neon flashing lights and toys are not necessarily illegal traders. If they hold a valid Peddler's Certificate and if they keep moving rather than staying still in a fixed position, then they are acting within the law. If they do not hold a valid Peddler's Certificate then they are written to in the same manner as any other suspected illegal trader.

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

COUNCILLOR WOOD: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Given the problems experienced at these events across the city and at the recent Farsley Christmas light switch-on, where about twelve such illegal traders operated and intimidated members of the public, does the Executive Member agree with me that this is a problem which the Council needs to be doing more to address, and will she undertake to ensure that all fellow Members of Council and Council partners are made aware of what powers exist to combat such illegal trading?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Coupar.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Councillor Wood, your written question to Council actually was the first that I had heard about this concern with Members so I am more than happy to meet with you and to discuss the issues that you

have relayed to Council here today, and then more than happy to let fellow Council Members know what has come of it. Thanks, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Jonathan Bentley.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Would the Executive Member for Environment and Sustainability explain the reasons for the delay to the refuse route reorganisation and the additional cost it has led to the service incurring?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Yeadon.

COUNCILLOR YEADON: Thank you. Just checking it is the question you want, I can do the other one if that is OK. I will do this one then.

Yes, we are working closely with front line staff and trade unions to complete the route review within refuse collection and to make the efficiencies that we have identified. Given the complexity of this work, any changes need to be designed in consultation with our collection crews and introduced where possible with the buy-in of those crews. From the outset we are therefore committed to fully involve crews in the redesign of routes.

The service has therefore spent the first part of this project agreeing the initial principles for route review and redesign with trade unions, and identifying the routes that can take extra work. The consultation process is large and complex and to date has involved 66 crews and more than 200 staff. Draft days of work have been presented to crews who have then had the opportunity to feed back and input into the redesign.

The complexity of the process has unfortunately led to it taking longer than we expected it to. It could result in a change of collection day for around 75% of the city and we therefore want to get it absolutely right before we change anything.

The refuse service is performing better than it has ever in terms of missed bin collections and we want to make sure that this high level of performance is not affected by any changes we make to the service.

As it stands and as the budget position reported to Exec Board in November, the delays to the route redesign work means that the refuse collection is currently projecting an overspend. However, this has been offset by significant management savings in the service and savings relating to waste disposal and business rates. That means that in overall terms the waste management service is in effect currently projected to make an overall saving of around £600,000 at the end of the year.

Because I have only got a couple of Council meetings left and I am feeling generous, I am going to answer your first question as well. I have been given the figures for fly tipping in December and I am pleased to say that the figures continue to show a downward trajectory for fly tipping. Your first question asked me am I happy with the decision regarding bulky waste. I do not think “happy” would be the word I use to describe it, but satisfied. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Supplementary, Councillor Bentley.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to thank the Executive Member for taking my amended question at short notice. It was very good of her.

The Executive Member talks about overall savings in the waste management service but, of course, had the re-routing scheme come in on time those savings would have been even greater, so would the Executive Member confirm that these route changes involve no amendments to operatives' terms and conditions or contractual working hours or working practice and as such it is totally unacceptable that delays have cost Leeds Council taxpayers probably over £1m by the time the routes come in? (*hear, hear*) The Labour administration always claims that its £500,000 subsidy to the trade union ensures good industrial relations. In view of the cost incurred now through these negotiations, does she still think that is money well spent?

COUNCILLOR HESELWOOD: Definitely.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Yeadon.

COUNCILLOR YEADON: Thank you. I think any of us who were a Councillor in 2009 during the three months refuse strike which was overseen by the previous Coalition administration (*applause*) or in fact was a resident of Leeds during that time do recognise the importance of getting on board trade unions and working closely with them to be able to deliver efficient and effective refuse services, and services across the entire Council.

I do not want to be disrespectful to Councillor Bentley because I do not think you were an elected Member during that period but I understand the importance of industrial relations very deeply and I will continue to support our trade union colleagues and work closely with them to deliver the services that the city needs and deserves. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Pryor.

COUNCILLOR PRYOR: Can the Executive Member please provide an update on the state of A&E in Leeds?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Charlwood.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Thank you, Councillor Pryor. There is a well documented crisis in the NHS. I think we all know that. Everyone in this Chamber is aware of it.

Today in Prime Minister's Questions Jeremy Corbyn raised that 17,000 people have been left waiting more than 30 minutes in the back of ambulances in December alone. Theresa May has apologised for cancelling 55,000 operations in January, there are four million people waiting for operations – that just adds to that. Incredibly, she stuck to her claim that the NHS was better prepared than ever for winter and she repeated this a number of times, which is bizarre to on one hand apologise for the parlous state of our NHS and then claim that the NHS is better prepared than ever.

However, that is the national picture. Your question is about Leeds and how we are coping in Leeds.

I would just like to put on record first of all our thanks and gratitude to all the staff working in the NHS and in social care. With such unprecedented levels of demand and at such difficult times they are doing an incredible job. Some people have mentioned the difficult state that the NHS is in. A Kirklees ambulance driver said it is the worst he has ever seen in a four decade career. 26 operations cancelled at Huddersfield, the Huddersfield Examiner said the Minister apologises for patients sleeping on the floor at Pinderfields Hospital. We can say we are not in that position but that is a very close neighbour of ours and clearly it is a great deal of pressure.

LTHT was at OPEL 3 recently, last week, which is the second to the highest. 24 Trusts nationally have declared OPEL 4, which is the highest level of concern and where they are concerned that care is unsafe. We are not there.

A&E has targets to meet nationally, so the 95% four hour waiting at A&E, and they are routinely pressed by national regulators on this, by the Government, to achieve this target, 95%. What it can do is fill the hospital full of people who come through the front door. Elderly patients are admitted to hospital when they get to that four hour target, so actually performance is reduced to about 80, 85% in August to meet that 95% target and it has gone down to 70, 75% over the last two weeks.

I would say that in some ways having a little bit longer in A&E and not filling up the hospitals so that operations are cancelled, there is a balance there, isn't there, and I think we have to just applaud our staff for dealing with a really difficult situation.

Clearly more money is needed, more workforce is needed, better facilities are needed, more investment is needed to allow the flow through of hospital to be better and for operations to continue and outpatient appointments to continue and people in A&E not to be waiting too long.

Overall apparently the number of patients has not grown that much since last year but the acuity of patients has generally been higher. We are expecting that because of an ageing population so none of this is shocking, none of this is new. Having been the best plan for winter ever they could have planned for this. We have an ageing population which we know about.

What have we been doing locally to tackle this? Partners in Leeds, as people on the Health and Wellbeing Board and anybody involved in it will know, we have a very strong partnership in Leeds between Social Care and the NHS, so together we have done quite a lot of things to plan for winter which actually, without that, could have been a lot worse in the middle of winter.

We have established a GP service in A&E to assess and manage patients who can be treated in primary care, so not going through the A&E door but seeing a GP. We have also established a new multi-agency unit to enable speedy assessment of frail elderly patients at St James's. That is called the Frailty Unit and often we will get elderly people who can avoid admission to hospital but just need that bit longer of assessment and care at the front door. We have funded that through the Better Care

Fund and the Social Care aspect of the Better Care Fund to support the NHS in the winter.

We have also partly funded and gone into partnership with them on the Integrated Discharge Service which operates within the hospital and the Frailty Unit to avoid admission and it helps to signpost and funnel people away from hospital and perhaps into a community care bed, an intermediate care bed, which we will talk about in the next question as well.

We have done an awful lot to stem that demand in Leeds and hopefully not made, in Leeds, it to be as bad as it could be and as it is clearly elsewhere. I will just stop there, thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Supplementary, Councillor Pryor?

COUNCILLOR PRYOR: Yes. As this is the sixth NHS winter crisis that Jeremy Hunt, the Secretary of State, has overseen, how does the Executive Member feel about his brief being expanded to cover Adult Social Care?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Charlwood.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: Thank you, Councillor Pryor. Absolutely, yes. I think the word on the street is that he went into the meeting with the Prime Minister thinking that he might be demoted or sacked and actually got promotion. I do not know how that happened, it is some strange and bizarre things that actually in the reshuffle that she has just done there are some strange appointments at the top level, a lot of right-wing Brexiteers getting ever more senior positions and, for example, the Education Secretary, a comprehensive educated woman living in a same-sex relationship giving entirely the wrong message to be effectively sacked from her position while other people like Jeremy Hunt, who have clearly failed in their brief to provide a good NHS system for two winters now of devastating crisis. Last year there were 100 people on trolley waits in the hospital. This year it is better but they have cancelled operations for the whole of January. How can that mean that he gets a promotion to get Social Care as well?

I would just say, bringing Health and Social Care under the Department of Health is an interesting move and it is not one that we would not have predicted because this year they have actually tried to, the Department of Health through the Better Care Fund has tried to direct the spending of Social Care and we have spent money that should have gone to Social Care on health services, and things we should be spending on our Social Care have gone into the hospital for the Frailty Unit, which we do not mind doing because it is necessary and it is the right thing to do, but actually we should have had a properly funded NHS and a properly funded locally accountable Social Care system, so what are they trying to do? Are they trying to centralise the Social Care spending? 40% of our budget is on Social Care in this Council. Are they trying to direct that to have more say over that? I am not sure that is where we would want to go with it.

I am concerned, actually, both about his performance as Health Secretary to get Social Care and about the direction that they are taking for our most vulnerable people in the city. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Arif Hussain.

COUNCILLOR A HUSSAIN: Thank you. Can the Executive Member please update Council on the recent launch of new services under the Better Lives Strategy?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Charlwood.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: Thank you very much. Yes, this kind of nicely dovetails in. As a result of the changing demands and the expectations of care and also the pressures that we have faced as a Council because of the Government eight years of austerity, we have had to update and modernise the services that we offer. I am really pleased that we have had some refreshed, renewed services to open in recent months.

We have launched a range of key services recently developing on our work to modernise and improve services. These are the new community beds services, these are our recovery hubs, our community beds I was just talking about. 109 beds in the city. We have some complex needs hubs as well which are dementia facilities and complex needs for elderly people, day centres, and our black and minority ethnic health and wellbeing hub in Chapeltown.

The community care beds, our recovery hubs, we have one in the north-west of the city, that is Suffolk Court; we have one in south Leeds, SLIC, which each provide 40 nursing beds outside of hospital. They are homely environments and they are recovery based and actually we are getting people out of hospital and back home really, really quickly.

Since the end of November there have been 215 people accessing the three services and they have discharged 113 people, of which 60% of those individuals went home, so that is working out at about a four week stay. An elderly person going into one of our units is staying about four weeks having that rehab and going home, whereas otherwise they would have been in a hospital bed, so that is really, really wonderful.

I would just like to say that I think Councillors have shown a great deal of interest in these services, including The Green in East Leeds. They are providing an excellent service and the staff, by the way, when you speak to them are so proud and pleased with the work they are doing to support people in a different way.

I would just like to say we should have an event where we open the doors to Council Members and anyone who is interested to come and see that and speak to members of staff and just see the wonderful work that is being done there.

We also opened a complex needs hub dementia facility in Gipton and Harehills which is a supportive, stimulating day environment for people with really complex dementia, so their carers can have a break, they can go to work, they can do what they

need to do so they can then support their loved one when they are not there, and I am so proud to open a new, beautiful facility for that very needed group of people.

I was also really pleased to open the BAME Health and Wellbeing Club in Chapeltown with the Lord Mayor. This service brings together the Apna Centre and the Frederick Hurdle Day Centre providing city-wide really relevant ethnically culturally specific services to those people who need it. It is just wonderful, isn't it, that we can show how we are a compassionate city doing these things in really tough times, managing to open new services for helping our citizens in the hardest of times financially. Thank you. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Supplementary Councillor Hussain? Councillor Andrew Carter.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Does the Leader of Council, like I do, fully support the pilot of 100% business rate retention in Leeds?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Thank you for the question, Councillor Carter. Yes, we do support the pilot. It would indeed be strange if we did not as we actually applied to take part in the pilot and we submitted that application and were very pleased that it was successful in December, just immediately before Christmas. I think sometimes the timing of these announcements, the settlements and times like this is dissatisfactory in the sense that it does not give us the sense to get out there and really publicise.

Just to be clear, what we are talking about is a pilot around the additional growth income through business rates and particularly the expansion seemed to be only going to those areas that had achieved devolution deals, so for Leeds to actually be included in the pilot for next year I think is a real achievement for all of those people who put the bid together.

We do not know yet how long it will go on for but what we do know is that we are looking at an estimated growth of around £30m, and that is across the seven districts, so it is not just the West Yorkshire District, it is also the business rate will include Harrogate and York. 50% will go to those Local Authorities and we are estimating a net gain for Leeds of around £7.5m and a pot of around £15m that the seven Authorities can then bid into. We look forward with interest to the analysis of this direction of travel around business rate support. We have found that actually getting some clarity on how Local Government funding in the longer term is going to take place very frustrating, so hopefully we will be able to contribute to that debate.

THE LORD MAYOR: Supplementary, Councillor Carter?

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Yes, Lord Mayor. A supplementary in I think three, four parts, really. First of all I think it is a tribute to the Leeds City Region that the Government has recognised that is the basis on which this arrangement has been come to and I am sure you will agree with me.

Secondly, given your comments about the length of time it has taken and the fact that we were favoured despite not having a devolution deal, why did we not apply earlier, like Manchester, in which case we would have had a decision earlier, wouldn't we, and more money sooner, wouldn't we?

Finally, as yet we have not had clarification on whether this is a one year deal or a two year deal. We believe it is a two year deal. Would she agree with me that we need to get that clarify from the Government as soon as possible and that we need to spend the money wisely in order that the Government is convinced that this should not be a pilot, it should be a permanent part of Local Government financing?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: I think I have already expressed our need to celebrate our success in getting this coming forward.

I just think, before we get too carried away, just to set this in the context of what has actually been happening to Local Government finance. When you actually see that the Government grant to Leeds since 2010/11 has been cut by £239m, we are facing a further £18.5m reduction in 2018/19, another reduction of 28% including spending pressures of £59m when we are actually looking at a total of £257m cut from this Council since 2010, I think we will be doing a lot more than talking about how we are going to spend this particular amount of money wisely which, of course, we will do. We will also be continuing to press for this Government to put more money back into Local Authorities, whether it is directly to us or through devolution deals to make sure that we can get out and protect the vulnerable and do the basic work that we need to do in this city. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Does the Exec Board Member feel the Council should do everything in its power to avoid families facing eviction losing their home?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Coupar.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am sure it is no surprise to Councillor Golton that, yes, I do agree that the Council should do everything in its power to avoid families facing eviction and losing their homes.

I can confirm that Leeds Housing Option Service, as part of a wider housing Leeds service, is focused on preventing homelessness wherever possible. Homeless prevention is defined as assistance to help a person either retain their existing home or make a planned move to an alternative accommodation. Helping a person to either avoid eviction or delay eviction so as to give them time to find alternative accommodation are key parts of the overall prevention approach.

It is forecast that approximately nine-and-a-half thousand households will have the threat of homelessness prevented through an intervention on the part of Leeds

Housing Options in 2017/2018. This equates to over 80% of cases closed at Leeds Housing Options Service.

Back in 2006/7 the Leeds Housing Advice Centre managed to prevent homelessness in 420 cases. This gives a clear illustration of the change in service focus and outcomes over the last eleven years.

One of the keys to homeless prevention is to intervene as quickly as possible. The longer issues are left then the less likely we are to be successful and, for example, we intervene as soon as we receive a Notice to Quit, which is two months' notice, rather than telling people to come back when the notice period has expired or they have been evicted. We can often persuade private landlords to rescind notices or to defer taking possession action to give us time to find alternative accommodation.

Another key part of this work is to ensure that landlords fulfil their legal responsibilities relating to taking possession action and we have prosecuted landlords who have carried out unlawful evictions by changing locks or harassing tenants.

I would also like to highlight the excellent work we have done in reducing the number of long-term empty properties in Leeds, meaning that there are more homes available for Leeds citizens. I know that Councillor Golton's party have done some work highlighting what an issue this can be nationally, and I know that Councillor Barry Anderson put out a press release last week based on the Lib Dem research, saying that our work in Leeds has stalled. This is not the case, Councillor Anderson. You really should have checked your facts before putting that out.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: I did check them out, yes.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Those figures included things such as student accommodation and was not the way in which we measure empty homes in Leeds. Since 2010 we have successfully reduced the number of empty properties in Leeds year on year and from a high of 6,721 in 2010 to just 3,091 in November 2017. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Golton, supplementary?

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. On that full response from Councillor Coupar, would she agree with me that if the situation arises where people face eviction due to their homes being demolished by a landowner, that she as the Executive Member for Housing, would be willing to meet with such a landowner to try and preserve those homes in question through the powers the Council has as potential property owner and purchaser?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Coupar.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Thank you, Lord Mayor and Councillor Golton, I think you are referring to the Sugar Hill Development.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: I am not referring to any particular development.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: In which case then I am always available to meet with anybody to negotiate on behalf of the Council. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Heselwood.

COUNCILLOR HESELWOOD: Can the Leader of Council please update Council on what Leeds is doing to celebrate the centenary of the first women getting the vote and obviously the first women being allowed to stand for Parliament? (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: I was just going to say could we have a round of applause for the question, please! (*applause*)

Just by way of a little background, it is quite staggering that it is 100 years on the 6th February that the Representation of the People Act became law but, of course, it was not for all women. It was only for women over the age of 30. It is quite staggering to think back, but nevertheless it gave around 8.4 million women the right to vote. It also at the same time gave all men – all men – over the age of 21 the right to vote, but we will move on. It was a good move in terms of suffrage, I have to say, for those men who had not had the vote before. We had to wait another ten years for all women to get the vote on equal terms with men

On 21st November 1918 the Qualification of Women Act became law, which meant that women over the ages of 21 could actually stand for Parliament and that year, due to a bye-election, we actually saw the first woman to take up her seat in the House of Commons, Nancy Astor, who actually came on at a bye-election before the General Election that took place that November, taking the seat of her husband, who had just resigned.

A huge amount to celebrate and I am delighted and just want to thank everyone involved in this, that Leeds has been chosen as one of seven centenary cities, which means that we get a share of £152,500 from a pot of just over a million to celebrate events throughout the year, so well done to all those teams who helped us to achieve that.

There already is a programme of events but do you know what, we just have to reflect on this. At the moment we reckon that 50.9% of the population in this city are female. We are on the increase! Leeds City Council is one of the biggest employers in the city and 61% of our employees are women, so we are looking for a whole raft of events and Jools, Councillor Heselwood, is very active in this, as has been the Lord Mayor and we will be communicating all of these things to you.

Obviously a big milestone, International Women's Day. The "Woman's Place?" exhibition at Abbey House opening already in Kirkstall. We also have the Leonora Cohen archive in our collection and we will be bringing the exhibition to life with real stories about Leonora and many other things, and we are looking to have outdoor screenings of the film *The Suffragette* out in Millennium Square over the summer.

The really key thing for me is about all of us, every single Member in this Chamber, using this opportunity to go out into our communities to celebrate the achievements of women in our communities but also to recognise and acknowledge the enormous amount of work we still have to do to achieve true equality in our city.

This is a real call to arms and I have to say, going out campaigning as we will be doing up to May, I have to say it breaks my heart every time a woman comes on the doorstep and says, “Oh, I don’t vote because it doesn’t make a difference.” I think over and over again we have proved it does make a difference. Let us really increase the number of women who go out to vote in our elections and let us go out and celebrate.

I would like to just say, talking to Councillor Heselwood, that she would like to set up a cross-party working group to help move these programmes forward and I know she will be looking forward to volunteers who would like to join her in taking this great initiative forward. Thank you. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Supplementary, Councillor Heselwood?

COUNCILLOR HESELWOOD: I think it has all been said.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you very much. In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.6, any unanswered questions will receive a written response.

ITEM 10 – MINUTES OF THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD AND THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now moving on to Item 10, to receive and comment upon the Minutes of the Health and Wellbeing and Executive Board. Councillor Blake.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Consideration of comments on the Health and Wellbeing Board Minutes will be for a period of up to 20 minutes. If Councillor Finnigan would like to start off – he is not here. Councillor Groves.

Health and Wellbeing Board

COUNCILLOR GROVES: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking on Minute 39, page 132. It is absolutely vital that we align the Inclusive Growth Strategy to our Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Leeds.

Firstly, there is emerging evidence of close links between skills and education, supporting good health and secondly healthcare and medical will be one of the fastest growing sectors.

Leeds Health and Wellbeing Strategy is a bold, ambitious plan that Leeds will be the best city for health and wellbeing. I am pleased the strategy recognises the value of a strong economy with quality local jobs as one of the twelve priorities that contribute to outcomes. “Outcomes” for me is the key word, and the challenge for all of us in this Chamber is delivering those real tangible outcomes for our citizens on health.

I know all of us personally recognise the distress and life-changing circumstances when our constituents or family members suffer with their health or disabilities. Inclusive Growth and the Industrial Strategy will simply fail if we do not recognise the scale of challenge needed. It is simply wrong that parts of society have been let down by Government in terms of funding, policy and failure to recognise the need for a radical change, so therefore at a local level I am pleased to see we all recognise connectivity and commissioning is key to meeting the need.

Health and Wellbeing is generated outside the health system by how people interact with the economy, with the environment and with their communities. Housing, employment, social mobility influence outcomes. It cannot be right that we are still stuck with the fact that our poorer communities with shorter lives, in poorer health with lower skills and less economic opportunities.

Sadly, the gap is widening across many parts of the country and other factors are emerging in every part of the country - the recognition of the scale of the challenge on treating and supporting people with mental health, for one.

Importantly, the Health and Wellbeing Strategy has a vision for Leeds to improve the health of the poorest the fastest and sets key outcomes to improve people’s lives and care outcomes. Looking also at the wider health sector, Leeds has leading assets in health. The City Region is home to 22% of digital health jobs in England. We are at the forefront of innovation, allowing people to gain more control of their own health. 57,000 people work in the health and care workforce. However, Brexit and an ageing population plus retirement of the existing workforce is highlighting a need to develop a local workforce that understands and reflects our communities in Leeds.

Locally we understand this. Sadly, the Chancellor’s comments recently which have been criticised blaming those people for low productivity, points to why we must continue to make the case that there is a need to ensure growth should be inclusive and should not exclude groups who can make a valuable contribution to the wider community. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Ann Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking on Minute 40, pages 135 and 136.

This report states quite clearly that air pollution in Leeds contributed to 680 deaths annually and was a factor in the number of recorded cases of respiratory and chronic vascular diseases. What about asthma and what impact air pollution has on that?

I remember some years ago now in the 1990s it was, long before I got elected, that there were reports coming out from my Party about the connection of children who lived near main roads and asthma, and this was the case and of course it continues to be the case. We see more children needing inhalers now and, as I said, it is because of air pollution. I accept air pollution is not just traffic but certainly traffic is a large part of it.

What can we do about it? This report I am pleased to say does acknowledge the need to increase the uptake of public transport. It also mentions cycling and I think what a lot of people do not realise again, which has been stated in this report, is that cycling, even in high polluted areas, was still better than being in a car because you are still breathing the fumes in even if you are in a car and, as I said, I think a lot of people just do not realise that.

Also, we must mention walking. This has two-fold benefit does walking because, yes, you can walk instead of using the car but also it is very good for you when it comes to health matters. How many people do we see and how many children do we see that rely on the parents to ferry them about in cars? I have seen it myself, children that I would say maybe are overweight or slightly chubby, shall we say.

THE LORD MAYOR: Final sentence, Ann, please.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: What I am saying with this is, can we have more walking buses and get people walking more as well as the other measures that is mentioned here. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: That is lovely, thank you. Councillor Ghulam Hussain.

COUNCILLOR G HUSSAIN: Lord Mayor, I am speaking on Minute 41, page 139, the report which was brought at the November Health and Wellbeing Board last year relates to the financial position of the health and care organisations in Leeds.

The report highlighted that NHS partners are predicting that they will meet the financial targets set by the national regulators. However, this is heavily dependent on the identification and delivery of local saving plan for the latter part of the year.

Lord Mayor, I am sure everyone here recognises the great value and important contribution our health and care organisations make in the city and across the country. Unfortunately when it comes to one of if not our most important institution in National Health Service, poor handling by this Government and the inability to listen to the calls for essential funding has meant our National Health is under significant pressures.

Indeed, the pressure facing the NHS nationally during the winter period only provides more evidence that this Government has failed to protect the institution millions of people across the country rely on. Now I know the Prime Minister last week apologised for the operations which have been postponed nationally as a result of winter pressures, but the Prime Minister also claimed over the weekend that Government had planned for this winter. I think most people reading about events over the last few weeks would not say that the Government has come up with an effective plan to meet pressures during the period. What is astonishing is that calls year after year for more money needed for the NHS and Social Care have not been listened to. Indeed, the

Chancellor in the autumn Budget failed to respond to the pressures on Social Care and did not provide the full funding that was required for NHS.

These are not separate issues. Both the pressures on the Social Care and the NHS must be tackled together because they are so closely connected. This side of the Chamber has been warning for years of the consequences of the Government policies on the NHS and Social Care. The Government is finding that its programme of cuts and funding squeeze on key services is piling pressure on to a system which is at bursting point.

Despite the Government's failure to listen, we on this side of the Chamber will continue to make the case for better funding of our NHS and for Social Care. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Christine Macniven.

COUNCILLOR MACNIVEN: Lord Mayor, I speak on the Leeds Health and Care Quarterly Financial Report, Minute 41, page 139.

Over the last few weeks I have been alarmed, as I am sure have most of you, to witness the pressures on the health and social care systems nationally and locally. The Leeds Health and Care Quarterly Financial Report was prescient in highlighting the risks associated with non-recurrent funding. In 2016/17 all health and care partners in the city met the required financial targets. This was due to non-recurrent investment rather than sustainable continuous change.

In 2017/18 partner organisations are predicting that they will again successfully achieve their financial responsibilities, but are simply once again relying on a range of non-recurrent funding measures to achieve this.

The Association of Directors of Adult Social Services has warned that this could be the year of no return for social care, the final days. Margaret Wilcox, President of ADASS, said recently, "The crisis facing us is so acute that we fear that social care could pass the point of no return in 2018 unless decisions are made to routinely and effectively fund it."

The £2bn one-off emergency funding announced for the sector in the Budget last spring merely skims the surface and will do little to address the sector's prevailing funding gap. By the end of March 2018 Councils in England and Wales will have made cumulative savings in Adult Social Care of more than £6bn since 2010 and the consequences of this are becoming increasingly apparent on a daily basis as we move relentlessly through winter.

Daily we face reports of harrowing failures occurring in the health sector. They dominate the media, yet Conservative Government Ministers react with surprise and denial.

It is probably too late but surely realisation will dawn soon amongst national politicians that there is an obvious solution – there is even a complete solution. A sustainable NHS is dependent on a sustainable complementary social care system

realistically funded. Lord Porter, the Conservative Chair of the Local Government Association, said recently:

“Councils have long warned about the impact of an under-funded social care system.”

Realistic, consistent funding for social care can empower Councils to prioritise prevention work both during winter crises and all year round. This is personal to us all. For some of us our parents are already suffering the lack of provision of integrated care. Some of us are next in line, but for all of us, unless this is dealt with urgently, the future looks increasingly bleak.

THE LORD MAYOR: That is lovely, thank you very much, Councillor Macniven. (*applause*)

Councillor Graham Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Lord Mayor, I wish to speak briefly about Minute 43 on page 139. This is relative to delayed discharge from hospital, something which has caused great problems and continues to, but I do wish to bring to Members’ attention the fact that our Adult Social Care Department has actually taken great steps in improving this situation.

One of the big problems is that the people who are in hospital who either had a care package before who are going to need a care package when they come out, the situation was that they effectively had to be out of hospital before anything real happened in order to set them on their way outside. Social Care are now embedding, as you might say, social workers within hospitals so that people are being eased out of hospital, shall we say. The Social Workers are preparing – not only preparing the patient for release but also preparing what is going to happen to them outside.

This is having such success that, as we all know, there have been occasions when delayed discharges have been running into the hundreds. Only the week before last I am informed – reliably, I think – that that figure was down to single figures in Leeds. That does not mean to say it is going to be the same all the time, but right now we are doing it. If we can do it now we can continue doing it and I think that our Adult Social Care Department deserves all our praise and support in maintaining this work. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: I would like to call on Councillor Charlwood to sum up, please.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: Yes, thank you to everyone who has commented. I would just like to take this opportunity to share a piece of general good news about Leeds. We always like to have good news, especially in January. It is about the health and wellbeing of the city. There is a new report, which is this, and it is initial analysis of data from Public Health England and the Office of National Statistics and it shows that, compared to other Core Cities, Leeds for health and wellbeing comes top, which is amazing and wonderful, so well done to everyone involved. (*applause*)

I think it shows that actually our approach works. We have a prevention bottom-up approach as a city, and bear in mind other cities we were compared to were places like Manchester, Bristol, Newcastle, places which are talked about in terms of health and wellbeing a lot, devolution and things like that. Actually what we are doing already to stop people from becoming homeless, to prevent ill health for people to be cared for and happy and have more quality in the city. We come top, it is a brilliant, brilliant achievement.

I think the debate also showed the power of our Health and Wellbeing Strategy in the city in that it covers so many of our strategic aims in the city – transport, the economy so Inclusive Growth that Councillor Groves talked about. We have got to get more people who are disabled, who have physical disabilities, actually into work and it just shows the misunderstanding of Government and Government Ministers to talk about lack of productivity because of disabled people in work. Actually, if more disabled people were in work we would have fewer people on benefits, we would have a stronger economy because then people could go out and spend their money. It is that sort of thing that shows their lack of understanding entirely, so Inclusive Growth is absolutely vital.

Councillor Blackburn talking about cycle routes and air quality and all the work we are doing on air quality is precisely for the reason she describes. Actually on the Health and Wellbeing Board the cycle routes, the good partnership working that we are talking about, we actually had a discussion about a cycle route from the hospitals, from the redevelopment of the site, maybe that can support their staff to cycle to work because they can cycle between the routes between St James's and the LGI. That is just an example of how we work together on those sorts of issues.

Councillor Latty, just to thank you for your really positive comments about Social Care and the work we are doing. It is really good to have that cross-party support and we are doing a lot in hospitals to get people out. The DTOC figures are of huge concern nationally across the country. We are doing well at the moment. Our Social Care aspect of that is very, very small, yes, in single figures. The DTOC figures are bigger than that but that is the wider system. Our contribution to Social Care is very small so that is really good news, so well done to them.

The comments from Councillor Hussain and Councillor Macniven on the shocking financial situation that we are in, we can see how after eight years of under investment in our NHS and hospitals the shocking state that we are in and is there any wonder there is such poor practice and things happening in our hospitals. Actually we need things like more nursing care, we simply need more nursing care homes in the city. We are not allowed to provide them ourselves although we are going to look at creative ways that perhaps we could in some way. That is the sort of thing we need and that requires investment, so we do need extra funding.

Thank you everyone for your comments and I am really pleased that we have come top in our Core Cities. Thank you. (*applause*)

Executive Board

THE LORD MAYOR: Right, we now move to consideration of comments on the Executive Board Minutes, which will be heard until ten-past four, at which point the relevant Executive Board Member will be allowed to sum up followed by the Leader of the Council.

If we would like to start, please, with Councillor Golton.

(i) Resources and Strategy

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thanks, Lord Mayor. I am speaking on two minutes. I will be speaking very briefly on the first one which is Treasury Management, just wanting to put my own Party's support and hoping that the business rates pilot that we were talking about, that 100% business rates for the city, so important to our future prosperity and that, of course, is mentioned. It is part of the backbone of the financial reporting that we have got here and the promise of that new business income coming in just points out what a precarious position we are in now that we have to consider new replacement borrowing, which I will not try and explain to those who have not come across it because I have got three minutes, and it is just to put down in writing we appreciate the very particular position this Council is in financially at this tight point. In the meantime of having the purse strings tightened from one end and then the promise of business rates at the other, there is a particular period where we are very much on our uppers and it is appreciated the management which is there for financial reporting.

I am actually going to concentrate more on the Best Council Plan which also, of course, talks about making sure we have that strong economy and that is where that business rates income comes through.

More to do with the fact that in the new Refreshed Best Council Plan there is a proposal that the Child Friendly City emphasis be deprioritised and you will notice that we have a White Paper Motion coming towards the end of the Council meeting. I appreciate the reasons which have been put forward in that the Council feels that Child Friendly City has been wholeheartedly embraced by different parts of the Council and the city at large. However, just because it is embraced it does not mean that it does not need to be continually updated and refreshed itself, and this Party believes that the increasing disparity between the outcomes for our poorer children and those children from more well off citizens and families in the city is one that could do with that extra focus as part of Child Friendly Leeds, so we do ask for the Council to reconsider that being a priority in the Best Council Plan. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jonathan Bentley.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Before I address these minutes I would, with your permission, just like to take a moment to mention the explosion that occurred in Silk Mill Drive in Weetwood on the Friday before Christmas. Members may be aware that an explosion destroyed a block of four flats in Silk Mill Drive. Thankfully there were no fatalities but two people were taken to hospital.

On behalf of the Weetwood Councillors I would like to pay tribute to the emergency services for the speed and nature of their response and the professionalism they showed and also particularly to the staff from Housing Leeds who spent all

weekend up to Christmas dealing with the consequences of that explosion, reassuring the community, making sure that the tenants who were made homeless were adequately housed and supported, so a big thank you to all involved. (*applause*)

Thank you for your indulgence on that, Lord Mayor. I am speaking on Minute 93, page 142, the Treasury Management Strategy, and Minute 110, page 153, Financial Health Monitoring.

The Report on Treasury Management does make reassuring reading. I am on the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee where this is also looked at and the controls and procedures in place, together with the professional management scrutiny, gives assurance that there is a prudent but effective approach to Treasury Management within the Council.

I wish I had similar assurance from the Financial Health monitoring. The headline in the report is that there is no projected budget variation but looking more closely we see that the only reason that Children's Services is within budget is because our already meagre reserves have been raided to the tune of £1.4m. Well, you can always meet your budget if you keep dipping into your savings.

Further on we see the budget is also being propped up by bringing forward into this year an additional £1.7m from the Department for Education's Partners in Practice Fund that is allocated to next year's activity. This is simply putting off this year's problems until next year.

I know and I think we all appreciate the tremendous pressures that Children's Services are under and we are going to be discussing those, debating those later, but really it does none of us any good and it does the Department no good to make it look as if we are meeting the budget when we are not, and I would really appeal for a bit more transparency around these numbers. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Just a note on that particular item, Councillor Bentley. Tom has just been telling me that Council staff have arranged a collection for the tenant lady who lost absolutely everything in that explosion. Quite a lot has been raised already and some of you may want to contribute to that fund and, if so, Tom is actually going to send out details and if anybody who is watching on the webcast would like to donate, the details are going to be available on the web for that, so thank you for raising that, Councillor Bentley. Councillor Andrew Carter.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. First of all again on Minute 93 on page 142, we have always been very fortunate in this Authority to have a robust and vigilant Finance Resources Department but as has been pointed out, the borrowing situation and the need to borrow more – and we are talking about capital here, not revenue funding – with uncertainty about interest rates I think calls for even more vigilance than usual. I was reassured at Exec Board that we are actually getting that. Nobody easily wants to predict where interest rates are going to go over the next twelve months. They can go quite easily up and down or a combination of the two. It makes it very difficult to judge short-term against long-term borrowing and I look forward to our staff, who are sitting over there taking in every word, being as vigilant as

ever, but it is a tricky operation and it is a tricky operation for them so they have our support.

On the second Minute, very quickly, Minute 110 page 53, I would like to thank Councillor Keith Wakefield who was Leader at the time when I approached him with an idea to purchase from Bradford University the playing fields at Woodhall, seven pitches in total, something which I am very pleased he was able to support, much as I had supported his former Leader, Brian Walker, with a project of a similar nature in Rothwell a number of years ago.

That has now come to fruition. It has taken a number of years and come under the remit of Councillor Blake, so again I thank her for her support. There is a major opportunity here and it has actually moved on a stage from the original idea, which was to get the seven playing fields to benefit local sports teams in the west of the city, and that is an absolute must. It now moves into a park-like project which, if it goes ahead, will be of huge benefit to all residents supporting youth sport in particular but also open age football, not just in Pudsey, Calverley, Farsley but in the whole of West Leeds where we have for some considerable time been playing field poor. You have only got to look at the state of the football pitches when they are overplayed and the actual cost there is getting them up to scratch to be able to be played at all, to realise how important that is. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Carter. Councillor Harper.

COUNCILLOR G HARPER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to speak on Minute 94, page 143, on the Capital Programme Update Report and in particular the capital injection to support the Grand Quarter Townscape Heritage Scheme and the bid for Lottery Funding to complement that.

This is an area of the city which is of great importance and historical significance but has been sadly declining in recent years due to under investment and vehicle dominated infrastructure. Not only has this led to a poor pedestrian environment, there has been a loss of valued historic features. This is not what this area of Leeds should be. As a member of the Grand Theatre Board I cannot stress enough the role that the Grand and the area surrounding it holds for Leeds as a whole.

The cultural importance of this part of the city should be reflected in the infrastructure and the overall offer in the area but unfortunately at the present time this is not the case.

I am delighted that we are making the most of the opportunity to bid for funding which could transform the area. The scheme would provide the restoration of heritage assets, encourage new business and employment opportunities and give the chance to improve connectivity to the rest of the city centre. It would be fantastic if this could happen.

If this scheme gets the go-ahead it would complement initiatives within the city centre including highway improvements along with New Briggate and the City Centre Public Realm Strategy, which aims to reduce unnecessary traffic in the city centre , meaning a better environment for pedestrians.

It would also build on the other township heritage schemes which we have been successful in completing. Indeed, we are the only Authority in the country to have completed two – one in Chapeltown and one in Armley – and work is also progressing on a third in Lower Briggate.

To conclude, this opportunity this bid for funding presents would be great for the Grand Quarter and I look forward to hearing about more developments and the outcome of the bid in the future. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ritchie.

COUNCILLOR RITCHIE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking on Minute 95 of the Report relating to Financial Health Monitoring, addressing the situation of the Children's Services budget.

It is no surprise to hear that the Children's Services budget is under constant pressure. In addition to the core service delivery and our investment in early intervention work, we have the reactive elements of a demand-led service to manage. This Council continues to put the needs of vulnerable children and families above financial considerations and I would like to think that everyone in this Chamber agrees with me that is the correct thing to do.

However, continuing to meet the needs of these vulnerable groups is becoming more and more difficult as the Government's ideology of austerity means savage cuts in funding continue to be handed down. The Opposition bemoan the fact that we continually criticise the Government for cutting funding for vital services. However, the criticism is justified as Whitehall analysis shows money for Early Years education has fallen by more than £650m since 2010, in addition to the Early Intervention Grant being cut by almost £400m since 2013.

Whether a Local Authority is Labour, Conservative or Lib Dem controlled, they are all struggling to cope with the financial position they are finding themselves in.

The Local Government Association has predicted that across the country children's social care will be facing a £2bn gap in funding by 2020. Of 85 Local Authorities who responded to a questionnaire by the Association of Directors of Children's Services, 68 reported an overspend on their high needs block, totalling approximately £140m. This funding is being cut at a time when the number of children with special educational needs and disabilities is increasing. The money given by the Government for these children is simply not keeping up with demand.

The Conservative Government has taken over 40% of Leeds core funding between 2010/11 and the current financial year. Nationally spending on children's social care has outstripped budgets by close to £1bn over the past three years with up to 90% of councils reporting an overspend. These cuts are having a devastating impact on children's services across the country as they struggle to provide vital services to vulnerable children and families.

Leeds Children's Services has seen around £43m in Government grant stripped away since 2010/11. That is money the Government has taken directly from vulnerable children and young people in this city. This Labour administration has continued to prioritise spending on vulnerable children and adults by allocating 66% of our entire Council budget to Children's Services and Adult Social Care.

We cannot stand by and watch some of our most needy children and families pay the price of savage Government policy. This Government needs to act now to adequately fund Children's Services before a whole generation of children and young people are let down. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Truswell, please.

COUNCILLOR TRUSWELL: Lord Mayor, I am speaking to Minute 95, page 144. Lord Mayor, the Red Cross last year described the state of our health and social care as a humanitarian crisis. Why? Because this Government's under funding and cuts are unprecedented in the history of those services. In his latest budget Philip Hammond allocated less than half the £4bn the NHS urgently needs. He allocated nothing more to social care. The £2bn previously announced was less than half the £4.6bn cut since 2010.

A recent study in the British Medical Journal suggested that Government austerity policies have already caused 45,000 extra deaths since 2010. That figure could grow to 120,000 by 2020. Many of those deaths were people reliant on social care and one of the co-authors of the report, Professor Lawrence King of Cambridge University, called it economic murder.

The human cost of austerity policies in Leeds is clear. Infant mortality is increasing – shameful. The number of people taking their own lives is increasing – shameful. Women's life expectancy is reducing – shameful. That is hardly surprising when research shows that women are bearing the brunt of Government austerity.

In addition to NHS under funding and massive social care cuts, the Government have slashed our public health budget by over £5m. Theresa May, as has been said, laughably claims the NHS has never been better prepared for winter. That so-called preparation entails cancelling all routine operations in January. Instead of sacking or moving Jeremy Hunt where he could do less damage, she leaves him not only in charge of the NHS but extends his death grip to social care. Lord Mayor, we should be afraid, very afraid of what that means for social care.

Lord Mayor, the casualty list of austerity goes on and we have had it referred to earlier. More people are waiting increasing lengths of time in ambulances outside A&E; longer waits in A&E; waiting times for inpatient treatment increasing; the 62 day target for cancer treatment continually missed.

Lord Mayor, the Tories promised 5,000 more GPs. Last year the number actually fell by 1,100. Nurse recruitment in Leeds we are told is down by 40%. The Tories blame patients for misusing services, or they blame delayed discharges, though it was refreshing to hear what Councillor Latty has to say. In Leeds we have a good record on delayed discharges, we are below the regional average and almost half the

national average. Despite national cuts of £4.6bn to Adult Social Care, this Labour controlled Council can hold its head high. We have raised our net Adult Social Care budget by £26.5m since 2010. Lord Mayor, I will finish by saying this.

THE LORD MAYOR: Final sentence.

COUNCILLOR TRUSWELL: It cannot go on, our services are held together solely by the dedication of staff. We owe it to them and the people of Leeds to demand this Government tackles the crisis or makes way for a Labour Government. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lowe.

COUNCILLOR LOWE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking on Minute 109, page 152, which refers to the Best Council Plan Refresh. In relation to this clearly the Refresh will take account of Safer Leeds priorities and how we as a Council fund this. Obviously under funding and cuts are a theme of today.

There is no doubt that here in West Yorkshire we need policing resources to keep people safe. The demand on our police service is significant and increases in demand include things like domestic abuse, child sexual exploitation, cyber crime, human trafficking and terrorism - many of these new crimes that have emerged over the last 20 years or so, yet since 2010 the Government has cut West Yorkshire's policing budget by a third at the cost of over 2,000 police jobs and yet the cuts keep coming.

Policing Minister Nick Hurd talks about an increase to local police forces in his budget announcement just before Christmas, but the same cash grant of 2016/17 next year is in reality a significant cut to West Yorkshire's budget. There has been no taking into account of inflation or the well deserved pay increase for officers announced by Government that needs to be paid for out of the current Local Policing Allocation. There is no uplift from Government for this well deserved pay increase.

West Yorkshire Police are having to absorb an extra £9m worth of costs this year. The Government has decided to give PCCs additional flexibility around the police precept of up to £12 a year on a Band D property but that means more people who are already struggling in West Yorkshire are penalised. By the way, Tory shires are very happy about this additional flexibility and Conservative PCCs are on the record as welcoming it, but be under no illusion, Members of Council, the Government is not paying for our safety but is instead unfairly transferring the cost burden to local taxpayers. The Tories are in fact the party of high taxation and it is right that this Labour administration makes that known to people who are struggling without pay rises year in and year out, but the nasty party just don't care.

West Yorkshire is an area of some of the greatest policing need and some of the highest levels of deprivation. Even by raising the police precept, if, in fact, that is what we decide to do, we will not be able to resource our policing effectively if you take into account the decimation of budgets and staffing numbers over the last seven years.

According to Government, we need to be more efficient and effective but with over 93% of police workforce on the front line, that is a well worn and unwelcome Government mantra. The fact is West Yorkshire needs a fairer funding deal and what

the Tories really need to do is allocate central moneys to police forces based on demand and need, and until they do that we will be demanding more. Thank you. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Salma Arif.

COUNCILLOR ARIF: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I will be speaking today on Minute 109 page 152. Nelson Mandela once said the true character of a society is revealed in how its treats its children. Lord Mayor, the sad truth is that in our strong and stable country we are living in a society where children are being forced into poverty as a result of this Government's policies. I do not say that lightly.

The upward trend in child poverty in our country has continued to grow for the third year running. There are £4m children living in poverty, that is 30% of our children or nine in a classroom of 30. Furthermore, the disturbing research according to the Institute of Fiscal Studies predicts that children living in poverty will soar to a record of 5.2 million over the next five years.

Child poverty is manifesting itself to such an extent that a study for the Nuffield Trust based on hundreds of thousands of patient records over a decade reveals that for condition after condition the poorest fifth of young people are admitted in greater numbers than the richest fifth. In cases of tonsillitis, viral infection, abdominal pain, even head injuries the poorest young people were admitted for emergency treatment at rates of 40% higher than the richest.

Lord Mayor, the Best Council Plan Refresh underlines our commitment to making Leeds the best city in the UK, a child friendly city and the best city to grow up in. These are bold ambitions and ones I am proud to support. However, they do not come without their challenges and I have to be honest when I say the Government policy often makes it feel as though they are working against us.

We often speak about the positive impact of a hot, healthy meal on a child's learning, but when it may be the only meal that the child gets that day it becomes even more important. The Children's Society are warning that Government plans to use Universal Credit to limit eligibility for free school meals could leave a million school children in poverty going hungry. Standing in front of you today is someone who benefited from free school meals and I would hate for other children to use this right.

The Government talks about being family friendly and wanting a country that works for everyone, but their continued unrelenting attacks on the most vulnerable sectors of our society demonstrate a completely different set of priorities. It cannot be right that a prosperous city like Leeds has over 26,000 children living in poverty. Let's be clear that 66% of these children are from working class families.

It saddens me that whenever these Government policies are mentioned people on the opposite benches try or start to deflect from the reality of what we are facing. Frankly, families across Leeds do not care about us in here arguing back and forth about who we think is to blame. All they care about is feeding their children, keeping them warm and putting a roof over their heads. It is therefore incumbent on us all to ensure predictions from the Institute of Fiscal Studies do not become a reality. Thank you. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Helen Hayden.

COUNCILLOR HAYDEN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I too am speaking on Minute 109, the Best Council Plan, in particular on the Best City Outcome that everyone should be able to enjoy happy, healthy lives. I will highlight two of the significant challenges to achieving this outcome, the first being access to GP services.

The recent YEP Big City Survey, which was reported in December 2017, highlights the pressures on the health service and in particular GP services in Leeds. Almost half of all people who responded to the survey reported that they struggled to make an appointment with a GP in the last year and I think that is something that everyone in this room could probably identify with.

Almost a third of respondents struggled to get an appointment at a hospital or to see a specialist in 2016. The figure for dentists is better but still one in four of respondents said that they had problems getting a dental appointment. Dr Richard Vautrey, Chairman of the British Medical Association's GP Committee and a Leeds GP, said that there is now a shortage of GPs in Leeds and doctors are under increasing pressure to meet the growing demand for services. Dr Vautrey said, "In Leeds we are at crisis point. We do recognise that lack of investment is having an impact."

GP and dental practices top the list in a survey of areas where Leeds people wanted to see increased spending. In fact, 71% were prepared to pay more in income tax to achieve this.

Going on to the second challenge of NHS funding which we have heard a lot about, or lack of funding that we have heard a lot about today, the news of routine hospital appointments to be delayed until the end of January to free up capacity for the city's patients. We have heard that this will lead to 55,000 deferred operations. This was warned. Simon Stevens said that we needed £4bn. The autumn budget gave £2.8bn over three years, this winter £350m. It is no surprise where that figure came from. We have had no extra, as has been mentioned, for Adult Social Care.

We have had the apologies from Jeremy Hunt and Theresa May but that is cold comfort to the thousands of people who have booked time off work, organised child care and geared themselves up in many other ways for their operation.

Can I join Councillor Charlwood in thanking all our healthcare staff for working so hard across the health system in Leeds. Staff have taken on extra and different responsibilities to get us through this crisis and are working in very difficult and pressurised circumstances.

I want to express our gratitude for their commitment, flexibility and dedication to our National Health Service and the people of Leeds. Thank you, Lord Mayor.
(applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Karen Bruce.

COUNCILLOR BRUCE: My Lord Mayor, I would like to speak on Minute 109 page 152, on the Best Council Plan.

The United Nations reported in 2016 that the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere increased at record speed to hit a level not seen for more than three million years. It is vitally important that we play our part in Leeds to keep global warming below the potentially catastrophic two degree threshold. I am glad, therefore, that cutting carbon is outlined as one of the Council's breakthrough projects in the Best Council Plan.

I am glad to announce that the Cutting Carbon Breakthrough Project clearly displays the number of ways in which we as a Council and as a city are continuing to work towards reducing our carbon footprint. In spite of a lack of clear direction towards tackling climate change from the Tory Government, Leeds City Council has adopted cutting carbon and improving air quality as one of its priority breakthrough projects and has been working on a range of projects and initiatives that are making a tangible difference in this city.

We have managed to deliver a significant reduction in our carbon footprint across Council buildings and operations, with CO₂ emissions down by over 16% since 2010. This is a vast improvement, I have to say, on the previous administration's efforts between 2005 and 2010 when you guys were in. You barely managed a 1% overall emissions reduction.

Construction is now under way on the city-wide District Heating Network. This will connect almost 2,000 Council flats as well as public sector buildings and private sector businesses with heat taken from the city's new incinerator facility at Cross Green. We have made significant progress through out LED lighting in schools initiative which has seen a reduction of 246 tons of carbon and almost £65,000 of overall savings as well for the schools involved. We have also updated a number of old street lamps at Chapeltown and Belle Isle with LEDs and we will be installing these throughout the city with new energy efficient lights as well.

The nature of the challenges associated with tackling climate change mean that the Council cannot do this in the city alone and one of the most important developments over the past year has been the formation of the Leeds Climate Change Commission, designed by the Council in partnership with the University of Leeds. The Commission helped to bring together private and public sector organisations throughout the city who are committed to effectively reducing the carbon footprints. The Commissioner has helped with projects such as Northern Gas Networks proposals for Leeds to be the first city to convert its natural gas network to hydrogen and has helped other key partners such as Yorkshire Water, Leeds Beckett University and Leeds NHS...

THE LORD MAYOR: That is fine, that is wonderful. Glad to have so many partners.

COUNCILLOR BRUCE: I am pleased that we are progressing and will continue. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Illingworth.

COUNCILLOR ILLINGWORTH: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I rise to speak on Minute 109 page 152, updating the Best Council Plan. I am delighted that the Executive Board adopted the Health and Wellbeing Strategy without any changes. Leeds will focus on improving public health and narrowing the unacceptable health gap between rich and poor areas of our city.

Key elements are the need to cut cigarette smoking and to increase physical activity in the general population. Current guidelines envisage that every child achieves one hour per day of vigorous physical activity. It is important that we provide our young people, and in fact all people, Lord Mayor, with safe, convenient, affordable and pleasant places to be physically active.

In Kirkstall we are delighted to be making progress towards the Kirkstall Valley Park on the back of the Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme. The most attractive parts of Kirkstall riverside have been designated as Passive Flood Storage Areas, which is exactly the right designation. It will make them available to the public for walking and running, cycling and canoeing, not only for Kirkstall residents but for neighbouring wards as well.

Lord Mayor, I would like to mention another piece of good news since our last meeting. On 30th November NHS England announced that the Leeds Children's Heart Surgery Unit would remain open indefinitely, having met all the required standards. (*applause*) In doing this, Lord Mayor, I would like to pay tribute to Bob Ward, who led the first Deputation to Council today, Lord Mayor. He also played a key role behind the scenes in the fight to keep the Children's Heart Surgery Unit open.

The attempt by NHS England to close the Leeds Unit explored the worst and the best aspects of our democracy. Their proposal was based on false news that the Leeds unit was unsafe and that combined units would be safer. Neither claim was actually true but they were echoed by every major newspaper and media outlet.

An expert panel was convened to assess the proposals. It eventually came to light that several members of the panel had close connections to the eight units selected for survival, but there were no panel members linked to the units selected for closure. We asked to see the individual scores awarded by the expert panel but NHS England refused to disclose them.

We were ultimately successful for three reasons: one, we were able to unpick the scientific and medical case for closure; two, Leeds campaigners made a successful application for judicial review; three, politicians across Yorkshire and Humberside co-operated cross-party to bring an effective case before the NHS Review Body.

Lord Mayor, fighting as a single unit all of Yorkshire proved amazingly successful. Perhaps there is a lesson for us here, Lord Mayor, in the ongoing devolution debate. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Illingworth. Councillor Mohammed Iqbal.

COUNCILLOR IQBAL: My Lord Mayor and fellow Councillors, I would like to speak on Minute 109 page 152. The Best Council Plan includes commitment to targeting interventions to tackle poverty in priority neighbourhoods. It is the work that I will be talking about today.

Priority neighbourhoods constitute a new flexible place-based approach to tackle poverty. Following a successful pilot in New Wortley, the Council has identified six priority neighbourhoods, one of which is my ward. There are many often related factors which can lead to an increase in poverty. These include national policy austerity, the economic recession post 2008, deteriorating housing conditions, welfare reform, migration and public sector budget reductions. Sadly in Leeds there are some neighbourhoods that have seen poverty increase over the last ten years. This means that a new approach is needed to ensure that everyone in Leeds is able to share in our city's prosperity.

A key benefit of this approach is that it prevents people working in silos. There will be a greater integration both within the Council and with our partners. This work is being done in collaboration with partners including the police and Public Health. It is also seeing the Communities Team working alongside Adults and Children's partners to give a whole picture approach to the problems of poverty. Whilst this approach focuses resources on some of our poorest communities, the universal offer with our ten Community Committees will remain.

I have spoken at Council in the past about our work to tackle poverty. This is an important goal contributing to a strong economy and compassionate city. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Sharon Hamilton.

COUNCILLOR HAMILTON: Lord Mayor, Councillors. I would like to speak on Minute 109 page 152.

As the report sets out housing is being given great prominence in the Best Council Plan on a page whereas this was always prominent in the full Best Council Plan. It is a positive move to highlight our commitment even further.

The draft plan on a page talks about providing housing of the right quality, type, tenure and affordability in the right places. This is what I will be talking about today. I have spoken in Council many times about our work to bring new affordable homes to the people of Leeds. Whilst many of us have long championed the cause of affordable housing, the Government seems to have only discovered housing as an issue in the last year. However, their response at the Budget was wholly inadequate. Considering we are seeing the worst rate of house building since the 1920s, the numbers promised are very, very poor. It is noticeable the Government promised to build 200,000 starter homes three years ago and so far to date none have been built, whilst it is estimated that our housing revenue account will be £283m less income over the next ten years as a result of the Government rent reduction policy to 2020.

There is, however, much positive work that we are still able to achieve including our investment in fire safety. We are making £10m available to retrofit sprinklers.

(applause) We are also calling on the Government to make more money available to fund the full £30m costs for Leeds. Making our own £10m commitment now means we can get started on this important work without delays.

We are also making key investments in the areas of health and affordable warmth and on low carbon energy efficiency. We are also investing in our Decent Home Programme to ensure we deliver modern, fit for purpose homes and neighbourhoods. In Leeds our commitment to affordable housing is strong. Thank you, Lord Mayor.
(applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Neil Buckley

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking on Minute 109 also on page 152, the Best Council Plan Refresh for 2018/19 to 2020/21, Initial Proposals.

To relate my comments specifically to the Best Council Plan priority, “Housing of the right quality, type, tenure and affordability in the right places.”

Lord Mayor, providing the appropriate housing is no more relevant than when discussing the Council’s approach to providing accommodation for the gypsy and traveller communities, so I wonder whether the administration can clear up some confusion. As many Members will remember, last summer there were various incursions involving travellers in Alwoodley and in Moortown for a given number of weeks, and in other wards. The point is this, at Development Plans Panel on 18th July it was stated, or a stated aim, that, quotes, “A discrete pool of sites providing a range of geographical locations and site sizes” and went on to say, “The list will not be a public document.” It would not be made public.

At Full Council in November Councillor Coupar said, “Councillor Buckley is missing the point. There is no list, there is no secret list.”

Perhaps, Lord Mayor, we can have this contradiction cleared up and although we are cold and wet at the moment in January, perhaps before the summer of 2018 where these things are likely to happen again, perhaps we can have some clarity on this and I would be very grateful for some kind of response in clearing this up. Many thanks.
(applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Right, unfortunately we have run out of time so apologies, Councillor Blackburn and Councillor Wadsworth. We move on to Councillor James Lewis to sum up, please.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I listened to Councillor Buckley’s contribution with great interest and I completely agree with what Councillor Coupar said last time at the meeting. *(laughter)* I do not know what could be clearer than the statement Councillor Coupar made and hopefully that has resolved that issue.

Turning to the Minutes, it is a bit of a mixed bag. I will start off with Parklife and the sports area because that is one the easier ones that Councillor Carter raised earlier though I do not really think the time on my Minutes is the place for praising

Councillor Wakefield in this Council Chamber. I do think the Parklife scheme is within the area of sport in my portfolio and is a really important one about some of the things that Councillor Illingworth touched on about encouraging people to be fit and active.

We all in wards across our city know that we have got football and rugby teams that need pitches to play on, we do not have enough pitches to play on at the moment. Quite a lot of the grass ones we have are unusable for times of the year when they are flooded, some of them are not the greatest quality, so actually having a proper programme, working with the FA, working with the Football Association in one of the richest sports in the country to actually bring money into grassroots sport and develop much more useable pitches right across the city. Councillor Carter referred to one in the West of the city but the paper refers to a network across the city as a starting point. I think it is something really positive and actually it is part of our role as a Council, one of the things we do as a Council, we are going to spend all our own money on, we are going to work with other organisations to bring the things we want into the city and I think that is an excellent example of that one.

I will move on to a couple of the other papers that people spoke on, and I am sorry we did not get Councillor Golton's thoughts on borrowing and the Council's financial strategy, I am sorry he ran out of time. I am sure they would be fascinating had we had the time to hear them. Certainly the Members who spoke on that were very clear about the perilous state it could sometimes appear the Council finances are in and I think, as Councillor Blake pointed out earlier, the reductions in spending we have had have really put us in that place.

Councillor Bentley particularly referred – I am sure we will come on to the detailed Children's Services in this afternoon's White Paper debate and I do not want to get people over excited too early about that (*laughter*) but the one thing I was a little bit puzzled to hear about, the lack of transparency around the reporting on the financial information. As Members know we have a monthly update on the Council's financial position with a huge amount of detail there. As Opposition Members I think forgot to mention but I will, the Council budget was balanced for the last month, we had a report on it that shows we are sticking to our financial plans. If Councillor Bentley wants to know any more about that he can maybe ask the Lib Dem Member of Resources and Strategy Scrutiny, Councillor Mrs Bentley or, if he is particularly interested in Children's Services and thinks there is more work to be done there, he could ask the Chair of the Children's Services Scrutiny Board, Councillor Mrs Bentley, to help him out there. (*laughter*)

Really, it is difficult times but if Members are concerned they are not seeing the right information that is something we want to take forward.

Just to turn on I think to the Best Council Plan consultation, which is a consultation – I was scribbling down what people were saying for when we come to the Best one. I think actually it was a bit of a theme that came through there from all Members who spoke on that and I think it is our ambition as a city to tackle some of the big problems we face, to be able to tackle the problems with housing that Councillor Hamilton referred to. I know the responses I think lots of Members have come up with on the housing one is focusing on the issue of not just the numbers of housing delivered but the numbers of affordable housing and social housing that we are able to deliver in

the city. Obviously we are limited by the Government's cap on the Housing Revenue Account on the amount we can actually spend on building new Council houses. We hope to agree a housing deal to take that forward but that is a really important point.

Some of the other things as well – I can see I am running out of time but to pick out Councillor Iqbal's about poverty. We often talk sometimes about the impact austerity has on our spending as a Local Authority but actually the issues for the neighbourhoods Councillor Iqbal spoke about, for the first time we have neighbourhoods in Leeds that are in the poorest one per cent in the country. That is the impact the poverty is having on the city, that is the impact that austerity is having on the city, whether it is our spending or whether it is the impact of things they have brought in like Universal Credit or just simply the weakness in the economy and the poor pay and vulnerable work in the economy that is endemic. That shows we are prepared to tackle those issues as an administration.

We always welcome the small bits of funny money we get from the Government when they arrive but they have not put back the tens and hundreds of millions of pounds that are missing from our budget, and just imagine what we could do to tackle some of these problems if indeed we were treated fairly and had that resource in the budget. I move my Minutes. (*applause*)

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

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Of course, it is a bit tricky following on when we have just had one portfolio covered at Minutes today from Councillor Lewis, who has done a comprehensive job, as he always does, but there are a couple of things I would perhaps like to go into in a little bit more detail, if I can.

Particularly picking up on Councillor Golton's concern about the Child Friendly Leeds work. Obviously the Best Council Plan is a consultation, I think we had quite a good discussion about this at Executive Board if I recall. I would actually say that the approach that has been looked at is actually the complete reverse of what you are saying. Rather than keeping it as a separate entity I think the idea is that it becomes fully integrated into every single piece of work that this Council does but I think we are all mindful in the same way that we have endlessly discussed about where you put equality issues, do you have it in a separate part or do you integrate it to make sure that it gets the attention that it needs?

I am delighted to say that Councillor Mulherin in particular is picking up the child poverty aspect of the whole issue of our focus for every child in this city to have the opportunity to grow up to become successful adults. She has set re-established, I think, the Strategic Working Group on Child Poverty and she really wants to make sure that it does remain a key priority. If people do not feel that within the plan that ambition of ours is reflected, then let us look at the wording of it because I think every single one of us in this Chamber recognises that for our ambition as a city, putting children and young people at the heart of absolutely everything we do is paramount.

The other issue I just want to pick up on is Jonathan referring to the gas explosion in his ward in the Silk Mills. We actually had a gas explosion in Middleton some years ago, actually in again a terraced house, but the impact of that explosion was

unbelievable. I really think when you start to hear about these events unfolding and you see the response from the emergency services – absolutely extraordinary. This case has followed the pattern of other serious incidents in this city that the emergency services do their work, they make sure there is no more threat to life and then the Council services really come in and come into their own.

There is a particular lady that I am sure you are aware of who literally was pulled out of her flat and lost absolutely all of her possessions. I think she was in her pyjamas, I think that is all she had with her when she left. I am delighted because of the initiative that you have heard via the Lord Mayor that working with Council officers, actually many of them putting their hands into their own pockets, have actually got enough money to furnish her flat. We in the Labour Group have put round a collection to contribute to the funds to give her support and I hope all Members here today will do the same.

I was wracking my brains, John, to know why Bob was so familiar in the Deputation. It is very strange when you see people in a different context. I was absolutely thrilled to hear the news about the Children's Heart Unit and I think it really showed the Council at its finest, all of us coming together supporting NHS colleagues in Leeds but also beyond, and Council colleagues across Yorkshire, as you quite rightly say, doing an extraordinary piece of work. Bob actually has been in touch with me very recently because of this because I actually did write to the Evening Paper and I did actually comment – he is going to be embarrassed now – the work that John actually did in this. For years we have been wracking our brains to find an issue that John could use his forensic interrogation skills in an incredibly constructive way – not that I am saying you are not constructive in others, far be it from me (*laughter*) but if we wanted to put anyone on that job then we had the right person, so well done. (*applause*)

The themes running through I think the debate that we have just had is really just picking up on what we as a Council in Leeds really have given our focus to, and that is around ensuring that we still fund early intervention; that we still fund prevention. I mean early intervention in the sense of in the life cycle of a problem, not just Early Years as it is obviously important but every single problem that this Government allows to develop by taking money out of the prevention work that we do then grows and grows and grows and ends up if you go into Armley and find out that so many of the people who are in Armley fell into the Youth Justice system at a very young age because of their family circumstances or because of lack of investment at that age; about adult literacy; about addiction. All of these things, preventable things that actually make our blood boil when you see the cuts that have come forward.

I just want to give a bit of a warning about the business rates work because going down the line I am afraid the Government is looking at the Public Health grant and rolling that up into being picked up by the money that comes out of the business rates. These are the things where we have to be incredibly alert that it seems that we are getting money with one hand but let's be aware of the extra responsibilities that we are given with that process around business rates, but without the extra money coming forward, but really, something to celebrate.

I think Leeds is stand out in this. We have over decades always put the most vulnerable people in our city first and it has caused criticism from people who would

like to see us put more into pot holes or whatever their particular issue is, but I think we can hold our heads up with pride and particularly now getting the recognition for, in very, very difficult circumstances, as has been outlined, that we are still prioritising services to our most vulnerable.

Sharon obviously mentioned housing which is a top priority for us all. Alison, your comments about the police, absolutely bang on. I think this is true across all of our public services. I have never known a time when so many people working on the front line are actually prepared to stand up and tell it like it is and talk about the impact that the cuts are now having on their services, on them as personnel, the sheer levels of stress that we have witnessed on our television screens from those medics in particular and nurses in A&E.

To hear – I am sorry, I cannot remember his name – the Conservative who is in the House of Lords who speaks on policing saying that he does not understand that there is a connection between community policing and the fight against terrorism, it absolutely beggars belief. We have felt the impact from a reduction recently in numbers in PCSOs when we thought the budget was going to go. I am very pleased to see that those numbers are coming back on the streets and they really make the difference that they need to make.

The Council Plan Refresh really highlights our priorities as a Council, working across the piece, making sure that we have got the economy to help us deliver on our priorities, but making sure that as a key partner in the city all of our public services can grow and thrive and really deliver for the people that we represent.

I just want to tell you that the LGA has launched a Bright Futures campaign. This is Tory-led LGA calling for services that change children's lives to be properly funded. Every single Councillor in this Chamber has a responsibility to stand up, demand the money that is due to us so that we can deliver for the people in this city. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(applause)*

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

Before you all move off I have got an announcement to make. The gremlin that has affected my voice has also affected the webcast as well, so whilst people can actually hear your voices, instead of having that very fetching close-up that they do like to do, there is an overview of the Chamber, so mind what you are doing because we can see everything we are doing now before we go to lunch!

It is just after twenty-five past, so if we can have you in the Chamber for five-to, please, so that we can actually start on the Devolution item. Thank you.

(Short break)

THE LORD MAYOR: You will all be pleased to know that instead of getting an overview of whether you are in the Council Chamber or not, we have now fixed the problem and apparently you will be in Technicolor on the webcast as a close-up, if you can be prepared for that.

If you can all be quiet, because this is a really nice announcement. I heard over the lunch break and it is my great pleasure and I am sure we will all wish to congratulate Matthew Robinson who has recently become engaged to a young lady called Rosaria. (*applause*) Of course we wish you every happiness going forward on that.

ITEM 11 – REPORT ON DEVOLVED MATTERS

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now going to move to Item 11, Report on Devolved Matters, and we are going to hear that for up to 30 minutes. If Councillor Blake would like to start, please. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. The Report that you have all got in front of you gives an update of the activity that has been undertaken by the Leeds City Region Local Enterprise Partnership and through the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA).

I do not propose to dwell too much on the details within the report unless anyone wants to comment on those. We have had a bit of a round-up of impact that we have had over the last year that includes opening Wakefield College's £7m Advanced Skills and Innovation Centre, attracting the highest number of foreign direct investment projects in 20 years and a very significant development for Leeds in opening the offices for Burberry, all the office staff, 400 office staff moving up to Leeds from London, as well as the transport. Although he was unwell, Councillor Wakefield actually I think should have, at the Transport Awards dinner, been on his feet three times to win awards for transport initiatives for West Yorkshire, so I think he needs a bit of a round of applause as well. (*applause*) Cruel timing, then, being ill so you cannot actually go and pick them up.

The main thing really that I want to talk to you about is our aspirations around devolution. Clearly you will be aware from the significant press coverage there has been recently that the Coalition of the Willing is holding firm, still looking to develop proposals around One Yorkshire. Doncaster and Barnsley very much want to be part of the bigger Yorkshire footprint and to that end they decided to hold community consultations so they could actually go out to the people in their communities and ask for their view. The consultation result is not binding but I think is a very clear indication of how the people in those two boroughs actually are feeling.

They achieved turn outs of 20% just in the run-up to Christmas, and if you think that is higher than PCC elections that we have known, sometimes certainly higher than some of the Parliamentary bye-elections we have been through. 84.9% of those who voted in Barnsley voted for One Yorkshire, the wider Yorkshire deal, and 85.2% in Doncaster also voted for the wider Yorkshire model.

I said to you last time we have established the Yorkshire Leaders' Board, we are still working on a range of different issues across Yorkshire so on housing, on Brexit, on industrial strategy, transport for example, and our simple request to Government has been that the Secretary of State holds a meeting with us to talk about our ambition for

devolution in Yorkshire. I am very, very disappointed and sorry to report back to Council that after all this time we still have not got a meeting in the diary.

The all-party Parliamentary Group is actually meeting this Friday in York, not in Westminster, and we are following on from that with a meeting of the Yorkshire Council Leaders, so we will be in a position to update you from the discussions taking part in that. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor James Lewis.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Tom Leadley.

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Councillor Blake has actually covered part of my script anyway!

Devolution is a difficult topic. Many agree that it is needed to oversee regional infrastructure projects and to ensure joined-up thinking on highways and public transport and general investment.

We are seeing a serious debate about regional devolution in South Yorkshire with creditable percentages of the electorates in Barnsley and Doncaster turning out to give support for a Yorkshire-wide region rather than a city region based on Sheffield. In both cases the turn-out was over 20%, quite a lot to answer a fairly abstract question posed during the run-up to Christmas and the votes in favour of Yorkshire-wide were well over 80%.

Even so, we need to tread carefully. There are some signs that the West Yorkshire Combined Authority is beginning to act like some of the regional development corporations and similar bodies of the 1960s and that those bodies were democratic only at second hand, they were only vaguely accountable with large budgets, wide-ranging discretionary powers, staffed and controlled by people who had ended up there more or less by chance and they began by looking slightly daft; they passed from incompetence to recklessness and ended up being positively corrupt. We do need to be a little bit cautious and, as we have heard before, within 100 yards or so of this Chamber we have the proposed Hilton Hotel, construction of which was abandoned part way through due to bankruptcy after its sponsors had received money which is acknowledged to be irrecoverable and that had come from the Combined Authority through the LEP. The hotel is about to be rebuilt and finished as student flats, which is good news in one way but that will be of no direct benefit to any aggrieved taxpayer.

Further worries have been turned up in the press and have prompted a Combined Authority Scrutiny Inquiry but I will not comment on those as no formal report has been published.

We do need a regional strategic Authority, preferably Yorkshire-wide. Smaller ones might be unpopular if they were thought to be dominated by Leeds or Sheffield. Such an Authority would have to be staffed and run by carefully chosen people who are

up to the job. If it were not it would soon fall into disfavour. Thank you, my Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: First of all can I welcome the news from Barnsley and Doncaster. I think it is great. Clearly you have got our support in all you are trying to do to achieve devolution on a Yorkshire regional basis. One thing that we have always said is that that is the way forward as far as we are concerned. I think a message should go out to Government that we want our Council Leaders to talk to them about a way forward and that way forward must be that we have some kind of Assembly of democratically elected Members that is accountable to the people. We do not want a Mayor, we do not want a series of Leaders. We want a proper Authority. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Stewart Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thanks, Lord Mayor. I did start to watch the reshuffle recently because I was looking forward to this bright new world of diversity and new faces and opportunities and, of course, I stopped watching after a while as more and more middle class white people from the Home Counties trooped forward and got given the same job that they already had.

The interesting thing that came out of the reshuffle was that some people seemed to be given extra responsibilities that we always thought were their responsibilities anyway but then all of a sudden it turns up in their title, which means the Prime Minister thought that it was an important thing. The Health Secretary, of course, got Social Care which we knew that they were roughly responsible for as well and then, of course, the Local Government Minister gets given Housing in front of their title, even though we knew Housing was already part of their portfolio.

One of the really disappointing things was that nobody got given the title of Devolution Minister and I think that just goes to show where the focus is on this present Government and where the priorities are in terms of where they think they should put their talent and identify people who are there to get things done, because they do not really want to get things done on devolution, it seems.

The unfortunate thing for me is the debate yesterday, that Dan Jarvis said the clock is ticking, I seem to see in the newspapers. It just got me thinking, where have I heard that expression before, and wasn't it Michel Barnier talking to David Davis about Brexit? It is all about if you do not actually get your noggin on and start thinking about it and start deciding and doing things properly and talking to the right people, then actually somebody else is going to be doing that for you and it will not be the conclusion that you require.

I really do think that some of the more assertive language that is coming out of the region like "the clock is ticking" and basically taking the challenge to the Minister that is supposed to be responsible for Devolution but does not seem to want to actually do anything about it, is more and more needed because I think that is what is going to generate the popular discontent and the popular support which is necessary to actually get Westminster politicians listening.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Andrew Carter.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Yes, Lord Mayor. It is certainly a funny old world when people can give so much credence to a referendum with a turn-out of 20% and some of those same politicians try to give no credence at all to a referendum with a turn-out of over 74%, but I will say no more about Brexit.

As regards the situation with the Combined Authority, Tom Leadley is right, there is an accountability and transparency issue and that has recently been highlighted significantly, certainly in the pages of the Yorkshire Post. There is an issue that when you get a larger Authority in being, whether it is a Combined Authority, a LEP, you name whatever, there needs to be quite clear transparency and decision-making and everyone needs to understand that, particularly the public. That is the only way we will get their support in large numbers for what we are trying to achieve. If the general public believe it is a bunch of politicians, businessmen and trade union officials who want to take decisions at a higher level out of the sight of public scrutiny, then we will have a problem justifying what I think all of us ultimately want to try and achieve, which is a regional body Yorkshire-wide, with the exclusion of Sheffield and Rotherham, that can deliver on a strategic basis. That is something I think we should increasingly focus our attention on, that accountability.

As regards the situation, there have been some interesting comments coming out of Government about their willingness to look at now, which is a step further forward than we were before, the all Yorkshire deal with Barnsley and Doncaster included at some stage. All I would say on that is we need to keep that door open and what we do not need to see is too much complaint from Doncaster and from Barnsley and push it too far and jeopardise a deal for the rest of us that they could then have taken part in. I am very concerned – very concerned – that that could jeopardise our position.

Finally, I just want to say – and it is interesting that we do not have a Devolved Mayoral Authority yet we have got the deal on business rates, and that indicates that the Government does look at Leeds and the Leeds City Region in an important way as driving the economy forward in this area. That is very important that that remains the case because in the interim we have to ensure that we continue to get these different funding streams still coming to us before the Devolution deal is done, because that could be, with respect, 12, 15 months away yet and some of those funding streams are going to start drying up but they will not for the Mayoral Authorities. *(applause)*

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

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I think the issue running through all of the contributions so far has been around accountability, transparency and governance. Certainly the Leaders Board are very mindful of the fact that we will have to set up a Combined Authority at a regional level and that was a sticking point for some time but things have moved forward.

I do want to recognise that Government has moved significantly on this and I think that is something that we will be picking up on Friday, that the original talk about there never, ever, ever being a Yorkshire-wide deal has gone and the discussion really now is about a two-stage process, and I think that actually represents an enormous change. We keep saying to colleagues in South Yorkshire that we do not want to hold

up them getting the money that they have got in the deal that they have got at the moment, so anything that we can do to enable that to happen, but there is a precedent in Greater Manchester. They had an Interim Mayor who actually was the Police and Crime Commissioner at the time and perversely has now gone back as an MP taking up one of the seats in Greater Manchester.

I think there is a growing determination. I think the fact that the Archbishop of York has actually come out very clearly and talked in favour of Yorkshire has given a huge boost to everybody who is working on this agenda.

Yes, we need to make sure it is accountable. Actually in the West Yorkshire situation it is going through a real period of change and we have had to do quite a lot of work with business leaders in particular to make sure that they understand what it is to work with public sector bodies, come to open meetings, declare your interests and, I have to say, we are making a lot of progress on that. That is a good fore-runner.

I hope every single one of us, wherever we get the opportunity, will highlight, and obviously I look to you Andrew and people on your side who have got influence – we want a meeting. It used to be that we used to talk with George Osborn over the phone. Who knew in two years' time you would be reminiscing about those days? *(laughter)* We should be negotiating at the level of Sajid Javid, the Secretary of State, and the Treasury. They need to take us seriously because without Yorkshire there is no Northern Powerhouse and all of their ambition to rebalance the economy won't materialise. Thank you. *(applause)*

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

WHITE PAPERS

THE LORD MAYOR: Now we move on to the final section of the meeting, White Papers. We have three White Papers this evening to debate. Each debate will last no more than 45 minutes and will conclude with votes on the motion and any amendments.

ITEM 12 – WHITE PAPER MOTION – CAPITAL OF CULTURE

THE LORD MAYOR: We move first to White Paper Motion number one, Capital of Culture. If I could call on Mr Neil Buckley, please, Councillor Buckley.

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. City of Culture – I have never felt as popular! Everybody wants to agree with me so I think one thing we can all rely on is that that won't last! However, I hope it lasts today – I think it will.

City of Culture – we know where we are with this. The EU said some time ago that the five UK bidders in the Capital of Culture process will not now be allowed to take part in the whole thing. Beyond initial shock and disappointment and anger and so on, we are where we are now. There is no point in dwelling on what might have been.

The decision has been made and it is unlikely to be changed, despite the best efforts of MEPs including Councillor Procter and others.

We are at a crossroads, really; we have two choices. We can either burst into tears and go and sit in the corner and sulk and do nothing, or we can say come on, let's do this, Europe or no Europe.

In recent years, if we all think about it, Leeds has had some setbacks as a city - let us just say the transport-related knock-backs which we have had. When we compare ourselves to Manchester, they have managed to secure for themselves over the last decade, let us say, a higher profile than ours. This really must change because it is not a natural order of things.

We can change this, but how can we and how should we do it, to go ahead with a year of culture? I have written down about three reasons – there are many, many more but if you take the numbers one to three: the Hull effect. If you look at their Capital of Culture, the UK, I know Hull quite well, we have got friends there, we go from time to time and the atmosphere there has been completely transformed. They used to be rather downbeat and subdued about their city, they did not think a great deal of it and now it is completely transformed. They are a much more confident, go-ahead, progressive city and the same thing, of course, happened in Liverpool some time ago.

Number two, what you might call the wellbeing effect. A happy ship, community cohesion, work-life balance, a rounded city – all these things are great. We are not just talking about the opera, the ballet, big orchestras but all kinds of small events, small groups, big groups, local events of all different types and sizes.

Thirdly, and probably the most important is what this could bring us. A potential massive boost to the economy and the international profile it should develop if it goes to plan. Visitor numbers and investment could really be a big, big success story.

We need to be confident that we can do the following thing, because there is no point in having this big event and talking to ourselves. If we amuse the people of the city that is fine but it needs to be national and it needs to be international, an international profile. The EU Capital of Culture and the UK Capital of Culture are enormous brands with massive marketing powers at their disposal. Leeds must get hold of this and it must sell the whole year of culture and be ultra positive about it. This is vital possibly with other bidders or possibly on our own – these things I know are all up for discussion. Could there be collaboration of some different types? Yes, I am sure there could. Could it be the City Region and the Yorkshire brand as per the cycling triumphs? Absolutely yes, why not? Let's get on the back of that because people already think about Yorkshire and if we can make them think the same thing about Leeds in particular, so much the better.

There must be a brand put out there in the run-up to an event. There must be big sponsorships, a big sponsorship buy-in. Do we want to see taxpayers' money wasted which the Liberals have hinted at? Of course we don't. We are Conservatives, we are quite good at saving public money, actually! (*laughter*) We do not want to waste it!

Let us have a great plan and let us just say that all right, Europe has said this, fine, they have done it, we cannot change it, it is a great opportunity in the making. Let us grasp the nettle, Lord Mayor, and let us get on and do it. Thank you. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Buckley for your comments. Councillor Blake, if you could second, please.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am happy to second this White Paper in the spirit that all the way through the process of making the decision to bid for Capital of Culture we have worked cross-party and I think that has been a real strength of our bid going forward. Of course, it was just after the last Council meeting that we got the news that the EU Commissioners – not the politicians, the Commissioners – had decided to pull the plug on the competition.

I believe, taking soundings from so many people who have been involved – the steering group, the sponsors, the universities, the people out in our communities who benefit from cultural investment. I do not think this is a choice. I think this is absolutely necessary that we find a way of harnessing the incredible energy that has been released through this process and move it forward. Particularly running through out bid, that theme about investing in our young people in the city, the creativity that we can unlock and enabling them to take up the best chance in life.

The wellbeing aspect, just how many people came out for the Tour de Yorkshire, Tour de France, the triathlon, the sports events – the crowds actually coming out and beforehand getting together on the cultural side, knitting jumpers for the statues in City Square, for example. That huge appetite for people to come together. A really strong theme running through about the benefit to the economy of Leeds and the jobs that a vibrant cultural scene will bring.

We have not been idle, we heard the news and I have to say that all of the bidding cities, the five cities, were in a state of equal shock to us. Straightaway within days we got together with those five cities, we went down to Government, we have been working with the officials in the Department of Culture and Sport and really looking at all the different options open to us, and we are still having those conversations. It is a bit of a shock to turn on the radio this morning and hear Councillor Buckley's dulcet tones coming through from Radio Leeds but I was very pleased to hear as well that they had the Leader of Dundee on Radio Leeds talking about how they had worked incredibly well with Leeds over the last few weeks, so we have gone from being rivals in the competition to being best friends and working out how we can move our way forward.

We know that we have spent the equivalent of seven pence a year for every Leeds resident so far but we know that every pound of public money that has been invested has been matched to a tune of four times by the private sector and the public sector. It is incredible pay-back. Liverpool estimated an uplift to its economy of £750m and you only have to go to Hull to realise the increase in confidence and ambition amongst all of the people.

I think the thing to stress for me at this point is that we need to take the people of Leeds with us when we make the next decision. We went out and got permission to put the bid in the first place; we need to make sure that we are taking the people of Leeds

with us, because the thing about our bid that I believe would have been the stand-out in helping us to win it, was that it was rooted in our communities through our Community Committees, going out and celebrating culture in all of our wards with all of our people, different ages, events that people would not necessarily badge as culture but really helped to determine the profile of the city.

I would say let us look at the way forward as an investment in what we need to do to benefit our economy, to benefit the health and wellbeing of our city and really to get the notice and attention that the city of Leeds deserves and needs. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jonathan Bentley.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I do not want to be characterised as the killjoy in this, far from it. I agree with everything that Councillor Buckley and Councillor Blake have said and you can see from our amendment that we broadly support this White Paper but with some slight provisos. I certainly agree with Councillor Buckley his opening lines of the White Paper where he expresses disappointment with the European Commission to prevent Leeds from competing for the Capital of Culture title. Should we be surprised that the organisation that promotes and runs the competition does not want the involvement of a country that is shunning everything to do with the European Union?

It need not have been like that. Let me ask Members to cast their minds back to June 2016 when they were putting their cross on the referendum ballot paper. Those people who voted Leave, let me ask you this, if you had really known that Brexit meant that Leeds would not be able to be the European Capital of Culture, would you have still voted Leave? If that big red Brexit bus said on the side not the false information about £350m a week to the NHS but had told people the truth, that voting Leave meant that we would be wholly excluded from ever being the European Capital of Culture, things may have turned out differently. We have here an example of why the whole referendum vote was so unsatisfactory. Those who voted Leave did not know the consequences of what that Leave vote meant. There is still chance for people to change their minds. As David Davis, the Brexit bulldog himself said, "If a democracy cannot change its mind it ceases to be a democracy."

So what do we need to do? Well, you need to lobby your MPs, you need to lobby the leadership of your political parties, to support the Liberal Democrat policy of having a public vote on the final deal and, who knows, Leeds may yet be able to be the European Capital of Culture.

If that does not work (*laughter*) we will go along with Councillor Buckley's proposal and we will go it alone.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: You are not even taking yourself seriously!

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: A cultural festival would be the showcase for the vibrancy and innovation of the city but we do need to have some concerns about spending large sums of taxpayers' money on this event.

The rewards to businesses in the city and in the region from the success of such an event would be huge, and therefore we should be looking to businesses and sponsors to finance such a festival. We should be looking for more sponsors from across the whole region.

There is a huge voluntary and amateur cultural sector in Leeds as well which has currently been a bit marginalised by the Council upping the fees on the Carriageworks and other Council premises for them to use, but they could have a really substantial role, so we would have to have something to make such a festival accessible and relevant to all our citizens, and I think that relevance to everyone is something that has got to be key. Councillor Blake mentioned the inclusion of the whole community, which is fine, but we have got to ask ourselves the single parent living in a Council flat somewhere, how relevant is the Capital of Culture to them and how can we make it relevant and accessible?

There has been some Council taxpayers' money already committed and we would not necessarily want to reduce that, but we have got to look at the other pressures on our residents. We are forecasting a £38m black hole for 2018/19, we know about the financial time bomb of the NHS and Children's Services, which we have discussed already this afternoon, so we have got to be careful how we present this to our residents, that it is not yet another burden and we have got to demonstrate that there is money coming in from outside and that will be for everyone's benefit. I move the amendment. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Colin Campbell.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dan Cohen.

COUNCILLOR COHEN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am absolutely delighted to speak in support of Councillor Buckley's White Paper, brilliantly seconded by Councillor Blake.

Following the very late decision by the European Commission not to allow the UK to bid for Capital of Culture in 2023, that our city hosts its own Year of Culture by 2023.

Along with Councillor Blake and Councillor Golton I have sat on the steering group that put together the Leeds bid for 2023 and because of the lateness of the Commission's very bizarre decision, a huge amount of work had already been done to put that whole programme for the year together. Equally important was the fact that a huge amount of sponsorship had been either raised or promised and many of those sponsors have been saying to us "We still want this to go ahead" and I think that is hugely important and hugely significant.

Having seen the very wide range of support for the Leeds bid, I have less than no doubt that with the right marketing our amazing city is more than capable of putting on the most amazing year of events and activity, showcasing ourselves for what we truly

are. Whatever one's take is on Brexit – and despite Councillor Bentley's comments – by 2023 the UK is going to have left the EU. That is, I think, a political reality, whatever your view is on that. Equally, there is no doubt that a high profile year of culture is a superb vehicle to invite the whole world to our city to attract investment of every kind and so to the world we say, "Welcome, yokoso, üdvözöljük, dobro pozhalovat, khush amdeed, witamy, brochim habayim, ahlan bik, vilcommen and bienvenue to our great city. Come and see why Leeds truly Leeds when it comes to culture, innovation and vision." Thank you, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Andrew Carter.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Follow that, Lord Mayor! I will stick to English. I am really sorry that the Liberal Democrats have sought to amend this and when I heard Councillor Bentley I was even more disappointed. I have just got one message for Councillor Bentley - get over it!

Let us get back to reality. This is an opportunity for a city to come together in the face of a decision none of us wanted to see made by people living thousands of miles away. My only complaint is that it took 18 months for the Commissioners to tell us. Why were we not told before we went on? My other complaint is I find it difficult to swallow that countries that are not in the EU are allowed to bid for City of Culture, and I highlight particularly Turkey because Turkey cannot claim to have a trading relationship like Iceland and like Norway, which were also allowed to bid. Turkey has no such arrangements but hopes to join the EU. I suspect with the state of German politics at the moment that is a long, long way away. It was mean and mean-spirited of the Commissioners to do what they did at the time they did it.

It does give us an opportunity and I entirely endorse the comments of Councillor Buckley and Councillor Blake. I have been very impressed by the reaction of local community groups to the decision from Europe and the reaction has been unanimously, as far as I could tell, "Well, can't we do something on our own? We are not going to throw it away, are we? This is an opportunity", and it is an opportunity and we need to take it.

The money side of it, Councillor Buckley quite rightly makes the point, we are hardly likely to be talking about throwing millions of pounds of Council taxpayers' money around but there is huge support from the private sector and from local communities for us to press on with something that we can really put Leeds on the map culturally. I am sorry for what I am going to say about Hull but Hull has been hugely successful but their cultural base from which they began is not like our cultural base, with respect to Hull. They have done a great job and good luck to them, but we have already got a series of much more solid foundations on which to build, particularly in the communities around the city and I know that organisations in my ward have been involved with the process, I am sure other communities – Morley, Otley, you name it – have as well and it could be a great catalyst for bringing all those communities together.

We must move ahead and I was very pleased to hear from Councillor Blake the talks between the other bidding cities, because of all of a sudden we are not in competition with each other any more. Let's not pretend we have cornered the market on good ideas because we have not. They have plenty of good ideas as well. Let us

swap those ideas, work together and make sure that by 2023 we have delivered a real year of culture for this city and, I think for this country, and I hope too for Europe and they will think about what we still have to offer. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor John Procter.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am not quite so sure if I need to declare an interest at this point. I will maybe seek the advice of a Legal Officer but I sit on a European Cult Committee – Culture Committee – and I am also the UK Delegation Spokesperson on Culture and Education in the European Parliament. Maybe I do, that was a joke!

THE CITY SOLICITOR: No, you do not! I was just going to say, you definitely do not! *(laughter)*

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Good.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Carry on.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Extra time, Lord Mayor, extra time. Even though my name was down I was not actually going to speak, I was going to withdraw my name until Councillor Bentley spoke. To be quite frank, the notion that people would have changed how they voted when they came to the referendum whether to stay in or out of the European Union based on whether Leeds got Capital of Culture or not I think rather debases the electorate, actually *(hear, hear)* of Leeds and elsewhere. People voted in different ways because of what they personally believed in and I respect each and every person who did vote, even though, I make no secret about it, I was and am a Remainer. That said, the vote has happened and we have got to move on and do something different now.

Councillor Blake mentioned some time ago that she was seeking, I think she said that she had got a meeting with other Council Leaders with M. Barnier. I hope when you go to that meeting, Councillor Blake, you will specifically ask him why he – he – issued the instruction for the Commission to write the letter, because that is the fact of the matter. With that in mind, it was plain and simple a negotiated position that he adopted and it was one of a series of things that came out of the Commission. There is no doubt about it whatsoever and an amount of work has already been done in the Cult Committee in the Parliament.

I might say that the decision and the grounds upon which it was taken are questionable. I am grateful to the Chief Executive, who I passed some papers to, and got a legal view out of there that I was able to go back, in actual fact, to the Cult Committee and start to challenge the basis upon which the Commission took the decision. It is, frankly, outrageous that they should arrive at that view at that moment in time. It was nothing other than, in my view, a political stunt, Lord Mayor. Thank you. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ann Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I note Councillor Buckley's enthusiasm on not wanting to lose the work that has already gone into Leeds's bid for the city to become the European Capital of Culture in 2023. He mentions about the Council working in partnership with organisations that have already pledged support of the Capital of Culture for Leeds to host its very own Year of Culture by 2023.

I am mindful that next month we will be sitting in this Council Chamber discussing the Budget and what cuts need to be made to make the Budget balance. Bearing this in mind I ask if we should be proposing spending Council money on such a project when I am sure there are more needy things to spend such money on. I think not. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Brian Selby.

COUNCILLOR SELBY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. In response to Councillor Ann Blackburn, can I just say that we got a lot of benefit from the work that we did so far. Arts Council England increased its annual funding to Leeds' organisations by about a million and a half a year since that bid was put together, and the Arts Council have made it clear that it will invest in Authorities that show some commitment to the arts.

Our bid, not only did it show the development of culture strategy but showed very firm commitment and it is important that we continue to show that because, Councillor Blackburn, I think what we do in this city, what we do in bringing people to the city, culture, all our history, all the things that have happened are important and I think with respect you have failed to understand that.

We should not under-estimate what the bid did and the work that it is being proposed that we do will improve the profile of the city. Leeds was the only city in the UK in the Lonely Planet Guide in the top ten European destinations. We have tourism which benefits this city and it is very significant, it creates over 18,000 jobs and if we were to proceed we would hopefully have got more. Jobs not just in tourism but also that raise the profile of other aspects of the city as well.

It enabled the unique city-wide partnerships to develop between different sectors. We had, as far as education is concerned, all the further education and higher education institutions backed the bid. The business community which is important to this city also stepped up with over 15 private sector businesses backing the bid with money. The Council only put forward a small proportion of what would be required.

The people of Leeds did get behind the bid with over 3,500 pledges of support and out in communities there was some central support even after the referendum. Community events were visited and many people were in favour of carrying on as before.

Community groups in Armley, in Chapeltown, in Holbeck, in Seacroft very much were behind the bid and we must see to it that the benefits that we had aimed for will still be there. If I take, for example, Chapel FM in my ward, heavily involved. They have a scheme going to get outside funding for training for locally based artists to work with young people. There are substantial proposals like that from Chapel FM.

As a city we are proud of the many people who have played an active role in the arts and in culture. We are all proud to see people like the Kaiser Chiefs headlining at Leeds Festival, we are happy to see other people involved in arts and the like, but what we also want to do is to help them to develop and to train people for the future so that the Kaiser Chiefs are not the only Leeds group headlining Leeds Festival in 20 years' time. We would like to see new groups as well. The same with people on television and the theatre, to encourage young dramatists as well. The bid gave them that opportunity.

We must not ignore the benefits so far, we need to work on them. I support Councillor Buckley's White Paper. I have no comment to make about the Liberals. I think it has all been said. (*laughter*) I make no comment any more about Councillor Blackburn. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Salma Arif.

COUNCILLOR ARIF: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to speak about the importance of culture to young people in our city. In particular I want to talk about why we should not lose all the fantastic work that was put into the 2023 bid because of what it will mean to children and young people in Leeds.

The big document that was presented to Executive Board really is worth a read if you have not seen it just yet. It contains some really inspiring ideas and makes clear how central children and young people were to the bid. As part of the city's commitment to becoming a child friendly city, one of the central strands of our bid was given entirely to children and young people. The strand, called Voice, was to have been created and co-produced with young people from across the city. Here are just a few of the ideas in the bid that now will be lost if we do not work together to make something happen.

The bid proposed a new festival called I Predict a Riot – that is named after the famous Kaiser Chief's song – produced and promoted entirely by the young people. There would have been a European Youth Summit which would have invited young people from across the world to share their experiences and create new cultures here in Leeds. We would have had Leeds Children's Cinema, a new dedicated city centre hub where children, young people and their families could watch, make and play and learn with film. The power of engaging young people in cultural activities such as these is immense. They can have a real lasting effect, inspiring and broadening the horizons of young people from all areas of our great city.

The economic effect and job creation of something like Capital of Culture is equally important to today's young people in Leeds. School pupils in Leeds today would be the ones to benefit from the new jobs and opportunities created. In Leeds tourists currently help sustain over 18,500 jobs in the visitor economy sector and this figure was predicted to increase significantly with the 2023 bid. We have a responsibility to make sure these opportunities do not disappear and we must not forget another key aim of the bid for the benefit of young people today was to celebrate diversity and promote inter-cultural and inter-faith dialogue. This is essential for the future if we want to promote a fair, peaceful and inclusive society.

Lord Mayor, I fully believe we owe it to children and young people both today and in the future to make sure we do not lose the valuable work that went into this bid process. We must do all we can to harness the energy and excellent work done today. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: I would now like to call on Councillor Neil Buckley to sum up, please.

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. They were very helpful and interesting contributions from everybody, which I would like to thank them for.

I will take them in order, actually, if I may. Councillor Blake in particular stressed the five bidders as having been competitors, if you like, and are now potential friends. I think that is a very interesting point. Also, the point which she made about taking the public with us. This is a good point, actually, because people do not want to think it is going to be a sort of financial splurge, because that is not what people want to see. I will come on to the Liberals in a minute on that basis. Taking the public with us is important.

Councillor Bentley started off by saying, “Well, we do not want to be killjoys” and is just exactly then what he was, because to go on well, yes, in a very grudging sort of way, to go on actually the whole point about this is to put the negativity behind us and move on to a positive and to go on about Brexit, admittedly in a humorous way, was really missing the point.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: He believes it though. (*laughter*)

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: He does believe it.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: I don't get much opportunity to say it!

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: Councillor Cohen also emphasised the need for sponsorship and I know this is going to be one of the great things. A great city like Leeds should be able to get all this together.

Councillor Carter, of course, emphasised, quite rightly, the late notice that we were given by the Commission - quite rightly, it is totally wrong – but also made the point about bringing people together. This is so important, there are so many different creeds and races and religions in the city, they need to be all part of this and not excluded in any way. Some of those points were made as well by Councillor Procter.

I must say, I was disappointed by Councillor Blackburn's contribution because, let's boil it down to a phrase, man cannot live by bread alone, nor can woman. (*laughter*) Occasionally I would just urge the Greens to just lift their sights a little bit. Occasionally we need something to look forward to that will not necessarily mean taking money from other parts of the budget, as she suggests.

Councillor Selby mentioned his enthusiasm for the arts and he and Councillor Arif, in particular, mentioned how important this was to all the young people. They are exactly the kind of people who need to be enthused on this and taken into consideration.

Of course, I have been instructed not to forget Councillor Lamb's Scrutiny Board and all the work that they have done in this regard.

I do thank all the contributors. It is great to have a consensus – nearly a consensus – and, as I said before, let us just get on with this and make it work. Thank you. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Buckley. I would now like to call for the vote and firstly we will call for a vote on the amendment in the name of Councillor Jonathan Bentley. (*A vote was taken*) I am afraid that is LOST, Councillor Bentley.

We now call for a vote on the substantive motion in the name of Councillor Buckley. (*A vote was taken*) That is CARRIED. Thank you for that debate.

ITEM 13 – WHITE PAPER MOTION – RAIL NETWORKS IN PUBLIC OWNERSHIP

THE LORD MAYOR: We now move on to the White Paper on Rail Networks in Public Ownership and I would like to call on Councillor Richard Lewis, please.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. There is a bit of a division of labour on this one in that Councillor Wakefield will talk about buses and I will talk about – sorry, he will talk about rail. I nearly got that wrong because I have been talking about rail for ages and not twigged! I will be talking about the bus side.

There is a Green amendment which we are happy to support, we think it adds something to our White Paper.

It says here, "Say something nice about Chris Grayling." I know that is quite difficult in many ways. However, he is a man in need of a fan club is perhaps something you could say. I think on this particular issue he is a Tory politician who is actually getting away from that mantra that we have heard so much over the past few years of no elected Mayor, no deal. He is being a little bit pragmatic, it is not what I expected from him but on this issue I think he is certainly going in the right direction and we should be positive about it.

I would just like to talk about where we have got with bus deregulation because I think as some Members will know I have very much got the tee-shirt along with my colleague, Jim McKenna, having lived through those years both pre-deregulation and post-deregulation and seeing how the world of public transport changed in this city. I was thinking, what was promised to us? What was going to be the great new future that we were going to see with bus deregulation? We are going to have lots of new bus routes, we are going to have minibuses coming up our streets, everybody will have a minibus coming up their street. Fares will be cheaper, everything will be wonderful, no more evil Council-run monopolies like Metro used to be.

What actually happened? The truth is we have had 30 years not of steady decline because sometimes it seems to bottom out, but it has been inexorable decline in bus services in this country and the product of that has been increased congestion for us all, everybody has been the loser. It is not just bus passengers who suffered, it has been every citizen of this city and I think every other city probably in the country.

What have we had? We have had fewer bus miles run, fewer journeys made, slower bus journeys and there's an interesting one because increasingly bus journeys are getting slower and that increases the cost to the bus operator who, of course, passes those costs on to the people who use the buses. We have got increased congestion which we have all experienced. We have got isolated communities. I know Councillor Wakefield is going to talk about the Cross Green area but again many of us have experience that, even Andrew, who is not listening, will have been aware that the services that we used to get that went from Pudsey through to Calverley no longer exist. Where I am in Pudsey, we had about ten years when you could not get a bus direct from Pudsey to Bradford at night time or on a Sunday at all and it is only in the past year that that has been resolved. I think for many communities it is those links that have been broken that make using public transport far less attractive.

Of course, we have got the new mega monopolies. We got rid of the evil local bus companies that were publicly accountable, democratically accountable and replaced them with First, Stagecoach and the like - organisations which were intent on using the most cut throat methods to get rid of their competition.

We destroyed the concept of integrated and co-ordinated public transport when you could get simple ticketing that took you from one mode of transport to another. Here we are, what are we talking about, something that we should get back. We have had 25 lost years on this one and we desperately need to get that because if you do not have that you are never going to have an integrated transport system and you are never going to get people back using public transport.

We have had increased fares. This is perhaps an exaggeration but buses stopped being part of the solution to our transport and mobility in the issues in the city and started being part of the problem. They started being a barrier to people travelling, they started discouraging people from getting around and visiting people and the social interaction that went with it.

It does not have to be that. If you actually look back to the era of even Leeds City Transport when you had that connection between the publicly accountable services that are still provided by us and bus services, you used to see Leeds City Transport provided a park and ride service; Leeds City Transport provided express bus services to our peripheral estates which made those estates that were on the edge more part of the city. All that stuff has gone.

THE LORD MAYOR: Final sentence, please, Councillor Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: I would say everyone knows there must be an alternative; there is an alternative. I think everybody here knows it, even those people who champion deregulation know it and it is about time we did something about it. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Wakefield.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor David Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. When I saw this motion I thought, oh, there's lots there I agree with but it had one weakness. I think as somebody who most of his life has been a bus passenger or used the railways to go further afield, the last 30 years have been a disaster for bus passengers. Things have just got worse and worse and worse. Lack of reliability. If you go to a place quite regularly and you do not go for another three months and you go back, the bus you get on does not actually go where it used to go because they are regularly changing services. Fares are going up and up and up where services are declining.

Certainly in West Yorkshire the public transport system is not fit for purpose and I think we do need regulation, but anybody who went on the trip with Councillor Leadley and Councillor Lewis and I to Reading will tell you where Reading are one of the few bus companies owned by the Council in the country, what advantage they have got, their real advantage is that one of the main providers is owned by the Council and can actually put something in, because even if you have some form of regulation you are still dependent on private companies supporting you and we can then lead the way. This is long overdue, this should have been dealt with years ago but our public transport system is a total mess and we need to do something about it and that is by taking back control of the railways, regulating bus services and allowing those Local Authorities who want the opportunity to start their own bus companies up. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Leadley.

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: My Lord Mayor, in seconding Councillor Blackburn's amendment, an addition which I hope Councillor Richard Lewis would accept, I would like to draw attention to the political interference which has eaten away at municipal bus undertakings over many years.

Fifty years ago there were about 100 municipal bus undertaking from ones like Leeds to small ones like Todmorden; now there are about ten. Most of them were well run and profitable. The surviving ones, such as Blackpool, Nottingham, Warrington and Reading are widely acknowledged to be among the best bus operators in the land, regularly winning a disproportionately large number of bus industry awards.

That is the case in Reading which we visited a couple of months ago. Since our visit the bus company wholly owned by the Borough Council has grown further by taking over a London Greenline service abandoned by First as not being profitable enough. Much growth of patronage has been among Reading University students, who do not seem to be in the same league as the bus operator. Last week they received a truly Norwegian "nul points" on University Challenge, which seemed almost impossible. Perhaps they could not even remember their own names!

The municipals have been the victims of political dogma, political prejudice, political stupidity and even political spite. By no means all of this has come from hatched-faced Thatcherite Tories. The first and largest culls of municipals were made by the Labour inspired Passenger Transport Authorities in some of the major conurbations in the late 1960s and early 1970s. I remember that when I lived in Coventry there was some outrage in 1974 when the bus undertaking was forcibly taken over by the West Midlands PTA based in Birmingham, even though Coventry had a profitable, compact and self-contained set of routes which was not connected to the rest of the PTA network. It is fair to say that there was a rapid deterioration after the takeover.

The second major assault was during the Thatcherite era of privatisation and deregulation. Some small municipals were driven off the road by large groups such as Stagecoach which ran buses in Darlington free of charge until the local undertaking became insolvent. Nothing was done to stop that by National Government though in Warrington the free buses were seen off by public boycott. Compulsory setting up of Council bus operations at arm's length companies rather than as municipal departments made them easier to sell off and many have gone that way.

Although Labour were in Government from 1997 to 2010 they did nothing beyond a bit of principled Socialist hand wringing. Almost the final nail in the coffin was driven in by Mrs May's Conservatives who brought in legislation to make it unlawful to set up any new municipal bus undertakings. Whether that was political spite or dogmatic stupidity is uncertain – probably both.

Some of the big groups have stopped growing. First are analysing their networks route by route and abandoning those which do not pay well enough to meet corporate targets. There may be some communities which will finish up with no bus services at all, especially as the backstop of setting up a Local Authority owned operation has been made unlawful.

Recently First abandoned the Seacroft to White Rose part of the Leeds Outer Ring Road number 9 service because it did not pay well enough, though they kept the more profitable White Rose to Horsforth part. A small company, Square Peg, took over from White Rose to Seacroft but those private operators are becoming fewer and often end up being squashed by the big groups. My Lord Mayor, I second the amendment. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: I would now like to call on Councillor Colin Campbell to move a second amendment.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can I just start by thanking Councillor Lewis for his comments in relation to First, which I think he described as “evil”, which is slightly ironic given that the Council has just signed a deal with them to help provide the transport solution to Leeds, but what the heck.

I have to say, Lord Mayor, Britain leads the way in how not to run a public transport network. I think that is fair to say. Privatised in the dying days of the Major Government in response to a political dogma rather than practicality, with multiple

companies, multiple responsibilities and, more importantly, no overarching transport plan.

Nationalisation, which is now touted perhaps in a wave of nostalgia as the answer to all our prayers. I have to be honest with you, I can remember when the rail network was nationalised and I can remember when Leeds ran its bus service that would not come to Otley.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Or Pudsey.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: I think it is fair to say that things were not perfect in the days of certainly the nationalised rail service. We had got falling passenger numbers, a shrinking network and more important, I think, no investment whatsoever in the infrastructure.

I am not sure that simple nationalisation will cure the rail network's ills. Nationalised trains have the same problem with it as private ones. Leaves on the line affect a private train in the same way that they affect a nationalised one, but what is clear, I think, to all of us, is that what this country needs is a publicly run rail/bus network responsible both to local and national priorities and, more importantly, passengers, rather than the current profit led system that we have at the moment.

I suppose our amendment seems to move that forward by putting local need at the centre and I could use here, perhaps, an example from Germany and at that point I was going to make an ironic remark about Europe but I do not want to upset Councillor Procter again.

If you look at the Deutsche Bahn model in Germany, which is in effect a company owned for the public good, it is actually a Government company but it is run as a non-profit making organisation, it is run as a public benefit company. They, in consultation with the regions and the local municipalities, run an integrated transport system that provides a simple, easy method of moving round the entire country and that, I think, is the major issue in relation to our problems here, both in Leeds and across the country. I think it is therefore important that rather than simply go down one line or another one, is to say what is the best solution for our area, and I am not sure that nationalisation *per se* is that because I think that actually there is a much better model in the not for profit company because it gives the company itself the power to go out and make the appropriate investments without then being hide bound by Government dogma or in fact Government spending limits.

For that reason, Lord Mayor, we were attempting to be positive in our addition to the White Paper and I would recommend it to Council. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jonathan Bentley to second.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Second, Lord Mayor, and reserve the right to speak.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Andrew Carter.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. In moving the amendment - I wonder why I have landed with this but never mind – Councillor Campbell referred to people having short memories. He is quite right, really. When I started work I used to travel by train from the old Stanningley Station into the centre of Leeds. That is when they were there. Time keeping, timetabling a nonsense, trains dirty, staff some good, some very indifferent, some downright rude to passengers. That was British Rail in the 1960s/1970s. That is why British Rail became a music hall joke and still are to many people who remember it.

A simple return to a nationalised railway system would not resolve the problems and it is interesting, isn't it, that for 13 years over the past 20-odd years we had a Labour Government. Did they do that? There's a man here who sat on the Labour Benches. Did they seek to renationalise the railways? Did they heck as like. Did they plough billions of pounds of investment into the railways like the Coalition Government and now the Conservative Government have been doing and will continue to do? Furthermore, which part of the rail system causes the biggest problems? It is the permanent way, isn't it? It is the part that is owned by the public that causes half the problems at least with the railway system in this country, so please do not come along here lecturing us or anybody else because you have had an instruction from the Politburo that is the Labour party's headquarters in London telling you you have got to start tabling resolutions you never tabled for 13 years of a Labour Government and one of you sat there amongst them in those 13 years.

Let us come to the buses. It is very difficult really to accept lectures again on this issue because I recall serving on Metro when all parties decided we were going to go for franchising. Everybody was agreed, we still agree. What has happened on Metro now the Transport Committee of the Combined Authority since then? It has all gone extremely quiet about franchising and please do not say, oh well, Mayoral Authorities can do it and we cannot because we have not got a Mayor. Actually, you put a proper bid together and go to the Secretary of State and ask for the franchise and we will support you, as I have said before.

If you want to talk about the transport ills of this city let us talk about the first time we discussed having a light rail system, a Grenoble type system, as I recall. Michael Simmons who wanted it chaired Metro; George Mudie who led the Council did not, they did not get on with each other so George stopped it.

Next we had Supertram. Your Secretary of State – your Secretary of State – turned down Supertram when I was Leader of the Council despite all the work being done, the public inquiry that won, the lot, and said get a bus system. Now you lot, under your Leadership, Councillor Lewis, conducted the most inept public inquiry on NGT and lost us that and we had to get you the £173m which now you are giving to First Bus who you have just criticised. You have got no record on which to lecture anybody about a transport system in this city. I move the amendment. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Neil Buckley to second.

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. In seconding this motion, Councillor Carter is absolutely right but let us start with the positive. There are Members in this Chamber who know from other bodies that over the last two years ago I

have actually been quite critical of bus companies in this neck of the woods. I think that is perfectly well documented and on record. A franchising arrangement which will give the public a better service, I have got no problem with that at all and it is entirely a good thing.

Really, when you actually read this White Paper Motion, it is just a rant about nationalising the railways and it is a complete load of nonsense. When you actually look, as others have referred, between 2010 and now the railways have had a massive increase in passenger numbers and since 1995 the number of passenger journeys has gone up by a billion – a billion. It is multiplied by a factor of three.

Prices have increased in order to fund a vastly bigger, better, cleaner and faster network but there are some Members – various Members of various ages - in this Chamber some of whom are too young to remember when the railways were nationalised, as Councillor Carter has referred to them.

I jotted down a couple of figures here about what the situation was at that time when they were in public ownership. 1975, that was a good year for Labour, wasn't it? Oh yes. 44% increase and it took them three goes to get it. 1976, a further 12% increase. 1977, 13% more. 1978, 15% on top of that. In all these years there were two common factors: number one, the railways were nationalised; number two, there was a Labour Government in power. The trains were late, slow, dirty, overmanned and old and the whole system was in decline.

Nationalisation means going back to the curled up BR sandwich. It is the days of the Austin Allegro and Red Robbo and British Leyland and having to wait nine months for a telephone. Do we really want to go back to that? We do not.

COUNCILLOR HESELWOOD: Yes.

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: Yes, somebody said yes! This magic nationalisation that they say, “Oh, we will nationalise it”, what do they actually mean by that? Would they sack all the existing staff? No they would not, obviously. Would they sack all the middle management? No. Would they change the actual track? No, clearly not. Would they change the trains? No, there would be no money for that, that is the first thing.

What they would do, as their spokesman said on the television the other day, “Oh, we would stop paying dividends to the shareholders.” Well, who are the shareholders? Prudential, Standard Life, all the pension providers; presumably all that lot want pensions for their local electors. That is not the way to do it.

This is a political stunt, it is ignorant of the facts and it is really a pig-headed attempt to defy logic, and I second this motion, Lord Mayor. Thank you. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Keith Wakefield.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Thank you, Lord Mayor. If Councillor Carter does not get a knighthood for this piece of rubbish that he has come out with I will eat my hat! (*laughter*)

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: You might.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Because it is a real smokescreen. It comes on a day when the National Audit Office has just condemned the running of the railways for poor performance, it has just condemned value for money for the Thameslink and it comes after a week later when Christopher Grayling cost the taxpayers of this country nearly £2bn by doing a sweetheart deal with Virgin and Stagecoach.

Now, what I dislike most about these Tory leaders in Government is they privatise anything and everything, whether it is health, whether it is education and whether it is transport and that ideology, that obsession with privatisation stops people genuinely looking at good public Authorities that are running buses. Three out of the top four bus companies or bus services come from Reading, Nottingham and London – all of them publicly owned.

If you think privatisation and franchises are working on rail, just look at the evidence. In 1996 when GNER and Sea Containers picked up the franchise, went with the second period, collapsed in year 2 because it did not make enough profit. Christopher Garnett at the same time said franchises is flawed.

Fortunately when it did collapse the Labour Government brought back the East Coast Main Line into public ownership and surprise, surprise it made a billion pounds profit (*applause*) to put back in the Treasury. That is the evidence, that is not ancient history, that is 2015.

Instead of looking at the evidence, what does the Government do? I will tell you what it does, it rushes out and does a deal with Virgin and Stagecoach without looking at some of the fantasy projections and figures on passengers and on income. Two years into that franchise, what have we got? Virgin handing back the keys with Stagecoach saying they cannot run it any more because it is not making enough profit and that is what is costing taxpayers £2bn.

What have we got in this country run in cities under this franchise system that we have got? We have got an East Coast Main Line that actually has cost the taxpayers £2bn. It has lost 9.8% of season ticket holders. We are now unsure of routes they promised to deliver that affect Bradford, Leeds, Wakefield and Horsforth and, frankly, on the same day that they handed the keys in, their shares went up 12%, so that was the kind of deal and frankly the deal that he pulled off is the most shabbiest, deceitful deal done under this so-called thing called Partnership with Network. Nobody understands it, it was an excuse and an alibi for Virgin and Stagecoach to walk away from their responsibilities to the passengers of this country.

I say this, if we are OK with nationalised industries running our buses from Italy and France and our trains, what is wrong with looking at the option of having nationalised companies or State owned companies, Local Authorities, running our buses and trains here? I think it is time now that we actually looked at the whole way the franchising system is run because there is nobody here yet that would justify the cost to passengers both in terms of the experience.

One of the things you talk about in your investment – I will tell you where the investment has come from.

THE LORD MAYOR: Your last sentence, Councillor Wakefield.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: It has come from passengers who have been paying hiked up prices on these privatised companies. I move and support the White Paper. (*applause*)

COUNCILLOR R GRAHAME: Nationalise rail lines as well. Keep them running.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Fiona Venner.

COUNCILLOR VENNER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to speak in support of Councillor Richard Lewis's White Paper. A modern and responsive and attractive transport network is absolutely vital to the success of our city, transport is not just about roads and cars and trains and buses. It can support communities and tackle poverty by helping all residents to benefit from economic growth as well as attracting employers and businesses to a city, thus increasing employment opportunities. It can help make a place more people friendly by giving people access to the wider labour market and other vital services.

As the Chair of the Inner West Community Committee I wanted to particularly highlight the importance of an efficient and accessible bus network to local communities. At our November meeting our Community Committee received an update on the Leeds Transport Conversation and this highlighted just how much people want change and deserve it. We need much better connections between local areas across the city and between key services such as schools and hospitals, and we need better connection with areas outside of Leeds too to support people commuting into the city.

There is also a great desire for more sustainable travel and to make improvements to the environmental impact of buses and public transport in general, as well as making economic improvements as a result of a better transport system.

In Leeds we are ambitious and we are working hard. Transport for the North is publishing its Transport Plan in a matter of days and the Combined Authority is launching a range of initiatives including Bus 18 where they are working with bus operators to make buses easier to use, reduce emissions and improve passenger experience.

There is, of course, the Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme which aims at increasing the range of choice of transport options but focusing very much on improving bus services across the city. I cannot stress enough how much that is needed.

At the Inner West Community Committee it was very stark how much in areas of high deprivation like the wards of the Inner West people are completely dependent on public transport, and particularly buses, and what people are getting at the moment is just not good enough. Buses are not frequent enough, they are not reliable enough.

Communities deserve high quality transport so they can fulfil their potential. We are doing all we can to provide this but we need more local powers, as has been very eloquently described by my colleagues. I am a hundred per cent behind the Council working with its partners to develop proposals as soon as possible for bus franchising in Leeds, but I absolutely support Councillor Blackburn's amendment. It would have been so much better if the Bus Bill had allowed Councils to set up our own municipal bus companies.

We very much need the Government to stand up, stick to its promises and work with us to get a better transport infrastructure for the people of Leeds. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Denise Ragan.

COUNCILLOR RAGAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor and fellow Councillors. I am speaking in support of Richard Lewis's White Paper. If there is one issue that illustrates the longstanding north-south divide it is the gap in transport investment between the two regions. Although the Transport Secretary insists that this is a myth, the Government's own figures show that the capital spent per head in Yorkshire has shrunk compared to London in the last four years. This has to stop. We deserve more.

Nowhere is the issue highlighted as clearly, I believe, as in relation to local bus services. Local people are having to face so many barriers to using buses that it is becoming nigh on impossible or, at the very least, impractical for many to do so. The lack of reliability, availability and frequency of service, as well as the amount of time taken to get to destinations, are all obstacles which people are having to face.

Residents living in my ward of Burmantofts and Richmond Hill (specifically Cross Green like Richard alluded to) experience these difficulties on a day to day basis. Our research has shown that those in the more deprived areas where car ownership is low will feel the impact of poor public transport links more. People cannot rely on buses to turn up on time, or even at all. There are often not enough buses available throughout the day or at a suitable time and it often takes so long to reach a destination that it is not worthwhile waiting for a bus to turn up.

This is not to mention the cost of services, which so often excludes people from using them and the effect of such poor services is huge. People are far less able to access jobs and educational opportunities as well as vital services as GP surgeries and hospitals. We want to make sure that this is no longer the case but we need to be allowed to do more to work towards this. It is only right that Chris Grayling has asked for Councils to put forward proposals for bus franchising arrangements. Local Authorities are best placed to have more control and we would be able to provide the amount of public accountability needed to ensure improved bus service for everyone. The Government should show us more respect for this.

I only hope that Grayling keeps his promise that he will not stand in the way of bus franchising in Leeds and that we see the promised guidance from his department quickly so we can get on and continue working to improve bus services for local people and visitors to our great city alike. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Barry Anderson.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. One thing just occurred to me, although it did not occur to me until we came here. One of the great things that you as a Government did the last time was you introduced PFI. Probably if Brown and Blair had kept going you probably would have PFI-ed the whole rail network as well and where would that have got you?

Anyway, to answer some of the questions that have been raised, the Government has listened on the East Coast Main Line. They are introducing a public private partnership. That is surely a chance for everybody to show how that works. That is an opportunity for this administration and for WYCA to work to move these things forward.

Let us look at some other comments that we have had here. It was said that when it was nationalised East Coast Main Line made a bigger profit. My understanding from the research that was done was that that was because they were not asked to pay premium access to get access to the tracks, so they did not have the same costs that were there. It is very good if you suddenly remove a cost, then it is quite easy to manipulate the figures to make things look better than anything else.

Then we go down to look at some of the problems. You talk about prices going up. Between 1979 and 1994 prices rose under British Rail by 108% in real terms.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Tory Government for you.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: Under British Rail? What are you talking about, man?

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: 1979 to 1994, Tory Government.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: No, it was British Rail. You wanted to renationalise. That is the sort of thing when you have a nationalised operation? Don't you understand? Simple economics. Dearie, I do wonder sometimes, I do wonder. I do wonder.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Stop winding him up, James.

COUNCILLOR: Go on Barry, you haven't lost your place have you?

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: This afternoon we have heard bleating all over the place about costs that the Government are doing. If you were to renationalise anything, where are you going to get the money? Are you going to suddenly reduce the National Health Service spending? We have heard today from you all across here how the National Health Service needs money spent on it. We have heard from you how Adult Social Care needs money spent on it, so that is a valuable resource. I am sorry but the money tree does not exist. Someone has to pay for it. (*interruption*) If you continue to borrow, how would you pay for the renationalisation? How would you compensate people? You do not even understand what your policy would have to do. It would have

to take away money from things that we all agree money should be spent on. You do not understand...

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Not a penny for Europe now that we have given them £39bn.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: ...you just cannot keep spending the same money over and over again.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: £39bn to the EEC.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: You also love spending everybody else's money in terms of what you are doing.

You have the chance, you can do something about this. You can show leadership and get us a Devolution deal. You can show leadership and get WYCA to come forward, as Councillor Carter says in his amendment. You are the ones who sit round with the Northern Rail economy. You are the people who have got your hands on the control mechanisms. Instead of carping on, start delivering and start doing why you were elected in the first place. Thank you very much, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

COUNCILLOR ROBINSON: I thought we had run out of time there, Lord Mayor. Thank you very much for your very kind comments earlier as well, Lord Mayor, I really appreciate that, and thank you for the round of applause from the Chamber earlier. I particularly appreciate you announcing that I am now off the market, so that is very, very kind of you! (*laughter*)

As we turn to the White Paper motion I speak in favour of the amendment from Councillor Carter. Back in 1989 when privatisation was first being mooted of British Rail I was but three years old, and I am sure some people in this Chamber were already on Council at that time. Things have changed drastically. There are hands up already! Things have changed drastically in that time. Actually what we have seen through privatisation is that there has been an increase in passenger numbers, an actual increase that was recorded in 2014 of 117% from those earlier figures. We have seen that rail patronage is now at its highest level ever in the history of the rail service.

We have seen that actually if you look at studies, and the study came out from the European Commission analysing the figures from 1997 to 2012 and what that suggested was that the UK was the best rail service in the whole of Europe. It was also the most improved but it was the best rail service and it was the best rail service when taking into account 14 different areas. It was not just a blip, it was not just hidden figures, it was actually looking at the whole range of things.

If you take other organisations and think tanks like the Adam Smith Institute, they have suggested that while they may prefer more competition in the market, privatisation which has introduced that competition has been of huge benefit to the rail service.

I would disagree with some of the Members opposite who would like to see further investment in the north of England and further investment in transport in the

north of England, and I will be one of the first ones championing that because actually we need that, that is what will help social mobility, it will help reduce income inequalities, it will help people get to work, it will help investment. Nationalisation just is not the route.

There is a whole raft of articles that appear in every newspaper, not just The Telegraph. I have got quotes here from The Guardian saying “On balance privatisation has been a huge success.” I am not a regular reader of The Guardian but I might start if they keep coming up with quotes like that.

COUNCILLOR: That is not The Morning Star, Matthew.

COUNCILLOR ROBINSON: No, in 2015 they had a further editorial which said, “To renationalise the railways would be an act of political dogma when patronage is going up.” There are actually some very fair and balanced comments that are coming out here.

If you look, renationalisation of the railways would be a costly mistake for three very, very simple reasons, the first one being that it would be prohibitively expensive to do. At a time when we are trying to negotiate and navigate Brexit, at a time when we naturally need to look at our health service and reforms that our health service needs with an ageing population, to start going down a route of nationalisation and the complexities involved in that would be utterly ludicrous.

The second area is that actually many of the trains and the train vehicles are not actually owned by these operators. They are owned by third parties and leased back. To unpick some of these deals is just not going to be possible and actually there will not necessarily be any improvement when the State runs it.

The third area, and the area that I would urge the Labour Party to look into most, is that actually under EU law it enshrines that under the single market there has to be open access and operators such as Grand Central and others actually have to operate free from Central Government control so I fully expect the Labour Party to be coming out and saying that they are going to lobby Kier Starmer, they are going to lobby their Front Bench to be able to say that actually we should be leaving the single market if we want to nationalise the railways.

COUNCILLOR: Their MPs can’t do that, they are not going to be able to do it.

COUNCILLOR ROBINSON: Because the policy at the moment, your Brexit stance, is completely contradictory to your transport stance. It just does not make sense, I am afraid, Lord Mayor, and I back the amendment in the name of Councillor Carter. *(applause)*

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

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thanks, Lord Mayor. I did not understand what Councillor Robinson was saying because clearly after Brexit we are going to be awash with money, aren’t we? The country is going to be flying. Everything is going to be

wonderful. The Health Service is going to be awash with money, it will be heaven on earth, won't it? That is what you told us. Have you changed your minds on that?

COUNCILLOR STEPHENSON: That's what people voted for.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Is it perhaps reality actually dawning for you? Can I get back to what it on here? It says "Council therefore calls on the Secretary of State to return the East Coast Main Line to public ownership without delay." That is what it says. That is what we are talking about. I know you might want to talk about something else but that is what we are talking about.

I always enjoy listening to the Tories in debates like this and I love listening to Andrew Carter's selective use of facts from history. The £173m which we are giving to First Bus. Keith, can you tell me how much we are giving to First Bus because I know I have been asleep through a few meetings but can you tell me how much? None? I think, Andrew, you have missed it. You need to talk to some of your colleagues who come to the cross-party working group and you might have a better idea.

Let us perhaps talk about the services that First Bus does provide contractually for us and Metro on our Park and Ride where they get 95% satisfaction. If you can get 95% passenger satisfaction on a park and ride between Elland Road and Leeds and Temple Green and Leeds, there is a message there that First Bus should be able to understand. If you can do it on that route you can do it on other routes and I think often for First as a big operator they always try and boil the ocean and solve all their problems and end up solving none. Actually, there are ways that they can improve their services and we are very keen in the short term to work with them to help them do that. The work that Keith is doing on Bus 18 and all that with all the operators is actually about change now, because you cannot wait. I think what we had at Metro was certainly, we were always talking about franchising and for year after year you would be looking at some other document that Metro had produced or the bus operators had produced together and we got absolutely nowhere. We cannot have a situation where we just sit back and just talk about what we are going to do in the future. We have to talk about what we are going to do now.

Another little point was, I did have to think about when the Tories ran Metro in the late 70s and I know it is ancient history, but if ever there were a time when an organisation – late 70s Andrew, yes, you ran it – before Labour took over. When Labour took over you might recall they introduced 30 pence fares off peak, free fares for old aged pensioners, all sorts of things, drove up patronage by 50% over a very short time, reduced congestion in the city. Before that Metro was a basket case.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: You are talking 40 years ago.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Sparling was one of them, wasn't he? I can't remember the others who were kicking around at the time.

COUNCILLOR: Your lot went back 40 years.

COUNCILLOR: They went back 50 years.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: You go back to 1960 for Stanningley Station.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: John, I only raise that because Andrew is so good at clutching bits of selective history. If he can do it, I don't see why we shouldn't do it!

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: I learned it from you!

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: To get back to the serious bit, I think there is a clarity perhaps on the bus side. We have all got to that point where we know that we must have change and we know that there is a way forward. I hope that the Tories over there will think about the East Coast Main Line and read up a bit on that because that is an absolute disgrace and a scandal what has happened for the second time and it is ripping off the people of this city and this nation. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: I hope you are all sitting down and listening very carefully because we are now moving to the vote.

Firstly I would like to call for a vote for the amendment in the name of Councillor David Blackburn. (*A vote was taken*) That is CARRIED.

Now I would like to call for a vote on the second amendment in the name of Councillor Campbell. (*A vote was taken*) That is LOST.

I would now like to call for a vote on the third amendment in the name of Councillor Andrew Carter. (*A vote was taken*) That is also LOST.

We move to the substantive motion in the name of Councillor Blackburn. (*A vote was taken*) That is CARRIED. Lovely, thank you very much.

ITEM 14 – WHITE PAPER MOTION – CHILDREN'S SERVICES

THE LORD MAYOR: We now move on to White Paper Motion on Children's Services. Yet again illness has meant that Councillor Downes has been replaced and Councillor Golton is now going to propose the White Paper. Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. You will note it is quite a lengthy White Paper Motion, primarily because there is a lot of detail to get in to make the case for our young people in the city.

I think the majority of us here think that our first obligation as elected representatives is to try and ensure a certain amount of social justice in the outcomes that we achieve through our decision making. One of the inevitabilities is that if we are to create true social justice you need to start early because if children are disadvantaged, then they are held back from the very beginning and it is the interventions that we make early on that make the biggest difference in terms of changing our society and equalising opportunities.

That is why it is with some regret that the Liberal Democrats are bringing this White Paper Motion here today because one thing that we do not want to do is to

denigrate the story of improvement and success which has occurred in Children's Services, especially since we knew what it was like to be in a very ignominious position of being inadequate by the national authorities and we recognised what needed to happen to improve that situation. We started that journey and it was fulfilled through this administration, and I think that level of partnership is one of the things that got us through.

One of the things that also got us through was our realisation that self awareness was key to actually succeeding in all those areas that we had ambition for for our young people and, unfortunately, being considered to be a good organisation by Ofsted and being the only good organisation out of the Core Cities, which is something that we should celebrate time and again, can perhaps mean that we take our foot off the pedal and that improvement that we had intended and worked for can start to reverse, and that is one of the reasons why my group is bringing this White Paper forward.

Lord Mayor, you know the Liberal Democrats hope to make a difference to the outcomes of young people through the creation of the Pupil Premium in the Coalition Government. It was universally accepted, I would think, afterwards to the point where the Tories now consider it one of their policies and they have continued its implementation up to now. The Pupil Premium is based on good intentions. It is how we spend that money which makes the difference and, as is pointed out when we brought this issue up before at Executive Board, we get told by our Chief Officer for Learning and Improvement well, it is so much more difficult these days because our schools are all independently run and we cannot tell them what to do.

However, since we do have a Chief Officer for Learning and Improvement and we do actually have a department of Children's Services which includes Educational Services, whose primary purpose is to improve the educational outcomes of all of our children, then I would like to think that we do try to intervene and that when we find out that our intervention is actually outcomes which are lesser than those of our neighbours and our comparative Local Authorities, that we will look again at what we are doing in the expectation that we could hopefully improve that situation.

I am afraid sometimes we do not pay attention until other people point it out so if you will excuse me I will read – which is not my usual delivery mechanism – and just give you a few highlights.

“Primary education is particularly worrying in Leeds. The city ranks as the second worst Council area for Key Stage 2 results in Yorkshire and the Humber with just 56% achieving expected standard. Only Doncaster, on 54%, ranks lower than we do. Furthermore, this is in the context that Yorkshire and the Humber is the worst performing region in the whole of England on this measure. The county is a full 10% behind Inner London, where 68% of pupils achieved expected standards. Performance is particularly bad for boys in Leeds with 51% reaching standards compared with 61% of girls and only three Council areas recorded a bigger gap.”

Lord Mayor, when those of us who are still Governors went to training recently that was put on by our Learning and Improvement section and it was there to make sure

that our Pupil Premium is spent to the best way possible. I have hit red. I will continue this anecdote when it comes to my summing up but what I will say is please do listen because this is a motion which is passed in the true spirit of partnership and transparency. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Golton. Councillor Cleasby, please.

COUNCILLOR CLEASBY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Lord Mayor, again I rise in the hope that I can correct history and not have it recorded in the manner it is here. My understanding of the history of education in this city is that the Labour Government took Education from us and as a consequence Education Leeds was created. That was under the Labour Council. The Coalition of this Council inherited that. My further understanding is that that Coalition of this Council were preparing for Education to come back into the control of the city and an LEA created. Unfortunately before that could be fully implemented we lost control of the Council and, Lisa, your Party took control of it. Please, let us not start lashing out with false claims about history when in fact there is a modern claim that I can make and that is the tiny bullet point here which is, "Reduce senior capacity to improve services."

Lisa, I have sat on Panels with you when we searched the country unable to find the talent that we need to come in to improve the services in this city, and you led on that. If we could not find the talent, maybe it is because somebody like you had booked the wrong headhunters or did not brief them properly, did not brief them satisfactorily so we could find the right people, because that is what is needed in moving forward, not the criticism of the old Coalition, not the criticism of the Government but how we do things.

Also, there must be less regard for our Headteachers' opinion. Management must have the confidence to manage and Headteachers must have the confidence to understand they are being well managed. I believe at this moment, Lord Mayor, that is not the case in our city and this White Paper that I am seconding is important that we look at it like that and, as Councillor Golton said, that we look at it collectively. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Mulherin to move an amendment, please.

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. The Lib Dem Group are very selective with their facts and, despite Councillor Golton's weasel words, they are quick to forget the remarkable progress that has been made over the last seven years and the legacy that their Coalition left us here to turn around. For the benefit of new Members and some of the more forgetful Members opposite, let me outline the situation Children's Service in Leeds were in under their leadership in 2010.

Ofsted found Leeds Children's Services to be inadequate, with inadequate leadership, high numbers of agency social workers with heavy case loads, vulnerable children left at risk of harm and a history of under-investment after six years of your Coalition.

Since then and the change in control of this Local Authority, investment in leadership, effective cross-party support for that work and for maintaining the

investment in the Children's Services budgets to continue focusing on upstream prevention, early intervention and working restoratively with families, in 2015 Ofsted described Children's Services in Leeds as good with outstanding leadership and management. (*applause*)

Leeds Children's Services now are recognised as a Partner in Practice by your Government over there and are actively sought out to support other Local Authorities on their improvements journeys precisely because of the strength of leadership and management of the service we have here. Investment in staff and new ways of working since 2010 have paid dividends. Not only are children less likely to come into Local Authority care and more likely to be safely cared for within their wider family, it has also improved recruitment and retention of social work staff, agency costs have reduced by over three-quarters saving over £3.5m per year.

COUNCILLOR: Well done.

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Let us not forget that Leeds had over 40% more Central Government funding as a Local Authority over seven years ago and much poorer outcomes on your watch, Councillor Golton.

Government cuts have led to around 600 Youth Centres and 1,200 Children's Centres closing up and down the country and many Local Authorities have ceased to provide a School Improvement Service as a result of the Education Services Grant having been completely abolished. That alone has led to a £14m reduction to Leeds Children's Services since 2010.

Locally we have continued to invest in our School Improvement Service as we work with all schools in Leeds to bring up standards, despite an increasingly complex school system with fewer powers held by Local Authorities.

We have always said that we value our relationship with all Leeds schools. We have managed to maintain our clusters and have a very strong family of schools across the city. However, we have never and never will support a policy of forced academisation. We have seen only too clearly what happens when it all goes wrong with the collapse of Wakefield City Academies Trust, an organisation that was losing money hand over fist and which its own Chief Executive described as having inadequate accountability and questionable financial practice. To make matters worse, it then appeared that that Trust was asset stripping its member schools and charging them a levy in an attempt to worsen a difficult financial situation.

We heard earlier from Councillor Arif and Councillor Ritchie about the impact of child poverty outcomes here in Leeds and how it is growing as a problem in our city. At a time when the challenges facing families are greater than they have been for two generations, I would urge Members opposite to get behind our work here in Leeds to make this city the best city for children to grow up in. We are open and transparent about progress made and where further progress is required and we positively encourage high challenge and high support, and we work through our existing cross-party arrangements to do that. We have cross-party Executive Board, Children's Scrutiny Board, a cross-party Children and Families Trust Board, a cross-party Good Learning Places working group and Children's Champions from parties across the city. We do

not feel your proposed Commission would add value and we strongly urge you to stop playing politics with children's lives and work with us to lobby this Government to stop cutting the resources we need. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jonathan Pryor.

COUNCILLOR PRYOR: I second and reserve the right to speak.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Wilford.

COUNCILLOR WILFORD: Thank you, Lord Mayor. As Councillors we are all corporate parents with the laudable intention of doing right by our children. We are failing those children by low attainment in their education. The fact that Leeds is the second worst performing region at Key Stage 2 in reading, writing and arithmetic and with Ofsted results plummeting, it is about time we took responsibility for our children. Children are the future of this city and without the basics of an education how can we expect them to flourish and grow as adults entering the workforce and contributing to society and the city in which they live?

We want to be the best city but how can we achieve that if we are not addressing our children's needs, if we are failing those children. Low educational attainment is not good enough, throwing money at Children's Services is meaningless unless we have the structures and wherewithal to address these failings and to put in place genuine improvements.

Our children deserve better. We owe them an education where they can attain qualifications to provide them with the best possible start in life, a foundation to meet their ambitions. Knowledge is power and I support the motion of a cross-party Commission to work together to turn around this decline in academic attainment. We owe it to our children. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Heselwood please.

COUNCILLOR HESELWOOD: Lord Mayor and comrades – I answer to the Politburo, come on! (*laughter*) I am speaking in support of the amendment in the name of Councillor Lisa Mulherin and I am focusing on education.

Leeds is an exciting and vibrant city with a growing population of just under 188,000 children and young people in our schools. These schools are increasingly diverse with over 20 ethnic groups and nearly 200 different languages spoken. It is a city of great contrast with some of the most disadvantaged areas of the country as well as some of the most advantaged. Approximately 40% of the children in our poorest communities receive Pupil Premium.

We recognise that improvement is necessary and we are working alongside all of our schools to achieve that. We all want the best possible outcomes for our children and young people of Leeds and our Best City for Learning strategy has been developed to show how we are developing a sector-led system whereby we work with schools as a key partner in driving up attainment, achievement and attendance.

However, I need to point out that our per pupil funding is the second lowest in the region. This is disgraceful when you consider the deprivation levels that many of pupils are facing. We know there is a proven link between poverty and educational outcomes and we heard earlier today about child poverty levels in Leeds, yet the funding received from Government does not address this inequality.

The Liberal Democrat White Paper is extremely critical and yet what it does not mention is that over 85% of children and young people in Leeds attend a school that is rated by Ofsted as being good or outstanding. It does not, however, mention the two schools in Leeds where 100% of pupils achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and maths at Key Stage 2. It does not mention the improvement that has been seen this year in Key Stage 2 results only the second year they were taken under the new curriculum. It does not mention the fact that Leeds children are making as good progress in reading as pupils nationally and better progress in maths than pupils nationally. I feel like I am in a pantomime because it also does not mention that for Key Stage 4 Leeds is in the top 40 of 151 Local Authorities.

The Ofsted results that are referred to – and have been referred to widely – are something that we have raised with the senior Regional Ofsted Liaison Officer and have been looking at within Children and Families and we are aware that this is a regional trend. He is looking into this on our behalf and it would appear nationally that Ofsted have recognised there are issues with the current inspection framework and have proposed that a new framework is introduced from spring 2018. We will, of course, work with our schools to help them adapt to any new framework that is introduced.

Councillor Mulherin mentioned earlier our opposition to forced academisation and used the example of WCAT as a chain that was completely unaccountable and where money was prioritised over the education of children and young people. It was their Chief Executive who was paid £82,000 for 15 weeks' work. I want to break that down for you. That equates to just under £5,500 per week or just over a thousand pounds a day. That assumes he was working full-time five days a week, which I really suspect he was not.

By contrast, primary school teachers are paid an average of £24,500 and secondary school teachers just under £28,000 per annum and that is working full time.

Unfortunately this is the reality of educational landscape today; inequality from the bottom right the way up to the top. It is something that needs addressing but it is something that Education Secretary after Education Secretary has failed to do. I have absolutely no confidence that Damian Hinds, as the latest to walk through that revolving door into that office, will do any better. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Finnigan.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. If we can perhaps deal initially with some of the comments from comrade Mulherin in terms of the Conservative-Lib Dem-Morley Borough Independent Coalition. That is fake news – there never was a Morley Borough-Tory-Lib Dem Coalition, so if we kill off that untrue statement we can work through comrade Mulherin's antagonism towards the academies that exist throughout Leeds.

That is perhaps a bit of a puzzle, taking into account that some of the finest schools she has serving her communities are indeed academies. Indeed, it is somewhat ironic that the person who introduced academies was Ed Balls, upon whose election material comrade Mulherin was happy to pose year in, year out. We cannot really understand why she has this antagonism towards academies who certainly in our area are doing an excellent job.

It is no doubt the case that they are offering the best educational opportunity to the working class communities that we have and certainly the tougher communities that we have are having their educational attainment raised as a result of the fine work that operates in those particular academies, whether we are talking about Newlands Primary or whether we are talking about Morley Academy.

Certainly when we talk about political dogma, what we are interested in in Morley is what works, what will give our kids the best start possible and simply the academy movement in Morley has been nothing but a total and utter success. I note that there is nothing in there from comrade Mulherin that talks about that particular success and the fact that in her own back yard this works fine.

I am sometimes puzzled by the comrades, what they expect from working class kids. I think that their view is that working class kids can be sacrificed and political dogma is what is important on these occasions. What we would say in Morley, particularly in Morley, is that what is important is making sure that those kids who get very little help and support elsewhere, get the best educational start that they can do and that is as a result of the academies doing the fine job that they do in and around the Morley area.

I think a bit more reflection, perhaps some generosity of spirit from comrade Mulherin may go down better and perhaps the occasional thank you to those academies that are doing an excellent job educating the kids in her area and educating in our area. Perhaps a little bit of thanks might go down well in those particular localities. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dan Cohen.

COUNCILLOR COHEN: Thank you, Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Comrade Cohen. (*laughter*)

COUNCILLOR COHEN: Easy now! Following the lead of Members opposite I would like to welcome our own Conservative candidate for the Moortown ward who I can see in the gallery above and look forward to seeing you down here come May.

I want to thank the Liberals for their White Paper today because it raises issues that we, my colleagues, have been raising for some time because once again, Members opposite are proving that denial is not just a river in Egypt. (*laughter*) It is a fact that at the earliest foundation stage Leeds children are doing less well than children in the Core Cities or compared with statistical neighbours, or even compared nationally. The same is true for our children at the end of Key Stage 1. The same is true for our children at

the end of Key Stage 1. Yes, this year we have done a little better than the previous year but so did everybody else, so essentially we are still doing less well than everybody else.

The same is true, indeed, for our vulnerable learners right across the city, right across the piece. The story is far from satisfactory.

Our secondary phase where, as an aside proportionately more of our schools are academies, fare better but how much better still could they do if we were performing better lower down the chain?

In terms of Ofsted there is a very worrying trend that has been alluded to where Leeds schools are having far too many judgments recently of RI and inadequate. I know it is being looked at but it is a worrying trend.

What is Councillor Mulherin's response? It was fairly predictable, wasn't it, like the old broken record. Blame the Government, blame Government funding. Like a three ring circus. She wants us to look anywhere but where the issue really is. She wants to bring failings of the administration on someone, on anyone but not the administration. Not for the first time, though, Councillor Mulherin is missing the point.

Councillor Ritchie made a very important point earlier on in this meeting. He told us that all Local Authorities are struggling financially and, indeed, nobody claims not for one moment that schools do not need more money. I am a Governor of four schools; every one of them would like more money. All of them could use it incredibly wisely but the fact is, in common with those other struggling Local Authorities, we have a problem. The problem is, we are doing worse than most of them. We are not performing as well as other struggling Local Authorities, and why is that the case? One must conclude that ultimately the responsibility lies with this Labour administration.

COUNCILLOR: Rubbish.

COUNCILLOR COHEN: I support this White Paper. We support this White Paper and its proposals. Lord Mayor, until we take control of this Council in May (*laughter*) it is the only sensible way to restore quality and commonsense to our Children's Services. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*applause*) (*interruption*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lamb.

COUNCILLOR COHEN: At the rate you are losing your Members we have not got to do much.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: I will give them a minute to settle down, Lord Mayor. Are we ready to start the clock now?

THE LORD MAYOR: I think we will start the clock exactly now.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Are all our comrades sitting comfortably? Then I shall begin.

Lord Mayor, I love a good knock-about in this place and goodness knows I have had plenty with Councillor Blake over the years on these very issues. *(laughter)* More on that later!

Lord Mayor, it is a shame in many ways the nature that this debate has followed because I think there is real danger and I was slightly disappointed in Councillor Mulherin's response...

COUNCILLOR LOWE: Because it was bloody good, that's why.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: ... because I think there is a real danger, Lord Mayor, that we are missing the point. In many ways I am very reluctant to support the White Paper and I am kind of sorry that it is here. For nearly all of my time on Council I have been involved in this Children's Services agenda either as a Lead Member in the administration, and I do remember my history and it was the Labour Government that took Education off your Labour Council and it was under Richard Harker's leadership, and I was one of his lead Members, that we got to a position where Education could come back to the Authority. There is nothing for you to be proud of in that, just as there is nothing for us to be proud of in the position Children's Services found itself in in the 2000s, but we collectively, supported by you initially, began the work to put things right and then you, supported by us, continued that. I think we collectively and you should be proud of the work that has been done to turn Children's Services around.

The reluctance to bring this forward and the worry that you are not taking it in the spirit that it is intended, this is genuinely as a critical friend to say there are things we are worried about, that we are in a good place but we do not have the guaranteed right to stay there and there are serious concerns. Education issues have been highlighted; I want to focus on some of the social care issues. Steve Walker is an officer I have got an awful lot of time for. I enjoyed my time working with him, I think he is a real credit to this city, as are so many of the officers who work in Children's Services and we should be incredibly proud that they have been asked to support other Local Authorities and help them to turn things round. The concern remains, do we really have the capacity in the city to do all of the things that we are doing and not take our eye off the ball? There are indicators that perhaps some things are not quite right. The whole point of this White Paper, as I understand it, and the reason I am supporting it, is as people who are desperate for Children's Services to improve and keep improving, we just want to pause and make sure we have got things right.

I think it is the wrong time to have a shrill debate and get a bit yarboo about it. There is nothing more important than getting the best start in life for the children in our city, making sure the most vulnerable area safe and getting the best opportunities to close the gap that all of us want to see closed.

I would urge you to - I am sure you are not going to support the paper but I would urge you to heed some of the warnings that are in it and just take stock and let us make sure we do not let things slip from the position we have got to. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jonathan Pryor.

COUNCILLOR PRYOR: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am delighted to be seconding the Labour amendment to this White Paper. I have to say when Councillor Golton started speaking I became a bit nervous. He began a bit of a *mea culpa* over what things the Tory-Lib Dem-MBI Coalition did over their time and I thought that is most of my speech listing all of the terrible things they did. Luckily he did not make it too far down the list and I can still remind Council, a bit of a recap, about some of the history of under-investment in services and staff.

Let us not forget this was a time when there was a Labour Government which was funding Councils properly in a way that the Government is not now, and yet at the same time there were very high numbers of children looked after with Child Protection Plans, residential care was poor with low quality homes, they were cheap, not a suitable home for vulnerable children. We were in a situation where Children's Services was not fit for purpose. There had been a clear lack of political leadership to drive the improvement that was necessary and it was the children and young people of Leeds who were left to pay the price.

By contrast, we have been judged good by Ofsted with outstanding leadership and management. We are the only Core City to have that. It was a few Scrutinys ago that Councillor Cohen said that we say that we are the only Core City to be rated good too often. I know that does not really fit into the narrative of the speech he made but we should not be afraid to keep saying that.

We are improving investment in Children's Services in the face of savage cuts from Government. It is your Government cutting all this money, let us not forget that, yet we are still doing better than a lot of the comparative cities. There has been a 14.7% reduction in the number of children looked after, compared to a 13% national increase; a 42% reduction in the number of children with the Child Protection Plan compared to a 31% national increase. If Leeds had been moving in line with the rest of the country, instead of saving £4m it would have cost us an extra £10m. When Leeds is doing better and bucking the trend of the rest of the country, I am sorry but we have to look to the national Government.

In May 2010 Labour took back control of the Council and started an immediate improvement journey. Children's Services has become a political priority that it should always have been and is now completely unrecognisable to the one inherited in 2010.

We said many times that we are not complacent. We do say that all the time and we are not and we are keeping working to improve Children's Services. We are aware that improvements are necessary but the White Paper from the Lib Dems, if I am honest it seems a bit of sour grapes. It makes no mention of the huge improvements that have been made after the mess we had been left.

Let us not forget, if we are going back to the other things the Lib Dems have done for our young people, it was the Lib Dems who broke their promise when it came to tuition fees, voting for an increase to £9,000 a year; it was the Lib Dems who said nothing when Education Maintenance Grant was scrapped; it was the Lib Dems who extolled the virtues of the Sure Start Centres and then voted for the cuts that led to hundreds to close across the country. However, I am sure the people of Leeds can take solace in the fact that while thousands of young people struggle to afford their tripled

tuition fees, while young children across the country are missing out on vital early intervention work, the man responsible can relax with his new knighthood, a true reward for his spectacular failure and betrayal of an entire generation of young people. Thank you. (*applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Matthew Robinson.

COUNCILLOR ROBINSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I think that the critical friend narrative is a useful one and I appreciate the Liberal Democrats bringing this forward because actually while there are many areas of success in Education in Leeds, many of them highlighted by Councillor Finnigan as well, there are areas we that need to be concerned about and there, as somebody who works with a lot of teachers, they talk about sweating the small stuff, that actually you cannot ever take your eye off the ball, you actually need to be constantly reaching for higher and higher standards.

While I think there is a huge amount of good, I listen to some of the speeches and it almost feels like we have reached a certain level and we are OK to sit on our laurels for a little bit. Actually, there is a lot more that could be done.

Many of the papers that actually are produced and not debated in this Chamber but debated at Scrutiny, I think that comes out. I understand that there is a lot of knock-about that goes on in this Chamber and I think that some of the narrative that has been suggested from the Members opposite and on this side and the Liberal Democrats and MBIs, actually perhaps now is the chance to have a little review and have a little think about things.

The worrying trend when you see that the gap is widening at primary is that, particularly like Councillor Golton said, it is so hard to close later on – nigh on impossible, actually, once that trend starts you can never close the gap.

That does not matter if those kids are from middle class backgrounds and not making the same progress that they would have done or who are on Pupil Premium and not making the same progress. It is now all about progress. The debate has changed to not just look at A* to C or the levels of SAT results. It is now about progress. Too often we do not look at progress and we actually start to look at just what the headline figures are.

There is a chance now, I think, for us to have some different cross party debate and perhaps to start bringing in others in the city, a little like Councillor Finnigan said, who have succeeded from Academy Trusts, from private schools, from charities, from others and say actually we want a really big conversation and a really big narrative.

A lot of the social mobility agenda that has been seen around opportunity areas has really harnessed those Local Authorities to really think about what they do and they are looking at something that we actually debated in some of the skills and Councillor Groves might remember, we were debating this about T-levels and what that could do and actually what that meant in the future, and the fact that we need more engineers as Governors, we need actually to look at governance leadership in schools as well, not just Headteacher leadership. It is how we hold to account at every single level. It is how the sector itself holds itself to account.

I do not believe that there is any teacher who wakes up in the morning and says, “I am really happy to go in and work at a rubbish school today.” I do not believe that. I do not believe there is any parent who says, “I am quite happy that my kid’s school is inadequate and I am happy to sit there.”

I think that what they do not understand is what needs to be done to improve it and a lot of that is around really, really sweating the small stuff, really engaging, really looking at the issues and actually thinking to ourselves perhaps now we need to think of our own opportunity areas in Leeds and where we need to put a real microscope on them and really, really set ourselves ambitious targets but targets that we stick to across this whole Chamber. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*applause*)

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

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thanks, Lord Mayor. I am going to finish my anecdote, actually. I went to training as a School Governor and it was to do with Pupil Premium and how we get the best out of it. Councillor Mulherin was there and, Councillor Mulherin, it was disappointedly defensive the response that you gave in this debate, I have to say. What you did show was your own personal commitment and you mentioned all the different meetings that you go to as the Lead Member for Children’s Services to show your commitment and get the message across that we want the best for our kids in this city.

I recall you went to that training and the person who was there who was running the training turned round and said, “We have got quite a good story in this city. As you know we have got good from Ofsted” and as Councillor Heselwood pointed out, 85% of our children go to a school which is deemed good or outstanding. Then the one thing she turned around and said was, “but do you know what, we are the poorest performing Authority for poorer families and children.” That was the point that we were all there and there were Councillors who were Tories, there were Councillors who were Liberals, there were Councillors who were Labour and they were all there as Community Governors because they all had a commitment to make sure that those kids that got Pupil Premium who are more disadvantaged and have less opportunities in life, actually that money was spent to the best possible means to make sure that their lives are improved.

We had examples, there was a school, it was Cobden Primary, and they had actually showed how their methods meant that their children from poorer backgrounds did just as well as middle class kids. We need that for the rest of the city. We need to show that ambition that it is not just going to be the outlier school, Cobden. Cobden is going to be the start of a new regime where all the children who are disadvantaged in the city do better. We need to get the message instead of the defensiveness that we have had this afternoon from this administration, that they are good. We are good, Ofsted says we are good. You pointed out that we got called inadequate after six years in administration and for everyone one of those years before that our Ofsted inspection said good. Then the Ofsted changed.

Councillor Heselwood talked about how, well, you know, we have got some bad Ofsted results recently with our schools but actually it might be because the Ofsted system is a little bit skewed. That is the way the cookie crumbles, I am afraid.

The point that you should be thinking about is, we should not be relying on Ofsted to tell us how good we are. We should know how good we are, we should be able to demonstrate that the gap between our poorest students and our middle class students is getting narrower and that we are not depending on our middle class kids to actually up the averages in terms of the results that we expect for this city.

That is the ambition we expect. We do not expect the defensiveness that we have had so far and Councillor Pryor, to bring up the rubbish about tuition fees in a debate which is talking about how we reduce poorer kids not being access things like university by making sure that they are not held behind in the way that they are at the moment in this city, that is what you should be concentrating on. *(applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Now I would like to call for the votes. Firstly I would like to call for the vote on the amendment in the name of Councillor Mulherin. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

The substantive motion is now in the name of Councillor Mulherin. *(A vote was taken)* That is also CARRIED.

Just one note before you all start packing your bags to go. Tom tells me that there has been a very bad accident on the M1 so for anybody heading out East Leeds way, it will not be that you will probably be on the M1 but obviously surrounding roads will now be full of other traffic as well, so please all be careful out there. Thank you for another Council meeting. Thank you.

(The meeting closed at 7.20pm)