

COUNCIL

12TH SEPTEMBER 2018

VERBATIM RECORD

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LEEDS CITY COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Held on

Wednesday, 12th September 2018

At

THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
CIVIC HALL,
LEEDS

In the Chair:

THE LORD MAYOR
(COUNCILLOR G LATTY)

VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

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VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF LEEDS CITY COUNCIL
ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 12th SEPTEMBER 2018

THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon to you all. We will kick off by asking you to ensure that your mobile phones are in a non-playing mode so that you do not have to contribute to my charity which, incidentally, is represented outside with the 40 faces of St Gemma's little exhibition which is going on at the moment. It is the 40th year of St Gemma's so these photos show you some people who have either been patients or parents, sisters, mothers, relations of patients and, of course, staff members. It is quite interesting and I recommend it as a look.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE LORD MAYOR: I do have several announcements, anybody with eagle eyes will notice that Councillor Sandy Lay is not here this afternoon. It is his silver wedding and his wife has said that there will not be a 26th wedding anniversary if he does not stay at home today! (*laughter*) He is elsewhere celebrating his wedding anniversary and I am sure we all wish him the continued happy matrimony.

We do need to extend congratulations to Ed Anderson who has been appointed as Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of West Yorkshire. A lot of you know him anyway and I do believe he was actually an officer of the Council some years ago before he started running airports. Anyway, he is the new one, I have met him a couple of times in his role and I am sure he will make an excellent Lord Lieutenant so let us wish him every success.

Yesterday we had the Yorkshire in Bloom Awards in York. It would be invidious to pick anybody out so I think really I should say across the city we won eight golds and a shed load of other awards and I think we should congratulate the gardeners of Leeds. (*Applause*) To be honest it was more like the Mayor's Show than an In Bloom - you could not move for chains!

I have mentioned St Gemma's so I hope you have a look at that and I hope it encourages in you the urge to contribute to my charity.

Now, a rather sad note. Honorary Alderman Grenville Fletcher has died. He passed away on 30th August. Honorary Alderman Fletcher represented Pudsey Ward during his time on Council and he was Treasurer of the Lord Mayor's Charity Ball – a very, very good job – for a number of years and also he worked tirelessly for the Leeds Children's Holiday Camp. His funeral is to be at Rawdon at the Crematorium on this coming Friday at eleven o'clock. I hope that you will join with me in extending our sympathy to his family and if you would like to rise, we will have a minute's silence for him.

(Silent tribute)

ITEM 1 – MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD 11th JULY 2018

THE LORD MAYOR: We proceed to work our way through the Minutes.
Councillor Dowson.

COUNCILLOR DOWSON: To move that the Minutes be approved, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Cohen.

COUNCILLOR COHEN: I second, my Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: In that case we will have a vote. (*A vote was taken*) Well and truly CARRIED.

ITEM 2 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 2. Has anybody got a disclosable pecuniary interest that they have not already declared? (*None*) Right.

ITEM 3 – COMMUNICATIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 3, Chief Executive.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: Thanks, Lord Mayor. Just to inform Council, we have had two responses to Council resolutions from Ministers. Jo Johnson MP, Minister of State and Minister for London in respect of the White Paper on Transport which was considered by Council in July, and Caroline Dinenage MP, Minister of State for Care, in respect of the White Paper on NHS Funding which was also considered by Council in July. These responses have been circulated to all Members of Council.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. I have to inform Council that I have received Notice that Councillor Andrew Carter would like to make a communication to Council. Councillor Carter.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. All Members of Council should have been circulated with an email which I was copied into from Councillor Alan Lamb. It relates to the White Rose contract, the contract for the whole of Yorkshire and the Humber for quality assured residential care for vulnerable children. It is worth £25m a year.

I am very pleased that we have altered the protocol on Communications so that an administration Member can respond.

Had it not been signed off – and please read the email, it will tell you everything you need to know – by the Director after he was given permission by the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee because the contract date was about to be missed, these vulnerable young people would presumably have been placed in accommodation where there was no contractual arrangement and all the Councils in Yorkshire and the Humber – it was not just a Leeds contract, we were administering the contract for every Council in

Yorkshire and the Humber – would have been faced with negotiating individual placements.

The need to extend this contract for a further twelve months has already been flagged up in the Council's Forward Plan and the fact that it was due to be renewed was only discovered, I understand, by our Procurement Department when they asked Children's Services for a copy of the decision notice and there was no decision notice and the contract was going to expire.

I am not complaining about the protocol because it is right, I think, if the administration slips up in this sort of a way that there has to be some semi-independent judgment on whether the contract should then be led, so Councillor Lamb took advice, including legal advice – it said he was not legally responsible for the decision because the decision-maker was still the Director of Children's Services but he had to give permission. It is not a small contract, it had very serious ramifications and I believe it is not the only occasion.

We need not only for these matters to be discussed by Scrutiny but I hope there will be a report brought to the Executive Board as we are ultimately responsible and I understand not only – a slightly different issue – are contracts coming to their termination and not being renewed in the normal way but on a slightly different issue between January and August of this year 132 contract waivers have been implemented over a 16 month period. This suggests a chronic and chaotic situation when it comes to being properly notified about the renewal of major contracts affecting people in this city who need those services provided.

We need not only a Scrutiny Report but a report to the Executive Board on the process and the way in which these matters are handled. It simply will not do as it is. Thank you, my Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

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

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Thank you, Lord Mayor, Members of Council. Firstly, let us address the most important matter here. Were any children put at risk by this simple admin error that meant that the Delegated Decision Notice had not been submitted for the 12 month extension of the White Rose Framework? No children were put at risk, no placements were put at risk, and all arrangements that already been made through the White Rose Framework could have safely continued.

Furthermore, whilst the purpose of the framework is to enable Councils across the region working together to drive up quality standards of residential accommodation for vulnerable children and to manage the markets and prevent the costs of those placements spiralling out of control, the Council does have robust arrangements in place to ensure that placements can be made as needed both within and outside the White Rose Framework if necessary.

What actually happened here and what has been done to ensure it does not happen again? A mistake was made by officers in processing the Delegated Decision Notice to extend the current framework contract for twelve months, which was within the terms of the original contract, whilst a review of residential provision is completed. To put it

simply, the paperwork did not pass around the organisation as intended in part of the process.

The decision was, however, taken legally within the Council's constitution and within the Budget and Policy Framework. Notice to take the decision was appropriately flagged up on the Council's Forward Plan, as Councillor Carter has already told Council, two months before the request to use Special Urgency Powers was made. The Scrutiny Chair, Councillor Lamb, was well aware of this because he had asked for and received a full briefing from officers on the proposals six weeks before the decision was taken.

On 15th August the Scrutiny Chair, Councillor Lamb, was asked to waive the call-in period for the decision through the use of the Special Urgency Power so the decision could be made with immediate effect six weeks after the briefing he had received on the decision that had been published in the Forward Plan two months earlier. Councillor Lamb did give approval for that call-in to be waived and the decision was duly made before the contract expired and published in line with the Council constitution and contracts regulations.

I repeat, whilst the paperwork for the Delegated Decision Notice did not move around the organisation as intended, no child was at risk, no placement was at risk, the contract was extended for twelve months in line with the constitution and our partners in the other Local Authorities around the region were satisfied with the explanation that they received.

I have ensured that the Department has learned from this error and additional checks and balances are now in place to ensure that deadlines for contracts' decisions are more effectively monitored within the departments and Children's and Family Services officers have also met with the Corporate Governance officers to ensure that lessons are learned across Council around monitoring of contract end dates and decision notices.

Finally, just to say that I think we need to be clear that we have a culture of openness in the Council. When honest mistakes are made we would want them to be appropriately rectified and lessons learned and not have any officers feeling hounded by a simple error. (*Applause*)

ITEM 4 – DEPUTATIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Mulherin. Item 4, Chief Executive.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: To report that there are four Deputations, Lord Mayor. The first is the Youth Council regarding transport in the city; the second, the Tribe Youth Group regarding recycling in the city; the third Pavements are for People regarding footpaths obstructions; and fourth, West Park residents regarding the Lawnswood and Otley Old Road scheme.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Dowson.

COUNCILLOR DOWSON: I would like to move that all Deputations be received, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Cohen.

COUNCILLOR COHEN: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Right, I will call for the vote that we received these Deputations. (*A vote was taken*) That is CARRIED.

DEPUTATION ONE – YOUTH COUNCIL

THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon. Welcome to Council. If you would like to make your speech now, no longer than five minutes, and please begin by introducing yourself and your colleague.

THOMAS: Good afternoon. This is Scarlett, a former member of the Youth Parliament who has campaigned on this issue for the past three years. My name is Tommy (or Thomas, whichever, I am not really that bothered!) (*laughter*) and I am the former Chair of the Leeds Youth Council.

We are here as members of the Leeds Youth Council speaking on behalf of all young people in the city. We are sure you have all had a long day so I think it is best to start on something we can all agree on. The public transport for young people in this city of Leeds needs to be better - better in the sense that we feel it could be more affordable, accessible and reliable.

Research has shown this is a big issue for many young people in our city. Last year, over 17,000 11-18 year olds voted in the annual UK Youth Parliament 'Make Your Mark' ballot- representing around 25% of the population in Leeds. Unsurprisingly, the top issue came out as better public transport.

As young people growing up in the city we are lucky to have so many child-friendly opportunities available to us. However, as citizens who are still too young to drive or have parents who cannot afford private transport, we often have no alternative than to rely on our public transport systems.

Our peers have told us that they intend to study for their A-levels at colleges such as Notre Dame. However, depending on where they live, they may to spend upwards of £500 per year just to access their preferred choice of education. For lower income families this means they simply cannot afford the right education and we consider this to be a passive discrimination that prevents social mobility.

The near annual increases to ticket prices have a disproportionate effect on us. Our legal requirement to be in full time education or learning means that our earning potential is limited. In addition, even with a part time job, as under 18s our national minimum wage is £1.90 an hour less than what a 19 year old earns, and £3.18 an hour less than what 21 year olds earn. This is for doing the exact same work.

So we have come today to bring this issue to your attention on behalf of all young people in the city. We understand how our transport services are delivered and that our operators are separate to the Council and as such are free set their own prices. However, we still feel there is a role you can play, so today we have two key asks for you.

Firstly, could Councillors and relevant council officers play a more proactive role in helping young people to know how to get the best value fares and passes. We know that lots of young people are not always aware of the discount schemes available to them and this needs to change. Joined up marketing between Metro and Children and Families Directorate could help with this.

Together as our 99 Councillors, you can cover all the schools in Leeds. You are in a great position to spread awareness about discounted fares and you can help to do this by speaking to schools and colleges and making sure they get the right information to their students.

Increased awareness would lead to less disparity between the available opportunities for young people from different backgrounds. It means that a student who was not able to before can now travel anywhere in Leeds for a reduced £2.40 a day. They can now go to that drama class or community provision which they have always wanted to attend but could not because of the transport.

Our second ask is for you to help lobby transport companies on our behalf. We want consistently low fares and crucially a lasting price freeze for tickets for under 18s.

Thank you for your time and for listening to our concerns today. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dowson.

COUNCILLOR DOWSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to move that the matter be referred to the Director of Children and Families and the Director of City Development for consideration, in consultation with the relevant Exec Board Members. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Cohen.

COUNCILLOR COHEN: I am delighted to second that, my Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: We need to vote. *(A vote was taken)* That is well and truly CARRIED.

Thank you for coming today. Officers from the relevant Departments that you have heard mentioned will be in touch with you in due course, so thank you and good afternoon. *(Applause)*

DEPUTATION TWO – THE TRIBE YOUTH GROUP

THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon, welcome to Council. If you would like to make your speech now, it must be no longer than five minutes and would you please start by introducing the members of your Deputation.

AIMEE KENNEY: Lord Mayor and Members of Council, my name is Aimee Kenney and I am ten years old and very nervous! (*Applause*) I am a Youth Leader at the Tribe Youth Group but also a member of Cross Gates Primary Junior Wardens. With me are Jean Barnbrook, who is one of our volunteer leaders, and Kara Bland, who is also aged ten and a Junior Warden and Youth Leader of the Tribe Youth Group.

They have asked me to help them to take you on a journey to see if you will help us with our campaign to remove plastic straws and bottles and disposable cups from schools, Council cafés and buildings in Leeds as well as other restaurants and cafés in Leeds.

Firstly, close your eyes and imagine standing on a beach looking out into the blue sea. Looks nice doesn't it? Now open them but all you can see is plastic bottles, disposable cups and plastic straws. Do you see the damage that they can cause now? That is because 750 billion plastic straws are used by one billion people in 750 days. Every plastic straw can take over 200 years to break down. Just in the UK we throw away 500,000 disposable cups and we use around 8.5 billion plastic straws every year.

In 2016 480 billion plastic drinking bottles were sold across the world. Have you thought about where it ends up? Well, just think about that beach. It could be there as 20 billion kilograms of plastic ends up in the ocean every year or as seen on the news in the past few months it could end up in the stomachs of seals and whales or in the noses of turtles. Just in May this year a 6cm square piece of plastic was found in the stomach of a rare Harp seal in Scotland. Studies predict that by 2050 there might be more plastic in the ocean than fish by weight.

Near where we meet at Temple Newsam we have Home Farm that looks after rare breeds, you have Tropical World with birds and animals that could be at risk of extinction, then there is Meanwood Valley and Lotherton Hall, yet we still give plastic straws with drinks. We have water in bottles or even disposable cups.

Isn't this going against what you are trying to save or help? You can now buy water in cardboard cartons or cans in other areas of the country, you can have paper straws or even bamboo and metal ones so why can't we take the step and actually protect the animals and birds globally that we are already trying to do in these places in Leeds.

We know that the Arium café uses paper straws, but why are we still giving these automatically? Why not only give a straw if they are asked for? In our youth group and at Cross Gates Primary we do not use plastic straws now or disposable cups. We have given every child at our summer scheme their own drinking bottle so we reduced our plastics there too. In our school, milk now comes in plastic bottles which means that there is no need for plastic straws and the bottles are recyclable and it goes into the school's recycle bin, but are we making sure that they are recycled in schools or do they just go to the tip?

Please think about that beach or even just the streets in Leeds where you see plastic rubbish every day and help us make a difference to our future and our planet's future. Let us remove plastic straws and disposable cups in schools and your Council cafés and buildings as soon as possible.

Can the Council work with local cafés and restaurants to stop handing out plastic straws and change to paper straws? We have worked with our local pub in the Barnbow that they now do not just hand out their straws without asking and they have asked their head office to provide paper straws. We are sure that these things are happening behind the scenes both within the Council but also with the local businesses, but this is something that can happen quickly but make a massive impact. Thank you.

(Standing ovation)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dowson.

COUNCILLOR DOWSON: Lord Mayor, I would like to move that the matter be referred to the Director of Children and Families, Resources and Housing and Communities and Environment for consideration in consultation with the relevant Exec Board Members.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Cohen?

COUNCILLOR COHEN: I second that, my Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: In that case we will vote on this. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

You seem to have struck a note here. Thank you very much for coming to Council this afternoon. It has been a pleasure listening to you. *(Applause)* Officers from the relevant department will be in touch with you very shortly. One thing I would just say to you, we are later on today discussing plastic waste in a White Paper, that is happening after we have had our tea. If you have got the strength to hang on you might like to – there would be two advantages for you. You will be able to sit up there and listen to us but you will also get your tea if you are here about half-past four! I just recommend that, but thank you. *(Applause)*

DEPUTATION THREE – PAVEMENTS ARE FOR PEOPLE

THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon and welcome to Council. If you would like to make your speech now, please keep it to no more than five minutes and start by introducing the people who are in with you today.

MS D LINFORD: Thank you. Lord Mayor and Members of Council, thank you very much for allowing us to come and talk to us today. Here with me I have Maqsood Sheikh who is the Campaigns Officer for RNIB; Mary Naylor MBE and volunteer campaigner and Chair for the National Confederation of the Blind; we have Karida, her beautiful guide dog (and of course we could not not mention her) and myself, Debbie Linford from Guide Dogs for the Blind and I am the Engagement Officer for this area.

We are part of a working group called Pavements are for People, which has had input from many departments of Leeds City Council, West Yorkshire Police, Leeds and Beckett University and a number of third sector charities. Pavements are for People was set up with the help and support of Leeds City Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Together we have held action days, held focus groups, visited waste crews, given talks to raise awareness and looked for different ways in which we can keep our foot paths safe and clear for all pedestrians.

With somebody becoming blind or partially sighted every 15 minutes our streets must be more accessible, yet they remain a daily obstacle course. Getting to work, getting to the shops, the GP's surgery or accessing local services can be like running the gauntlet, with increased fear and anxiety and a real risk of injury. Some people have told us that they are so intimidated by the risks outside that they stay home and become isolated.

We are here today to ask Leeds City Council to commit to a Street Charter that puts a clear policy at the heart of your decision making. A Street Charter is a simple document. It shows a commitment, or list of commitments, which is abided by everyone involved. By signing a Charter, Leeds City Council makes a pledge to implement the Charter's action points.

Local Authorities such as Hull, Newcastle and Liverpool have committed to a Charter with cities such as York and Barnsley to follow soon. Charters are a tried and tested engagement tool that can be used to recognise quality, set standards, define duties, gain agreement and establish goals.

We feel a Charter is needed to work towards a long-term solution that takes into account the local geography, characteristics and features of an area while at the same time being shaped by the knowledge of people who rely upon safe streets and clear footpaths.

We can supply you with copies of other Local Authorities' Charters and a draft of a Charter which highlights some of the key issues that we have found in the Leeds area.

We would like to meet and work with a Member or Members of the Council's senior leadership team to develop a Street Charter for Leeds.

Before we finish I would like to read to you some quotes from blind and partially sighted in the Leeds area:

"I heard some people laugh when I walked into a bush. I was really upset."

"Sometimes people park completely on the pavement and block it totally and I have to walk on the road, which is really scary. I hurt my arm on a door mirror."

"I avoid going out on bin day if I can."

On behalf of Pavements are for People thank you so much for listening to us today. We sincerely hope that Leeds City Council will join the growing list of Councils by committing to a Street Charter.

Lord Mayor and Members of the Council, thank you very, very much. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dowson.

COUNCILLOR DOWSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to move that the matter be referred to the Director of City Development for consideration in consultation with the relevant Exec Board Member.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Cohen.

COUNCILLOR COHEN: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Can we take a vote on that? (*A vote was taken*) That is CARRIED.

Thank you for coming today. As you heard it will be referred to the officers of the relevant Department who will be in touch with you as soon as they can, so good afternoon to you and thank you for coming.

MS D LINFORD: Wonderful, thank you very much. (*Applause*)

DEPUTATION FOUR – WEST PARK RESIDENTS

THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon and welcome to Council. If you would like to start making your speech, it really must be no more than five minutes but would you start by introducing the people who are with you today.

MR S KHAN: Thank you. I am Sarfraz Khan, this is Hilary, Graham and Adris.

Dear Lord Mayor, Councillors, thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

We are residents of West Park in North Leeds who are affected by the proposed Adel to Leeds Bus Route scheme. We welcome the proposals to deliver improvements which make the bus services quicker and more reliable whilst making journeys on foot and by bike convenient and attractive. However, we are here to raise our concerns over the viability of the scheme and its value for money to the city. There are serious concerns over the proposed changes to the Lawnswood Roundabout which have implications not only for residents but also pedestrians, cyclists and road users. This is our primary focus today.

The proposed changes are a catastrophe in the making. A visibly striking and beautiful roundabout landscaped in vibrant colours is an attraction for the area. To remove this and convert it into a monstrous crossroads with traffic lights is a shame.

The supposed benefit from the change is that bus journeys through the roundabout towards Leeds will be improved. However, this is a flawed assumption. Currently there

is a build-up of traffic in the morning rush hour. This is due to traffic narrowing from two lanes into one heading from the roundabout towards Headingley. The improvements do not address this and traffic will still be forced into a single lane

Grass verges are being removed from the front of a considerable number of residential properties to make way for a combined pedestrian and cycle lane. Currently the verges provide a place for the residents to stop and view the traffic in relative safety before joining the Ring Road. With the proposed changes this line of sight visibility is removed and the danger to pedestrians and cyclists is significantly increased. There appears to be adequate scope to leave the verges untouched in many areas by making minor changes to the plans. The use of taxis and access for residents with mobility needs is significantly affected, increasing risk to life. Pedestrians will be forced to cross twelve crossings to navigate the junction, depending on their destination.

The creation of a right turn lane for vehicles into Lawnswood school is dangerous. Drivers will be required to navigate across two lanes of traffic, increasing the risk of accidents. The use of traffic lights will cause the traffic to be stationary for longer periods and for more occasions, impacting the environment through noise and air pollution. This does not fit with the Council's Environment Policy.

The width of the Ring Road and the clear visibility towards the proposed junction will inevitably encourage some motorists to speed from distance if they can see the lights are green or amber.

This will increase the risk of serious accidents at the junction and potential risk to life for pedestrians using the crossings.

The proposals will increase the volume of traffic using the surrounding side streets, causing disruption, noise and air pollution to more residential areas.

We are also aware of the proposals for the Harrogate Road/Moortown roundabout to be improved with further landscaping to enhance its green appeal. There are no proposals for traffic light controlled crossroads at this site. Work on this scheme has already started. Why is this any different to the Lawnswood junction scheme?

Reflecting on the scheme as a whole, we see significant flaws throughout its design. Dedicated bus lane on Woodhouse Lane, currently two lanes and separate lane for right-turning traffic into Clarendon Road will all be reduced to a single lane. This will increase congestion and create long queues on Woodhouse Lane, Victoria Road and Hyde Park Corner. Introducing traffic lights and banning right turns here will increase the traffic build up. Motorists will choose alternative routes through the side streets, increasing traffic in areas which are already narrow and congested.

Shaw Lane and St Anne's Road, a busy junction due to the attraction of shops, restaurants and sporting entertainment venues in Headingley, a bus gate and the change to cycle lane will increase stationary traffic, impacting flow in both directions. Re-routing the traffic through St Chad's Drive, a predominantly residential area, is concerning. This will impact the environment, damage the quality of life and increase the risk of accidents to residents and pedestrians in the streets.

Weetwood Lane and St Chad's Road, the re-routing of traffic and new traffic lights will create a hazard and environmental issue for people who frequent this, increasing the risk to residents of both Orchard Court and St Chad's Court retirement homes.

The changes will have a detrimental impact on the businesses and their servicing and access arrangements.

On numerous occasions we have requested the consultants to provide data and evidence from simulation models. Nothing has been forthcoming. There is very little support for the changes to the Lawnswood roundabout from the residents in the area. We also feel that the resulting time benefits for the buses travelling from Adel to Leeds will not be significant enough to warrant the expenditure on the scheme.

We would like the Council to release the data and simulation models used to support the scheme and its value for money; share what alternatives have been considered and why these have been discounted, other than the tram and trolley bus proposals; re-consider the removal of the grass verges that will cause an immediate threat and risk of accident; retain the beauty of the area by saving Lawnswood roundabout.

THE LORD MAYOR: I am afraid I am going to have to ask you – you have got a lot to go and so you are obviously not going to make it, so wherever I stop you...

MR S KHAN: I was on my last paragraph.

THE LORD MAYOR: I have got a page full here! What I will do, I will see whether we can get this circulated to Members of Council.

MR S KHAN: Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: First of all we have got a bit of business to do. Councillor Dowson.

COUNCILLOR DOWSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to move that the matter be referred to the Director of City Development for consideration, in consultation with the relevant Exec Board Member.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Cohen.

COUNCILLOR COHEN: I second, my Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Can we have a vote on that, then? (*A vote was taken*) That is CARRIED.

Thank you very much for coming. I am sorry you had to be stopped in full flow but, as I say, the paper version is available and we will make sure that you are contacted as soon as possible by the officers who are considering this and thank you very much.

MR S KHAN: I appreciate that, thank you for your time. Thank you. (*Applause*)

ITEM 5 - SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 5, the Scrutiny Annual Report. Councillor Lewis.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dowson.

COUNCILLOR DOWSON: Seconded, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Grahame.

COUNCILLOR P GRAHAME: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Please can I start by welcoming the opportunity to once again be a Scrutiny Chair, presiding over the Strategy and Resources Board. I would also like to thank my colleagues for nominating me for this prestigious position. I am looking forward to working with my Board colleagues over the next year as we continue to ensure the efficiency of public spending.

With that in mind, I would like to thank the Members, some of whom are no longer with us as Members, who served on the Board last year. They helped drive the work of the Board in pushing the Council to operate in a period of sustained austerity. They also helped oversee the strategic aim of the Council to drive improved outcomes for the poorest in this city as set out in the Best Council Plan.

The changes to Scrutiny arrangements in this municipal year mean the remit of Strategy and Resources Scrutiny has increased, taking an oversight of activities related to the Council's cultural ambitions. The Board will, of course, continue to oversee the Council's central strategic and regulatory functions including financial services, human resources, digital and information services, elections, registrars, licensing, local land charges and Council Tax processing. We have also had several requests to look into the use of social media and code of conduct between elected Members which all Members of the Board agreed to do, so that is a new one on our agenda.

One of the key areas for the Board last year was our work to ensure oversight of the calculation and collection of business rates. There was a particular focus on the level of outstanding appeals, the level of risk to the Council and changes to the appeals process which helped reduce the number of speculative appeals. We also have to take into account the effect of Brexit, how that could affect the Council's budgets.

A further key area of work was oversight of the Council's approach to risk management. This important area of work included a review of the Council's initial response following incidents with significant national implications including the Grenfell Tower and the collapse of the facilities management and construction company Carillion.

I was just thinking back on some of the other Boards I have chaired over the years and one of them was Leisure. One of their areas was Cems and Crems and it is interesting how we have had a request to scrutinise again and, actually, the issue that

was raised, it is interesting the person who requested it was actually involved in that decision, also transforming services. I think, Lord Mayor, you were on that Board with me and again with the bins and waste and again a request to Barry Anderson's Board to look into a decision made previously, maybe by the person requesting it.

On that Board do you remember, Lord Mayor, how you used to upset our late Council colleague Eileen Moxon. Can you remember what you used to say that upset her? It is nothing...

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Grahame, whatever I remember it does not get you more time! *(laughter)* The red light has been shining for a minute or so. Thank you very much.

COUNCILLOR P GRAHAME: That is OK. I will just remind you, you used to refer to me as "Madam Chair" and it used to drive her mad. I would like to congratulate you as Lord Mayor and I hope you have a good year and as good a year as what we intend to have on our Scrutiny Board. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: You are a smooth talker, aren't you! Councillor Truswell.

COUNCILLOR TRUSWELL: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Like Councillor Grahame I would like to pay tribute to past and present Members of the Board that I chair and also to thank Sandra Pentelow, our excellent Scrutiny Officer, for the support she gives us.

Lord Mayor, every year we examine the figures for people killed or seriously injured on our roads which remain stubbornly above Council targets. As a Council we can implement highways engineering, traffic calming, speed indication devices and 20 mile an hour speed limits, but ultimately we need robust police enforcement to tackle reckless drivers and it seems too much of a coincidence that these escalating figures have coincided with massive cuts of 1,200 officers in West Yorkshire and yesterday's damning National Audit Office report on policing.

We conducted an inquiry into sustainable development last year which complemented our previous inquiry into housing mix. We are desperately short of affordable housing in this city as we know, and we operate under a system that is geared more towards satisfying developers' greed than meeting our people's needs. There is a common view that the Government's Planning Policy Framework is a developers' charter. We need to return to a brownfield first approach to force developers to build out the 19,000 properties for which they already have planning permission and to scrap the five year land supply wheeze that allows house builders to rig the market.

The Board has continued to monitor the Council's Transport Strategy and our previous inquiry into bus services. We all know that since bus deregulation in 1986 passenger numbers have plummeted as services have been chopped and changed and fares have rocketed and I think there is unanimity across this Council on the need to re-establish more local control over bus services and operators either through franchising or running the services ourselves.

This year our main inquiry will look at the implementation of the Council's Inclusive Growth Strategy. Leeds, as we know, is a paragon of economic success, yet over 160,000 of our citizens live in neighbourhoods that are in the 10% most deprived in the country; over 26,000 of our children live in poverty; over 80,000 jobs pay less than the living wage of £8.45. That is the enormity of our challenge.

Lord Mayor, the Board also examined the implications for the Council of the shameful tragedy of Grenfell and the scandal of Carillion. One thing is absolutely clear when you examine vital issues like buses and transport, affordable housing, sustainable development, road safety, Grenfell, Carillion or Inclusive Growth and it is the fact that these challenges cannot be addressed by privatisation or neo-Liberal economics and certainly not by mindless austerity measures inflicted on this Council and the communities that we serve.

There has to be a better way that, dare I say it, serves the many and not the few.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Hayden.

COUNCILLOR HAYDEN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am delighted to have the opportunity to update Council on the work of the Adults and Health Scrutiny Board. I would also like to thank my colleagues on the Labour Group for giving me this incredible opportunity. Chairing the Adults and Health Scrutiny Board has been and continues to be a steep learning curve but one that is incredibly interesting and fulfilling.

It has been a very busy year for us. I would also like to thank the members of the Board for their dedication and commitment to scrutinising Adult and Health Services in Leeds. We have managed to undertake some significant enquiries into what can be very emotive issues while maintaining a professional approach and for that I would like to thank you all.

Thanks are also due to the Scrutiny officers, especially Steven Courtney - I don't know what I would have done without him, to be honest – who have worked tirelessly to ensure the smooth running of our meetings and have provided a fantastic level of support to the whole Board as well as to myself as Chair.

Our areas of inquiry this year have included examining the health and social care needs of prisoners. As a Local Authority we have obligations under the Care Act 2014 and the Board was looking for assurances that we are meeting those obligations. Several members of the Board made visits to both adult prisons in Leeds including your good self, Lord Mayor, and we had a very interesting visit to HMP Leeds or, as we better know it as Armley, and HMP Wilston in Wealstun. I would like to thank Harriet Speight for organising these visits so brilliantly and the healthcare staff working in both prisons for their time and welcome.

These visits had quite an effect on myself and the other members of the Board, especially speaking to prisoners and staff. It was invaluable to see for ourselves the challenges for both prisoners and staff as well as the work being done in increasingly difficult circumstances. We have made a number of recommendations that will hopefully help to improve health services for the prisoners in Leeds.

We continue to look at the quality of care services in Leeds, in particular residential care homes, nursing care homes and home care services, as well as the development of the Shared Lives service. All of these services and facilities are facing challenges in terms of providing the best possible care in incredibly difficult financial circumstances. The Board has seen an improvement in the good CQC ratings; however, they know there is more to be done in this area and our focus will continue.

I would like to thank everyone working for our more vulnerable people in Leeds – they do so in very difficult circumstances.

We continue to maintain our oversight in the proposed local NHS changes, including prescribing changes, maternity services and community dental services and I would like to thank our NHS partners and third sector organisations for the time that they give to come to meetings and allow us to scrutinise them.

As we will be hearing about later on in the afternoon, Health and Adult Social Care services are facing unprecedented levels of demand at a time when budgets are becoming tighter and tighter...

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Hayden.

COUNCILLOR HAYDEN: ...and I very much look forward to continuing the work of the Board. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lamb.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Thank you, Lord Mayor. It is a real privilege to be asked to chair the Children's Services Scrutiny Board this year. It has been one of my main passions on Council for my whole time here and I am really looking forward to working with Members on all sides as we pose the question this year, is Leeds a child friendly city?

The item is to speak obviously to the Annual Report and the work that we did last year. I do not want to talk very much today about the White Rose contract, (our Scrutiny Board is going to look into that), other than to say it seems from the information I have a gross understatement to describe it as a simple admin error. Time will tell.

Did you have something to say?

COUNCILLOR HESELWOOD: Talk about the Scrutiny Board.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Turning to the Inclusive Growth Culture and Sport Board that I was privileged again to chair last year, we got through an awful lot of work. I would particularly like to thank Angela Brogden, our fantastic Scrutiny Support Officer; as has previously been said I would have been lost without her and I am very happy that she is working with us again on the Board this year, and I would like to thank all of the Members of the Board from all parties, various different partners and the officers that came to contribute to the Scrutiny Board.

One thing I think which is concerning across all Scrutiny Chairs and all Scrutiny Board Members is, we understand the pressure the Council is under but there is a concern that the ability of Scrutiny to do its job is gradually being eroded and it is something we need to take stock of and be aware of, because good and effective Scrutiny leads to better decision making and ultimately will save the Council money. We need to be careful that we do not cut so far in Scrutiny that we are not able to do the job that we are all there and all want to do, so I hope that can be taken on board.

Some of the things we looked at last year, we had a watching brief over devolution which, of course, is ongoing, seemingly never-endingly. We did work on the Leeds Talent and Skills Plan; we worked on the Leeds Inclusive Growth Strategy which has passed on to Councillor Truswell this year; we obviously took a very close look at the City of Culture bid and the circumstances around that and the ongoing culture strategy from there. We did a big piece of work which I think we will pick up on the Children's Services Board this year around information, advice and guidance, and we also were looking at active lifestyles. Probably the one regret of the year is, one of our big recommendations – and again I think colleagues from all parties would agree with this – is we had a recommendation that trying to make Leeds an active city should become a city-wide obsession and while it is part of the Best Council Plan, we felt and still feel that it should go a step further than that and we should be looking to make getting everybody in Leeds active a key city obsession, and I hope that that perhaps might be something that can be taken on board as we move forward.

As I say, it has been a privilege to chair the Scrutiny Board last year and I am really looking forward to the work we are going to do this year. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Anderson.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Everybody has said it and I am not going to repeat it exactly but last year I was asked to look after Environment, Housing and Communities. Can I welcome this report and can I start by thanking Angela Brogden, the other woman in my life, Caroline, who keeps telling me when I am wrong all the time as well, so I am well practised on that. I will actually really miss Angela this year because her commitment to Scrutiny, the work that she does, her knowledge and understanding will be missed by me. That is not to say that Sandra is not going to do a good job, I am just paying a compliment, before anybody jumps on that one.

What did we cover? We covered Crime and Grime with everyday contact with the Council added on. We have done some important work which is set out in the report, but what I wanted to do was talk about some of the things that were not in the report. For example, we did a high rise strategy last year which was used to complement the Grenfell Inquiry which I think is vitally important because the high rise for a number of years have not necessarily had the amount of work done on them that was necessary in terms of making the quality of life better in those locations.

We also looked into Universal Credit which is coming along and we need to make sure that when it is implemented the majority of the people who are going to be affected by it have got the advice necessary to make the correct decisions.

We also looked at Customer Contact with the Contact Centre. Too many times people have to phone up again and again and again and we have tried to look at what we can do to reduce down the number of repeat calls and again I think we did an excellent piece of work in that.

We also looked into Waste and Recycling which is going to be a returning theme this year because we have got a major inquiry to do. We also looked into the Council's website. Most of us would have struggled to understand the Council's website when we look at it but hopefully it is a little bit better.

One thing I do quickly want to say is, I am concerned at the direction Scrutiny is being taken. We are finding – I certainly find – we do not have enough time to hold the Executive to account. It does not matter which party is in power, there is not enough time now to do it with cutting back the number of meetings and also cutting back the resources that we can get access to is going to have an effect.

We also need to make sure that we re-establish the parity of esteem. It is beginning to be eroded away. We need to make sure that we get back again in terms of what we are doing because we need to hold the Executive to account to make sure that they are doing things right, and equally as far as Grenfell is concerned, to show that the Council had done everything they could have done and that Councillor Coupar led from the front and showed what can be done. *(Applause)* It is to be done in both sides. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Anderson. Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. The Liberal Democrat Group appreciates all the work that Scrutiny does and that is one of the reasons why I wanted to speak now. There has always been a tradition of parity of esteem between Scrutiny and the Executive but there has been an evolution in decision-making involving this Council which perhaps might be left behind if Scrutiny are not allowed to respond to it effectively.

I am very lucky, Lord Mayor, that I am involved with the Combined Authority and also I get to participate in the Leeds Health and Wellbeing Board, and both of those organisations take decisions which are somewhat at arm's length from purely Council decision making. I think sometimes the ability for Scrutiny to cast a window on some of that decision making is not made very easy.

I appreciate that both of those bodies, one more than the other, have developed a Scrutiny function of their own so, for instance, the Combined Authority does actually have its own Audit Committee and does have its own Scrutiny Committee, but I have to say that the primary objective of that is simply to make sure that the decisions have been made in the way that the process is meant to have been done.

It does not, perhaps, scrutinise whether or not the decisions that have been made have been made, for instance, in this Local Authority's interest but have been made in those pan Authority venues. It does not potentially concentrate on the deliverability of some of those decisions and perhaps where that money goes to so, for instance, I am a little bit frustrated sometimes when I am on the Combined Authority to understand when money is awarded for certain schemes, when the money stops being primarily paid to consultants and it actually turns into shovels and boots on the ground. I think that is something where the role of Scrutiny in this city could play a valuable role.

In terms of things like Health and Wellbeing we, for instance, had a discussion at the last Health and Wellbeing Board which was about housing and how integral that was to the development of people's health in the city and it turned out that recommendations that had been made in a Director of Health's Report from 2014 still were not implemented, primarily because it had not been scrutinised to find out where the blockages were in terms of resources, and that is something that I think Scrutiny, if it had been allowed to cast an eye on to that issue, they would have actually made sure that it was sorted out a lot sooner.

Can I just make a plea, therefore, that Scrutiny is allowed to cast its net a little bit further and, for instance, in these outside bodies where decisions are made, sometimes those decisions are made before decisions are made at Executive Board and it therefore makes it more difficult that they are offered the perspective to pursue them. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Buckley.

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can I make some remarks on the Infrastructure and Investment Scrutiny Board. As Councillor Truswell mentioned a few minutes ago, he mentioned the investigation and the scrutiny of the public transport investment programme.

We all know about this £250m scheme which is largely financed by the £174m which was given to us by the Government and in many ways it is a once in a generation opportunity to get transport right in the city.

All of us here want a first class transport system and we want cleaner air, there is nothing wrong with any of that, and we should thank officers who have been looking into this, not least on that committee and on the cross-party committee, for all the detailed plans that they have produced and for also sticking to their remit because actually you would think that the original remit was to look at improvements to transport in the round and in fact it was to look at improvements mainly to buses, which is a slightly different thing.

There is quite a lot of cross-party support for some of the measures, notably new railway stations – nothing wrong with that – but we do have real reservations about some other aspects and having gone down the bus only option for the City of Leeds, bus priority corridors were then the logical outcome of that policy.

These are sensible if extra bus lanes are added wherever possible, or extensions to guided bus ways where they are already there, or priority at peak hours, particularly inbound.

If we take the A61 corridor as an example of this, this is one of the main corridors mentioned, we are told that the bus priority, the bus lane which will take away all the cars from one lane, will be 24 hours a day, seven days a week and there appears to be no logic in why it should not just be at peak hours. Available space on the left-hand side of the road should be used and should not be just ignored because of possible fear about utilities and trees causing more air pollution.

The Park and Rides, including the one proposed at Alwoodley, may well be a success but the bus companies will only improve the services when they see that that has been a success. Has the administration considered what I would call the Norway option, which has nothing to do with Brexit. It is about Norway and Canada where if you have an accredited completely green vehicle recognised by number plate recognition, they are allowed into the bus lanes because at the moment we are going to have on some of the routes very few buses going down the bus lanes once every few minutes.

They are my points, Lord Mayor; we need fewer jams and better air quality. Thank you very much. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Caroline Anderson.

COUNCILLOR C ANDERSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to speak on the Scrutiny Board Annual Report for Adult Social Care and Health. Something very close to my heart in serving my ward is OPAL, the Older People's Action in the Locality, one of the jewels in the crown of our Neighbourhood Networks. This links to the plan Leeds being the best city to grow old in, bringing communities together to support those with care and support needs, improving health and wellbeing in Leeds and making use of better resources and providing integrated care around people and communities.

OPAL was established in 2002 by former Conservative Councillor and now Honorary Alderman Angela Wheatley, who was its first Chairman and since then it has gone from strength to strength. It is a registered charity supporting the over 60s living in Cookridge, Ireland Wood, Tinshill, Holt Park, Adel and Bramhope. It recently moved into new premises which was the inspiration and vision of its current Chief Officer, Ailsa Rhodes.

Some of you may remember the old Bedford Arms pub in Tinshill which has now been dramatically reformed to provide wonderful accommodation that has resulted in OPAL being able to do far more for its members than it could in its old small premises. It provides home support and transport to various activities to full members at cost of only £10 a year. It has over 80 volunteers, young and old, and a staff team of five supporting a membership of around 2,000. Numerous outings and activities are run daily or weekly. The drop-in office is open every day from 10.00 to 1.00. It has a very active Twitter and Facebook page and a lovely website where you can see wonderful pictures of the members enjoying various outings and celebrations.

The space at the new location allows OPAL to hire out rooms for other groups which gives much needed income that is vital. A monthly newsletter keeps residents up to date with what is going on. For example, last Friday they had a full day out to

Lytham St Annes and they have a trip in October to the Hepworth Museum in Wakefield and a trip to the Harrogate Christmas market. They also run a men's group which has separately organised trips and this is great for helping them with potential problems with isolation and friendship. They have three lunch clubs a week and a carers group that gives carers a break.

I am always in awe of what is being achieved at OPAL. It not only meets a need that the community has but if it could be measured how many people are helped from loneliness, isolation, illness, trips and falls it would be thousands saved of hospital and GP time. I know our Adult Social Care team are very proud of the Neighbourhood Networks and I know that OPAL is showcased in many presentations that they do to other Council departments. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Amanda Carter.

COUNCILLOR AMANDA CARTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to start by thanking the Scrutiny Chairs and the Members of Scrutiny and the support team who work so hard. I would like to comment on the Children and Families Scrutiny Board, partly because I am very passionate about that are, having worked with vulnerable young people in the past.

I am sure that Councillor Lamb, as Chair of the Committee, will take these comments on board and that children's safeguarding is a key concern to everybody in the Scrutiny Board but also everybody in this room.

What I would particularly like to comment on is cross-border working. My ward borders with Bradford, as do other wards, but also there are wards around the city who border with other Authorities – Wakefield and North Yorkshire. I would like to ask Scrutiny Committee to ensure that effect border working is effectively carried out because I am not sure that this is actually always the case, certainly not in my experience, and it can leave young people vulnerable. Vulnerable young people left with no-one to turn to.

I know that data protection is here to protect all of our data but it is also very important that when data should be shared, it should be shared with all agencies and across borders.

In West Yorkshire we have the West Yorkshire Police. However, their borders do not always follow the lines of the Authority and they certainly are slightly different in our ward and I am not sure what it is for North Yorkshire, which is a completely different Constabulary.

I hope that Scrutiny will look into this in the following year and pay some attention to my concerns. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Robinson.

COUNCILLOR ROBINSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to speak on the Scrutiny Annual Report and firstly associate myself with the comments from other speakers about the hard work that the Scrutiny officers do. I think they put in a huge

amount of hours to make sure that Members have the opportunity to get the right information and hold people to account. I would also like to thank the Chairs of the Scrutiny Boards as well, not just the Scrutiny Boards that I serve on but the Scrutiny Boards that I have approached to scrutinise matters too. I have always thought that they have dealt with those matters with a lot of good grace and made sure that officers could be heard, but also made sure that members of the public can be heard as well and it is absolutely right that we get members of the public coming to Scrutiny Board not just to listen but to make representations too.

In the past year I think there have been some real successes around Scrutiny and I know from the Board that I have just joined, chaired by Councillor Grahame, that they did a huge amount of work around business rates and the progress on business rates is to be applauded, and we need to make sure that we keep on top of that and I know that she will be doing that in the year ahead.

I also think that there are some areas such as the Cemetery and Crematorium Horticultural Maintenance which is not that particularly catchy, but when you go out to meet with officers and they are referring specifically to a Scrutiny Report, it just goes to show the emphasis that they place on it and they actually want to make sure that decisions are rigorously taken, that they are transparent and that they make sure that there is good governance in running this Council too.

There are other areas such as the bins and waste management that I have brought to Scrutiny Board. I think that that is coming forward to Councillor Anderson's Scrutiny Board later this year and I have requested in the past the value for money of Highways spending that has gone to Councillor Truswell's Board. Again, I think that they are great opportunities for Members to really get down and into the issues and actually make sure that they have a greater understanding of them. We can often get a very surface level understanding of the issues that affect our wards but Scrutiny allows us to look at issues that affect the whole city.

There is one area that I have asked for Scrutiny in the past on and I would hope that Scrutiny Boards will come back to again, and that is around the investment the Council makes of the Council's Pension Fund in tobacco firms. I previously requested some Scrutiny to this, I know it had gone to the West Yorkshire Scrutiny Board and I think it is high time that we start to look at this again to make sure that the Council's investments are not just offering a great return for Members and for officers, but are actually making sure that we can put our name to something that we can hold our head up high and actually does not contravene the other spending that we are doing as a Council. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Cohen.

COUNCILLOR COHEN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I also will be speaking to the Scrutiny Annual Report and am grateful for the opportunity, Lord Mayor, to speak to that report.

I have the honour of sitting on the Children and Families Scrutiny Board and as we have not had the opportunity in this session to make note, I would want to note our thanks to Councillor Sue Bentley who last year so ably chaired that Scrutiny Board.

There is no question that Councillor Bentley was a passionate Chair of that Scrutiny Board and gave valuable service for many years both to the Council but particularly to that Scrutiny Board, ensuring that we really looked at the issues that came before us. In that vein, of course, I am very much looking forward to working with our new Chair, the indomitable Councillor Lamb. That is a good word for you!

In terms of some of the issues we looked at last year, I was really pleased that we looked in some real depth in terms of a working group at the Post-16 SEND school transport provision. This is something that was very difficult for a lot of families. It had caused tremendous distress to a number of families and there were some real concerns raised through that working group as to what impact changes that were being proposed would actually have on the families it was going to impact. We dug down and we did see that while lots of people had indeed been spoken to, the message was coming across very clearly that the impact would be felt quite significantly. It is welcome that the administration is now re-looking at that perhaps, recognising that they may have got that wrong, and I think that is to be welcomed.

Again, we also looked in some great detail at sufficiency of school places and Early Years provision. On this side of the Chamber, Lord Mayor, we have a real concern not just in terms of school places within primary, which are well documented and well rehearsed within this Chamber. We have a real concern about the future of particularly places in High School and we have said it before and we will say it again repeatedly, we are very concerned that there is a real bubble coming through which is going to cause this city a tremendous problem if it is not properly tackled. I am sure we will through Scrutiny; I am sure the administration will, Lord Mayor. Thank you.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Flynn.

COUNCILLOR FLYNN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking today on the Adults and Health Scrutiny Board Annual Report and specifically about safeguarding and the quality of care provided in care homes to our adults.

I would just like to echo Helen's comments before and thank her for being a marvellous Chair over the last twelve months, and particularly to Steven Courtney, of course, without whom none of us would be here, I think, today.

The matter itself is not a reflection on the Scrutiny Board – quite the opposite - but it does cause me some concerns, the amount of times this is brought before us as a Scrutiny Board. Members who were here around last year will remember a marathon seminar meeting of the Scrutiny Board regarding the closure of The Green, a Council owned care home in Seacroft following a campaign led by the redoubtable Lindsey Cannon to keep it open. Lindsey is here today, lovely to see here again.

The Scrutiny Board and residents' families were given very firm commitments by the Executive Board and Adult Social Care prior to the closure regarding what we were told would be bespoke care for residents being moved out of The Green. I will just give you a couple of examples of what happened. The reports are anonymised for obvious reasons.

One ex-resident died within three weeks of their transfer to a care home with a CQC judgment of “Requires improvement”. She was blue lighted to a hospital in a very poor medical condition. Another ex-resident’s transfer was arranged without her husband’s knowledge on what was called a fast track basis. The transfer actually took place on the day that her husband arrived home from some time away; he had no knowledge at all about the transfer prior to this. He spoke to the manager at the home and was told a fast track in this context meant that his wife was going to die within six to eight weeks. You can imagine his reaction because no-one had told him. He was not given the promised social worker, and he was not the only one.

The first of these cases involved an internal safeguarding inquiry, the findings of which were quite frankly appalling. I was asked by another family to follow up a second safeguarding issue; the findings of this inquiry were, if anything, worse. I was approached by these two families to follow it up and I then had to approach both of them for copies of the internal safeguarding reports because I was refused access by Adult Social Care on the basis that elected Members and members of the public were not allowed to see them. When I got the reports, I do not think that was quite accurate.

I would just like to say it is not a sour note at all, I just think it is a reflection of what we do as a Scrutiny Board. Can we please be informed how many adult safeguarding inquiries have been carried out over the last two years and how many of them were referred to the Adult Safeguarding Board and what were the outcomes? Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

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

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I will not take too long. There was lots of issues raised by Members there which I think are worthy of consideration by Scrutiny Board in the years going ahead. I have some sympathy particularly with the comments that Amanda Carter made about how we work on Scrutiny arrangements with other Councils in our ward. We have lots of different issues that cross over different Council borders and I think we work very well on some levels with other Councils but not always the most effective and quickest way and I think those can be looked at.

Just looking through some of the comments that were made, Alan Lamb and, I think it was Barry Anderson, made comments about the resources available to Scrutiny and I welcome the acceptance of taking £240m every single year away from the Council in Government grant does actually have an impact on the services this Council provides, and certainly on the Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board we look very closely at both the money the Council receives and the money the Council spends and certainly it is something that Scrutiny does an excellent job on.

In conclusion, I again congratulate all those that serve on Scrutiny Boards who do an excellent job not just looking at the work we do as a Council but looking at also increasingly the work that different partner organisations do in the city as well, I think that is becoming increasingly important and I move the Scrutiny Board Annual Report. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. We will now have the vote. (*A vote was taken*) That is CARRIED.

ITEM 6 – COMMUNITY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 6, Councillor Coupar.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am pleased to present the Annual Report of the work that the Leeds Community Committees do to Council and look forward to comment from Chairs and other Councillors who sit on those Committees. I move in terms of the Notice, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dowson.

COUNCILLOR DOWSON: Seconded, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Hussain.

COUNCILLOR A HUSSAIN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. As Chair of the Inner East Community Committee I am delighted to speak on the Community Committees' Annual Report. Firstly I would like to thank the former Chair, Councillor Asghar Khan, who over much of the work of the committee over the last year. I would also like to place on record thanks to the officers in the community teams for all their hard work to helping improve the lives of the residents across all of Inner East Leeds.

Much like all the other Community Committees we in the Inner East have been extremely busy over the past year. We have had a particular focus on the Community Cohesion, supporting young people and getting more residents into the work and the regeneration across our wards.

I would like to highlight a few examples of some of the excellent work by officers and Members of the Committee to improve things for the community in Inner East Leeds over the last year. Firstly, in Seacroft the new Community Hub at Deacon House opened just over twelve months ago and has gone from strength to strength. The Committee contributed Wellbeing funding to the support of the on-site community café and money buddy financial adviser to help those struggling with that, and a community development worker apprentice to strengthen the link with the local organisations and the residents' groups.

At Rein Park a new multi-use games area is under development to provide a facility to help young people to stay active. In Burmantofts and Richmond Hill the ward Councillors through the Wellbeing fund funded five youth activities over the school summer holidays. These took place into the Lincoln Green, Nowell Mount Park, Torre Grove, Rookwood Road and Harehills Park. The event including inflatables, games and low cost refreshment. An event also provided the engagement between the local resident Councillor and the local community teams.

The Lincoln Green improvements to the Lindsey Garden Park are nearly complete. The scheme will see improvements to the community garden area and the refurbishment

of the play equipment and the fencing. It was funded by the ward Members in the East Housing Advisory Panel and the PSF. In my ward of Gipton and Harehills, Youth Activity Fund was awarded to the Compton Centre to help the centre to put on activities for the young people for five days a week. These were including sports sessions, games nights and the workshop with the Leeds College of Building.

Lord Mayor, I think the value of the Community Committee is clear. Over the last year we have seen some fantastic work to make improvement to the lives of the residents across Inner East.

I am greatly looking forward to working closely with my colleagues and the local residents over the coming year to do even more and to create the best area possible for every single resident. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Heselwood.

COUNCILLOR HESELWOOD: Lord Mayor, comrades. *(cheering)* The enemy! *(interruption)* I would like to start by thanking officers, Leeds West Councillor, co-optees and members of the public for making the Inner West Community Committee such a success. I would also like to thank my colleague Councillor Venner who expertly chaired the Inner West Community Committee in the last Council year.

There are only a couple of Community Committees who have co-optees on their committee and I am very happy to say that the Inner West is one of them. Jonathan Butler, our very own Bramley co-optee, is here today and he plays a very active role in our community and is even here keeping an eye on us in Council, so thank you, Jonathan, for playing an active role. *(Applause)*

Co-optees play a very important role as representatives of our local community, ensuring that we have community involvement in all that we do. We also encourage members of the public to attend our meetings and participate in debate. In the last twelve months we have covered topics such as transport consultation, health and care plans, community safety as well as approving funding for lots of projects through our Wellbeing Funding Grants that we give out at Community Committee, so at our September meeting we will have an open forum on Universal Credit with speakers from the DWP and Housing looking at the impact of the ill-thought out discriminatory policy that this Tory Government has put in place and the effect that that will have in Leeds on the people that we represent – a policy which has already been proved to leave thousands with rent arrears, choosing between paying rent or clothing their children and leaving many women, especially those in controlled relationships and suffering domestic abuse, with nothing and no way to escape.

Comrades, please feel free to join the Inner West Community Committee meeting on Universal Credit next Wednesday where you will all be very welcome to come and listen. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Akhtar, please.

COUNCILLOR AKHTAR: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. I am absolutely delighted to speak on the Community Committee Annual Report 2017/18. Can I first of

all welcome this particular report and all the hard work that went into this, and especially the comments which were made by the Executive Member for the Communities, Councillor Debbie Coupar, where she says we want every resident regardless of their background, ethnicity, faith or sexuality to be proud and feel fully positive difference into their own communities but all part of our city, so we welcome everyone.

Just to follow from those notes, my Lord Mayor, as we all know the Inner North West Inner is such a diverse now, we have all learned the majority of the migrants live in our part of the city which we absolutely welcome them.

Just talk about some of the projects that we have carried over the last twelve months, one which comes to mind is the tackling noise nuisance which basically affected many of my residents and also the neighbourhood ward Hyde Park and Headingley. We invested some money into a project where out of hours service was provided for those residents who were facing with the loud music parties day in and day out, and that has been welcomed by the local residents. We absolutely thank the Inner Community Committee for funding those particular projects.

With regards to the summer activities, officers, the elected Members have talked to the residents in Tinshill, Hyde Park and Headingley and also Little London and Woodhouse and we have listened to the young people and we obviously have carried out some work. For example, Mini Breeze in Tinshill and Mini Breeze was also provided in Alexandra Park which many of our local residents took the benefit.

My Lord Mayor, even though the little amount of money which has been invested because of all the cut backs but the Inner Community Committee has played its role to make sure that the services have been given the balance. The Committee also worked closely with the local community groups to make improvement to the areas. One example, works with the Barca to improve the public health, the Better Together Project has been worked with local people to increase community resilience, build social capital and support health lifestyle.

Overall, my Lord Mayor, I would like to thank our Councillors who sit on the Board and also our fantastic officers. Without the officers probably we might not be able to do much so it is a commitment not only from the elected Members from the Council officials and above all our residents. Our Community Committee is the only Community Committee which we can proudly say where we get a high number of local members of the public come along, so thank you to Councillor Coupar and her team for doing whatever they are doing for our local communities. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Bentley.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: I was just nodding off there - Councillor Akhtar has that effect on me!

When this report has come up before myself and my former colleagues often remind Members that the Inner North West Community Committee is the only one where the Wellbeing Fund is put into a big pot and everyone has to share it out in

whatever way they can rather than it being allocated ward by ward. We have always thought that is not the right way to do it but we always get voted down.

The other issue that I often raise, particularly with Weetwood, is in the past the lack of community facilities, Council facilities in Weetwood ward. By coincidence Councillor Anderson is talking about OPAL. In the last twelve months we have seen quite a number of changes in the way that both the Community Committee and the local facilities are being arranged. Because of OPAL's move into the old Bedford Arms they have developed a fantastic community centre. They have gone into that gap where the Council has neglected the area in terms of facilities and the Third Sector has gone in and filled it, so we now have a superb community centre not only catering for OPAL's own work, they work with elderly people, but also for a range of community activities and it is thriving. In fairness, it has been supported by the Community Committee in terms of grants and Wellbeing etc.

Once we had that facility in place we were then able to better address some of the other problems in the area, namely the lack of adequate youth provision. Again, with funding from Wellbeing, from the Community Committee and Youth Activities Fund, we were able to commission the Cardigan Centre to put on Youth Clubs within the Welcome In and to do outreach work across the ward, and we had some young people come to the Community Committee telling us what they did and explaining what they would like us to do further and we are doing that.

As a result of partnership between the Third Sector, the Neighbourhood Policing Team, the Community Committee, we have seen a marked decrease in antisocial behaviour and youth crime in the area. Our residents are a lot more reassured and we have got more engaged young people in the ward. A really positive outcome so many thanks to all involved. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Paul Wadsworth.

COUNCILLOR WADSWORTH: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to comment on the Annual Report for the Outer North West Community Committee which I chair.

The year started off very positively. We had five sub-groups, we were having Community Forums and we had a Youth Activity summit, and then within a very short period of time we lost three members of staff and there is a saying, you don't know what you've got until you have lost it, and we certainly knew that we had lost these three members of staff. They have all gone on to doing excellent work in other parts of the Council, including one who has gone to the Conference Centre to work on the Neighbourhood Priority Areas.

Losing those members of staff one after another impacted a great deal on the work we could do and things just really ground to a halt because we did not have anybody who was dedicated or knew the area to actually do any work at all, and the restructure then took place and that seemed to take for ever to actually get anyone in place that could actually do anything for the Outer North West in particular. I am pleased to say we do now have a very energetic member of staff who is working really hard. She struggled because she does not know the area and she is new into the job but she is

working very hard. I think the restructure could have been done more quickly and could have been done more effectively, and I did raise that with the Chief Officer and the Exec Member, I have to say but it just did not seem to happen as quickly as we expected it to.

During the time when we had no staff at all, Members, particularly Chairs of the sub-groups, did work extremely hard to try and make sure that they carried on their work because the sub-groups really are the workhorses of the Outer North West Community Committee. They meet regularly, they make recommendations and they actually get things done with regards to that so I cannot thank Members enough for that and hope that that goes forward into the next year.

With regard to the budget, the Council Budget Meeting did inject £180,000 into Wellbeing. However, Outer North West saw a slight reduction in funding. That is very difficult when you try to explain that to members of the public, that more money was injected into the budget but actually Outer North West got a little less. I have to say the report on this particular page does not really reflect that. I think it could have been better designed as to what actually local communities get and that might be something we want to look into going forward.

I hope that this is a one-off year and I can be more positive next year. Thank you very much, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Wilkinson, please.

COUNCILLOR WILKINSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. First of all I would like to thank all Members and officers of the Outer North East Community Committee for their work and support in this last twelve months. Secondly, I would like to warmly welcome Councillors Norma Harrington and Sam Firth who replaced John and Rachael Procter in the May elections.

Spending money wisely is, I am sure, on all Councillors' minds when allocating Wellbeing, Youth Activity, Section 106, Ward Based Initiative and MICE spending. Now added to that is the Community Infrastructure Levy allocated to Community Committees. That is most of the Community Committees but not the Outer North East as, with the exception of a tiny area within the Alwoodley ward, CIL funding will go direct to Parish Councils with no say whatsoever on its spending from the Community Committee.

So that we can continue to spend money wisely it is essential that we know the amount of CIL funding going to Parish Councils and when. As an example, one Parish Council within the Outer North East received almost a quarter of a million pounds in CIL funding which is more than ten times their annual precept, and yet have applied to the Community Committee for funding towards improving facilities in their village hall. It was only by chance that we knew how much they had received.

I have raised this anomaly on previous occasions in Joint Plans Panel, Scrutiny Board and Community Committee Chairs Forum, but so far it has fallen on deaf ears so please can a scheme be brought forward so that ward Members receive a regular update on what CIL fundings have been and will be allocation to Parish Councils so that we can continue to spend our money wisely and ensure it goes to those areas in most need.

Finally, thank you to Councillor Coupar for the efficient way in which she chairs the Community Committee Chairs Forum. Meetings are scheduled to start at 10.00am until noon and, something I am not used to, they start at 10.00am and finish at noon, so well done, Debbie. *(laughter)* Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor David Blackburn, please.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thank you. I speak to the report on the Community Committees as newly elected Chair of Outer West – a position I have held previously but not for a few years.

Our Community Committee is a strange mix-up of three different political parties, but if you came to one of our meetings I do not think you would notice the difference because we all tend to work together. Some of you might say fortunately and some of you might say unfortunately, there has been a major change. We lost four Members - two voluntary and two involuntary - of the Committee and they have been replaced with four others, one of them being my predecessor Councillor Coulson who I have to say had my full support as Chair over that period.

The thing is, we all work together and one of the things I stressed at our first meeting was to the new Members, can we continue that work because together we can do things; if we fall out we will not get things forward.

As I say, I will go back to the last year. We have done much with the resources that we have and in particular, which is not mentioned in there - and I am talking about my own ward here – it is the support of the six Councillors from the other two wards in the work we have done on the Bawns and the Heights in Neighbourhood Improvement and I hope this will continue. I think it is important that we all recognise the areas where we have problems in any of our wards and try and work together to resolve them.

I think we have a good relationship there and I think from the first meeting it looks like with the four new Councillors we will be able to work together and deliver. Can I say to the Exec Member I am sorry I will not be with you tomorrow morning but I am somewhere else, unfortunately. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Amanda Carter, please.

COUNCILLOR AMANDA CARTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to echo some of what Councillor Blackburn is saying and say thank you to our former colleagues who have worked so hard. Very sorry to have lost Rod Wood who was on the Environment Committee and I have now replaced by that and realised how much hard work there is to do there. Also particularly to Councillor Coulson who kept us amused throughout all our meetings and I count as a friend as well as a colleague. Councillor Blackburn has not let us down. At our Environment meeting this week he was busily telling us jokes and tales of Norfolk, which was highly amusing.

I would like to pass a few comments on the Environment Committee which we had this week. We have had a fantastic summer, haven't we? The sun has been shining, blazing down on us, and I do not know whether it was predicted or not but one thing you

can certainly predict is that this country cannot predict its weather, so I am not entirely sure when the leaves will fall but you can bet your bottom dollar it won't be when we want them to fall and we will have difficulty collecting them.

I wanted to ask that officers are able to react quickly to when the leaves actually do fall, because it can cause an awful lot of damage, particularly to the elderly and young children. In the Outer West we have got a lot of leafy areas. We have got woods in the area and the leaves blow on to parts where elderly people use.

The other issue which has reared its head – and I love dogs, we have got a dog in our family, we have got two dogs actually in our family – but sometimes in our parks we have more dogs than people and they are busy running round and quite often they scare the young children. I welcome some of the implementation on controlling dogs in that some people now have to carry doggy bags because we, and I am sure everybody else around this city, suffers from dog fouling. In Calverley Park in particular Parkside School has to use the park as its playing field and it is particularly unpleasant and extremely unhealthy for children to fall in it. I am hoping that the Community Committee Environment can start to do something about this. I think a few years ago we had some action days, didn't we, Councillor Blackburn, which worked very well.

We all work very closely together, as Councillor Blackburn said, and you would not know we were from Opposition parties, unlike in this Council Chamber when it is very obvious that we are from different parties, so I hope that we can continue to work in that vein. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: I owe an apology to Councillors Anderson, Stephenson and Lamb. I bypassed you by letting Amanda in and I do apologise, so Councillor Anderson.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. In referring to the Community Committee Report, can I first of all start by echoing part of what Councillor Wadsworth said but be more particular about the good work that has been done in our Community Committee this year in a number of facets and one of them is the work done by Councillor Pat Latty in terms of the work that she has done in terms of Children's Services. From the good work that she has done, I think a number of other Community Committees have learned from the way that she had done work and, as a result of that, she has been almost single-handedly responsible for setting policy and standards throughout the whole of this city, so that is one thing that we can definitely say that Community Committees have had a very, very positive effect on.

However, after that things start getting a bit more shady. I chair the Environment sub-group and also the Community Safety sub-group and sometimes it is proving very, very difficult to actually implement some of the works we would like to see done, particularly in Environment. Councillor Carter just mentioned about leaf fall. This morning I was walking through Headingley and the leaves are already quite thick as you walk past the old Girls' High School. It really is quite thick already and it has only just started, so what is it going to be like by the time the other trees fall and are we responding quickly enough?

In our area we keep being told you have got the choice, you can either have your leaves cleared or you can have your streets cleared. Why is the choice as stark as that? Do people who do not have trees, can they not be given the same quality of service in terms of what we have got?

When it comes to community safety, we as a Community Committee have put a lot of money into target hardening. We have put a lot of money into target hardening but when we asked the Police Commissioner for some money to help support what we are trying to do, we keep being told “No, no, no, no, no.” Where is this partnership that we need within the Community Committees?

Funding. Councillor Lewis made reference to a comment I made in the previous area. Well, yes, you have had to make changes but if you listen to us on this side, we can get you the money to invest in Scrutiny, we can get you the money to invest in Community Committees. You just do not want to look after the whole of the city. You want to just have your narrow focus on everything you do all the time instead of governing for us all. We on this side believe that we are here to look after everybody in this city, not just a narrow focus in terms of what we are doing.

To conclude, to back up a comment that Councillor Wadsworth made, why is it now because of your changes taking away back-up staff I, and people are doing so, have to take my own minutes, develop my own action tracker, arrange my own meetings? Why has that got to be done? *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Anderson. Councillor Stephenson.

COUNCILLOR STEPHENSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Colleagues, friends *(laughter)* I have to say, countrymen, friends, leaders. Councillor Heselwood, I am quite insulted to be called the enemy, I have to say. We are really not the enemy at all, we are really not, and in a week when senior Labour MPs described the Labour Party as being institutionally racist, I think the enemy is within. You ought to be looking there instead.

Just imagine, Lord Mayor, imagine being sat at home watching this webcast on a topic about communities and a Councillor, a senior Councillor on the Labour Bench stands up and starts talking about enemies and divides. I think it is appalling, Lord Mayor, and we should move beyond it.

I would like to start and talk about the Outer North East by paying tribute to Councillor Gerald Wilkinson’s Chairmanship. Gerald, Councillor Wilkinson, is an eminently respected member of our community both in Wetherby and in the broader Outer North East and it is a great pleasure to serve on the Community Committee with him.

As you will see in the report here, the Outer North East has pioneered some of the Neighbourhood Plans across the city. Our Parish Councils and Neighbourhood Planning Groups have got together and spent hours of work organising community events and organising their Neighbourhood Plans which have been well received across the area.

In the rural areas some of the things that fall to us as Members of the Outer North East Community Committee is dealing with pressures of planning and also investing

into our communities. One of the things I get to do is chair the Emmerdale Stakeholder Panel, the Section 106 pot that arrived from the filming and the tours of Emmerdale at the Harewood estate, and that panel has managed to fund some great capital projects across the Outer North East in that time and hopefully will do moving forward.

I just wanted to add at the end of this point, some of us in the Outer North East were feeling the pressure a little from staffing changes within the department and we felt for some time that we are kind of cast aside, we are put aside in favour of other areas and no more so was that the case than we were scrolling through Twitter, as we do from time to time and we noticed that officers of this Council were out door-knocking with elected Members in the Inner East – door-knocking, picking up issues. Hopefully when the Executive Member sums up I would be very grateful if she could tell me who to contact to get officers out to help us with our street surgeries because we very much welcome the support of officers out knocking on doors, picking up issues from residents in our area. I would be grateful if we could have an update on that, please. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lamb, please.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I will not say “comrades” but certainly friends. Like Councillor Stephenson, I think it is worth reflecting that perhaps - how can I put this – we take a slightly more mature view of our arrangements in this place, and political opponents you may be but I think we have found many times that this Council is at its best when we are working together and collaborating with one another and we tend to work in that spirit. There may be one or two notable exceptions but I certainly think the talk of enemies and comrades is really not appropriate for this sort of place. I think the spirit that most groups and most Members work in actually in this place actually we should stick to and adhere to. I hope you might reflect on your ill-judged comment, Councillor Heselwood, and perhaps reflect on that and change your view.

Anyway, coming to the Community Committee Annual Report, first of all I would like to join others in paying tribute to Councillor Gerald Wilkinson who has chaired the Outer North East Community Committee I think for, is this your 17th year? 19th year, and has done a magnificent job, is hugely respected, engages with Chairs across the city and chairs our Committees fantastically well and the amount of work and level of effort that he goes into is immense in terms of preparing our Committee and enabling us to do the good work that we do.

One of the things I would like to focus on today is the Youth Activity Fund. We have done some good work in our area; we can do better we feel, and we are certainly looking to some of the examples. I know I have been inspired by the work Councillor Cohen has done, Councillor Pat Latty has done, Members in other areas as well and I have seen some of the good things they have done.

One of the asks that we have though, it is a particular challenge – I am not sure it is unique to our area, others may find the same. What we really try and do with the Youth Activity Fund is create sustainable activities for young people. We are keen to avoid a six week scheme here and a twelve week scheme there. They have their place and they are good at times but we would really urge you to consider allowing Youth

Activity Funding to be used for capital projects because there are many instances in our community where it would be incredibly helpful to sustain activities for the long-term if we can use some of that money for capital projects – whether that is for building or football posts or equipment. There are certain ways round it but we do find it restrictive and there are times when there are groups we would really love to support and help to get going and unfortunately the restrictions mean we are not able to do that.

I would also echo previous points about CIL and trying to make sure that the CIL contributions are available to Community Committees when we are making decisions about whether to award grants to Parish Councils now in particular, some of whom in our areas are getting significant sums of money, hundreds of thousands of pounds in some cases, and still coming to ask us for grant funding. I hope that is something you can look at as well. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Neil Buckley, please.

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Outer North East Community Committee, I would just like to echo my colleague's comments about Councillor Wilkinson who does a fantastic job. I am not going to make any more comments about Councillor Heselwood. She will have plenty of time to reflect on her attitude. *(laughter)*

I would like to bring up two issues, Lord Mayor. I think a lot of work has been done in the Community Committee this year particularly around Neighbourhood Planning. Just to bring a parochial attitude to this, in Alwoodley we have established our Parish Council which covers the western half of the ward, the Neighbourhood Plan, one of the main things we want to achieve with that is to try to prevent this unwanted demolition of family homes. We have had a situation where attractive large family homes on large plots – and that is the key – have been demolished and turned into flats which completely alter the character of the area.

The second issue is one which I have mentioned here before and to some extent it sounds like a first world issue, if you like. This is this whole situation about estates which were typically developed in the 1950s and the 1960s and so on and with the best of goodwill at the time developers were either told to leave the trees where they were or to actually provide copses of trees in order to make the estates look better. This worked, it was fantastic, everybody was happy and so on. The difference is, of course, that when the little saplings are put in, particularly things like silver birch and so on, these are about six feet high, the houses are still the same size and now there are various woods, really, which tower over smallish houses and not only attach themselves to the houses, interfere with aerials, roofs, moss and all that kind of thing, but actually cast a lot of shade and also some problems over gardens, and I am hoping that in some way we can try to address this as a Community Committee because obviously the problem does not just apply to Alwoodley, it applies to other wards.

Forestry have found it very difficult to help us for various reasons. However, there is sign that they are trying to be a little bit more proactive with this and I very much hope we can make some progress. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Norma Harrington, and I would mention to Members that this is a maiden speech so I hope you will observe the usual proprieties.

COUNCILLOR HARRINGTON: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. As a new Member of Council and, of course, a new Member of the Outer North East Community Committee, one of my first interactions in a formal Council Committee setting was at that Community Committee. It was really pleasing to see the good work that goes on with elected Members identifying priorities and having the discretion to direct funding that will really boost local communities.

We, of course, direct funding at a wide range of projects and as the Annual Report highlights, Neighbourhood Planning has been a key focus. I would like to talk about some schemes that we have agreed to back that will provide much needed new play facilities for children and families in my ward in line with the local Neighbourhood Plans aspirations.

The Outer North East Community Committee will, in the coming months, be directing funding to support significant investment in three playgrounds in Wetherby. This is replacement of existing equipment. It is essential that we do all we can to support families in the Wetherby ward and providing enhanced recreation is one key way that we can do that. As a result, we will be providing support to Scaur Bank, Masons Field and Nidd Approach playgrounds and we are very helpful that families will access them and enjoy the new opportunities they offer, including play equipment for children with disabilities.

We live in a busy world and it is vital that families get support with leisure activities, and we all know how much enjoyment children and young people get from play facilities. Two of the play parks are actually going to have equipment that teenagers and older children can use also.

As a recent Town Mayor of Wetherby, recreation was one of the key things identified for development and investment and it is pleasing that through our work on the Community Committee we are now able to support that from the various funds available to us. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Caroline Anderson, please.

COUNCILLOR C ANDERSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I just wanted to bring to Council's attention the work that we have done on the Outer North West Community Committee with the children in the area. This has been led by Councillor Pat Latty and I would like to thank her for all the work she does with the children right across this city, not just in Outer North West.

Pat had the idea of getting all the children together somewhere in a location in the area for the last three or four years now and we have had a Children's Day when all the children from schools across the area have been invited to come along and put forward their ideas for how they would like to see some of our Youth Activity money to be spent. We had some wonderful presentations from different groups that came along and told the children what they could do with that money and they all went away and got into groups and did some exercises and looked at different ideas that they had

themselves with a view to presenting to all of the audience later in the day their idea. There were some fantastic presentations – and these are all primary school children. None of them were nervous, none of them were afraid to tell us exactly how we could spend the money that was available. We had a presentation from sports coaches, from entertainment people, all sorts of things and everybody participated in the day. They had a lovely lunch and all the children enjoyed it. They were all so well behaved and a credit to the teachers and to this city. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Golton, please.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am a member of the Outer South Community Committee and because Councillor Bruce is being a bit shy today I thought I would take the opportunity to actually talk about some of the activities that we do on that Community Committee and obviously some of the issues that have arisen during the conversations that we have had as Members.

One of the things that was most important to us recently, Lord Mayor, is around how we use our Wellbeing money and how we identify whether or not it is being spent to good value. One of the things that we did was, we stopped a contract that we had been running for quite a few years now with Parks and Countryside for site-based gardeners, and it was precisely because that department was not able to report back to us exactly what it was, which was the added value that our extra money was delivering through that contract.

I think that Council departments need to learn to report back in the same way that some of our social enterprise partners in the city already have the custom of doing, because they have to do that to justify the money that they are given by the Council, and I point out the long relationship that our Community Committee has had with Morley Elderly Action to deliver community gardening services to elderly people throughout the Outer South Committee because of their effective nature of reporting back to us as a Community Committee.

On a second issue, Lord Mayor, I would also like to point to the issue of Community Infrastructure Levy, which Councillor Lamb referred to as well. I am not aware that there are any Parish Councils in the Outer South which have Neighbourhood Plans at the moment. What I am aware of is that there are Neighbourhood Fora which are available in the Outer South and they are busy working towards getting Neighbourhood Plans in place.

I note that Councillor Buckley is frustrated about the conversion of large properties into smaller properties which may be more affordable. We have got the opposite problem in our area where we are having people in affordable poorer housing being evicted and having their homes demolished to make way for executive homes, and each of those communities should have a way of actually being able to add a veneer to the planning policy for their area to say that is not something which we consider sustainable, and we can only do that through a Neighbourhood Plan.

What I can say, Lord Mayor, is that the Community Section have not been the most amenable in enabling Neighbourhood Fora to develop and deliver their Neighbourhood Plans and there is a suspicion at the moment that the Planning Section

are holding back on the development of those plans because, at the end of the day, there needs to be a referendum and also in terms of the Community Committee it is in its interest to have these Neighbourhood Plans in place because those communities get 25% of Community Infrastructure Levy as opposed to 15%, and if we are complaining about how much money we have in our Wellbeing budget, that is a great way to supplement local spending. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Robinson.

COUNCILLOR ROBINSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Also rising to speak about Community Committees. I would echo what you have just heard from Councillor Golton, Councillor Lamb and from Councillor Wilkinson before that. Community Infrastructure Levy, it is an incredibly important pot for communities to access whether they are Parish Councils or Committee Forums and we need to make sure we get this right in terms of rolling out across the city.

Similarly I would applaud the Chairmanship of Councillor Wilkinson. I do not know what the prize is after 20 years of being a Chair of a Community Committee. Perhaps the Exec Board Member takes you out for a slap up meal or something like that. I do not know but I am sure there is something.

Within our Committee we have spent a lot of Wellbeing money on speed indication devices over the last few years and only today I was being told by one of our Parish Councils that the speed indication device in Collingham was active and working and managed to clock somebody doing 96 miles an hour in a 30 zone, which is absolutely incredible.

One of the ways that our communities have done this, have used speed indication devices to collect information, is they every month download this information and share it with the police so that the police can go out and make sure that they are enforcing at the right times and being out there at the key moments. I think that that is one of the best things that we do in our area as a Community Committee and I am sure you all do this in similar ways in your own areas as well, it is about that information sharing that I think works so well through Community Committees and needs to keep on going in the year ahead.

Similarly we have used some of our Wellbeing money for playgrounds and play spaces and play spaces and playgrounds often get associated with those under 16 and equipment for them, but actually what many communities in our area have done is, they have looked at external gym equipment as well and making sure that they are bringing external gym equipment forward in each of the villages so that we are encouraging healthy living, which I think is one of the key priorities we have for our Community Committee.

Finally I would just like to touch on two areas. One of them is our Environment sub-committee. We until last year had a fantastic officer in Bev Kirk who was doing incredible work enforcing environmental action in our area and whoever's Community Committee has got her now is incredibly lucky because we were very disappointed to lose her. Bev is one of those officers that displays the brilliance and diligence that our

officers all too often have and goes untold and unshouted about and she has done a great job in making sure she represents the Community Committee.

Finally, one of the things that we have and we are blessed with are many Town and Parish Councils and the Parish Council Forum that we chair. Very gratefully Councillor Coupar has asked me to work with her on reviewing the Town and Parish Council Charter which I am delighted to do in the year ahead, and we have got some early meetings put in place and I think one of the key things we need to do on that theme of communication is bring our Clerks together to work with officers and share information accordingly. Thank you very much, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Andrew Carter.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Yes, the clue is in the name isn't it really, Community Committee. Not Labour voters' committees, not Conservative voters' committees, not Liberal Democrat voters' committees – Community Committees where we all try and forget the politics and talk about what is in the best interests of the people we represent, however they vote.

I do get a bit concerned when I hear comments about political enemies, comrades, what have you because it just seems to me, Judith, that the administration is going backwards. Over this past number of years, yes, we have heated debates in here, that is the place for them, that is why I always say to the Chief Executive when he says perhaps we should change how Council meetings are run, no, that is the pressure cooker, do not screw the top on the pressure cooker down or the top will blow off. That is where we all have our political backwardses and forwardses at Community Committees, and it has certainly been the case in the Outer West Area Committee, and I pay tribute to the previous Chair, former Councillor Coulson and, indeed, my former colleague Rod Wood, because they were actually two good examples of people working extremely closely together over eight years delivering all sorts of things for the community.

I really do not want to see this Authority go back to the days of only one Council Leader, actually, a fellow called John Trickett who some of you lot know quite well, when the whole Council was a battleground and actually only one group of people lost out and those are the people we were supposed to be serving and looking after, the residents of Leeds, because it was such a political bunfight at every level that the people of Leeds lost out. I really hope we are not going back to that because since that time working together under different administrations I think huge successes have come Leeds' way.

Let me just finish on this point. The added value of what Community Committees do cannot be under-estimated. Just have a look at the application forms groups have to fill in for funding and see how many people are involved with those community activities. This city does a lot of big things very well. It does a lot of small things that affect people very directly very badly because big organisations do, so have some confidence in Community Committees. Restore the relatively small amount of funding and let us get on with the job a cross-party basis. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Cohen.

COUNCILLOR RENSHAW: Point of order please, Lord Mayor. You seem to be missing out two Labour Councillors whose names are on the agenda.

COUNCILLOR: Can I ask what the Procedural number is?

THE LORD MAYOR: Excuse me, I did not catch that. I am not sure what the problem is. You are raising a point of order?

COUNCILLOR RENSHAW: Yes, you should be following the names on the agenda.

THE LORD MAYOR: What Procedure Rule are you quoting?

COUNCILLOR RENSHAW: I will withdraw.

THE LORD MAYOR: OK. Councillor Cohen.

COUNCILLOR COHEN: Thank you, Lord Mayor, and thank you for this Leeds Community Committee's Annual Report. I would lend support to comments that my colleagues made earlier on. I thought it was really incredibly sad that somebody who I have actually worked and got on very well with decides to refer to us as "enemies". I thought it was really, really unbecoming. Genuinely. I genuinely thought better. There we go. One lives and learns.

I would like to pay tribute to two people first of all before I move on to the substance of what I want to discuss within the Annual Report. First of all, I know we do not normally name officers but it is a real loss to our Community Committee that Bev Kirk has now moved to another Community Committee. She is a tremendous example of what an amazing Locality Officer is. Not that it should be encouraged but I work somewhat crazy hours and occasionally I would send an email off at some ridiculous hour of the night. There are two people, my Lord Mayor, who will always reply at whatever crazy time I send. One was our Chief Executive and the other is Bev Kirk. I always said to her, "Bev, you really should not be working at that time." Nonetheless, she always seemed to reply.

Within our Community Committee one of the things that I am incredibly proud that we have been able to do in recent years is the Youth Summits. They are not, interestingly, referred to directly as something we have done within our Community Committee, which is a pity. We held one three years ago that gave us a three year programme of work and then just a few months ago held a second, much larger Youth Summit where we had representatives from all of the schools within our ward, over 70 young people who were giving us their views as to how the Youth Activity Fund should be spent.

My Lord Mayor, it will come as no surprise to any of us who had the pleasure and privilege of working with young people that some of the ideas that they had that they brought forward as to some of the projects that they would want to see were truly, truly mind blowing in some regards. Some of the partnerships that they wanted to see us forge, for example with Leeds Rhinos, for example with drama organisations within the

city, they are things that we are going to take forward knowing that that is what our young people want to see. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: I am quite aware of the red light. Before we carry on, Councillor Renshaw. Councillor Renshaw, you raised a point, I have had it explained to me what it was.

COUNCILLOR RENSHAW: I withdrew the point of order.

THE LORD MAYOR: I just wish to explain to the young lady what it is. Now then, Councillor Renshaw, everybody has spoken in the order in which they have been given to me as wanting to speak. I am not sure what your problem is but there is one Labour Member who asked to speak and who will speak, she will be the third next to speak because that was when she asked to speak. I have tried to be scrupulously fair and I will continue to be so. There is no time limit on this so people go on in the order that they tell me they want to speak. Thank you. *(Applause)*

Now we have Councillor Dawn Collins.

COUNCILLOR COLLINS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. As a member of the Outer North West Community Committee I would like to extend my thanks as well to all of the officers who come to our full committee meetings, but also to all of the sub-committee meetings. They all come extremely well informed about their departments and not only what they are doing but also about what their colleagues are doing. This gives us a wonderful opportunity to discuss real issues with them and to put our points of view and the residents' points of view forward as well.

One concern I have had in the last few years, though, is regarding our pots of money. No disregard to Councillor Coupar but she has on numerous occasions through the Chair put us under pressure to try and spend these pots of money quickly. Our concern is that these pots of money are not just sitting there idly, they are actually already ringfenced, they are already allocated, but a lot of our projects are longer-term projects that have been carefully thought out. We do not want to fritter away our money, I do not think any of us do. We know that it is a valuable commodity at the moment and it needs spending wisely.

Just to give an example, some of our money is going to be spent on the following. We have been negotiating with Highways regarding road safety. One issue we have is on a road called Low Lane. It is a very congested road, it is not very wide but there are cars parked on both sides. Cars are there to support businesses as well as residents but this does actually make it difficult for pedestrians to cross the road.

Highways came up with a scheme where we were going to put pedestrian refuges in the middle of the road but unfortunately priority in Horsforth was lower than other areas, so instead of getting match funding, the Community Committee is now having to pay for the whole of the works. We have simplified the works so they are now pedestrian build-outs but it is very disappointing to the community as a whole that they are not being given this priority.

We have also spent money on speed indicator devices. We know that no-one will get a ticket as a result of these machines flashing, but it does reassure the public when they can actually see that the majority of the cars on their road do keep within speed limits.

We have also given Highways some additional funds, so at an area where, right next to a school, they were proposing to make a simple crossing that had no Belisha beacons or zebra crossing, we have now been able to turn it into an official zebra crossing. This makes it an awful lot easier for people to cross there and it also makes it an awful lot easier for the traffic.

I would just like to say, we are spending our money wisely and we will continue to do so.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Collins. (*Applause*) Councillor Firth and I would remind Members that this is a maiden speech and again please observe the usual politenesses.

COUNCILLOR FIRTH: Thank you very much, Lord Mayor. The one thing I have to say is that this is a maiden speech and I did not expect to be making a maiden speech right now, but I must say I was disappointed given as a new Member, and I think I can speak for most new Members, that it is a different experience and it has been a tricky and interesting first five months. I was disappointed, Councillor Heselwood, about your comments about everybody, and the reason why is this. We all have shared experiences, we all have a reason why we are here and my particular reason actually links to Universal Credit. The reason I am here is because of Adult Social Care and trying to do what we can to improve it.

I do not want to get political on that point but the Monday before I was elected I had to make the tough decision of moving my mum into a nursing home, who at 57 has suffered from MS since 1999 and I have been her carer since I was at primary school. What I can understand is this, we are one Community Committee sat in this Chamber, we make decisions every single day about where funding goes. I have to say this, getting away from that point is this, that fundamentally I have realised since being a Member of the Outer North East Community Committee actually the work that goes on within them to actually realise that all those events that I attended when I was younger - as I am one of the fresher-faced people in the Chamber as I have been told in the last meeting by particularly Councillor Leadley - the one thing I would say on that point is you realise actually fully the actual role in which Community Committees across the whole of our city, from every single area, touch every single individual young person and those who are maybe isolated, be them older, be them disabled.

I can say that I am really proud to be actually part of that process and I think going forward, I hope that certainly we can work together to actually forget about the politics and actually find the best way to deal with the issues at hand.

I am glad to say that I have been delighted to meet, particularly because those are the Members that I have met the most, the 27-odd new Members who will work together in those sessions to actually understand how the heck we can work as Councillors and actually get to grips with something that may be alien to us anyway.

The one thing I would say is this. In the Outer North East one thing we do know about particularly my ward and the ward that I share with Councillor Stephenson and Councillor Robinson, is that it is pretty rural and there are pretty big roads and long roads that do not have many houses along them at certain stretches and there are some people that unfortunately cannot keep their foot off the accelerator. The one thing that we have been able to fund through the Community Committee is the speed indication devices. They have been mentioned a few times already. The record results that also Councillor Robinson mentioned too. The fact is that then it actually puts the power back in the Parishes with the Parish Councils to enable them to realise actually generally what the problems are and then not only have we got local elected Members, we have got local people who know the facts, have the power and the influence in their hands to make things happen.

One thing I can say is this: I am a proud member of the Community Committee and I look forward to working with everybody across the Chamber. Thank you.
(*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Bruce.

COUNCILLOR BRUCE: Thank you for allowing me to speak, Lord Mayor. At last! (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Sarcasm is not needed.

COUNCILLOR BRUCE: The Outer South is the most mixed Community Committee politically because we have three different political parties represented, so obviously there have got to be strong differences of opinion sometimes and a lot of lively discussion, but we manage to work for the good of the area and get things done in the end between us.

A vital part of our work in the wards of Ardsley and Robin Hood, Morley North, Morley South and Rothwell is engaging with the array of local volunteers and community groups in our areas, because they do sterling work and it is so important that the Council and Councillors get behind them as they do, and I want to thank all of the Members of Outer South for all the work that you put into the Community Committee and the areas that you represent.

Our volunteers are the backbone of our localities. Some of you know we recognise our hardworking volunteers because we hold an annual event, Community Heroes, and it is the Outer South Oscars, really, but without the red carpet but still with star-studded guests because they are our community stars.

We use our Wellbeing funding to make things happen in our local communities such as the first ever dementia friendly garden in Rothwell. I am working with a group at the moment to try to get them funds for a community enterprise for Rothwell. Another example is the speed indicating devices (already been mentioned) in Ardsley and Robin Hood, they have done an excellent job getting them in there. There are so many events that we put on including Mini Breezes, which are always popular

throughout the summer holidays, St George's Day Parade, the Rothwell May Day Festival and Carnival etc and Morley Arts Festival, of course.

One of my personal favourites was the Youth Democracy Day that we put on this year. We had the Banqueting Hall full of children from Outer South schools and the children were chosen by their schools so I was really pleased that my daughter got to come along because she is a School Councillor and was elected by her school.

It was great to spend the day with the children and Councillors Mulherin and Renshaw also came along for the full day to show their support and help teach the young people about democracy, so thank you.

We have an aging population in our area and we make sure we put on an event every year in both Rothwell and Morley for International Day of Older People and it was a fantastic event in Rothwell, the one I attended in my ward, and all the older people were up Bollywood dancing at the diversity themed event, so they were having a lot of fun and the event was a success.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Bruce.

COUNCILLOR BRUCE: Transport is a big issue for us. We have had two events on that.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Bruce.

COUNCILLOR BRUCE: OK, thank you. Thanks everybody. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Pat Latty.

COUNCILLOR P LATTY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I shall only be speaking for two minutes but as my name has been mentioned several times in dispatches about my good work with the Children's Committee, I wanted to say that I have had some very good people on my committee who have worked very hard to bring these summits together and I think we were the first, actually, in our area to do them.

We are doing another one this year. I have had permission to do it in the Banqueting Hall so we are looking forward to having another very successful summit. Really, it is just to say that it is not just me, it is my committee who work very hard with me, so that is really all I want to say. I will not keep you any longer. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Coupar to sum up. *(Applause)*

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Finally, Lord Mayor, thank you. Can I say how pleased I am that the Community Committee Annual Report has caused such interest in Council and particularly, I have to say from the Conservative Benches who normally have expressed the view that it is a waste of Council time in previous Councils. I am extremely pleased to say that we have converted you into talking about the communities in this Council Chamber where it matters, so thank you for all of your contributions. Virtually all of your Benches have spoken on this issue.

Can I firstly thank Community Committee Chairs for all their hard work that they have done this year, including the ones who are no longer Committee Chairs, and Mick Coulson and Fiona Venner, thank you for all that hard work that you have done, and Asghar Khan, and welcome the new Chairs that we have got on board for this year's work.

Some Chairs have already highlighted the excellent work that is happening in all our communities and thank you for that, but I would like to take this opportunity to thank our Council officers, the Community Officers under the Director, James Rogers, for all the hard work that they do in our communities, and to the disappointment of some of our Benches I know that we have prioritised our work to frontline services and not minute taking, which I am very pleased about, I have to say.

Community Committee Chairs are not only working within their area but are coming together to look at emerging issues and common ground on a strategic level. As a strategic group we are tackling Council priorities and we are starting to visit different Community Committee areas so that understanding and good practice may be shared, and in fact we have got our first visit tomorrow over to Councillor Bruce's area in Rothwell. It is the first time I have taken apologies in Council, Councillor Blackburn, but I am happy to do so.

I would like to just say, because I do not want to waste any more time of Council, that the Community Committees are at the forefront of the Council's engagement with our communities and they continue to ensure that our city-wide priorities are discussed in local neighbourhoods, and that local people have a say on issues that matter to them.

I was pleased to support the increase in funding this year of £180,000, which gives Councillors more resources to address local need and I do have to say when the Conservative Government keeps cutting £240m a year, it is an effect of that that we have to cut our services, but we will prioritise front line services and I look forward to the work that the Community Committees are going to do next year and our next Council debate on it next year, maybe. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: We will go to the vote. (*A vote was taken*) That is CARRIED. (*Applause*) It has taken long enough, don't delay it any longer!

ITEM 7 - QUESTIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 7, Questions. We have 30 minutes for Questions. We had better get on with it. Councillor Harrison.

COUNCILLOR HARRISON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Does the Executive Member for the Environment and Active Lifestyles agree with me that disposing of waste at household waste sites should be free of charge, and that this would help to reduce fly tipping and reduce the cost of cleaning up after people who will not pay these charges?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Rafique.

COUNCILLOR RAFIQUE: Lord Mayor, the vast majority of waste deposited at one of our eight household waste sites is typical household waste and there is therefore no charge for over 80% of the waste that residents bring here.

Similar to many other Local Authorities, the charge we introduced is for building type inert waste such building rubble and plasterboard soil which households may find they need to dispose of only from time to time. The vast majority of waste that is fly tipped on our streets is not inert waste but is of the type that can still be deposited free of charge at one of our sites. The number of complaints of fly tipping of rubble, soil etc remains the same since the introduction of the charge.

Whilst the introduction of the charge was never going to be popular, the experience by the staff on site is that it has been met with broad acceptance from residents. In charging for this discretionary service we are able to help safeguard essential frontline services and we are on track to achieve the income expectations this year, Lord Mayor. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Harrison, do you have a supplementary?

COUNCILLOR HARRISON: Yes. I am afraid to say that evidence is going against what you have just said. I have got here a piece of paper that is showing that there have been 400 increase in people complaining of fly tipping since your charges have come in. Also, we all have had the same email off a constituent who has complained about the charges he has had to pay and I am sure we have all read that email, which came out on Sunday night.

This is proving that this 5% raise in the tax has done no good for these people, they are all complaining “Why should I pay more when I am still paying 5% more on my tax”, so I put to you, sir, can we find a way of reducing this and making it better and easier for people to dispose of this waste that you are saying is not inert. Thank you.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Rafique.

COUNCILLOR RAFIQUE: Yes, Lord Mayor, as I said before, the vast majority of the waste that is deposited at our household waste site, in fact well over 80%, is free of charge. With regard to fly tipping, I am happy to provide information to all Members of the Council which shows that there has not been an increase in the fly tipping; in fact in some areas there has actually been a gradual decline.

I am happy to provide that information. I am not sure where you got those figures from but if you have please do send them on to me because that is not information I am getting from the service and our officers.

Can I just say that the charge we introduced helps to pay for some of the other services such as our garden waste which accounts for 10% of our 40% recycling rate. Two-thirds of Local Authorities across the country actually charge for garden waste. Here in Leeds we are rolling out the garden waste to as many households as possible, so given the work we are doing and the facility we provide across our eight waste fill sites, which again accounts for 10% of our recycling rate, I think the charge for a small

service, given the £40m we lost since 2010 across the service because of Government cuts, I think it is a very small amount to pay for some vital frontline services. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Bentley.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Is the Executive Member for Regeneration, Transport and Planning satisfied with the quality of the remedial surface dressing work that has recently been carried out on roads in North Leeds?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Richard Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Each year the Council carries out a programme of surface dressing work using contractors who specialise in this type of work. Last year 113 sites were surface dressed, covering a total of 540,000 square metres. All surface dressing work carries a two year defect guarantee. From the time it is laid its performance is monitored. Of the sites treated last year, eleven have been of concern due to excessive chipping loss. The failed areas equate to around 10,000 square metres, which is only around 2% of the total area treated.

The contractor responsible was made aware of these early failures and has been asked to sweep the sites on a number of occasions to remove the loose chippings and, on the Council's insistence, has carried out remedial works to ten of the eleven sites during August this year to retreat the failed areas. The eleventh site could not be done at the same time due to a clash with utility works. The eleventh site to be retreated was completed on 30th August.

Given this process relies on passing traffic to embed the chippings into the existing road surface, it is likely that the remedial dressing sites are still relatively green and will require a little more time to settle before we can fully assess whether this retreatment has been entirely successful.

In addition, further sweeping will be required, along with the repainting of road markings. However, early inspections of the work carried out show the repairs to be performing as expected. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Bentley, do you have a supplementary?

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor, yes. Is the Exec Member then aware of the number of complaints from two particular main roads in Weetwood ward, Monk Bridge Road and Weetwood Lane, and the only response that the residents seem to get from Highways is, well, this is a cheaper way of doing things. Will he comment on that and the feeling that this method of resurfacing is a false economy, and could he provide us with a proper cost benefit analysis including the measures of satisfaction from road users? Thank you, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lewis, do you have an answer to that?

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: I think the supplementary is not really about anything to do with the original question.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: It is.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: The question should perhaps have been about your view on surface dressing. Surface dressing is an accepted way of doing a relatively cheap job which in terms of the hierarchy of the work that we have to do is one that delivers value for money. There were years when we did not do any but that was before austerity. That is what we live with and I would still say it is an effective means of treating roads that are at a certain stage in their life when they do not need a full resurface but we want to extend their life, and that is what we do.

I am more than happy, Jonathan, to come out and meet you and your excellent ward colleagues to have a look at the sites in question, have a full debate. However, I have just met some of the residents from the Lawnswood roundabout campaign so I may have to come in disguise but I hope that is acceptable. Thank you, Lord Mayor.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lowe.

COUNCILLOR LOWE: Happy New Year and Shanah Tovah to everyone in the room and around the globe and on that note, please could the Leader of Council update Members on Leeds' response to the recent national debate about equalities?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Councillor Lowe, for the question. As we all know Leeds is a growing and richly diverse city with people of different ages and from many different backgrounds, cultures and beliefs living and working alongside each other. I think we can be very proud of the work we do across the Equalities agenda in Leeds.

The Council produces and publishes Equality Improvement Priorities and annual updates to ensure compliance with our duties under the Equality Act 2010. These are developed to complement the Best Council Plan priorities and help to underpin our ambition to be the best city in the UK, one that is compassionate with a strong economy, that tackles poverty and reduces the inequalities that still exist.

The Council's Equality Improvements Priorities have taken into account the protected characteristics as required under the Equality Act 2010. However, it is not just about meeting our legal duties. It is about improving outcomes for the citizens of Leeds and they set out what we are doing to remove and reduce the barriers that prevent people from fully participating in the social, cultural, political and economic life of the city.

We are committed to making equality a reality for all the citizens of Leeds. We want Leeds to be a city where people are able to recognise value and embrace diversity and difference. We work with organisations across Leeds to promote a clear, consistent message that prejudicial views or behaviour that could result in hate incidents or crimes will not be tolerated or condoned. We value the contributions that all citizens in Leeds make to our city and we want everyone to recognise and appreciate these.

Tackling hate crime continues to be a priority for the city not just because of the devastating consequences it can have for victims and their families but because of the divisions that it causes within our communities. This has become increasingly evident as increased hate crime reporting has gone hand in hand in recent years with national and international events.

The Responding to Hate Strategy was launched in October 2016 and the Annual Hate Crime week will be held in October this year. We work with faith communities through the Council's Religion or Belief Hub. The hub's mission statement is to ensure consideration of faith, religion or beliefs in the planning of Council and partners' services. A specific example of work undertaken is our longstanding relationship with the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust and our work together to support the annual Holocaust Memorial Commemoration event. We are absolutely clear there is no place for anti-Semitism in our city.

We will go even further. I want to inform Council that we will bring forward a report to Executive Board in October and set in place the necessary proceedings so that the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Definition of anti-Semitism can be adopted as a Council-wide policy

Alison, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for all of the work that you have done in areas of equality of the Council. I hope we can show our appreciation for her contribution.

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

COUNCILLOR LOWE: No, thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Hutchinson.

COUNCILLOR HUTCHINSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Could the Executive Board Member for housing confirm that she supports bringing Council homes up to a decency standard across Leeds and specifically in Drighlington in the Morley North ward, and also confirm that the proposed work on the Kingsway Estate to replace rotten single glazed wooden windows and to introduce – in many cases for the first time – gas central heating systems on the same estate, will be completed in the current financial year?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Coupar.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am, of course, fully committed to ensuring that Council properties offer the very best standards. Before I answer your specific question about Drighlington, I think it is important for Council to understand what has been achieved.

When the Labour Government launched its Decency Programme in 2003 only 40% of Council properties achieved that standard after years of lack of investment. The Council, through the ALMOs, was able to invest nearly £1 billion to transform the condition of Council housing across this city which tens of thousands of tenants have benefited from.

Now that the Decency funding has ended the Council has continued to prioritise investment in our housing stock by directing savings made in the HRA to maintain capital spend. We spend and are committed to continue to spend £80m a year on capital improvements. A significant element of that spend will continue to be directed towards meeting the Decency criteria which are still used by the Government, which places emphasis on replacement programmes of kitchens and bathrooms. Each year new properties come up for renewal. Currently 95% of our stock meets that standard.

It is fair to say, however, that the Decency Standard has its weaknesses and now that we are reliant solely upon our own resources rather than Government grant, we have taken the opportunity to address issues that were not covered by that definition such as single pane windows and incomplete central heating, for example, are allowable under the Decency Standard.

The condition of multi-storey blocks was also not properly addressed. The Executive Board has agreed a business plan that puts greater emphasis on affordable warmth which goes beyond the Decency definition. Examples of some of the extra work we are doing includes £24m investment to deliver district heating to improve the heating and hot water systems to 26 high rise blocks; £68m investment to deliver a programme to install external wall insulation, concrete repairs and structural works to a significant number of non-traditional construction high-rise blocks; £76m investment in heating and hot water upgrades to upgrade gas central heating systems, install innovative new heating systems and renew obsolete all-electric central heating systems.

This is not to mention other schemes which we are funding such as £10m for sprinkler systems which we have prioritise; nor the latest programme of Council house building we have funded since the 1980s.

I am glad to say that Drighlington will benefit from the investment the Council is making. Within this year's capital programme we will complete a window replacement programme to 117 properties within the Drighlington area which will include all the properties on the Kingsway Estate to replace any outstanding single glazed windows. I can also confirm that a scheme to install gas central heating to properties in Drighlington, including the Kingsway Estate, will be undertaken where properties do not currently benefit from gas central heating. Both these schemes will indeed be completed within this financial year.

I am committed to not only maintaining Decency across the entire stock but also to go beyond the narrow definition to improve the quality of life for our tenants on issues which matter most to them. Delivering efficient heating solutions that deliver affordable warmth is one of the top priorities which more and more of our tenants are benefiting from. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Hutchinson, do you have a supplementary?

COUNCILLOR HUTCHINSON: No thank you, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Tunnicliffe.

COUNCILLOR TUNNICLIFFE: Will the Executive Member please comment on the impact of the 2019/20 Business Rates Pilot Announcement?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor J Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. First of all, as Members will be aware, since austerity was imposed on us in 2010 Government funding for Local Government services has dropped by 60 pence in the pound, which means that this Council has lost by this point £240m every year in funding for Government services and I think I congratulate Members at the other end of the Council Chamber for eloquently outlining the impact their Government cuts have had on our services on the earlier outline. Interesting to note that although this has led to our Council having nearly 3,000 less staff, the Cabinet Office in Whitehall has more staff than it had in 2010, so maybe we can have a few civil servants seconded to take minutes of Community Committee meetings. *(laughter)*

Turning to the Business Rate Pilot Announcement, we were successful for a one year pilot for this financial year which saw a few percentage points equivalent of that £240m reduction returned to us from our business rates that we have collected alongside other City Region Authorities. We had hoped in the spirit of localism that that would continue for another year but the announcement made in July said that we would only be entitled to 75% of business rates, so already one single announcement by one Government Minister has cost us £4m less for Council services next year. If we are unsuccessful even for that 70% we will be losing tens of millions from Council services next year on an arbitrary Government announcement.

Council might be interested to know on this year's figures, though London is only three times the size of the Leeds City Region they have benefited from about 20 times more cash from this scheme than we have which demonstrates we are not all in it together. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Tunnicliffe, do you have a supplementary? No. Councillor Buckley, please.

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Given recent speculation about First Group's future and the extent to which the administration relies on this company for much of its current and future transport strategy, what discussions has the Executive Member for Regeneration, Transport and Planning had with First and others about commitments and contingencies in the event that First is restructured?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Richard Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I suppose I first question the premise that we are reliant. I would rather not be reliant on partners like First, Arriva, Transdev, Network Rail and the rest of them. Unfortunately your Government many years ago put us in the position where we are very dependent on the private sector to do or not to, and I think for many residents in Leeds they would say that First Bus certainly has not done for us.

That is where we are, we have to live with that arrangement that was foisted upon us. I would far rather we were dealing with Leeds City Transport or a WYCA run bus service but that is not what we have got. We are where we are.

It is difficult and I remember when Andrew Carter was joint Leader the saga of the FTR bus which First insisted was the saviour of transport in the city. Leeds City Council put hundreds of thousands of pounds into extending bus stops from Seacroft right through to Pudsey at massive cost and then First Bus shifted the buses on to another route and that is the basis of the relationship that we have had to live with.

In terms of where First is now, yes, we are absolutely aware of the situation. It is obviously worrying as is, I suppose, the situation of some of our rail companies and I suppose I reflect that only Chris Grayling could make the nation wish for the return of the British Rail sandwich – a true achievement for that politician.

I have asked officers to pursue our concerns with the senior management in the region, so not only is it about new buses but our wider ambition from First and other operators to raise the overall standard and quality of their operations against that shared target for doubling bus use within the next ten years.

A meeting has been requested with their UK Bus Managing Director and is expected to take place shortly. Regrettably we do not have immediate options open to us for taking over the running of buses or franchising services. However, we will continue our dialogue with Government to grant us a real option for exercising stronger powers in control of our local bus services, but I am not holding my breath. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Buckley, do you have a supplementary?

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: Well, Lord Mayor, I am a little bit nonplussed by that complacent and political answer. Here we are, given that we are not talking about First Bus, this is First Group. Given that First Group have just made a loss of over £300m and they are now considering bids for any or all parts of their business including buses, trains and goodness knows what else, and that the new Chairman has ruled nothing out and that every division must stand on its own two feet, what guarantees has he sought and received not from regional management but from First Group directors that any partnership with Leeds will actually be honoured? *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Come on, let's not be silly. There is not going to be any guarantees that we are offered that we can depend on. Let's look at the real situation, let's not talk in this phoney way. It will be as meaningful as Adolf Hitler's assurances to Neville Chamberlain, wouldn't it? They cannot offer us any assurances, they are in difficulty but that will only be resolved in time but we have requested our meeting, which we expect to take place shortly. Do you think we can go and drag them into a meeting here? I honestly – sometimes I despair with the party opposite, Lord Mayor. I cannot help it. We are doing exactly what we can do but I wish you lot had not put us in this situation in the first place. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Caroline Gruen.

COUNCILLOR C GRUEN: Would the Executive Member like to comment on the recent Neighbourhood Network grants?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Charlwood.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: Thank you, Councillor Gruen, and thank you to everyone for their cheering, nice warm cheers. Lots of Members have spoken today about their Neighbourhood Network from across the Chamber. We all have incredibly warm feelings for them, and rightly so. They are internationally recognised in terms of our approach in the Council to helping them flourish but really recognising, as has been mentioned, that they start in communities, they grow and they are allowed to flourish as they are but given a sort of contract basis to give them that stability, and I think it is that that we have got to really celebrate today.

The celebration is that we have found that all of our Neighbourhood Network schemes, the current ones, the current deliverers of those schemes have been awarded funding for a further five years following a competition process, but they have all regained their contracts and they will all also have another five years on top of that which could lead to them having ten years of core funding available to them, which really provides the security that they need and helps them attract funding from other sources as well.

The additional funds for them help them to develop new activities, try new approaches such as the Asset Based Community Development work that has done so well in some areas of the city and grow them even further over the coming years.

Some of you will know the Neighbourhood Network schemes first began developing back in 1985. This was in direct response to the growing numbers of older people in Leeds and the need to focus on preventing illness and promoting health, wellbeing and independence. The services were created to improve the lives of older people in the city by providing a variety of support with focus on reducing social isolation and improving the health and wellbeing of the individual and their families.

They operate across 37 geographical areas in the city, they cover the whole of the city now. That was a key element of the review, how do we make sure there were no areas where people could not be seen and that, I am pleased to say, has been a success as well.

A key element of the services is that older people and their community stakeholders are actively engaged in the planning and running of the service, both as consumers and as contributors. It means that the Neighbourhood Networks are able to be really flexible and reactive to the needs of local communities that they serve and their individuality is really celebrated.

On average 23,000 people utilise them every year. They operate with 184 paid staff and have the help of 2,046 volunteers of which 285 of those volunteers are over 80 years old themselves.

The volunteers deliver 246,000 hours into the services which if you valued that economically would be worth about £3m, which is amazing, incredible volunteering that they bring in.

The range of activities offered by each one differs, as I have said, but they are all based on what their local communities want and they include things like lunch clubs, coffee mornings, shopping trips, days out, friending services, housing and benefits advice, walking groups, exercise groups, knit and natter, days out etc.

To get to where we are now we have really used a partnership approach to get the agreements in place. I chaired the cross-party Strategic Advisory Group and I am really grateful to all the Members in the Chamber and those who stood down or are no longer Councillors for the guidance and support and oversight on this commissioning piece of work. It has been really beneficial, I think, and as we have seen them all regain their contracts it is a really, really positive story to tell.

The other thing that I really want to highlight is that this administration has recognised the work that they do in promoting health and reducing other issues, and the just general goodness of them, and we have given them an extra £564,000 per year.

Our Council investment to the Neighbourhood Networks is over £3m per year but we get so much back from that as well, so every single Neighbourhood Network got an increase in its core funding and it should be remembered that the Neighbourhood Networks also bring in a huge amount of money, equivalent sums from other organisations such as the National Lottery and many others, and I am also delighted to say that because of our partnership working with the NHS, the NHS CCG has recognised the health benefits that the Neighbourhood Networks deliver and they have also given an extra £300,000 to these services, so it really is a good news story at such a difficult time. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gruen, do you have a supplementary?

COUNCILLOR C GRUEN: No, thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: In that case, that's that! *(laughter)*

ITEM 8 – MINUTES OF THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD AND THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

THE LORD MAYOR: We go not to Minutes of the Health and Wellbeing Board and I call on Councillor Blake.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dowson.

COUNCILLOR DOWSON: Seconded, Lord Mayor.

Health and Wellbeing Board

THE LORD MAYOR: Health and Wellbeing Board. Councillor Golton

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am going to return to the theme I mentioned earlier around the report that we had to our last Health and Wellbeing Board which was about the role of housing and how our Housing Policy can have an effect on the health determinants of our population.

It was a very good discussion. It was good to see Council Officers from different departments present and it came to some very useful recommendations at the end. What was frustrating, Lord Mayor, was that actually some of those recommendations that they came to at the end were the same recommendations that had been made in the Director of Public Health's report, he does an annual report, usually a very nice glossy document, and in 2014 it was especially about housing and about how housing has a big role in determinants of health in the community.

Unfortunately, the recommendations that were made then had not been fulfilled when it was reviewed in 2016 and it ends up being the same recommendations in 2018.

I appreciate that some issues are complex and they are difficult to manage. However, there has never been any admission that the outcomes which were desired in the original report and were reported upon two years later and are now still desirable at this point, there was no admission that actually the right resources had never been applied to those recommendations.

I think it is one of those age old problems which is, when it is a subject matter which crosses the departments which are led by several different people, it is very difficult to identify somebody who is going to take a lead and make sure that those outcomes are actually achieved. I am hoping that Councillor Charlwood will personally take the responsibility on for this and make sure that recommendations that are coming in 2018 will finally be fulfilled.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Caroline Anderson.

COUNCILLOR C ANDERSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I was pleased to be party to a briefing in respect of the agenda item on the Health and Wellbeing Board which is about how health is inextricably linked to housing. Improving health through housing is not a new concept. It has been known for a very, very long time and I would like to take you back to the Leeds of the early 20th Century, the 1930s to be exact.

About three Christmases ago I read this book which is called the Turbulent Priest by H J Hammerton. This book was given to me by the late Reverend Hamilton, Vicar of Cookridge. The book is about a parish priest, Charles Jenkinson, a man of great foresight, dedication, passion and a work ethic to see something through that to me was a great inspiration to read about, and I can see some Councillors nodding because you know who Charles Jenkinson...

COUNCILLOR TRUSWELL: A Labour man.

COUNCILLOR C ANDERSON: Yes, and I am coming to that. For those of you who may not have heard of Charles Jenkinson, he was a great housing reformer of this city. His main focus was to improve the housing conditions in Leeds in order to improve health. He worked tirelessly to the detriment of his own health to prepare huge far-seeing plans to demolish the slum housing in Leeds and replace it with new modern, healthy housing for hundreds of residents. He met with lots of opposition and much criticism but nothing deterred him. He was instrumental in building Quarry Hill flats. He actually set up the first Housing Department in Leeds from a small office at the top of the Town Hall. He had a five year programme to demolish 15,000 to 16,000 houses at an average of 3,000 per year.

I have not mentioned so far how he managed and how he had the power to do this. He was part of the Labour Council that took control at the municipal elections in 1933 and got the chance to implement plans that he had been working on for the previous two years. He had no training in housing before he came to Leeds and he had little or no knowledge of housing affairs. He saw the terrible cost in terms of poor health to the city due to the poor housing and he cleared vast areas of slums.

Why, you may ask, am I praising a Labour Councillor? Yes, Charles Jenkinson was a Leeds Labour Councillor but unlike some Members opposite we on this side can see the value of people's views across all parties and we can work with people of other parties. Although he was a committed socialist, he actually did not care about party politics. It was a vehicle for the work that he wanted to do, not all of which was by any means plain sailing. He actually became the Council Leader but such was the independence of mind that he had and the controversy that he caused that he left the position, ultimately resigning, but he was actually, as it turned out, very ill.

I would recommend this book to everybody. It is a great inspiration to how people can achieve something. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Anderson. Councillor Blackburn, Mrs Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Now there are a few different things here that I would like to speak on this same report. One is to do with the drugs in prison, and I think most of us know or have seen this goes on, we see things that happen now and again in the newspapers and on the television and drugs are an ongoing problem in prison, while people are in prison.

This report mentions about prisoners being released on Fridays and it is detrimental for those with a history of drug and alcohol problems. It does not say what anybody is going to do about that. I would have thought it would not be difficult to let people out on a different day. I am not going to say it will solve everything because if people want to get hold of drugs and alcohol I suppose they will no matter what day you let them out, but if there is more chance of it happening on Friday we should not be letting people out on Fridays, simple as that.

I would like to know, going on from here, have we managed to alter that? Can we alter that? If not, surely we should be able to do.

We also mention about the beds, the pressures on beds. Again nothing unusual there, we have it every year where our hospitals get crowded and then it is a matter of finding places for people that need ongoing support coming out. It seems as if, from reading this, our health and care services are working together, which is good, and working closely in partnership so they will be better prepared this winter. Definitely I hope that they are. There is always a problem with beds in hospitals and more so, I appreciate, in winter where some people are there longer than they should be because particularly if they need a place in a care home of finding places for them to go and it is an ongoing problem.

Interested to read about this idea to do with art and I think that clearly that could be a good idea, so I would just like to thank people for the report and look forward to hearing more. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Charlwood. Summing up.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: Sorry, Lord Mayor, I was expecting a couple more speakers but I appreciate the time.

Yes, OK, thank you for your contributions. Just before I go into Councillor Golton's other points, I just wanted to make sure we picked up the point earlier about Scrutiny. Councillor Golton mentioned something about cross, pan Authority – he is not here, never mind – he did mention about pan Authority panels and having less Scrutiny. I just wanted to pick up that the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Panel for West Yorkshire is a really good panel, pan Authority panel, through which to pick up the things he was concerned about, so I just wanted to give him that reassurance.

He also mentioned the DPH report from 2014 into housing. He did raise it in the meeting and the Director of Public Health did respond to him in the meeting and he is not here today to respond, to give any further response. I think what was said in the meeting stills stands, and it is that housing clearly, poor housing and poor planning of housing and spaces around them, green spaces, clearly contribute to poor health outcomes and do not do much to help where people are living in poor housing generally. I think the point he was making in the meeting was about planning and getting public health colleagues to actually go into the planning process to give health advice and public health advice about new developments and that sort of thing.

That does happen, I know that does happen but the problem we have, because I used to chair a Plans Panel and I know that the problem we have is with the legislation, actually it is very, very difficult to keep any health related conditions when there is quite little in terms of regulation that we can impose upon from a Local Authority perspective, so I would very much like to join forces with him and perhaps other sides of the Chamber as well to lobby Government about that and change the law on that because we definitely would like to have more powers in that regard but public health officers very much do get involved in trying to help wherever possible the health outcomes in terms of planning.

I really enjoyed Councillor Anderson's intervention about the history and the Labour Member that she was talking about, his book. It is really great to hear both the Liberal Democrats and the Conservative Group talking about how poor housing and

poverty has an impact on people's health and on people's outcomes. I think that is a really useful cross-party place to be, actually, that we know that only poverty reduction and improvement in people's living standards will really help them to get out of that.

Councillor Golton is back in, I have addressed your points, I am sorry you were not here to hear them but that we all agree that that is a critical way forward, so thank you for that.

Actually, the meeting itself, the housing aspects during the Health and Wellbeing Board meeting was exactly to address the issues that are about the wider determinants of health and how we have a healthier city rather than us all focusing as care professionals on poor health when somebody is poorly, keeping them well.

The Safer Leeds report was another excellent example. It looked at a cohort of very complex individuals who were street users, Councillor Blackburn, and it was looking in the hundreds in the city and how do we improve their experiences. The issue about discharge on Friday was mentioned as an example of the kind of things we need to look at for that very small group of people that have particular needs, how can we support them to stay clear of drugs as they come out of prison. It is being picked up and I can guarantee that I will take that forward. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Blake, please, summing up. Anything? You are entitled to take us into tea.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: I think this is a first that we have ever been at when I have been asked to sum up on the Executive Board Minutes and we have not actually had the opportunity. Whilst many of you in the Chamber will know I am quite happy to stand on my feet and talk indefinitely, I am not sure of the purpose here this afternoon.

I would say actually it is with some regret that I feel we do not have the opportunity to discuss the Minutes on the Executive Board, the really important issues on Children's Services that would have come up through the debate, certainly we would have given the Children's Services really good coverage and I am particularly disappointed that we will not have the opportunity to look in depth and the work that we are doing in this Council, absolutely groundbreaking work and actually compare it to the evidence that has been given in the Resolution Foundation's Report highlighting child poverty as one of the scourges of our age.

Picking up on all of the issues of poor housing that Councillor Charlwood referenced in the Health and Wellbeing Board Minutes, we know the impact of poverty on our children and young people and I am delighted at the leadership that Councillor Mulherin has taken in getting the Child Poverty Strategy Group up and running again. I think if there is one issue that we should come together on as one Council working within one city, it is actually working towards eliminating the absolute disgrace of child poverty, the sort of impact that scars children throughout their childhood and in many cases scars them for life.

Let us take the debate that we have to have on these issues seriously. I regret again that we have not had the opportunity to do that. We care passionately about the life

chances of young people in our city and with that, Lord Mayor, I will move the Minutes in terms of the Notice. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Right, may we have a vote on the Minutes, please. *(A vote was taken)* That obviously is CARRIED and that takes us into the tea break. All the people up in the gallery, you are welcome to come and join us in the Banqueting Hall for tea and we will start again – or at least I will start, whether you are here or not – at ten-to five by the clock in the Chamber. Thank you.

(Short break)

ITEM 9 – REPORT ON DEVOLVED MATTERS

THE LORD MAYOR: We will start, Report on Devolved Matters, Item 9 on page 14. Moving on to the Report on Devolved Matters, this will last 30 minutes. Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. There are a few items I would like to bring to your attention through this report. Obviously the key issue of One Yorkshire Devolution is one that is of interest to us all and I think you will all have been aware of the launch of the campaign on 1st August, Yorkshire Day, from the Archbishop's Palace in York and I am delighted to say that representatives from all 18 of the Authorities that are supporting the proposal, all the different business representative organisations such as the CBI and the Chambers, the trade unions and other faith groups actually came along to that.

I am very disappointed to have to inform Council that we still have not been offered the courtesy of a meeting with the new Secretary of State for Local Government, James Brokenshire. We had had the offer from Sajid Javid before he became Home Secretary and I am very disappointed that James has not honoured that commitment that we secured from Sajid to help us move things forward, but we are moving forward at pace to refine and develop the economic case for One Yorkshire and conversations are taking place with officials around these matters.

I think it is fair to say that a lot of the work around the Combined Authority in particular at the moment has been around rail performance and I am afraid I have to stand in front of you today and many of you will know people who are back to work in the last couple of weeks who are still facing enormous problems despite the efforts of Northern and Trans Pennine to work around their catastrophic implementation of the timetable changes. In fact I know two pupils who were due to go to a different Sixth Form who have just given up because the first week of school they were in trouble for being late on three days as a result of their train connections not coming. I am sure we have all got other stories.

You will all be aware that I am leading a review on behalf of Transport for the North together with Jo Johnson who is the Minister for Rail, and we are really working with all of the stakeholders across the North to get a better understanding of what went so catastrophically wrong. There are enormous issues about democratic accountability and how the Leaders across the North can feel much more engaged in the debate.

I would like to give real praise to our partners across the city and the wider City Region for their support on our Channel 4 bid. I am delighted that we reached the final shortlist and we are waiting, of course, to hear the outcome of that.

Just to let you know that we have just had a very successful visit to China with the LEP and business colleagues and, indeed, our Arts Communities and Phoenix Dance was able to go to Hangzhou to help celebrate our 30 year anniversary of the partnership with that great city. A huge amount to report back on that when the team get back into Leeds and a great number of opportunities developing the work we do through our universities, through our business connections to make sure that we go from strength to strength in terms of trade and inward investment.

With that I will leave the report. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor James Lewis.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Leadley.

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: My Lord Mayor, Whitehall and Westminster must be terrified of One Yorkshire – terrified that it might work; terrified that it might be big enough and have a territory coherent enough to have widespread popular support; terrified that it might become England's Catalonia. It would be too early to forecast that one day a Yorkshire elected Mayor would flee to Belgium to avoid arrest by United Kingdom Central Government agents, but we might just be near the top of that slippery slope.

There is little evidence of support for the Sheffield City Region beyond Sheffield, other than lesser support in Rotherham. The people and politicians of Barnsley and Doncaster are against it as, indeed, is the Barnsley based Dan Jarvis, Sheffield City Region's first and recently elected Mayor. The main plank of his election manifesto seemed to be abolition of the post that he was seeking to occupy by merging Sheffield City Region into a larger Yorkshire body at the earliest opportunity.

As we have seen for many years, regardless of what Government happens to be in power many of those in Whitehall and in Westminster despise Local Government and wish to cripple it by means of arbitrary regulation and unreasonable budgetary restriction. Good and effective Local Government are essential for the success and wellbeing of any organised society. It is time that those at national level realised that.

An ineffective and unpopular Sheffield City Region would satisfy those who wished to give a token devolution but do not want it to be over successful in case it runs away with itself and gains more popularity than National Government, and by no means would that be difficult. Now all three traditional main Westminster political parties are characterised by weakness and by mediocrity of leadership deeper than in the 1970s or even in the 1920s. European Union negotiators must despair at the calibre of those they are obliged to deal with. A nation ill at ease with itself may become a confused rabble. We are being led by a rabble of confused rabbles.

Looking across the pond it cannot be to our advantage or to that of the world that two of the leading English speaking democracies are gripped at once by isolationism and by political nervous breakdowns. One Yorkshire would have a coherent territory so it might well work. Some of its components would have to give ground to give it a better start. For example, the administrative capital should be York to avoid that Leeds or Sheffield were empire building, but that would be a detail to be filled in once the principle had been established. Thank you, my Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Very quickly on three separate issues. Channel 4, Councillor Blake as Leader of the Council has the full backing of all Groups in terms of achieving the basing of Channel 4 in this city. I cannot think of a better place for it and the letter thankfully was not – what is the word? – was not overly modest that we have sent to Channel 4 to entice them to come to Leeds and I am glad to endorse it.

The One Yorkshire issue, the Government is for ever putting obstacles in our way to try and halt the progress of this. One of the best ways to overcome that kind of obstacle placing is to actually demonstrate popular will. The Yorkshire Party is an empty vessel and cannot take the aspirations of the Yorkshire people along with it because it does not have any ability to actually deliver anything. However, a multi-party movement could and I think we should be thinking about, as Leaders in this region, developing that kind of mass movement that people can endorse and hopefully it becomes an irresistible force in the same way that it happened for Scotland.

Lastly, the Blake Review. Transport for the North is not like Transport for London. They have proper devolution about their transport decisions and they can set their stall accordingly. Transport for the North is a half-way house and unfortunately Councillor Blake has been given an odious position to take, which is to lead a review which will look at who is to blame for the debacle that we have had on our rail system this year. However, it is co-authored and the co-author is a Transport Minister and it is the Transport Minister on high, Mr Grayling, who perhaps has the most to answer for in this debacle.

You cannot have franchises which are awarded by Government and then say that the Government has no role in the oversight of the delivery of those franchises and that they have nothing to do with the railways, especially when they do not offer the responsibility to the likes of a devolved outfit like Transport for the North.

I do wish to let Councillor Blake know that I think this Chamber should say to you, you need to reflect to Mr Johnson (if he is still the Transport Minister by then, who knows in this Government) that actually you are not allowed to let the Government off the hook at all and just like the Select Committee has done with the East Coast Mainline Franchise, there has to be admission that the Government was absent from the party in terms of the accountability of rail services for our area. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Andrew Carter.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. I will deal with the Channel 4 bid first. It is the policy of my Group that we for the most part write independently to Government Ministers supporting the Leeds case for all sorts of things, but on the occasion of the Channel 4 I thought it absolutely right that it should be a joint letter which has been sent and yes, you could not be described as being modest in connection with that letter, but so well and good. The case is made and I think it is a very strong case and certainly this Group hopes that Channel 4 will be headquartered in this city and we will see how the bid transpires.

As regards devolution, what concerns me the most – what did Rab Butler say, politics is the art of the possible. What concerns me the most is it is unlikely that devolution in some form of semi-permanent form will be settled this side of a General Election and, if it then entails primary legislation, for some time thereafter. In the meantime, I want to be sure that we can get as much devolution of funds and responsibility as possible for what we already have and the problems as I see it is that Mayoral Devolved Authorities are getting more functions, some of the funding streams (and I have said this in this Chamber before) that we have so far benefited from will be finishing and I am concerned, back to the art of the possible, that the obsession with what some people see as the ultimate goal detracts us from the very real issue of ensuring we get our fair share of what is on the table now, and that we are not disadvantaged by not having a Mayoral Devolved Authority at the moment, because I strongly suspect that this devolution debate will run up to and after the General Election.

As regards the issue of rail, nobody can pretend it was anyone's finest hour, to be frank, and I hope that the report being compiled will reflect the deep dissatisfaction of all of us on that particular issue. I am pleased that we seem to have struck up a reasonable relationship with Jo Johnson, if not with the Secretary of State, which is another issue altogether which I suspect the Leader of Council – well, I will not go into it, I am sure she knows to what I am referring.

On devolution my great concern is that pursuing whatever you happen to think the Holy Grail is...

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Carter.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: ... deflects us from the purpose of making sure we get a fair share of what is on offer now. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor David Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Firstly, on devolution, it is very, very disappointing the attitude of the Government. I don't know, we have been trying this for a considerable length of time and if we have got to wait for another General Election and then primary legislation after that, well, quite a few of us might not be here then in that time.

The point is, and the rail franchises I think prove this, if we had a proper devolved transport like Transport for London, we would be doing the franchising. We would not have got in this mess; we know what we need. It is Central Government that is behind this doing the franchising and they cannot do it, they cannot deliver for us up

here. We all know, and I have got to say, with their inadequacies the Scottish Assembly and the Welsh Assembly are a lot better than the Scottish and Welsh Office were. That is what we need for Yorkshire. We need something where we can make our own decisions and deliver on them that is suitable for Yorkshire and Humberside and not decided down in Westminster. It needs to be done as soon as possible.

I can see where Councillor Carter is coming from by going for the Holy Grail. In the meantime what we need to do is we need to push for other things but what we have got to do, we have got to push and I think it would help if we can all speak with one voice, I think.

On the Channel 4 bid, we welcome getting into the final two, we hope we are successful and you have got our support there.

The review of transport that the Leader is involved in, I wish you the best of luck there and give them some hell! Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor James Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I often reflect when I hear about the speaking with one voice, as we work towards getting Transport for the North, which as Councillor Golton refers to is only really a half-way house, actually it was a struggle to get to that point because we had to demonstrate time and time again that the 33 Transport Authorities in the North of England could speak with one voice. Again, I will remind Councillor Golton, as I think I have done before, the biggest obstacle in Government to achieving that was a then Lib Dem Transport Minister who was dead against (former London MP, of course), was dead against us having a single transport body for the north and we had to again convince everybody this was something we wanted and this was the investment we needed in the north.

Whilst I am looking at just transport, I was lucky enough to attend the Convention of the North in Newcastle last week on behalf of the Council, a fantastic event where actually again we saw a real commitment from right across the North of England at all levels, all parts of the North of England, all parties represented there talking about what we actually saw as a shared vision for the North of England, our challenges around the economy, our challenges around trade after Brexit which are often very different from other parts of the country, and our challenges around some of the infrastructure we need. We can speak together in Yorkshire and the North of England.

To finish on a point of unity, I think everybody here recognises that and I think it is time for the Government to come up with their response, some of the silly and insulting comments we have seen fairly recently I do not think from the Northern Powerhouse Minister, I do not think help anybody, particularly in the week that, like I say, we came together as the North of England across the whole region, cross-party, to achieve more than that. I hope the Government is as serious as we are about devolution. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake, please.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you. Thank you everyone for their comments and your offers of some on some really important agendas that we are looking at, not just on behalf of Leeds City Council but as the Region as a whole. I am very surprised not to be described as modest but it has been the remit that has been given us to actually go out and sell Leeds City Region and I think that is what we are really starting to do. The narrative that we are getting together and being able to go around the country but beyond and to other countries that we are working with at the moment, and to be able to actually stand up and say, “Do you know what? Leeds City Region is the most important economic area of activity in the whole of the North of England; geographically it is right at the centre of the North; all of the main roads and rail routes come through Leeds and we are the middle point between London and Scotland.” I think we have allowed ourselves to be underplayed and I think we all ought to say “No longer”. We need to stand up and really account for the great things that we do do. In spite of the fact that we have not got the devolution deal we are still punching our weight.

I think the real important thing to remember is that we did put forward a bid for devolution to the Leeds City Region area and the previous Conservative administration turned it down. That is something that we need you to stand up to the plate and actually come with us and argue our case for us. I just repeat, I cannot believe that a Secretary of State for Local Government has the gall to refuse to meet 18 cross-party Leaders from one of the most important regions in the country. That is shameful and if you can help us unlock that I think we would be very grateful.

There is an enormous prize for the person who breaks through the devolution issue in Yorkshire and I think we should all, wherever we can, work together to achieve this and there is a steering group set up under the Yorkshire Leaders’ Board and we will be continuing to press our case.

Let us see how the discussions happen about rail. There was a very interesting comment from Theresa May acknowledging that the current franchise system, for example, is not working. I think we have got real examples of serious failings in Northern and Trans Pennine Express and I think the time is now absolutely ripe where we actually look at the transport needs of this country and pull together and make sure we get the changes we need to deliver for the people we represent. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: We will now take a vote. (*A vote was taken*) That is CARRIED.

WHITE PAPERS

THE LORD MAYOR: We now move on to the exciting part, White Papers. We have three White Papers this evening; each will last for no more than 45 minutes and will conclude with a vote on the motion and any amendments.

ITEM 10 – WHITE PAPER MOTION – EDUCATION STANDARDS

THE LORD MAYOR: The first White Paper in the name of Councillor Cohen.

COUNCILLOR COHEN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I have on a number of occasions in this Chamber and at Scrutiny Board meetings raised this Group's genuine concern on how the administration is driving educational improvements and attainment at a strategic level within the city. Let me be absolutely clear, we have no criticism of schools, we have no criticism of teachers, we have no criticism of our young people. We realise how hard they are working and both appreciate and congratulate their results.

Our concern is that as a city we are not doing good enough strategically for our young people and this White Paper is seeking to do one thing and one thing only. We believe that officers need to be asked within Children and Families to bring a report forward setting out what this administration is going to do to improve the education of our city's young people.

The data on our city's educational attainment is there for all to see. It is very sobering. On so many measures of attainment and progress Leeds is in the bottom quartile nationally. At Early Years the percentage of children reaching a GLD – a good level of development – has improved from 51% in 2013 to 65% in 2017, but nationally it has gone up to 71%, so as a city we remain behind national average standards. Arguably, our pace of improvement simply is not fast enough.

Key Stage 1, attainment below that nationally for statistical neighbours and for Core Cities. Key Stage 2, yes, we have had improvement across subjects but it is barely keeping pace with improvements at a national level. Gaps to national performance remained the same in 2017, we are waiting to see the detailed figure for 2018 but we are still below national standards.

When we look at our children in Key Stage 2 with English as an additional language or children from various ethnic backgrounds or, indeed, children with SEND, the picture becomes worse. Indeed, the poor educational outcomes of our children with SEND was something Ofsted picked up some years ago and despite repeated assurances that this is urgently in hand, the fact remains on this measure too we are behind the national average. Leeds, this child friendly city – Leeds, the best place for children to grow up – not even achieving the national average in terms of children's attainment at Early Years and Key Stage 2.

Our secondary schools do a much better job. I might point out the majority of our secondary schools are academies. I do not actually think that is the absolute answer, but it is a fact. At our secondary schools they do close the gap. Our GCSE results are far better but just imagine what we could do if our Key Stage 2 results were that much better, our foundation for improvement was that much higher.

What has given rise to this situation? We would argue one of the things that has given rise to it is a lack of direction right from the top. Clearly this has been recognised to some degree in that we have had a change of Exec Member but it really does go deeper than that. Too much time is spent by senior officers on projects like Kirklees, trying to backfill the very significant number of senior vacancies within Children and Families.

How can we claim to be serious about improving learning when we have only just appointed a Deputy Director of Learning who does not even start until November? How can we say that we are serious about learning and learning improvement when we still have a vacancy in the Head of Learning Improvement that we are just advertising now?

There simply is not the Director level time to give this issue the attention it needs. He can only split himself in so many pieces, so many directions. We are asking too much. We have not ensured the right resource is in the right place.

Our view is that as a city Leeds must, as a minimum, seek to exceed national average and to do that the city urgently needs a clear, unambiguous, transparent plan as to how it is going to do that. As Councillor Golton has right said in his amendment, which we support, you have had ample opportunities to voluntarily come up with a plan. Now is the time for this Council as a whole to require that you do it for the good of our young people and to do it in a way that is open, clear, measurable and above all absolutely transparent. We owe our children that much. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lamb.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I offer the amendment in the manner that it is put because I think we should all learn from history and I personally have been involved in the history of Children's Services in this city. I am keen that people do not make the same mistakes that I made, so for those new Members that are out there, I will give you a very short understanding of what it can be sometimes to be in charge of Children's Services.

I was the Lead Member for Children's Services. At one of my first meetings I had the Director of Children's Services come to me and say, "Oh, we have been inspected by Ofsted and we have got 'Good', but do you know what, they have changed the scoring mechanism or whatever so actually to get 'Good' now, actually we are very good, really." OK, I thought, oh, thanks very much because, of course, when you go into a portfolio you are generally green and you rely on the advice that you are given.

I went into the Council Chamber and, naïve as I was, I went in and gave those exact same lines to this Council. A matter of months later, around about a year, what you found was that the atmosphere has changed, Baby P has hit the headlines in the newspapers, the country is appalled at the ability for the official system to allow such a child to fall through the net and the regime changes all over again in terms of how Ofsted measures your performance.

Ofsted came to Leeds; from being 'Good' we went to 'Inadequate' immediately. I cannot tell you how that feels, especially when you are told that there are young people in the city that are being let down because your leadership is weak. We tried to do

something about it and we had to start from the very beginning, from the ground up and we needed to do it and so we sucked it up and we did it.

We have got a position now where this Council is judged as 'Good'. It is the only Core City in the country to be judged as 'Good' and that is because of the hard work that has been put in by those professionals that work within the educational system and primarily as well, I have to admit, the emphasis was on safeguarding and how you look after your looked-after children. We are exemplary. We go round and we teach other Councils how to do it.

However, the emphasis that has been put on that aspect of Children's Services unfortunately has meant that our eye has gone off the ball when it comes to education.

I am really glad that Councillor Pryor has been made specifically responsible for this area of Children's Services because it means that we have twice the focus that we have in Children's Services. Councillor Mulherin can continue with the social care side; you can look after education. It is ironic because when the Labour Party came into power they said that was one of the major weaknesses of how we ran education because we separated the social care from the education although, of course, we were asked to do so by the Government when they intervened when they deemed our education service not to be good enough.

All I will say is, there are cycles that happen and we cannot afford to be complacent about our education services, especially when the people who are being let down through our education system at the moment are the poorer families within our city. The middle classes in the city are doing pretty well and that is how they are holding up the average performance in terms of our schools. We cannot allow for it to continue that our poorest kids are let down and I know we hear about there is more academisation, this Council cannot intervene, we have less influence. Well, actually, you do have a lot of influence, a lot of soft power and we have one of the largest performance and improvement outfits in the country because we are one of the largest Local Authorities in the country and those people could be setting the standard and making the grade.

Please can we have a strategy which says to our poorer families in the city, "You count too" and please give us an education prioritisation plan which works for them.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Downes.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Pryor.

COUNCILLOR PRYOR: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I was disappointed to read the Tory White Paper as I honestly thought they would not consider it appropriate to bring a White Paper criticising the achievements of Leeds' pupils and teachers to the very first Council meeting after exam results have been published. I know they claim to have no criticism of the children themselves, but what a kick in the teeth to those pupils

who have worked so hard for a quick, almost reluctant “Well done” before moving straight into “but you are not good enough.”

Councillor Cohen is right in saying that the evidence is there for all to see so I would like to take a few moments to outline where we are in Leeds and in fact what we still need to do.

In 2018 41.9% of Leeds pupils attained a Grade 5 or higher in English and maths, putting us above the average for Yorkshire and the Humber, Core Cities and our statistical neighbours. Average Attainment 8 in Leeds in 2018 was 45.9% - again above the average for Yorkshire and the Humber, the Core Cities and above our statistical neighbours.

While the 2018 Progress 8 score for Leeds will not be known until October, we know that in 2017 Leeds’ score was above national, Core Cities and our statistical neighbours. Leeds was ranked 37th out of 151 Local Authorities and is in Band B nationally against this measure. There is clear evidence that Leeds is improving at a far faster rate than nationally.

We know that we need to improve progress outcomes for vulnerable pupils. 2017 results for these pupils suggest that our work is having an impact. The Progress 8 score for disadvantaged pupils was better than national. The gap is clearly closing. Non-disadvantaged pupils in Leeds also out-performed their peers nationally.

Other specific groups also made good progress in 2017 compared to similar groups nationally. For example, pupils who have educational and health and care plans gained a Progress 8 score that was better than the national figure, and improving outcomes for these pupils of course remains a priority.

That is where we are. We know there is more to do but we know that we are improving faster than the rest of the country. There is no complacency, we are on the right trajectory but we recognise we have further to do.

I am glad that the White Paper references SEND because it enables me to talk about the National Association of Headteachers that has said that funding for schools supporting pupils with special needs and disabilities is at crisis point, and this is funding from Government. We have spoken many times in here about Government ceasing to fund five days’ education for Post-16 pupils and instead only funding three, leaving us, along with our education partners, to pick up the slack and that is pick up the slack alongside the millions of pounds that the Government is cutting from Local Authorities which we have talked about several times today. This is simply not good enough.

One of the most controversial things the Coalition Government did back in 2010 was scrap the Educational Maintenance Allowance. This was a payment given weekly to students aged 16 to 19 on the lowest household income. My parents are both teachers and my dad, who retired last year, spoke about the tutor group he had when they abolished EMA, and he has said he has never seen such a fast politicisation of young people. They were so against that withdrawal of EMA because they knew exactly the detrimental effect that that would have on their life chances and maybe this suggests why the Government nationally are not in favour of votes at 16, because they know that

those people coming through to vote are so against the things that the Conservatives are doing to this Government affecting their educational outcome.

So what has been the outcome of this removal of EMA? The Department for Education figures show that last year retention levels for disadvantaged students aged 16-18 were 84% and this compares to 93% for non-disadvantaged students.

When they scrapped EMA the Government replaced it with a 16-19 bursary scheme, but that was only a third of the level of EMA. This EMA was a vital resource for students whose families simply could not afford to support their education in the same way that more advantaged families could.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Pryor. (*Applause*) Councillor Heselwood.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Flynn.

COUNCILLOR FLYNN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to strongly support Dan Cohen's White Paper and I would like to just echo the points that he made right at the very start that he was criticising no child, no teacher and no school in this city, despite what Jonathan has just said.

I would like to concentrate my comments today on the education of children with special educational needs and social, emotional and mental health issues and how external non-education matters can sometimes affect the education of some of our most vulnerable children.

I spoke two years ago in this Chamber about how bad the education of children with SEN and SEMH had been in Leeds over a period of Leeds under all the administrations, not just one. Elmete Wood was a school that looked after some of the most vulnerable children in the city. In a period between 2007 and 2016 they had 18 separate Ofsted investigations or inspections. God knows what that did to the children at that school. Subsequently, and at the insistence of the Regional Schools Commission – not the administration – a separate academy was set up under the Wellspring organisation.

Just taking your mind back to 2015, no pupil at Elmete Wood left school with five plus A-C grades. The numbers of children who had left school and were not in education, employment or training were eight times the average in Leeds and five times the number in similar schools across the country.

Elmete's replacement, the new and very expensive Springwell Academy opened in 2016. At a Children's Scrutiny Board in 2016 and in my speech I did ask to be kept informed about progress, the outcomes and achievements of the children at Springwell. I have not heard a word since and I would really like to know what the current outcomes and achievements actually are.

Moving on to the law of unintended consequences and how it can affect some very vulnerable children and families. This administration decided to reduce what was described as a bespoke transport offer for over 16 learners with SEN eligible for travel assistance. You will note the use of the word “bespoke” again. I used it earlier on in a speech in regard to safeguarding in care homes. God knows what “bespoke” means to this particular administration. Apparently it was meant to mean that families would become more involved in making decisions about how their children travel to school.

I was personally assured that a comprehensive consultation exercise had taken place before a decision was taken. Most of us here are aware, I think, that almost every child thrives on routine, SEN children, I think, even more so and children on the autistic spectrum cannot function without it. Having met with a number of parents at the Lighthouse School in Weetwood which looks after children on the autistic spectrum, they were horrified at the thought of this policy being introduced, not least because of the financial and time effect it would have on them, because these children come from all over Leeds, not just from Weetwood. I think one parent said it would take her two-and-a-half hours each way and she had four other children to look after.

Fortunately, very fortunately I think, an amalgam of elected Members here from all sides of the Chamber, trade unions, parents of the children concerned and an awful lot of other people combined I think to force the administration to change their mind. I would like to ask today to have that particular policy consigned to the dustbin where it actually deserves to be. Thank you very much indeed, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Flynn. Councillor Ann Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: Thank you, Chair. I too would like to speak about the SEN pupils but I note in the motion that it states “SEN pupils in Leeds performed less well than SEN pupils nationally across all categories in 2016/17.” I know that at ordinary primary schools sometimes these children if they are in a class with other children, say learning maths and that, that they will probably be working from a different book. Some may draw instead.

My concern is that where the children have somebody with them to assist them, the people maybe have some knowledge of SEN children because this does not have to be – and I think in most cases is not. I am seeing it where a maths lesson might be going on, a child is drawing and I will say to the assistant, “Can’t she be doing something to do with maths?” “Oh, well, she likes doing that.”

I know SEN children have different abilities, you cannot say they are all the same because they are not, but surely they should be getting some type of education. We should not be thinking oh yes, they want to draw so let them get on with it. It really annoyed me and so what I would like to see is where we have assistance and they are helping somebody that is SEN and the pupils that have a real problem that we have that person that has a knowledge of SEN, has a knowledge to help them to get further.

That is my concern here and yes, I would like to see the Government fund it more and that is it, really. We have got to try and help these children. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Bithell, and I would remind Council that this is a maiden speech, so please be gentle.

COUNCILLOR BITHELL: Lord Mayor, I am delighted to be making my maiden speech in Council on an issue that I am passionate about. As a teacher myself I know only too well the pressures, challenges and rewards that such a career brings. It is my first-hand knowledge that makes me perfectly placed to fully support Councillor Pryor's amendment to a White Paper that offers no more than a flippant "Well done" to pupils and teachers and then steps in to critique.

I would like to take a moment to tell you what it is really like on the ground in school. Let us start with time. As a teacher you are paid for six hours a day plus parents' evenings. I get into school at 7.10 and I am by no means the first one there. That gives us time to go and do final prep on lessons and some marking. One of the main battles in the morning is for the photocopier. In an under-resourced school, is it working, is it not? This is the ultimate teacher gamble.

Then we move on to teaching. One of my colleagues teaches 22 classes a week and as a teacher you get two-and-a-half hours non-contact time a week to prep lessons, mark and do any other admin. Clearly this maths does not work. In school you do break duties, meaning some days we cannot use the bathroom between 8.10, when pre school meetings begin, to 1.10 when lunch starts. I work in a job where I am not valued enough to have appropriate bathroom breaks.

By 1.30, based on my start time, my pay for the day is over, so I do the rest of my work for free and it will at least another four-and-a-half hours. Obviously no person can prep and mark quality lessons in two-and-a-half hours.

On a day-by-day basis schools are having to battle a lack of funding which leads to a lack of resources for our children. We are having to cut back on what we give students; this at a time when students need us more than ever. Teachers now bring our own stuff in. I always have tissues, pens, sanitary protection and other equipment for students to have. This comes out of my wage and hundreds of other teachers' wages, none of which have kept up with the rate of inflation.

Teaching on the ground is becoming a lonely place. With a lack of teachers we often have a merry-go-round of supply which offers none of the support needed to be an excellent practitioner. This also does not provide the excellent education that our students deserve.

The reason we have no teachers? Because this Government is making being a teacher almost impossible. It is putting admin ahead of education and filling our time with impossible targets. As a teacher it feels like there is no-one on our side. We get abused and assaulted by students, we have consistent and overwhelming pressure from leaders. This pressure stems from the Government targets and on the side the media feels the need to bash us too. I would never as a teacher allow my students to face the sort of confidence destruction that we have to face every day because I know they could not work their best.

Teaching as a role is growing. Never before have we had to the same extent to play parent, social worker, teacher, chef, carer, librarian, enforcer, IT assistant and now in many schools launderette. We are having to provide washing facilities at school as parents are unable to wash their children's clothes at home. I see countless notes in planners from parents waiting for pay day to get their kids' shoes. I have learners come to me to tape their shoes in the morning or staple their bag so they can make it round school for the day. Families are suffering and we are at the front line trying to get students to sit down and concentrate on learning. These kids may not have slept, they may have spent the night living in a violent household or may not have had anything to eat since their free school lunch the day before.

So, Lord Mayor, in my humble teacher opinion the Government's report card with regard to education policy would not read "Could do better" but rather, "Inadequate." With these challenges for Leeds still to be getting better faster than other cities means I would personally like to high-five all the teachers in Leeds because you know what, we are making a difference. I fully support Councillor Pryor's amendment. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Hayden, please.

COUNCILLOR HAYDEN: Thank you, Lord Mayor, and first of all I want to echo everything that Councillor Bithell has just said. As a teacher for many years in Leeds, as my really good friend Sinead called, we taught in the golden decade of teaching under a Labour Government when resources were put in, when we were paid properly, when we were given that PPA time which might not be enough but we were actually given it, and now I am looking at – and I had to leave because I came to do this amazing job but I am looking at my friends and relations who are working in teaching, leaving. Teachers I mentored and supported leaving and going to other countries because the conditions are just so awful.

As a Leeds teacher you might say we are not criticising any teacher or any school or any children – I would have taken it as criticism because you turn up for nine hours a day and you do your best for those kids. Dealing in a classroom with those outside influences, such as the poverty that our families are facing today, it is almost impossible then to teach those children, to help them have an excellent learning experience.

As Councillor Bithell mentioned, because of child poverty and it is increasing, teachers and schools are having to wash uniforms and feed the children so after you have done all that in the schools then you have got to get them ready, you have got to prepare them for their SATs, for their GCSEs. As for testing our children it is absolutely ridiculous. The amount of work to get my six year old son through his phonics test last year, and I think I did it just about not being very good at phonics myself which bears no relation to whether he can read or not and means nothing to anybody, and then his dad and I looked at each other in dismay when we said he has got SATs, my seven-year old has got SATs and the end of this year and his wonderful teacher said, "Please do not stress about it, they will not know they are doing it" and then you would look at other schools, because my kids are very, very lucky to go to a school where parents can support their children financially – not all of them but most of them. They can go on

school trips and the school says in their letter, “Don’t worry if you cannot afford it, they are still going to go.”

Yes, in other schools those same wonderful teachers with the same wonderful standards, once they have fed the kids, washed their clothes and mitigated any other terrible financial problems that their parents have had, it is a wonder that some children ever come to school on a morning. I am really passionate about this. Then those teachers have said “You have got to get this number of children to this level” when it is a wonder that they have come to school, put a pen in their hand and written anything on the sheet.

I am very, very passionate this. It is not the teachers in the school and it is not anything from leadership above. We are fighting child poverty. We have 4.1 million children in this country in poverty now and that is going to increase by 1.5 million by 2021 and that is a direct result of Government austerity policies and it is immoral and it is disgraceful and it needs to end now. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Cohen. Nobody has indicated that they wanted to exercise their right to speak.

COUNCILLOR COHEN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Thank you, colleagues, for all the contributions today. Councillor Golton, thank you for your insightful and erudite contributions, indeed. Councillor Blackburn thank you for your comments regarding the challenge of working with children with SEND. Councillor Flynn, your points were certainly well taken.

Councillor Bithell and Councillor Hayden, there is absolutely no question or doubt as to your passion, absolutely, but that is not what today’s White Paper is about. We are absolutely no talking about the work that teachers do in schools. However much you may wish to talk about that, that is not what this White Paper was about. This White Paper is focused with laser like precision on a Leeds issue within the control of this administration.

I realise that Councillor Pryor, through his amendment, was desperate to shift the conversation on to the usual tack of blaming the Government or in fact blaming anybody but themselves. Our young people deserve better than that. Our young people deserve better. I am certain that we could do better than that because it seems very strange to me that notwithstanding all of the challenges, other cities do it so much better. Other major cities, other Core Cities with all the challenges you have outlined, do that much better than us.

How is that possible? It is simple. Because they have a strategy from the top down, they ensure the administration ensures they are doing their job better. You are so busy blaming the Government, you are so busy trying to deflect these conversations that rather than grab the bull by the horns and come up with a plan and a strategy to ensure that Leeds truly does do better than average, truly does lead when it comes to educating our young people, you seem to muddy the waters than have any other conversation. So busy trying to play party politics that our young people are not being given the best possible life chances because the leadership is not coming from this administration.

The responsibility is not the schools'. The responsibility for this is not our young people. The responsibility certain is not teachers'. The responsibility is this administration. This administration must try harder. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: We come to call for the vote.

The first vote is for the amendment in the name of Councillor Golton. (*A vote was taken*) That is LOST.

Second amendment in the name of Councillor Pryor. (*A vote was taken*) That is CARRIED.

Now we vote on Councillor Pryor's motion as the substantive motion. (*A vote was taken*) That is CARRIED.

ITEM 11 – WHITE PAPER MOTION – PLASTIC WASTE

THE LORD MAYOR: We move on to the next White Paper in the name of Councillor Ann Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. My White Paper is on plastic waste. Many of you will have seen Blue Planet 2, the David Attenborough documentary on the effect that plastics are having on marine life. More than eight million tons of plastic enter the ocean each year yet together the three best known major international ocean clean-ups deal with less than 0.5% of that volume. Scientists have discovered micro-plastics embodied deep in the Arctic ice. Plastics consistently make up 60% to 90% of all marine plastic pollution debris studied. No finished product has yet been approved as marine biodegradable.

Leaked plastics can also degrade other natural systems such as forests and waterways and induce direct economic cost by clogging sewers and other urban infrastructure. There is an urgent need to stop plastics becoming waste and entering the ocean in the first place.

In 2015 we produced over 320 million tons of plastic globally, which is more than the combined weight of every human alive today. Based on our current usage, global plastic production is set to double over the next 20 years unless we collectively change our course.

At this point it is important to realise that we have no effective means of getting rid of this durable material that we are using and discarding as if there is no tomorrow. The Green Party believes that we should reduce, repair, reuse and only recycle as a last resort. That is why, though I understand where the amendments from both the Conservatives and Liberals are coming from, I do not think they fit well with this motion, which is trying to cut down plastics and where we have plastics to ensure that they are reused and not thrown away after one use, as most plastic bottles, cups, plates, cutlery, straws and food containers are.

The vast amount of plastic ever made has gone to landfill or escaped into our environment. We cannot recycle our way out of this mess because our current recycling infrastructure is not fit for purpose. Just 9% of plastic ever produced has been recycled and much of the western world's recycling is shipped overseas and dumped in countries that lack facilities to deal with them.

Now there is such a thing as substances of concern. Plastics are made from a polymer mixed with a complex blend of additives such as stabilisers, plasticisers and pigments and which may contain unintended substances in the form of impurities and contaminants; substances such as Bisphenol A and certain phthalates have already raised concerns about the risk of adverse effects on human health and the environment, concerns that have motivated some regulators and businesses to act.

In this motion are some things our Council can do to make a difference and try and move away from today's throwaway society. It leads on nicely from the action taken by our previous Lord Mayor, Jane Dowson, when she stopped plastic bottles of water being provided in the Council Chamber in favour of jugs of water and glasses.

I ask you all to support this motion and make a difference. Thank you.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Elliott.

COUNCILLOR ELLIOTT: Thank you, Lord Mayor. The Morley Borough Independents second the White Paper in the name of Councillor Ann Blackburn on plastic waste.

It was good to have an absolutely pertinent deputation from the Tribe Youth Group and Cross Gates Primary School, good to know that Jean Barnbrook is still working with children for the good of the community. I first met Jean when I held the office of Lord Mayor in 2009/10. Aimee and Kara brought concerns exactly of the White Paper of Ann Blackburn.

We understand that 50% of plastic is used just once and thrown away. We have developed easy disposable lifestyles. The statistics available to us of the pollution by plastic on planet earth is frightening. David Attenborough's Blue Planet 2 on television was a real wake-up call.

Councillor Blackburn's White Paper is an opportunity for Leeds City Council to take the first steps in the phasing out of the use of single use plastics on their premises and for which they are responsible. Getting the message out to the citizens of Leeds, the urgency of the need to protect the planet and in doing so themselves, for all life on earth is threatened in some shape or form from plastics.

The MBIs hope that this will be the beginning of Leeds City Council promoting the avoidance wherever possible of the use of plastic throwaways. Plastics create problems which horrify us. The prospect of our ocean's creatures dying, humans not knowing what harm they are suffering from, plastics taking a thousand years to decompose, plastic bottles 450 years and plastic bags ten to a thousand years. Now is the time to move forward to make a beginning to protect planet earth. The MBIs

wholeheartedly support Councillor Ann Blackburn's White Paper. Thank you.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Paul Wadsworth to move an amendment.

COUNCILLOR WADSWORTH: Thank you, Lord Mayor. It is with a great deal of regret that I have to bring an amendment because we thought that we could work with the Greens to actually strengthen their motion because my amendment is an addition. We agree with everything that has been said on the Conservative Group by both Councillor Blackburn and Councillor Elliott about the damage that plastics do to our environment, but just banning them and not dealing with the recycling element of some that cannot be banned for whatever reason or brought by the public because Councillor Blackburn's motion is about the ones that the Council use, and particularly with regard to our outdoor events an awful lot of plastics are brought on to site by the general public and are not recycled properly, and they could be recycled. All plastics from plastic film to plastic guttering can be recycled in Leeds in the plan that we originally have our contract for but, due to contractual arrangements, that does not happen and so the people of Leeds do not actually get the benefits that they should have.

With regard to the outdoor events, we have got to look at why we went to plastic and what we would do as an alternative. There are some events that we would want not to go back to where we were before such as putting things in glass, because we have to look at why we came away from glass and the health and safety around glass. There is never going to be a hundred per cent banning.

I think the deputation about straws that came was very poignant and is an easy win, really. That could be done both within Leeds City Council but we need to also educate the businesses. Look how many pubs there are in the city centre, you will probably go in one tonight after the Council meeting and have a look. I bet they give you a plastic straw with your drink – Councillor Truswell is shaking his head, maybe he will have a pint of beer! That could be paper and it could be recycled very easily and I think we have to educate people and particularly educate businesses and the general public. If you look years ago how we dealt with paper, you would not really contemplate putting a sheet of paper in a general waste bin. You would look to recycle that piece of paper or paper bag or whatever you have. We need to do the same about plastic but just banning it wholesale is a little bit of a sledgehammer to crack a nut.

I am also concerned that the Labour Group have decided not to amend it for themselves because they are the administration that should be carrying this out and, Councillor Rafique, it may be a lack of leadership, it may be a lack of knowledge, it may be you could not get it through your Group but really you possibly should have brought an amendment that covered all what we are going to say here today, but you decided to stay silent.

I will offer you an olive branch, because the Greens did not want to take our amendments on board but maybe I can offer you an olive branch in the sense of saying perhaps you will take on a cross-party working group to actually deliver some significant change to Leeds. I move the amendment. Thank you, Lord Mayor.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Stephenson.

COUNCILLOR STEPHENSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am happy to second the amendment in the name of Councillor Paul Wadsworth but first I would just like to thank the Green Councillors in Leeds for picking up the baton set out by the Conservatives in Government on a responsible environmental stewardship. Very grateful to you for giving us the opportunity to set those things out.

I am no sandal wearing, lentil eating non-conformist but I do care very deeply about our natural environment, as do many on these Benches, and it is for that reason that I believe we really need to get together and turn the tide on plastic waste and damage to our environment so we can leave our environment in a better state than that in which we found it.

It matters not, Lord Mayor, whether you are a naturalist who delights in the occasionally sight of a beaver or perhaps if you are, for the ornithologists amongst us who like to get a shot of twelve finches every now and then, we all benefit from improved natural environment. It is right that we do our bit here in Leeds as well and it is also right that we get behind actions taken in Government.

This White Paper pays subtle reference to the Government's 25 years Environment Plan, including phasing our single use plastics altogether, plastic bag charges for carrier bags which have now come in, reduce them by nine million in circulation, which is an 86% reduction in the big seven supermarkets, we are banning harmful microbeads, we plan to ban plastic straws, as we have described earlier, abolishing all plastic waste by 2040 and that is a point I will come back to a little later. We are bringing a deposit return scheme on plastic, developing the natural forest in the North, delivering a Green Brexit – that is quite important as well, getting us out of the Common Fisheries Policies. It is absolutely astonishing that Labour MEPs voted against that in the European Parliament recently. This is all, Lord Mayor, part of a plan supported by £61m of Government money to get a grasp of this and protect our environment for the future.

We must take note of new innovation that is coming around. Some of you may have seen earlier on today that researchers in Islamabad have found a new species of fungi that actually eats plastic in waste sites and we have to look at those innovations coming around as well.

That is the action that is in the pipeline and, as I say, banning plastic waste by 2040, but it is important that we look at what can be done now, which is why I would ask Councillor Blackburn to reconsider adopting the amendment we have put forward or, indeed, if the administration wants to take up the olive branch offered by my colleague, because it is important that we make Leeds the place, the vanguard of efforts to reduce waste in the interim period and this amendment does that.

It is something we can all get behind, I believe, if we can adopt this amendment, whether hippies, naturalists, naturists or quite simply just quiet simple determined Conservatives. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Bentley to move another amendment.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I love it when Conservatives take on an environmental mantle and I will be looking forward to their support when I bring the White Paper against fracking.

I think we have already had the best speech on this subject today and that was given by the young lady this morning from the Tribe Youth Group in her deputation. It was so appropriate that it was young people up there giving us, their elders, the message about plastic and about pollution because it is about their future and their children's future. That is why we have to be doing something now.

Like Councillor Wadsworth, I support everything that Councillor Blackburn said, everything that Councillor Elliott said. We have not altered a word that they put into this White Paper but we have put something else forward which we think, our Group thinks and I support the Conservative Group on this, actually takes it a step further, because we do want to stop the use of single use plastics, we do understand the devastation and the impact not only in our oceans but on our countryside. We had something this morning about fly tipping and the very complacent approach over fly tipping. You have only got to drive around the countryside and look at the lay-bys, look in the little wooded areas in our estates, full of fly tipping. A lot of it is plastic, a lot of it is building waste. We have got to take this seriously.

All the measures that are in this White Paper are excellent because they will be saying we have got to replace the single use, we could replace plastic cups, plastic straws, the Council has got to take a lead on that. Absolutely right but we are not going to get rid of plastic that way in anything like the short term or even long term. Whilst so ever Leeds residents are told that well, you can recycle, it is as easy as 1, 2, 4, whilst we are not recycling 3 and 5 and 6, and Leeds residents are being told to put those in the black bin where they go to the incinerator and get incinerated, an additional margarine pot, an additional yoghurt pot will still have to be manufactured until we get to this area where we do not have them at all. That is going to be using new materials, new resources, hydrocarbons, all the things that lead to pollution.

I would urge Councillor Blackburn to think again, say there is a two-pronged approach here. One is stopping the use long-term but the other is making sure that we are preventing the re-manufacture of a lot of plastic by increasing our recycling and it is not that these other categories of plastic cannot be recycled. As Paul said you have only got to go down to Martins and they are recycling all sorts of plastics coming in from Local Authorities. It is this Council will not recycle them because of market forces and financial issues, but if this is so important to us it is worth subsidising, it is worth putting some money into it. We know there are savings earmarked within the Waste Management if they got their act together on the bin round rationalisation, there is £1m there that would be available and we could also take Paul's idea of a cross party working group to look at all these issues and Paul mentioned about carrier bags. The impact of putting a small levy on carrier bags reduced their use considerably. We should perhaps be looking with our contacts with Government and the LGA at lobbying for a levy on plastics as well. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Campbell.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Garthwaite.

COUNCILLOR GARTHWAITE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Right, we know that single use plastic fills our seas and threatens to destroy our planet. Some plastic does have its place, it can be useful, but we know what is happening in the sea as Councillor Blackburn so graphically described. One in three fish for human consumption now contains plastic. 40% of this plastic is packaging. Average households throw over 40 kilos of plastic into their black bin every year.

In Leeds we recycled almost 4,500 tons of plastic last year but that is only one third of what we could recycle. As Councillor Blackburn said, because of contracts, because of various reasons, not all plastic can be recycled, countries will not accept any more, it is much better not to produce plastic waste in the first place but, while it does exist, what are we doing in Leeds?

Firstly, there is the Hubbub Leeds by Example campaign #Leeds by Example – it is rather good – a partnership between Leeds City Council and the charity Hubbub. It is a recycling on the go scheme, the trial starts next month in Leeds city centre. We will see bins, recycling reward machines and innovative communications to change behaviour, especially for things like coffee cups, sandwich wrappers. Then there is #No Sucking Plastic campaign, if that name is used. A Leeds city centre retailer founded this campaign. We are working with it. Retailers and bars who demonstrate their sustainability, avoid single use plastics, obviously including straws, and recycle as much as they can will be awarded accreditation by the Council.

We are running a communications campaign. The guide, on recycled paper, went out to all households recently explaining what plastics you can recycle and there is advice on the Recycle for Leeds Facebook and Twitter pages.

We have to clean up our own act within Leeds City Council. With the help of a Leeds University student we are auditing Leeds City Council's buildings, reviewing our single use plastic and recycling practices. Some changes can be made really quickly and easier; others will have to wait until existing contracts end but we are examining them all.

In my ward Councillors work very hard with Leave Leeds tidy and the Universities to encourage students to recycle and donate unwanted goods when term ends. This year over 44 tons of goods were collected and much was sold in pop-up charity shops. I am working with Leeds Beckett partners and students to reach communities where recycling is low, which actually can be anywhere in the city, trialling creative technologies and communications to streamline the process.

Leeds businesses, we are working with Macdonald's, contacting them to phase our plastic straws, encouraging the businesses who refill water bottles free of charge, supporting the Rose Bowl.

What can we do? Use recyclable – *this* is plastic but you can fill it over and over again. Use coffee cups the same. Think about supermarket items but remember that I

might be able to go to the farmers market but not everyone can. For the poorest people they often shop in shops where there is mounds of non-recycling plastics used and we are not going to start blaming them. What we have to do is pressurise the Government. 2042 is not nearly soon enough to get rid of this plastic waste.

Do we want to eat plastic? Do we want our children and grandchildren to be eating plastic? No, so let us prevent every living organism and being on the whole planet from doing so and work together in Leeds to recycle and stop plastic waste at source. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Now we have another maiden speech from Councillor Gibson.

COUNCILLOR GIBSON: My Lord Mayor and fellow Councillors, I would like to speak in support of the White Paper. People are becoming more and more aware of the impact plastic has on the world. We are all more conscious about what our food is wrapped in and where we are eating and drinking it from. It was recently reported that packaging is an increasingly growing concern for shoppers and in some cases even more so than price.

The seemingly never ending bits of wrappers, clingfilm, or disposable plastics that can be found up and down the shopping aisles must end up somewhere and unfortunately, no matter how hard we try, there are people that are happy to see it discarded in our streets, in our parks and in our water.

We can see this problem in our communities with litter and dangerous plastics ending up in local bodies of water like Farnley Reservoir in my ward. It is a problem that each and every one of us can help tackle at a local level. Acting as individuals to deal with plastic can feel like an uphill battle sometimes, but the small actions of individuals can inspire communities to enact positive change in their area.

I am proud to see such individual actions coming together in such a strong community presence in Farnley and Wortley. Last month I was out with local volunteers, Yorkshire Water and a specialist diving team to clean up Farnley Reservoir. Being surrounded by people with such pride in their community and a drive to clean up the blight of litter that harms our local wildlife was a real privilege and I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who came out to help with the clean up or support it in any way.

This was not just a one-off event. Local volunteers and I have done numerous litter picks across my ward such as on Farnley fish pond and the Bawn estates, where we found the amount of single use plastics like chocolate wrappers and crisp packets on the ground to be very alarming. As well as this we have had new bins installed in these areas to try and stop further littering but however proud I am of the amazing volunteers in Farnley and Wortley who give up their free time to help clean up the community, I am deeply sad that it needs doing at all. These clean ups are treating the symptoms of a problem and not the cause.

The best solution is to make sure we do not make unnecessary plastics that can be littered in the first place. It is a sad fact that some people do not care about the

environment and no matter how much we educate or show them the damage of littering, they will not change, so we need to make sure that we limit the amount of plastic that can end up in landfills and on our streets before they can even get into these people's hands.

We as individuals can all pick up litter where we see it and try to limit our disposable plastic use. Larger organisations like Leeds City Council can create bigger opportunities to reduce the amount of single use plastics across the whole city. The Council as a major supplier and customer can help radically change how Leeds as a city treats single use plastics. We as a Council are already carrying out actions to help limit our plastic usage and I fully support the extra action in this White Paper to ensure that this Council is doing its part to help preserve the world for generations to come.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Smart, please.

COUNCILLOR SMART: My Lord Mayor and fellow Councillors, plastic waste is fast becoming a widely recognised problem. While it is an important material for our economy providing multiple benefits to our everyday lives, it can take thousands of years to biodegrade, it takes up valuable space in landfill sites and in our communities and is polluting the natural environment, having a significant impact on our oceans. I would like to run through some of the important steps this Council is already taking to phase out the use of single use plastics, whether it be plastic cups, bottles, cutlery, straws or food containers.

Civic Enterprise Leeds Catering do not use straws or plastic cups of any kind in the schools or commercial functions where they cater, and drinks with attached straws are also being phased out in the John Charles café. The extent to which compostable cups could be used by organisations running large events is also being considered, and the potential use of reusable and deposit scheme glasses and cups are also being investigated.

There is currently a working group across all the catering that Civic Enterprise Leeds undertakes to look at how prepared food is packaged and also how the waste is managed once we are ready to dispose. A full review of all catering packaging across the service is planned, alongside consultation with interested parties such as Tribe Youth Group who spoke to us this afternoon about the damage caused by single use plastics.

Civic Enterprise Leeds are also progressing with the removal of single use cups in our own buildings. For example, as Councillor Blackburn mentioned, at our full Council meetings plastic bottles have been replaced with water jugs and glasses and for Exec Board meetings, plastic cups have been removed from the water dispenser and replaced with glasses. This practice has been carried out throughout the Civic Hall and there are no longer any plastic cups supplied.

I welcome this White Paper because while the Council is certainly heading in the right direction on this issue, there is much more to do to meet this challenge. This White Paper gives the Council the opportunity to lead the way in showing how single use plastic can be phased out across the city. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Rafique please.

COUNCILLOR RAFIQUE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Lord Mayor, the issue of single use plastic is currently very important for many residents in Leeds, and quite rightly so. Just to give an example, more than half a billion plastic straws are used every day around the world. If we continue to generate plastic waste at the current rate, approximately 12 billion tons will be in landfills or the natural environment by 2050.

Just before I carry on I just want to comment on a couple of points made by Councillor Wadsworth. The very reason why we are actually seconding Councillor Blackburn is that we generally, on just about most of it, we agree with what is being said, that is why we are discussing it. I would be quite happy to form a group but, as you have heard from my colleagues Councillor Garthwaite, Councillor Gibson and Councillor Smart, we are taking a number of steps within the Council to phase out single use plastics.

The plastics we accept for recycling are those for which there are the most sustainable within the recycling market. PVC, which is type 3 and polystyrene which is type 6 and plastics with complex polymers are extremely difficult to recycle. Polypropylene which is a type 5, is recyclable but there is a very limited reprocessing capacity for this plastic type currently. For these reasons it is not recommended either from an environmental or economic point of view to expand the range of plastics accepted at the kerbside as proposed.

Instead, prevention is better than cure. We need to stop unrecyclable packaging from entering the environment in the first place. We need manufacturers to scrap a range of plastics which are used to package food so the Council can reduce waste sent to the landfill. Relatively small package design changes could make a real difference. For example, black is the only colour that cannot be scanned by recycling machines. Items like black microwave containers needlessly hinder the recycling process. If margarine tubs, which are made out of category 5 plastic, were made out of the same plastics as water bottles, they could be recycled as well. If manufacturers do not want to get serious about producing material that can be recycled, then they should at least contribute towards the cost that local taxpayers pay towards cleaning up.

In terms of what we do in our parks, I think we are encouraging our organisers to use alternatives in place of single use plastics with a view to eradicating them altogether. We are also working with the various festivals in terms of providing recycling bins on site for events, intending to dispose of waste and to give you an example about Kirkstall Festival, Chapel Allerton Festival recently, Horsforth Food Festival, Beeston Festival, Wetherby Food Festival, Let's Rock Leeds and Unity Day, we are also looking at recycling or putting in place recycling infrastructure at Parks managed events such as Leeds West Indian Carnival and Bonfire Night. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Firth, please.

COUNCILLOR COHEN: Point of order.

THE LORD MAYOR: Right, a member may raise a point of order at any time and you are entitled to be heard immediately.

COUNCILLOR COHEN: Councillor Rafique just informed us that he seconded this White Paper. Of course he did not so do, my Lord Mayor. I thought it was important to correct that. He has clearly misled himself a little.

THE LORD MAYOR: We will now carry on with, Councillor Firth, who is no longer a maiden.

COUNCILLOR FIRTH: Yes we have already had that one, unfortunately. Thank you very much indeed, Lord Mayor. I must say to speak earlier with regard to the Youth Group from Cross Gates, it is fantastic to see young people, particularly kids who are really interested and worried and concerned to get this sorted and I am so glad that you have brought forward the Green Paper, although I do hope that you would second the amendment with regards to Councillor Wadsworth, but the one thing we have to say is this. Single use plastics, to coin a phrase and get down with the kids in terms of Taylor Swift, we need to shake it off. *(laughter)* We need to shake off the idea that we need to use them. We need to go actually, right, what is the future going to look like, where do we want to be in the next 50 years in terms of plastics?

Because the fact is this. When I think about this I mentioned earlier about the fact that I have been a carer and it is particularly hard with those people with disabilities who have difficulty swallowing or eating to use anything other than plastic straws, but if we think outside the box and think about finding some other contraption, be it paper straws if we can find them waterproof enough or some way but that will probably make them not recyclable but anyhow, if we can find some sort of solution we will get there. I think that generally this is a really hot topic and I am glad to also say that if you looked at the past four speakers, three of us are of the younger generation of Councillors and so I am really glad to hear that certainly it is every single age group within this Chamber. I apologise, I forgot to include Councillor Stephenson.

All I can say on that point is this. Fundamentally we need to do what we can and I have been in touch with the Waste Strategy Team about this in particular and got a very colourful map about particularly looking about how much of the actual waste that we receive is actually recyclable. Beyond that from the actual recyclable waste that we get from the kerbside, from the green bins, actually what of that is actually recycled?

I am glad to say that around about, according to Andrew Lingham who is the Head of Waste Strategy, 80% of our waste that is put in the green recycling bin is gladly recycled. Don't get me wrong, we need to do more because that is still 20% that then has to go the incinerator and we know how much still goes in the incinerator otherwise.

The big problem we do have is in those areas that you would expect in the terms of the fact that unfortunately there are other priorities that people have to deal with. The fact that their daily lives recycling is not the absolute be all and end all for those who are struggling in our inner city everywhere from Headingley to Middleton Park and even from as far as probably Calverley and Farsley across the Cross Gates and Whinmoor. In those areas across the city you see, according to this map, that at least 22.9% - so 18% to 22.9% of all waste that is collected is recyclable. The rest of the city is much better than that but that is because of a number of mitigating factors, so I think we need to have a two pronged approach.

We need to, one, try and get out there and say to people who are actually in the good areas that are recycling and have good rates of recycling how they can be better, how we can build on that 80% but then on those areas that we know that there are other priorities, if it is not a priority then we need to do what we can but at the same time really focus on trying to improve and educate but at the same time there are other priorities that we fully understand other people may not want to actually buy into but eventually if the young people grow up to be the adults that then will be recycling, that will be even better.

Generally this is a real issue and something that I have seen quite clearly when it was raised to me by a constituent that in two of the major leisure centres near us – John Smeaton and Wetherby Leisure Centre – did not have recycling bins next to the actual vans where you could actually buy the bottles there. Then when I made a random trip to Scott Hall Leisure Centre, which I know is in Councillor Rafique's constituency, as far as I am aware, unfortunately you had to go right down a corridor to the viewing platform overseeing the swimming pool to actually find a bottle recycling bin. This is not to blame anybody but it is to say we can do more and together all I can say is we can stop talking rubbish as politicians are supposed to and actually get recycling. Thank you.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor James Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am continuing the run of younger Councillors speaking in this debate! (laughter) Of course some of these things are all relative, of course.

I think Councillor Firth said a lot of things we agreed with but I think he was getting slightly off the point of the Green Party White Paper that we as a group are happy to support and welcome this debate, because with a lot of this debate once you start talking about recycling you are actually missing the point that a lot of these products should not even be used to be recycled in the first place. I think we can do a lot as a Council but again there has to be a question around why at this point when there is such a widespread concern there are not more restrictions on what packaging is used and the day when packaging that cannot be easily or readily or economically recycled is still in our shops I think is a question we cannot solve in this Council Chamber but it is one we have to address around what our Government is doing around this agenda to help everybody with recycling.

I think Councillor Smart touched on some of the points as well. Actually one of the benefits of us is with Civic Enterprise Leeds we have our own in-house catering facility and I think again it is one of the benefits of having a lot of these services in-house in the Council, we can very quickly and rapidly respond to changing demands and changing needs in a way we would not have been if, like other Councils, all this had been outsourced, so we have been able to very quickly reduce the amount of – following people's concerns – non-recyclable plastics that are used, reduce things like straws and very quickly make the changes there to a lot of our own catering operations. Actually we provide nearly 40,000 school dinners every day and we are able to set an example for a lot of young people in the city at a very, very early stage.

It is a shame, just drawing my comments to a conclusion, Paul Wadsworth did not follow some of his Members' advice earlier and was polite to other parties because we are considering supporting his amendment despite the fact he was so rude to us. Maybe if he had listened to some of his Members earlier around civility in this Council Chamber it could have been done in a more cordial fashion, but again, we do that because we think it is useful if we are going to bring forward an Exec Board White Paper, it is useful to consider some of those points but again I would underline that actually one of the things we do need to look at is how we can stop a lot of this single use plastic actually coming in. Recycling is almost – recycling is good and we want to encourage people to do it in some ways but in other ways it is actually a mark of failure for us on some of this because these products should not be out there in the first place.

On behalf of our Group and on behalf of everybody we are pleased to support the White Paper put forward. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ann Blackburn to sum up, please.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: Yes, thank you, Lord Mayor, and I thank everybody for their contributions. Basically we are more or less singing from the same hymn sheet here. I would like to thank my ward colleague, Councillor Gibson, for his views and I am very pleased that he is with us on this. It is nice to think that the three of us in the same ward are batting in the same direction.

Also the rest, Councillor Garthwaite gave me some information I did not know about the Leeds Hubbub, I had not heard of that before so I will certainly be looking that one up and Councillor Smart told me about what Civic Enterprise Leeds is doing which I am very pleased about. Councillor Rafique mentioned about plastic straws and certainly his concern about plastic getting into the environment in the first place. Councillor Firth, I do not think is quite where I am at yet. Quite a bit of a way to go, I am afraid, Sam! *(interruption)* I like Sam, he is a nice lad but I think you have got a fair way to go, Sam.

When you are talking recycle; we believe recycle is the last resort and we cannot go on with all these plastics. I said to you before about how it is getting into the environment. We have got to do something about it so I think you have a bit of a way to go – certainly a long way to go before you would make a good Green anyway, but I hope you will try. I hope you will try!

Councillor Lewis, of course, mentions about 40,000 school dinners already being provided by the Council and again, when we provide those we are not using single use plastic so I am very pleased about that. I think it is great, I look forward in six months' time to seeing what you have done with this. Hopefully you are going to have a good report and I look forward to seeing that. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: We will move to a vote. First of all the amendment in the name of Councillor Wadsworth. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED. *(Applause)*

We now go to the amendment in the name of Councillor Bentley. *(A vote was taken)* That is LOST.

We will go to the substantive motion which is the motion in the name of Councillor Wadsworth. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED. *(Applause)*

Procedural Motion

THE LORD MAYOR: We now have a Procedural Motion. Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: We have a procedural motion on the paper. Can I move in terms of the Notice.

THE LORD MAYOR: We seek leave of Council for Councillor Blake to alter the motion in her name. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED. Councillor Carter.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Robinson.

COUNCILLOR ROBINSON: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Right, so we seek leave of Council for the withdrawal of the amendment in the name of Councillor Andrew Carter. *(A vote was taken)* CARRIED.

Council has given consent to the request of Councillors Blake and Andrew Carter. We now consider the altered motion in the name of Councillor Blake. Councillor Blake, please.

ITEM 12 – WHITE PAPER MOTION – LEEDS FLOOD ALLEVIATION SCHEME

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: In moving the amended White Paper in my name I would just like to ask everyone in the Chamber to really think back to the horrific scenes that we were presented with on Boxing Day in 2015, and those of us who witnessed the event and the aftermath will never forget the devastation that the flooding of Storm Eva actually caused. We know that communities were affected across Leeds and the wider city region from three rivers – the Rivers Aire, Wharfe and Calder – and we will recall this was the fourth significant flood event to hit Leeds since the year 2000. The Aire reached its highest level ever recorded and was three times higher than the previous catastrophic flooding event in 1866.

Over two-and-a-half thousand residential properties were flooded, over 650 commercial properties affected, either flooded completely or partially flooded. Over 150 structures had to be assessed for damage, including vital bridges and essential infrastructure, Leeds Industrial Museum, Rodley Nature Reserve and Leeds Rhinos' training facilities were all flooded. In total we estimate that over £36m-worth of damage was caused by the floods of that day.

Seventy 999 calls were made to the emergency services and around 50 calls for assistance made to the Council. While the flooding brought no loss of life, this was not due to the scale of flooding; it was a combination of the outstanding emergency work and crucially the timing of the event. The floods hit on a Bank Holiday when schools and businesses were closed and travel was at a minimum. Kirkstall Road was devoid of its usual 12,000 commuters. We are eternally thankful it did not happen on a normal working day with potentially a far more devastating impact.

The damage to hundreds of commercial properties along the Kirkstall Road corridor, including Stourton, we still see the impact of the devastation. Many businesses there have struggled or are unable to get insurance, deterring investment and causing significant damage to economic growth prospects. Tragically, we have seen the closure or relocation out of the area of a number of businesses including the loss of 93 skilled engineering jobs following the permanent closure of Thyssen Krupp Woodhead on Kirkstall Road.

We also saw significant flooding to the east of the city and also in Otley, where 74 residential properties and commercial properties were flooded – a town which has seen multiple flood events over the years.

What we know is that these extreme weather conditions are with us for the foreseeable future. We saw an incredible community effort to get the community back on its feet, incredible volunteering from community members but also Council officers who should have been on their Christmas breaks.

We did get Ministers from Government coming to visit after the Storm Eva event and they brought many promises and assurances with them. Both the former Chancellor of the Exchequer and the then Secretary of State for the Environment, Liz Truss, came to Leeds and promised we would get the funding that we need and deserve to prevent a disaster like that ever happening again.

What we know is after we submitted the business case for Phase 2, supported by all of the many partners that we put together along the Phase 2 Alleviation Scheme into other Authorities going right to the source of the River Aire, I am very disappointed to have to tell you that we have received a letter back from the Environment Agency effectively telling us that they do not support the extent of the business case we have put forward. They are suggesting that we put forward a lesser and cheaper scheme that would not provide anywhere near the level of protection of the original proposal and one that we know we deserve.

We have worked cross-party on this issue. We sent a delegation of all the MPs in this city and Leaders of the parties and I am asking Council now to support us in our endeavour to do the same again, to go to the Secretary of State and demand that Leeds gets the protection it needs and deserves. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Andrew Carter.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Yes, my Lord Mayor. I second and reserve the right to speak, which I shall be taking up.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Campbell. I was just going to say I have not asked Matthew Robinson to second but he has got nothing to second, so it is me that is wrong again! Carry on.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: You don't usually get heckled by the Lord Mayor! *(laughter)* Thank you, Lord Mayor. Give me an extra minute will you? I put forward a White Paper resolution not in an attempt to dilute, if that is the right word, the strong feelings I think the whole Council has in regard to the issue in relation to flood protection within the city of Leeds. Can I say that as a group we wholeheartedly support the suggestions put forward by Councillor Blake that we lobby strongly to get funding for a decent scheme for the centre of Leeds. I think it is fair to say that in 2015 those extreme weather events – and I think we are likely to see more of them, given global warming – affected a much wider area of Leeds and Leeds has two rivers and the other one was the Wharfe, as Councillor Blake alluded to, and we have a similar issue with the proposed flood relief scheme in Otley in that Government promised money, the Environment Agency, to fund a scheme to protect the properties that were flooded during 2015. It was assumed to be quite a generous contribution but unfortunately it will not cover what I would describe as the basic scheme to protect the 60-odd properties that are at risk in Otley.

I simply wish to bring that to Council's attention and if Council are minded (and I think they will be) to go along and lobby the Secretary of State to bring to his/her attention, whoever it might be at the time, the issue in relation to the Otley scheme as well as the issue in relation to the city centre scheme, because I think it is beholden on the Government to step up and help protect all the residents of Leeds, wherever they live, from the scourge of flooding.

I know Councillor Yeadon is not here which is unfortunate really because she was almost the angel of the Kirkstall flood but if your house is flooded it is a traumatic event and certainly within the Otley area it was at least two years before many of the houses were fit for habitation. We just need to make sure that people are not put through that again wherever they live in the city. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Downes.

COUNCILLOR DOWNES: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to second the amendment in the name of my colleague Councillor Campbell.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Wray, and this is a maiden speech.

COUNCILLOR WRAY: Thank you, my Lord Mayor and fellow Councillors, and it is a great honour to be speaking on behalf of the White Paper, which I think unites everyone in this Chamber.

I remember back to the floods in 2015, running around on behalf of a couple of MPs getting them photos of things that were going on while they were in other parts of the country and seeing parts of the city centre where I live flooding for the first time I had ever remembered in my living memory, and I have lived in the city centre now for a good twelve years.

I think the first thing we need to do is, we have to thank all those volunteers who came out to support people to clear up the mud, the Council staff who gave up their holiday and the emergency services whose dedication and speed protected people and properties that perhaps otherwise would not have been.

In the end there is going to be more flooding. We know it is going to happen, climate change is radically changing the rain patterns and distribution of water within our waterways and for a systemically important city like Leeds, one of the premier cities of this country, the financial heart of this region, a city that is now international in its reputation not to have the protection measures in place to protect its citizens and its people is an absolute dereliction of duty by our Central Government.

In the end Government has a duty to protect its citizens not just from foreign operators but also from the powers of nature itself, and in the end it is our duty as a Council from all of us to speak on behalf of our people, the people of this city, and demand the rightful support that we required. That support to make sure that our citizens' homes are protected, that our citizens' business are protected, that the economic safety of this region is protected because if we fail to do so with a united single voice all those several thousand people's homes that were destroyed, the businesses wrecked, the lives changed and the physical and mental scars people will carry for their lifetime seeing their possessions destroyed one by one by the power of nature, we will fail in our duty and we must make sure that Central Government, our Government which is meant to protect us, meant to support our citizens in times of needs, gets that message.

My comments to this are very simple. Let us say with one united voice together, fund this scheme, protect the people of Leeds and let us make sure what will not be a one in 200 event but potentially something that will happen again in our lifetime with climate change is protected for this generation and for the next. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Venner, please.

COUNCILLOR VENNER: Thank you, my Lord Mayor, I would like to speak in support of the motion as well. According to the Environment Agency, man-made climate change is expected to create more intense and more frequent flooding, destroying people's homes and livelihoods.

According to the Met Office of England and Wales, there is a one in three chance of a new monthly rainfall record in at least one region each winter. This obviously has massive implications for both flooding and the need for flood defence schemes.

Around five million people now live in flood risk areas in England and Wales; one in six homes are at risk of flooding. You now in this country have more chance of being flooded than of being burgled. Business and agriculture can, of course, also be hugely impacted by flooding and Leeds has experienced this first hand. On Boxing Day 2015, as the Leader referred to, Leeds and other parts of West Yorkshire experienced flooding from some of the highest river levels that we had ever seen. At that exact same point in time, the Tories had cut funding for flood defences by 27%, despite a review which suggested that more funding for flood defence was necessary. The Environment Agency recently said that risk of flooding was rising as a direct result of Government cuts.

On Boxing Day the River Aire was a massive 2.96 metres high. As it flowed down Kirkstall Road it was the most surreal thing to behold. It had a really strange, savage beauty that was absolutely devastating. We all rallied to support each other, as Councillor Campbell referred to, led by the amazing Councillor Lucinda Yeadon, and we had around a thousand volunteers who came to help us with the flood clear up. That included people here. Councillor Pryor climbed right into a drain to unblock it and the intrepid Councillors Walshaw and Illingworth bailed out the institution that is the Shish Mahal restaurant in Kirkstall, which was a truly foul job with curry sauce floating in the flood water! *(laughter)*

Despite our fantastic community effort and spirit which I will always be so proud of, as the Leader said, businesses had to close for long periods, some never re-opened. Businesses have struggled with insurance and that has had such a big impact on economic investment in the area.

The dreadful effects of that flooding could to some degree have been prevented if Government cuts to our much-needed flood defences had not happened, and that is really heartbreaking having seen first hand the devastation that flooding causes.

We must learn from those mistakes, we must not have a repeat of 2015. We have to have proper flood defences.

Part 1 of the Flood Alleviation Scheme opened in 2017 and that already protects more than 3,000 homes and 500 businesses and 300 acres of development land. We must now ensure that Phase 2 is properly funded and provides the protection for residents and businesses further upstream from there. That involves creating new woodland areas by planting more trees, reducing run-offs by managing land, restoring river and flood plains, using sites in Leeds to store excess flood water, removing redundant bridges, improving the flow of water into the city and installing river bank protection measures.

In order to protect communities like Kirkstall we must come together as a city and as the Leader says there has been a lot of cross-party working on this. We are a united voice and we must lobby Government to provide the funding needed.

Flooding is going to get worse. Adequate flood defences are a necessity. I urge you to support this motion. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Leadley.

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: My Lord Mayor, one of the annoying things about being a Councillor is that you have to repeat the same points year after year until someone takes notice and does what is needed. Some Members may recall that I chaired a Scrutiny Commission Inquiry into flooding in Leeds in the 2005/6 municipal year. This had been prompted by localised flash flooding in a number of places such as Mill Shaw on the borders of Cottingley and Cherwell, the Dunhill Estate in Halton, the Outer Ring Road at Wortley and the Kirkdale Estate in Farnley. Also we highlighted the fact that the city centre had had some recent near misses, with the River Aire coming within a few inches of overtopping its banks.

The Scrutiny Commission led to the Environment Agency and City Council Land Drainage, as it then was, tackling localised flash flooding with urgency and effectiveness, but it was agreed that national funding and wider Environment Agency co-ordination would be needed to deal with the river flooding within the overall Aire and Wharfe catchments.

There was widespread river flooding in Yorkshire in the summer of 2007 and everyone will remember the Boxing Day floods of 2015. As I have said before, Central Government, regardless of political colour, responds to such crises by going into a predictable cycle of behaviour. Ministers and bureaucrats turn out in Barbour jackets and wellington boots. They nod wisely, they make soothing noises and promise that something will be done. The Environment Agency is set to work to devise comprehensive flood defences and there are firm promises of Government money to pay for them. Then after a couple of dry years slippage becomes evident, schemes are delayed, or paused to use the correct Whitehall term, proposed works are reduced in scale and effectiveness, budgets are cut and doubt begins to emerge as to whether anything useful will be done at all before the next major inundation.

There cannot have been a much more dramatic proof of the needs for flood defences in Leeds than the Boxing Day incident except that it would have been a good deal worse if there had been more rain in Leeds itself and the Aire had burst its banks at Crown Point. With most of the rain falling in the Upper Aire Valley, most of the flood water came from up country and most seriously affected Kirkstall, although the city centre did not escape entirely.

There can be no doubt with climate change flooding of cities by major rivers is a growing threat to social, economic and environmental progress. It is not just a matter of a few householders and publicans losing a few carpets. Failure to fund the Aire Catchment Flood Alleviation Scheme to a one in 200 year standard adjusted to take account of climate change would be folly and false economy. Money must be found and found urgently.

My Lord Mayor, I support the White Paper as amended. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor David Blackburn, please.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I was listening to something on the radio the other day. We are the sixth largest economy in the world, we are not a third world country, and we are standing in the second largest Metropolitan district in the country where we are the centre of this region's economy. To not be able to fund properly proper defences against things caused by climate change – because that is what it is, more extreme weather conditions, then there is something wrong. As I say, we are not a third world country, we are one of the richest countries in the world. There might be problems, economic problems or whatever, but if you have got a hole in your roof you mend it and that is what we have to do here, not just in Leeds, not just in central Leeds but in Otley as well and all over the country because if we do not do, the long-term costs to this country will be far greater.

I have got to say, I think part of the problem is probably the Environment Agency because my dealings with the Environment Agency over flooding and whatever, and anybody who is on Planning where they want to build some houses where it might flood, their reaction to that is very poor. I can remember one place in our ward where planning permission was given for a house and six days after it was stamped up it was flooded, which everybody told them it would. The Environment Agency said it was all right.

I think not only that, not only does the Government need to put its hand in its pocket on this one and there is no excuse, but I think they need to look at how the Environment Agency functions, so that it actually functions for the benefit of people of this country and not on some strange way it does.

As I say, we will support the amendment from the Liberal Democrats because we think quite honestly the River Wharfe is as important as the River Aire but the Leader can be assured you have got our full support in this. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Richard Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. It feels like déjà vu for me because I went down in, was it 2010/2011 on the All Party Delegation to meet the Minister and again it reminds me of that in that we are talking again about a formula that does not work in our favour. The formula in those days was a formula that favoured rural areas, agricultural land rather than cities.

The one bit I do not want to repeat is the result of that meeting and I do not want to come away again with a refusal or a “Well, we will wait and see” and years go past without you getting anything, because it took Danny Alexander a couple of years later, after a severe flooding event that cut off the A1M which did huge damage to the local economy, to work out that spending money on flood defences is investment. It is not just spending, it is investment in the future and that is why it is so important. When people go down this time, we have got to come back with a positive.

We have talked about Kirkstall, it was not just Kirkstall and I think we need to remember that the flooding covered far more of the city than that and there were some industrial areas that Judith and I visited Stourton only a few days ago to see where advanced works have been done there that would prevent another event happening. Only a low wall but that low wall will do the business because every unit on that industrial estate flooded and it was flooded up to here. You can imagine that those firms, most of which have got back on their feet and all of which said thank you to Leeds City Council for actually getting the money out of the door and into those firms, will they do it next time? Thyssen Krupp Woodhead did not hang about. I have a huge fear that if it happens again other firms won't hang about.

We are talking and we have got the Government now talking about a one in 75 year scheme. I actually cannot believe after what we have been through that anybody talks about that because we have already established defences for the east of the city, this one in 200 years, so do we have a second-class scheme that we talk of for going out west? That seems just ridiculous to me.

I will just quote something that actually Rory Stewart said and it is wonderful to have hindsight, isn't it? He said in 2016, "The 2011 scheme did not stack up in economic terms if you run it through the traditional formula that simply looks at narrow cost benefits. The fact that it has the third largest commuter hub in the country and fantastic growth potential" (he is talking about Leeds) "obviously changed the view."

You cannot just talk about formula, you have to talk about the reality. We have a funding gap, it is not a huge funding gap between what will give us a one in 75 year scheme and what will give us a one in 200 year scheme. We must have the one in 200 year scheme. I cannot imagine that anyone in this Chamber would argue differently from that but we must come away with a positive answer this time. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Robinson.

COUNCILLOR ROBINSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. It is putting my memory to the test some of this going back as I was writing some notes ahead of this White Paper and the Chief Executive and the Leader of Council may remember that they joined Harewood ward Members to go to Collingham and to see some residents down there who were some of the thousands of residents who were flooded and found their homes under eight foot of water. One of those residents – and it was not a set up, I still swear to this day it was not a set up, he was doing his garden, was there at the time and we stopped at the bus and we had a chat with Niall. Niall was telling us how on the night of Boxing Day this torrent came down the River Wharfe and it was like a monsoon or some sort of tidal wave coming down that burst over the existing flood protection that was there and covered not just the whole street but covered homes in flood water. It was only because he was awake and saw this coming that he was able to wake his infant daughter and they were able to get out of the house. If they had not done by a matter of minutes she would have drowned in her bed there and then.

It is when you start to hear stories like that that you think just how close we came to something incredibly serious happening in this city and I am picking on Collingham because it is my own ward but this covers Kirkstall, it covers Otley, it covers the city centre, it covers everywhere and I am immensely pleased that on a cross-party basis we can go down and argue the case for Leeds.

I would say, and I would say because I am on the Conservative Benches, that some money has been spent so far. We have been seeing Linton Bridge repaired, we saw £4m come into the Authority, we saw that when we pointed this out to the Environment Agency on the evening that the telemetry equipment that was there fundamentally failed, they were very quick to come out and fix this and that has been in place and it has worked on every single occasion when there have been any opportunities to measure flooding increasing, or the river levels increasing so far.

I think there was something that was really important pointed out by Councillor Blackburn too. The EA needs to actually exercise some teeth when it comes to planning applications. I am fed up with reading for my ward and other wards across this city how the EA have absolutely no objections and can see no reason why a scheme should not go ahead on a flood plain. I am afraid it is a flood plain for a reason and that is what is there.

Nobody is saying that there is not engineering solutions around some schemes, but there are other schemes that it is fundamentally wrong to go around building houses on and the EA needs to show some teeth.

Similarly, I am very pleased that we have the Northern Forest that is coming forward. I think the Northern Forest offers us a great opportunity to look at flood catchment upstream and across the city. I have been busily emailing the Chief Exec and officers put the question down today on the Northern Forest because I know that that is something that could be a real benefit to my ward but I think could be a real benefit to the whole of Leeds.

We are going to have extremes of weather, we need to make sure that we are in a resilient position. We saw one of the driest summers that I can remember in recent memory where we were worrying at one stage about fires in fields and now we are back talking about flooding again as the temperatures start to change, but I think it is right that we go through it on a cross-party basis. I am very pleased to hear that the amendment is accepted to make sure that it is all-party that is going down and I look forward to updates and working with the administration on this going forward. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Andrew Carter.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Yes, thank you, Lord Mayor. Just on Councillor Campbell's amendment first of all, I am quite keen that this is an all-party resolution, for perfectly obvious reasons, but I have a great deal of sympathy with Councillor Campbell's comments. He mentions the whole of the city, flooding happens in a number of places and, of course, Otley and the Wharfe, and Judith did pick the point up when she moved the resolution. I would like to think there was some way of accommodating the concerns about the Wharfe and Otley in any subsequent paperwork we submit. Other than that the only way round it is to accept the amendment from Councillor Campbell and I would not be unhappy to do that, I will be frank, but I am very keen that this resolution goes forward with everyone's support.

I thank Councillor Robinson for raising some interesting points. We have reached the stage in this country – it has been building up over a number of years and it is not acceptable just to blame the current Government, the last one or, indeed, the one before that, but for a long time infrastructure provision has been provided by the seat of our pants as a country and the result of that is that now with the undoubted climate change that there is, we are seeing the substantial damage that can be done to all sorts of areas but in this particular instance the city of Leeds. The city of Leeds, the capital of the Leeds City Region, the economic powerhouse of the City Region and yes, by the way, Judith, I am one hundred per cent committed to sub-regional devolution based on Leeds City Region on which the City of Leeds is the capital and flooding devastation on the level we saw or worse.

Let me just remind you about 2007 when I was the Council Leader. The flooding there was the city centre and it came within a foot of bursting the banks in the city centre and flooding the commercial area of the city and Heaven only knows what the result of that would have been in terms of lost jobs and lost investment in our city.

I mentioned earlier that my Group lean towards sending our own letters to the Government and some five weeks ago now I wrote to DEFRA, to the Secretary of State, supporting the Leeds bid, conscious of the fact that the Environment Agency, according to my briefing, were very likely to send the letter they ultimately sent, a copy of which I only got today, by the way, and that cannot go on if we want to have cross-party working.

There are some interesting differences but my briefing was very simply this, that if the scheme exceeded a certain amount of money, whether or not the Environment Agency supports it, we move to another level. We have to get DEFRA support followed by Treasury support. That is the system and we have to work through the system.

Let me make no bones about it, this Group is absolutely committed to do whatever we can to make sure this city gets the investment it needs to make sure we are well able to cope with any flooding that may come at us. Let's face it, when people talk about one in 200, the one in 200 could be 2019, next year, so it is of huge importance that we get the Government to understand and fund what we need.

It is a bit rich, Richard, for you to come on to the scene talking with your plans for 70,000 houses (*interruption*) some of which are built on the flood plain. Take some responsibility for something sometimes. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake, please.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Oh dear, we were doing so well! (*laughter*) I do not think Andrew can ever speak in Council without mentioning the dreaded numbers, but we will move on from that because actually the spirit of what we was saying I think was with us in the motion.

I do want to pick up Councillor Campbell's point and I did have a conversation with you. We do not want to go away from the one in 200 which your motion effectively would do, but I want to reassure you, along with colleagues from across the city where flooding is an issue and we know that the Calder is an issue and we know that the communities out in the east obviously James, Mary and Keith to name but a few have persistent problems every year. Actually the situation with Otley is different because we have not actually submitted the business case yet, so I think to do that with this would be premature.

I want to give you assurance and I am sure every single person in this Council will support, that we want your communities, along with all the other communities in Leeds, to have exactly the same support and if it is necessary we will do the same again. I hope it will not be and I hope the result of us coming together around the particular Phase 2 of the Aire Scheme will mean that we will be listened to and our business case for the Wharfe will be supported as well.

What we know through this work is that this is the starkest example of the North/South divide that we can have. Transport is incredibly bad as well but when you have £180 per person spent on flooding in the south-east, 60% of all flood defence

spending in the south-east, and just £83 per head on flooding in Yorkshire and the Humber, we know we have a problem in this country in terms of fairness of spend. It does go to what Richard was saying about the formula that was used. It was pointed out at the time that that formula works against the cities like Leeds.

Actually there is a discrepancy that perhaps we could exploit here, because Michael Gove himself, as Secretary of State, has come out very firmly in favour of carbon reduction in terms of planting trees, as you have said, in terms of the Northern Forest, all the work that we are actually leading on from Leeds but the Environment Agency has not taken all of that work into account in terms of the spend of planting trees going right up the River Aire, so I think we did go to see the Minister last time, I think we should include Michael Gove in our invite. He was coming to see Phase 1; unfortunately we had a tragedy in the area that prevented him from coming.

Phase 1, if you have not been to see it, go to see the weirs that we have put in. They are state of the art. They are award winning, not just in a national sense, in a European sense. We have looked at the best in Europe and we have brought it here to Leeds. It is phenomenal and if there is never a better example of if we get the money given to us to deliver a scheme to show what we can do, it is that scheme. I really recommend that you go and see it.

Thank you for your support. We will work together and work with our MPs and businesses to get the funding that we need and deserve for this great city. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Right, we will go to the vote. First of all we vote on the amendment in the name of Councillor Campbell. *(A vote was taken)* That is LOST.

We move on to the amended motion in the name of Councillor Blake. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

It carries us into the end of the meeting. Thank you very much for your time today, thank you for not making life too hard for me and have a safe trip home.

(The meeting closed at 7.13pm)