

**COUNCIL VERBATIM**

**27<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2019**

This page is intentionally left blank

**LEEDS CITY COUNCIL**

**MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

Held on

Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2019

At

THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,  
CIVIC HALL,  
LEEDS

In the Chair:

THE LORD MAYOR  
(COUNCILLOR G LATTY)

---

**VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS**

---

---

Auto-transcribed from Webcast

---

**VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF LEEDS CITY COUNCIL  
ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 27<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2019**

THE LORD MAYOR: Right good afternoon everybody. Welcome to the Budget Meeting, promises to be a bit more than usual.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

THE LORD MAYOR: Right 1 or 2 little announcements. I've got a notice here that's reminded that today's meeting will finish earlier than usual and so there will be no afternoon tea but Kevin tells me it might well be half past six when we're finished but it's up to you how fast we get through it.

We have to congratulate Councillor Harper, Gerry Harper and his fiancé Lynn having got engaged, where is he, there he is.

(Applause)

I'm sure they've got everybody's well wishes there. Couple of in-house announcements. The Lady Mayoress is very bravely going to do a parachute jump for the Lord Mayors charity and as she comes down to earth I'm hoping the fund goes up. So somebody there waving a sponsorship form for me but we're going to circulate to you a Just Giving link so that in your generosity you can support St Gemma's or I hope you will be able to support St Gemma's but I think everybody's asking was I going to do a jump but I pointed out somebody has to be there to take the photo of her coming down. So I shall be doing that but I think she's a brave girl all the same.

And more down-to-earth next Wednesday we have a Lady Mayoress's afternoon tea in the Banqueting Suite, there's 1 or 2 tickets left, again in the interests of St Gemma's. If you pop into the office anybody who hasn't got a ticket or would like a ticket you'd be very very welcome but now come down to earth quite literally I have to announce the death of Honorary Alderman Peter Kersting he passed away on the 20th January. I remember Peter when I used to come here before I got elected he was always sitting just on the back row over there but that's a long time ago now. He was on Pudsey Borough Council from 70 to 74 and then he was on Leeds City Council, this Council, from 76 to 96 so I think we all would wish his family well wish them our sympathy and support and I would like us to have a minute's silence for Peter please.

(Silent tribute)

**ITEM 1 - MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 16<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2019**

THE LORD MAYOR: Right, down to the real business of the day. So Councillor Dowson.

COUNCILLOR DOWSON: To move that the Minutes be approved.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Cohen.

COUNCILLOR COHEN: Second Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: May we take a vote on that. (*A vote was taken*)  
That's CARRIED.

#### ITEM 2 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

THE LORD MAYOR: I would like to invite Members now, anybody with a pecuniary interest if you would like to declare that now.

Right Councillor, no it's not Dowson sorry

COUNCILLOR DOBSON: Dobson. Thank you Lord Mayor, Manage Neighbourhood Network.

THE LORD MAYOR: Any more. OK.

#### ITEM 3 – COMMUNICATIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: Right Communications, Chief Executive.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: 2 responses Lord Mayor have been received to Council resolutions. First from the Department of Works and Pensions in respect of the White Paper on Universal Credit considered by Council in November 2018 and from Mims Davies MP, Minister for Sport and Civil Society in respect of a White Paper on Youth Services considered by Council in January 2019. These have been circulated to all Members of Council. I have pointed out to DWP that we would like responses from Ministers rather than officials in the future.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Dowson.

COUNCILLOR DOWSON: I'd like to move in terms of the Notice, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Cohen.

COUNCILLOR COHEN: Second Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: May we vote on that please. (*A vote was taken*)  
That's CARRIED.

Councillor Dobson

COUNCILLOR DOBSON: Thank you Lord Mayor. Move under provisions of Council Procedure Rule 13.2(d) and 14.10 that leave of Council be given to withdraw Amendment 43 in my name.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Field.

COUNCILLOR FIELD: Second Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: (*A vote was taken*). That is CARRIED.

**ITEM 4 – RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD – BEST COUNCIL PLAN PROPOSALS**

THE LORD MAYOR: THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lewis, Councillor James Lewis.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dowson.

COUNCILLOR DOWSON: Second Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: We'll have a vote on that then. (*A vote was taken*) That is CARRIED.

**ITEM 5 - RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE – PAY POLICY**

Right Councillor James Lewis again.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you Lord Mayor. Once again move in terms of the Notice.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dowson.

COUNCILLOR DOWSON: Second Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Vote on this. (*A vote was taken*) That is CARRIED.

**ITEM 6 – BUDGET MOTION**

Now then we will turn to page 7 and I would ask Councillor Judith Blake to move the Procedure Rule motion set out below

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Right, sorry I was looking for a seconder but we don't need one for that, no. So we'll vote on that. (A vote was taken) That's CARRIED.

And now I ask Councillor Blake to move the Budget and we will go to page 14 in the process.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you Lord Mayor I'm very conscious today that we're delivering our budget in one of the most uncertain times any of us have ever experienced as the chaos around the Brexit negotiation in London unfolds on a daily basis it only heightens our vulnerability and lack of direct control over the way our finances are managed from Central Government against a backdrop where austerity still has a real grip across the country with all its pernicious impacts on our communities we can only do what we can at a local level to protect the interests of our city and most vulnerable people living here from the worst effects of Government failure.

Make no mistake austerity is a political choice people in our city are amongst those bearing the heaviest burden of that choice. The tragedy is that harm being done today is avoidable I want to reassure you all we are doing everything in our power to counter its worst impact. I would like to put on record our appreciation for our Council officers. Over the last 9 years they have risen to the challenge of increasing demand pressures at a time of unprecedented funding cuts, their hard work dedication and professional expertise has helped this Council protect and improve vital frontline services for the people of Leeds. Working with our partners they have helped ensureLeeds continues to thrive and moves to becoming a place where everyone can contribute to and benefit from economic success, public service at its best. I would like to ask you all to join me in thanking our finance team ably led by Doug Meeson for their work on this year's budget. I am sad to inform you that this is Doug's last budget. He is retiring and with his usual impeccable timing the date he is retiring on is the 29th March.

(Laughter and applause)

But Doug has been such a calm influence and such a rock to us all and I'm sure we all will have another opportunity to say our thanks appropriately but I would like to put it on record at this special moment today. I'd also like to take the opportunity to thank all of the members in the Chamber for the immense contribution that you all do to make the work of this Council successful. I know the sacrifices in both your professional and personal lives play a massive part in helping the Council to be successful on behalf of the people of Leeds. I think we all have a role to play in making it easier for people to come forward to stand to be Councillors and all of the challenges of balancing work and home lives but I'm proud this Council and in particular the Labour Group is growing more representative of the hugely diverse population of Leeds that members represent here today. I'd also like to take the opportunity to thank someone else whose last budget Council it is today and that is Councillor Wakefield. As you know as leader between 2010 and 2015 he took through some of the toughest

decisions that we have ever had to face in this Council and I believe it is those years that gave us, paved the way for the resilience that we have been able to show against such a massive major onslaught on our budgets. Could I ask you all to show your appreciation.

(Applause)

There's someone else who needs congratulating and that's Councillor Ragan who has taken on the mantle of the sweepstake for the Labour Group. I don't know if she quite knows what she's taken on I'm very surprised that the former Lord Mayor from last year hasn't reclaimed this position with a claim but there you go. So moving on I'd like to just describe the background of the position that we're looking at today. By 2020 Councils will have lost almost 60p in every pound the Government provides for local services. Last month we saw the Conservative Leader of Local Government, Lord Porter, as in his role as Chair of the Local Government Association warned his own Government's cuts are breaking local services and have gone too far. We saw the production of a special report from the United Nations extreme poverty and human rights looking at poverty across the United Kingdom. That report recently stated that Local Authorities had been gutted by Government cuts. Tory cuts to our Council funding reached £251m in the year 2018/19 the settlement for this budget contains a further cut of £15.2m. The cumulative amount of money austerity has taken out of Council services for people in Leeds since 2010 is now close to a staggering £1.5b. A significant effect of 9 years of Tory austerity is that Council services now rely more on local people helping to fund them as a consequence we have in this budget put forward an increase in Council Tax of 2.99% plus the 1% Adult Social Care precept. This means the average Band D property in Leeds will pay £1.03 more per week for their Council Tax however this still keeps Council Tax in Leeds amongst the lowest of all Core Cities. Income from Business Rates and Council Tax means our overall budget for 2019/20 increases by £5.8m to £516.7m. However the £15.2m call funding cut combined with cost pressures like inflation and increasing demand means we still have to deliver savings of £22.6m next year alone. Things get more uncertain after that in the 2 years that follow we have a further gap of £65.4m. Given the uncertainties and risks we have no choice but to increase our reserves by £2.8m. If Brexit were to cause inflation just a 2% rise in prices would increase costs to this Council by £16m. Given the National Audit Office has warned 10% of Councils will exhaust reserves in 3 years risking insolvency we have no choice and this is a sensible thing to do. Our cost pressures continue to increase with inflation set to cost the Council £28m more next year alone. Demand and demography costs for social care alone will increase by £3.6m. Nationally funding for Adult Social Care has shrunk by £7b since 2010 and the much trailed social care green paper has been delayed no less than 6 times. All the Tories can offer are sticking plaster solutions like the Adult Social Care precept, not only does this fail miserably to put services on a sustainable footing it also reinforces inequalities as more affluent areas benefit most. Unbelievably the Government has cut our Public Health grant by a further £1.2m this year following a cut of £1.2m last year. The continuing cuts in this area are short sighted, cynical and wrong. Children's Services nationally face an estimated gap of £3b by 2025. In the autumn budget the chancellor announced

another sticking plaster of £84m nationally to be shared between just twenty Councils. Youth services have seen a national 62% cut equating to £737m lost since 2010. Around 6,000 centres have closed and 3,500 youth workers have lost their jobs across the country. Education funding has been decimated, the gap between the money we receive from Government for school places and what it actually will cost to provide them in Leeds has reached £6m to £7m. The backlog of school maintenance repairs is over £100m but we will get just £6.7m from Government. The new schools funding formula takes away £15m this year and £5m next year from Leeds children with special educational needs. When will they recognise that this cannot go on, they are reviewing Local Government finance with the Fair Funding Review that they want to implement in April 20. I

emphasise the Fair Funding Review could any funding review be more inappropriately named I ask you. It causes more uncertainty for Councils trying to plan how to fund services from April 2020, just a year away we are now effectively working under a one year finance settlement making it impossible to budget beyond next year. We are deeply concerned that the review proposes to

remove deprivation as a factor and introduces rurality. It is completely unacceptable and will have a damaging impact on many people in this city. It would remove more funding for services that vulnerable people rely on and goes against the values we hold dear to support people most in need. It undermines the credibility of the whole review and I have written to the Secretary of State to set out our concerns. Only last month we saw a study by the centre for cities find austerity has fallen hardest on deprived areas creating a city and county divide where urban Councils have been cut twice as deep as County Councils. The Tories have form for cutting funding for people most in need who can forget their recent transition grant. This allowed £300m allocated £300m to help the Local Authorities adjust to the cuts in their Government grant funding and guess what most of that funding went to the Tory shires, cities like Leeds got nothing and guess what over three quarters of Tory MPs represent constituencies covered by those county Councils. The view that we need a better way of financing Local Government is the right one but this cynical manipulative approach is not the way to go about it. One way they could properly fund all of Local Government not just their favoured areas is by ending austerity. You will recall Theresa May gave a vague statement at the Tory Party Conference last October about this, she said people need to know that austerity is over and that their hard work has paid off. Well in her own immortal words nothing has changed. As usual there was no detail all Government departments except for

Health faced at best below inflation increases all like Local Government continuing deep cuts. At a time when we have lost around 3,300 posts in Leeds the Whitehall Civil Service workforce continues to increase up by a staggering 10,000 last year alone talk about inefficiency. At the same time they find money to cut taxes for big business and the wealthy, corporation tax cuts and income tax cuts cost the Treasury billions in lost revenue it fits the basic truth that Tory areas get richer as these tax cuts overwhelmingly benefit wealthier households.

When welfare cuts are included the poorest households lose an average of £400 while the richest gain £390.

We know women have been disproportionately affected by austerity by 2020 men will have borne just 14% of the total burden of welfare cuts compared to 86% for women. The total cost of the cuts is estimated to be £79b for women

since 2010 compared the £13b for men. In total Tory austerity has pushed 14,000 more people in Leeds into poverty there are now 164,000 people of which 26,000 are children living in poverty in Leeds. This includes people forced to choose between food and fuel for their children and those relying on food banks. it includes people in receipt of universal credit, it includes people in low paid jobs with 65,000 workers in Leeds earning below the living wage foundations real living wage. 10,900 Leeds workers are on zero hour contracts the scandal of in-work poverty continues. The increasing number of United Kingdom children growing up in poverty is not just a disgrace but a social calamity and an economic disaster, these are not my words unbelievably they are from the same United Nations envoys report who came to investigate what 9 years of austerity has done to this country. It found Government have deliberately chosen to target austerity at the poor while diverting money to fund tax cuts for the wealthy instead. As Councillors each and every one of us is acutely aware of the impact on families and our communities, all of us have heartbreaking first hand evidence of the toll the cuts are taking on our people. There is no sign of anything changing, 75% of welfare cuts announced after the 2015 General Election are still in place. The Conservative ideological obsession with cutting spending has also impacted vital services like the Police and Fire, both have seen their budgets cut by austerity, there are now 21,000 fewer police officers and 12,000 fewer firefighters. Both the Police and Fire face no choice but to increase their precept too to mitigate the impact of these cuts as much as possible. This Government has no shame in passing the blame to Local Councils or Local Police at the first sign of any impact of their cuts on services in their areas. The austerity inflicted by the Tories on the city over the last 9 years makes everything we have achieved here all the more remarkable. This Council's focus on creating a compassionate city within a strong economy with the pursuit of inclusive growth where everyone is able to contribute and benefit from economic growth is making a big difference. I'm going to focus today on some of the areas where our direct influence is making that difference. Despite the shrinking of the public sector and the lack of infrastructure investment we have one of the highest rates of business start-ups and scale-ups amongst UK cities with nearly twice as many last year compared to 2010. The creative sector is especially strong and just under 4 months ago we received an enormous boost with the news that Channel 4 will base their new HQ here in the city of Leeds. This landmark decision is a sign of the confidence in the city and most importantly the diverse talent and potential of our communities, our education and training providers and our creative sector. The decision is vindication of our approach to invest in culture including Leeds 2023, given the economic impact the cultural sector and jobs the cultural sector can create as well as the major contributions to the wellbeing of our citizens it is important we continue to show our support for the sector at every opportunity. We expect Channel 4 to have a wide knock-on impact creating around 1,200 jobs and an economic benefit of £1b over the next decade, the announcement as already seen 6 other TV and film sector organisations announce relocations to Leeds, more jobs and training opportunities for our city's young people to follow. We will continue our focus on putting children and young people at the heart of everything we do. Our Children's Services Directorate is a national exemplar. In December you all are aware we received the outstanding Ofsted rating. We are the only Core City to have achieved this rating. A huge reason is our focus

on finding innovative ways to improve outcomes and avoid the build up of future costs. By protecting investments in early intervention services we have safely reduced the number of looked after children, we are bucking national trends. Against an 11% increase in the number of looked after children coming into care nationally we have seen a 13.5% reduction locally. Early intervention has helped us to save £15m annually. Nationally Council spend £6.4b more because of late interventions highlighting the value of this truly innovative work. I'm delighted to be able to say we have still been able to keep open all of our 56 Children's Centres protecting against the buildup of future costs. Elsewhere around a thousand centres have closed due to cuts. We know the centre's help encourage better outcomes in health, education and so much more. In the absence of the Government taking the school places problem seriously we have found innovative solutions and delivered over 11,000 places since 2010 to ensure children in Leeds are able to go to school. Despite the drastic national cuts to youth services we have protected funding in this area in Leeds since 2015. Youth Services have a positive impact on health and education outcomes while reducing crime and antisocial behaviour, the evidence all points to why these services needs to be put on a statutory footing. The Audit Commission has highlighted how a young person in the criminal justice system costs the taxpayer over £200,000 by the age of 16 but one who has given support to stay out of the system costs less than £50,000 of investment, underlining again just how important it is to invest in our early intervention services. We have also applied the principles of early intervention and innovation in Adults and Health, this budget goes further with groundbreaking work for dementia sufferers. We have included extra funding of £36,000 to support teams with dementia training and to support 15 independent sector homes to train workers and we will set up a dementia care network to support good practice. This Council has played a significant role this winter in providing stability in the health and care system, delayed transfers of care in Leeds were at an historic low in January in spite of more people than ever presenting at A&E last winter. In part this is because we have invested in the Leeds Recovery Service, our 3 recovery hubs in Beeston, Yeadon and at the site of The Green in Seacroft. They help people who are ready to leave hospital but need a little bit of extra care and support before they return home. Our wonderful Neighbourhood Networks play a significant role in preventing the build-up of future costs, last year we renewed our commitment with £3m worth of in long term funding to run for 5 years, the long term stability they need. We have awarded similar long-term funding to Carers Leeds so they can continue to support 72,000 plus unpaid carers who make such an important contribution to this city. I am pleased this year we can increase funding for carer's short breaks. We are investing £170,000 per year into the community short breaks service this will provide over an extra 11,000 hours support a year. Despite the impact of austerity we have improved standards in the city's care homes, over the past year the number of homes rated good or above went from 64% to 77% this is because we have invested in a care quality team whose remit it is to assist care homes to improve and to maintain the quality of the services they provide. We continue to protect Public Health Services, to tackle smoking, addiction, obesity and sexual health. Public Health helps people to stay well tackling the scandal of health inequalities and preventing the build-up of future costs to the public purse. That is why we have mitigated Government cuts to this area we will use £304,000 from our Public Health reserves and a

carry forward sum of £387,000 to help protect these vital services. Our work here is achieving great results, smoking rates in Leeds continued to fall to an all-time low of 16.7% the lowest in West Yorkshire. Our addiction treatment for drugs and alcohol compares well and we are now the best performing Core City for treating alcohol addiction. The number of people in Leeds not physically active has fallen by 3.5% since 2015/16, 20,000 fewer people are now inactive. Leeds has the second lowest proportion of inactive people of all Core Cities. Possibly the biggest public health emergency this city faces however is poor air quality. We estimate 700 people this year in Leeds will die from illnesses related to air pollution. While the Tories in Government had to be dragged through the courts to do anything about this we have moved quickly and were the first Council in the country to sign off our clean air zone. We have gained Government's approval for more than £29m with the funding to implement the zone and to support businesses affected. Leeds is the leading Council nationally at facing up to this crisis we now have almost 100 electric vehicles and our fleet the largest of any Local Authority and we will be increasing this rapidly this year to 350 vehicles. We are leading the way to tackle climate change with our groundbreaking work across the city through the Leeds Climate Commission. It shows by 2030 Leeds could save over £277m annually if we exploit all profitable measures for energy efficiency and low carbon development, improving air quality and health outcomes whilst significantly providing more jobs in the green economy. We are progressing innovative work in this area with our flagship Leeds Pipes project. This will use heat generated by waste at the RERF to supply a lower cost and low carbon heat to vulnerable tenants, businesses and new developments. The network is on target to supply heat this year and phase one is on track to be ready by summer 2020. This multi-million pound investment will play a key role cutting carbon emissions, reducing energy bills and improving quality.

In last year's budget we announced the extension of our garden waste collections to all suitable properties. The number of properties now offered this service has increased to 208,000. The service contributes over a quarter of all waste recycled in the city. Unlike many other Local Authorities I'm pleased to confirm the service in Leeds remains free of charge.

We would like to go much further on waste and recycling. The Government, as you're aware, is developing its own waste strategy and through the Local Government Association we are lobbying for it to include funding so Councils can implement the radical changes so desperately needed in this area. Make no mistake fly-tipping has become a national epidemic, the move to rename this as waste crime is to be welcomed.

We also want to see radical national action to address the housing, the current system is broken. The UK has failed to build sufficient new homes of good quality for decades. The result is people live in poor quality homes in overcrowded conditions. Housing in Leeds for many is unaffordable with over 60% unable to meet open market prices. Demand for affordable housing is off the scale, over a 100 bids for every Council property we let. We are taking action and I'm delighted to set out today our plans to deliver the biggest Council House Programme this Council has seen since the early 1980's. One of the

largest and most ambitious in the country. By the end of 2020 we will have delivered almost a 1,000 new Council homes. Homes of an incredibly high standard with generous space, energy efficient and affordable to heat and maintain. In the next 5 years we want to deliver a further 1,500 new Council homes in Leeds we have already set out our intention to fully grasp the opportunity given to Councils to use further freedoms to build Council homes.

We have quickly identified a number of sites that will help kickstart that programme. We will, over the next few months, begin to deliver the first phase of over 350 new homes for families and others in need. Leeds has always been committed to its people, people of all ages and were placing a greater focus on older people in the city with an unprecedented programme of new homes for people with care and support needs either through external partners or by direct provision ourselves. We recently signed a partnership to deliver 4 new schemes that will provide up to 240 new places for older people by March 2021. We know the majority of these places will be affordable rented homes and they will be accessible and affordable to all based on their needs, whether people get support with their charges or they are self-funders. Building on the success of the award winning Wharfedale View we're now selecting a contractor to build 3 more brand new Council run extra care facilities for older people. Taking together this Council will have met more than half of the identified need for extra care housing through its own actions rather than relying on the housing market which so often fails to deliver what is needed.

Our commitment to innovation and investing in preventative solutions has helped us avoid the worst problems of homelessness seen in comparable cities like Manchester or Birmingham. Our approach to help people resolve problems before they hit crisis point has been successful for many years, we are the best core city with the lowest number of people in temporary accommodation here in

Leeds with none in bed and breakfast accommodation. Our innovative approach to street support to help homeless people plays a big part in this. I am pleased to announce the continuation of our investment in the Street Support Team for drugs and alcohol support services. This investment will increase to £385,000 in 2019/20.

We have used innovation to mitigate the worst impacts of Government cuts and found innovative ways to raise to increase income. Investing in assets to generate a revenue stream to support the front line, we will get 50% of all future rents from the redeveloped George Street shops and the new hotel. Bringing services back in house so that we can increase income through Civic Enterprise Leeds. Increasing the number of visitors to the city's museums and galleries an estimated 1.3m visitors last year including many young people. Leeds City Museum was named the most family friendly attraction of its kind in the country at the prestigious Kids in Museums awards. Savings delivered through innovation for transport of children with special educational needs or disabilities by listening to families to find solutions that work for them and also saving over £400,000 over the next year. Our Capital Programme has a value of just under £1.7b, it incorporates projects as diverse as investment in major infrastructure such as the new Flood Defences or the East Leeds Orbital Road so that their essentials such as repairing windows in a school or fixing the roof on an older people's care home. Making the most of our Capital Programme in

terms of the jobs it supports and the economic impact it can have is absolutely essential.

Over the next 3 years we estimate it will have an economic impact of over £1.2b and at its peak will create an estimated 5,090 jobs. Sadly as we know people right across this region and across the North in particular are still being held back by the Conservatives failure to invest in infrastructure. We saw the worst effects of this with the rail chaos unleashed by the catastrophic introduction of major timetable changes last May. People unable to get home to put their children to bed, unable to get to work or to college getting anywhere has become a major expedition rather than a matter of routine. Government spending on transport in Yorkshire fell by £18 per person last year while at the same time increasing by £90 per person in London according to IPPR North.

There is still a long way to go but we are now in a better position to make the case on behalf of passengers in the north for fairer investment, this is a result of this Council's efforts working with other Local Authorities and the business community through Transport for the North to persuade Government to listen to us. Earlier this month I helped launch Transport for the North's new Strategic Transport Plan. The plan is not just a collection of schemes from which to pick and choose but a coherent plan where HS2 Northern Powerhouse Rail, an upgraded transpennine line and other investments are integrated and all necessary for each to reach their full potential. It shouldn't be a case of either or as some suggest, we need investment in all of those schemes. Through

connecting Leeds we are starting to see the results of the very limited investment we received from Government in public transport in this city. This year there will be around £50m of the projects out on site in Leeds but that figure is still far too low. Park and Ride has been an early success over 2m journeys have now been made on the Elland Road and Temple Green services the number of cars parked at the 2 sites has risen by 48% year on year and together take around 9,000 cars off the roads each week. Work is due to start at

Elland Road next month to expand it by a further 550 spaces, we will also expand Temple Green by an extra 400 spaces, a new Park and Ride site at

Stourton will provide a further 1,200 spaces. However to truly meet the challenge of increasing prosperity and tackling poverty in this city we need more investment and powers. Many have been disheartened at the Government's response to our One Yorkshire proposals that those who have been pushing the devolution agenda for a while know this is just a bump in the road. What is really important is what happens next. Whilst deeply disappointed that the

Government is not ready to progress One Yorkshire now I have been encouraged by the more constructive tone we have heard in recent months from

Government on the need to unlock the benefits of devolution for the whole region. As recent history has shown finding a way forward on devolution for this

region is challenging however the cross party response of 18 authorities, business and trade unions to this challenge was to formulate the One Yorkshire proposal. This plan has the potential to add £30b a year to the economy by building on a shared identity and a globally recognised brand. It would build on our distinctive strengths in key economic sectors enabling us to boost skills, deliver housing and control programmes to target unemployment, poor health and in-work poverty. The Independence Economic Study has shown it has the potential to create 200,000 extra jobs and increase incomes by £500 per

person. However we know devolution itself isn't the silver bullet, what we need is real proper funding. If austerity came to an end with no further cuts to core funding we receive from Government there would be a direct improvement in this Council's financial position of £13m by March 2022. That is the very least we need but in reality we need the Government this autumn to use its comprehensive spending review to go much further, they need to listen to what the cross-party Local Government Association and the sector are saying about services being at breaking point. They need to reinstate funding at the 2010 levels with funding of £2b each for the demand pressures in Adult and Children's Social Care.

This time last year I announced new funding for mental health services, I'm delighted to update Council following that announcement. £100,000 has been successfully invested with our Health and Wellbeing team in Children's Services to deliver a mental health resilience programme in secondary schools for young people, £150,000 has been invested into a family bereavement service due to start this week delivered by Child Bereavement UK to support children and young people together with their family when they experience the loss of a close loved one. £72,000 has so far been invested by our public mental health team in 4 third sector organisations for work on suicide prevention, focusing on men at risk of suicide. Additionally at the budget last year I announced funding so families suffering the bereavement of a child aged 16 or under would no longer have to pay burial or cremation costs. By the end of this financial year we will have helped around 110 families with burial costs and over 300 families with cremations. This year I can announce we are extending this scheme to cover the burial and cremation costs of children under the age of 18.

(Applause)

The Prime Minister at the end of March last year just after our Budget Council announced a new national scheme for this, however surprise surprise this has been delayed and will not now be implemented until April 2020 at the earliest. Our updated scheme will take effect from April 2019 we anticipate our own measures will save bereaved parents in Leeds £550,000 by March 2020 which they would have had to pay without our own local policy. Nothing can diminish the agony of losing a child. We want to do everything we can to reduce the practical nightmare so many face at a time of unimaginable grief. In Leeds we are ambitious for our children and young people we want them to all reach their potential however evidence last year by NHS Digital highlighted the rapid increase of mental illness in young people. 1 in 8 young people under the age of 19 have a mental health disorder. We know many young people in Leeds are struggling to cope and they are left anxious, isolated and unable to engage with education, employment and training and in positive social activities. However despite David Cameron and then Theresa May's promises mental health services continue to be massively underfunded and treated as a second class service. What funding there is comes in different pots through a collection of disjointed schemes, it is very difficult for an adult to know the right place to turn for support never mind a child. We are lucky in Leeds to have some fantastic mental health support services provided by the Local Authority, the NHS and the

third sector. Working together they already provide excellent and innovative support for children and young people such as Mind Mate but we need to do more. As well as increasing support, given the piecemeal Central Government funding for this we need to ensure services are linked and coordinated so that no young people can fall through the gaps. That is why I am pleased to announce today I have set aside half a million pounds in the contingency budget which will be released by Executive Board to ensure children in Leeds with mental health illnesses are able to get the support they need.

(Applause)

We will develop a bold and innovative approach which will include the expansion of our existing therapeutic social work team to support a team of life coaches who will work directly with young people to enhance their emotional wellbeing. This approach will enable better mapping and signposting as well as increasing the mental health support available to young people in the places where they already go in their communities. I will ask officers to bring proposals to the Executive Board setting out the details of these new services. Working with all our partners this bold new approach will ensure that young people in Leeds will receive the support they need.

On another matter according to the British heart Foundation increasing rates of diabetes and obesity mean the prevalence of heart attacks is likely to increase. Currently only around 18.5% of people who have a heart attack survive. Chances of survival increase to 90% if a defibrillator is used within the first minute of an attack. At just over £1,000 per defibrillator there is no excuse for their current lack of public availability. The simple fact is defibrillators save lives. So today I am proud to announce £50,000 worth of funding for Adults and Health to provide public defibrillators across the city and we will be announcing the criteria for these in due course.

(Applause)

In addition the guidance for spending of MICE money has been updated to allow members to allocate MICE money should they so wish for new defibrillators in their wards. Council, today I have set out the work of this Council to help people in Leeds struggling under the impact of continuing Tory austerity. There is one area I would like to touch on further and that is the scandal of low pay. We constantly hear the Tories talking about how there are now more jobs of course we welcome more jobs but what they don't talk about is the scandalous rise of in-work poverty. Many people now have to balance 2 or 3 jobs so they don't have to choose between food and heating this winter, This administration has a proud record of addressing low pay for workers in this Council, we started the move towards becoming a real living wage employer back in 2015 implementing it in January 2017. We have invested close to £13m increasing the pay of around 2,700 of our lowest paid officers. This year I am pleased to announce we will go further and invest a further 3.4m to increase our lowest pay rate to £9.18 per hour

(Applause)

This is 18p above the real living wage rate of £9 an hour and 97p above the Government's National Living wage rate of £8.21 from April 2019. Could I take this opportunity to thank all of our trade unions for working with us to achieve this.

(Applause)

We have done this without a penny of extra Government funding because it is a priority for the Labour Group on this Council. I would like to pay tribute to Councillor James Lewis for his tireless work in this area and his steering of this agenda to get us where we are today.

(Applause)

As a Labour Council that has also taken the decision to keep as many of our services in house as possible it means our work on the living wage as had an even greater impact. Workers in catering, meals on wheels, property and school cleaning, fleet services, refuse collection, street cleansing and parks in Leeds have all been kept in house and have benefited from our living wage.

Our gender pay gap is also improving, last year a woman working for the Council was paid on average 8.6% lower than a man. Whilst we still have so much more to do I am pleased that this year the figure has reduced to 6.3%.

(Applause)

We are doing all we can to raise pay and conditions among workers for organisations that the Council commissions. Our new Council Procurement Policy makes clear that while we can't legally require contractors to pay the real living wage they are explicitly encouraged to do so and it will be a factor when deciding whether or not to award a contract. We have also invested around £4.4m towards the Ethical Care Charter. This ensures that the care providers encompassed by the charter are commissioned in a way that enables them to pay their staff properly and give them good terms and conditions. This Budget includes an above inflation increase to fee rates of between 5 and 5.3% for our home care framework providers. Extra care contracts and the direct payment rate for personal assistance. This allows them to pay an hourly rate, an hourly minimum of £8.75 an hour up from the current minimum of £8.25. This puts the

hourly rate in Leeds 54p above the national living wage, a step up from our current differential which is 42p. However if we really want to see an end to the low pay scandal we need a national Labour Government to raise the minimum wage for all.

(Applause)

In the meantime we will continue to do everything we can as a Council, so today I am pleased to announce that we are launching a new living wage city campaign working with businesses, trade unions and partners to take forward this work to end the blight of low pay in Leeds once and for all, let's all work together to deliver our ambition for Leeds to become a real living wage city.

(Applause)

I have set out today how this budget is set against the backdrop of the Government in chaos, the like of which we haven't seen in our lifetime.

Uncertainty has become the new certainty but through collaboration and leadership across our city bringing forward innovative ways of working and sensible investment, contributing to delivering inclusive growth this budget does all it can to protect front line services against the ideological Tory cuts and their desire to roll back the state. We will do everything in our power to see the powers and resources we need devolved down to us to give us much greater control over our destinies, delivering investment and opportunities for everyone in our communities. It gives me great pleasure to move the budget for 2019.

(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor James Lewis. Councillor James Lewis.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lamb.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Thank you Lord Mayor. It's a real privilege to be asked to move the Conservative Group Budget Amendments. I understand there's been quite a bit of speculation about why I'm moving it rather than Councillor Carter and while he may wish to address it in his remarks I couldn't possibly comment Lord Mayor. My Lord Mayor to say we live in interesting times must surely be the grossest of understatements. The origins of this phrase are interesting. Perhaps the most famous use was by Senator Robert Kennedy in a speech in 1966 when he said like it or not we live in interesting times, they are times of danger and uncertainty but they are also the most creative of any time in the history of mankind. Actually the first notable use of the phrase was captured right here in this city by the Yorkshire Post in March 1936 when they reported a speech by Sir Austen Chamberlain speaking of the grave injury to collective security by Germany's violation of the treaty of Locarno, Sir Austin said it is not so long ago that a member of the diplomatic body in London who had spent some years of his service in China told me that there was a Chinese curse which took the form of saying, May you live in interesting times. There is no doubt that the curse has fallen on us he said. We move from one crisis to another, we suffer one disturbance and shock after another, we most certainly live in some of the most interesting times but I have to say Lord Mayor that I prefer the more optimistic Bobby Kennedy slant that recognises the many challenges we face but also senses and looks to seize the opportunities that lie ahead to shape a brighter future.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Lord Mayor before I get started I would like to add to Councillor Blake's comments and put on record our thanks to Doug Meeson, Richard Ellis and their teams for all the work they've done on the budget and to support us in preparing our amendments. I know this is Doug's last year with

the Council, it's safe to say he will be sorely missed, his contribution to this city should not be underestimated over many years and we wish him the very best in whatever he does in the future. I would also like to add our thanks to the hard-working staff across the Council, employed directly or indirectly for their unstinting public service to Leeds. I'd like to thank colleagues in my own group particularly Councillors Barry Anderson, Councillor Buckley, Robinson and Stephenson for the work they've put into dissecting the budget and I'd like to thank all the staff in our Group Office for the work and support on these amendments. We should also thank Lord Mayor the army of volunteers in so many sectors, who give their time for neither reward nor recognition simply because they want to make their community, their city and their country a better place. And there's one more group we should thank as Councillor Blake neglected to do. The businesses, small medium and large. The entrepreneurs and private enterprises who provide the overwhelming majority of jobs and create the wealth and generate the tax receipts that enable this Council to have the money to fund the public services that so many in our city depend upon. We should never forget that the money we are debating how to spend today is generated by the hard work of the taxpayers of this great city and beyond it is our absolute duty to spend every penny of their money wisely.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Lord Mayor we have just heard another speech from the Council Leader that takes the credit for all that is good in our city while avoiding responsibility or blaming the Government for all that is not right. Every year and increasingly during recent Council debates this administration paints the same lazy caricatures and stereotypes of the enemy, the so called evil Tories. It eases their own consciences and helps them to avoid looking in the mirror by painting Conservative voters as deliberately going out of their way to make life more difficult for Leeds residents. My Lord Mayor can I just make one thing clear at the outset, those of us on this side of the Chamber got involved in politics to improve lives and help to give everyone the best chance in life.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: We believe this is achieved not by giving false promises but by ensuring that with a good education and equal opportunity all citizens should be able to achieve anything their talent secures for them. We disagree on many things yes, but our history in this city, the backgrounds and valued experiences of our newly elected members in Pudsey in Horsforth in Wetherby and in Harewood alongside members with a long serving track record on our benches and the many moderate voices around this Chamber. That while some within the administration believe it is their role to divide society into friends or foes the many in this Chamber across the political divide agree that being here is about trying to get the best deal for Leeds residents and those very residents, the voters who elect us to our places and who we serve in this Chamber have little time for Labour members who so often seek to claim a monopoly on compassion and understanding. My Lord Mayor the country may have no effective opposition nationally but I can promise that this Conservative Group as the principal opposition group on this Council will continue to hold this administration to account at every move it makes. Today we set out a positive vision for Leeds, a vision that ends Labour's era of waste and delivers not just for the few, not even for the many but for every citizen of Leeds regardless of race, gender, age or income. Our vision for Leeds will deliver for our citizens at

every stage of their lives, it delivers support for our schools to help deal with new pressures, it delivers for young families stuck in rented accommodation with ambitions to get on the property ladder and own their own home. It delivers for working families and helps to make their communities safer, it delivers for older people who become vulnerable through illness and need a little extra help looking after themselves or their loved ones and it delivers for all citizens of Leeds who care about the environment around us. We would put Leeds at the forefront of an environmental revolution in this country and ensure that we as custodians leave this city's environment in better shape than we inherited it. The Conservative Group believes that the opportunities that lie before our city are greater than the challenges facing our country. We do face challenges Lord Mayor but we always have. We live in a fantastic city with so much to celebrate but we all must acknowledge that there are still far too many people across our city who are disconnected from those opportunities and unable to share in the prosperity others feel. As the city collectively thrives and succeeds, for some, for too many a good life seems to get further and further away. This is not a new challenge, I'm sorry to say to some members opposite this is not a problem that began in 2010 nor is it a problem that began in 1997 or in 1979. It is a challenge that is passed from generation to generation and it is a challenge that we must now rise to as the UK seeks to reaffirm its position in the world. It is a sad fact that our Council District houses some of the most deprived communities in the country, even sadder is the fact that I'm not telling you anything new. I could have stood here at any time over the last 4 or 5 decades and the same sad facts would have been true. I say to members in the administration don't try to tell us that on that side of the Chamber you have all the answers and on this side we do not. Don't try to tell me that we don't understand the challenges of poverty for many of us know it all too well. For surely if this administration truly understood the problem and had all the answers then we would not still be facing these same challenges that were present at the end of the last Labour Government. And there will be those who say the last Labour Government just wasn't left wing enough, that was the problem.

That Corbynomics would lift everyone out of poverty. You simply have to look across the Atlantic to Venezuela to see the consequences of the policies Mr Corbyn has long cherished.

(Applause and audible)

THE LORD MAYOR: Could we have a bit of silence please.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: There's a big advantage for unlimited speaking time Lord Mayor. You simply have to look across the Atlantic to Venezuela to see the consequences of the policies Mr Corbyn has long cherished, if you think that is the answer for this country you must be Caracas.

(Laughter, applause)

For those who don't know, for those who don't, if I recall Jim last year your group gave your Leader a standing ovation it seems to have been relegated to a polite round of applause this year.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: For those who don't know the Venezuelan currency, who knows who knows what it's called,

COUNCILLOR: I do.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: It is called Lord Mayor, the bolivares soberano or BS for short.

(Inaudible)

Today, today Lord Mayor £1, £1 will buy you 4,279 BS's, that is a lot of BS.

(Laughter)

If the last week has proved

(laughter)

If the last week has proved anything at all Lord Mayor it's that Jeremy Corbyn isn't fit for the office he currently holds let alone the one he aspires to.

(Applause and inaudible)

I've got all day Lord Mayor.

(Inaudible)

It's OK I haven't made any plans for this evening so....

(Laughter)

You take your time.

(Inaudible)

I hope you're all sitting comfortably because this could take some time.

(Inaudible)

My Lord Mayor it's time to change the narrative in Leeds, it's time to seize the opportunities before us, it's time for this administration to take some responsibility. No longer should it all be the fault of the big bad Government. I imagine there is a whole filing room filled with letters sent by Leeds City Council, the poor old Chief Executive has probably written hundreds of letters sending out this Council's opposition to the Government on a whole range of different issues. The last one did not even get a Ministerial reply, it was left to a civil servant to deal with. No doubt they, like us, see it as a return to the Derek Hatton days of the hard left misusing Council resources to kick the Government.

(Inaudible)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lamb just one moment. Could I, now then, could we have a little bit of hush. Councillor, please

(Inaudible)

THE LORD MAYOR: The principle is that you don't talk down the Lord Mayor's so just let me say something please. Councillor Blake was given a very very good fair quiet hearing, it's been great to laugh at the jokes but this background swell of noise that starting to build up just doesn't help us to get through today and as I said we're in danger of going on very very late it is in your own hands but I think it would be nice if you laugh at the jokes, laugh at the funny bits but let's try.

(Inaudible)

Right you are, take as long as you like.

(Inaudible)

COUNCILLOR LAMB: And we're back, thank you Lord Mayor and you're quite right while we disagree with much of what Councillor Blake had to say we at least showed her the courtesy of listening to it and to completely misquote one of your former leaders Neil Kinnock I will tell you

(Inaudible)

I will tell you Lord Mayor and you will listen.

(Inaudible)

My Lord Mayor the actions of politicians in this city are sending out the wrong message, Central Government are key partners and provide much of the funding that this city needs, yes we can agree that it's not enough at times but nevertheless having an effective and productive relationship with Government is essential. I doubt that biting the hand that feeds at every turn on every issue will help that. At the last Executive Board meeting earlier this month there were a range of reports that set in motion what could end up bringing in excess of 300m of Government investment to Leeds and that is from just one Executive Board agenda. At the same time administration members can only see through the prism of the Council's budget, I wonder if any of you realise that life exists outside the Council in Leeds. What about the Leeds pounds at the February Executive Board meeting Government funding was either already granted or was being applied for in a range of hugely important and strategic schemes for our city. £65m for phase 2 of the Leeds flood defences, £9.9m from the £173.5m in spite of their bungling of the NGT scheme, £2m from Highways England to assist with air quality measures on top of £31.5m already granted. A bid for £85m from the housing infrastructure fund which if successful would

provide infrastructure to unlock 10,000 new homes in new sustainable communities in the city centre. A joint venture agreement between the Government owned London and Continental railways and the council that will transform the city train station and ultimately deliver significant investment into the city centre. My Lord Mayor these are huge sums of money if you add in HS2 and HS3 there are major plans to invest in Leeds and the North of England.

All that seems to matter to the administration is the Council revenue budget, important as it is we're one part of a bigger picture and the reality is that for the second year in succession the net revenue budget has increased, not as much as we all might like but nevertheless it has increased. If you listen to the administration you would think the councils on the brink of collapse but in fact budgets have increased across directorates and there will be an increase in full time staff over the course of the year. Using the core spending measure funding in Leeds has increased. My Lord Mayor between 2017/18 and 2019/20 core spending power in Leeds has increased from £532.4m to £545.7m. Nationally core spending power will increase by 2.8% and in Leeds it increases by 2.2% from last year to the coming year. Yes there have been reductions but what Councillor Blake neglected to mention are the reasons why. We could go much further into the debate about why these cuts were put into place but I think that well used quote from Liam Byrne, the then Chief Secretary to the Treasury in 2010 sums it up best, I'm afraid there is no money left.

And of course it would be remiss of me not to mention the recent ONS figures on deficit reduction. The deficit in 2009/10 was a staggering £149b as you left office, by the end of the current year it will be £25.5b its lowest level since 2001/02. So my Lord Mayor it seems that the budget reductions have been for something after all and it really makes a mockery of the claims we have just heard, it was for a reason, it has got public finances back on track and it's time you accepted that and accepted that difficult decisions had to be made to get us to this point. So let's have a reality check it does no good to constantly complain, abdicate responsibility and accuse the Government of not doing enough when they are our most important partners if we want to transform this city. Our Group Leader moved a White Paper in 2016 calling for a Royal Commission to look into Local Government funding to try to address funding disparities. Leeds has not had a good deal from Governments of all political persuasions, not Labour, not the Coalition and not Conservative for a number of years but you need to change the narrative on this and look to be more collaborative on a range of issues and get that better relationship that is clearly needed. It is right to challenge and on some issues we would agree but the cheap political point scoring really does need to stop.

(Inaudible)

COUNCILLOR LAMB: My Lord Mayor let's turn our attention to the Council's minimum revenue provision. I see blank expressions from the members opposite, I know they always enjoy it when we partake in a little audience participation and I'd hate to disappoint them on this occasion. So hands up who knows what MRP is. Oh dear 4 members.

(Inaudible)

Keep your hands up if you understand this.

(Inaudible)

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: 2 of them.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: 2, we're down to 2, that's slightly troubling especially as none of them was the Leader of Council.

(Laughter)

Now I suspect Lord Mayor there are a number of members opposite who do indeed understand MRP unfortunately none of them have the surname Lewis. Let's be clear not all borrowing is bad especially when interest rates are so low in some instances borrowing is absolutely the right way to invest in our city infrastructure and with a smart approach you can deliver schemes such as our proposed rent to buy house-building programme which would more than cover its costs. In the simplest terms MRP is the amount of the Council's

Revenue Budget that goes to service the substantial debt of £2.12b.

Unfortunately this administration has chosen to pay the least it can over the past few years and again in 2019/20. It's akin to only ever making the minimum payment on your credit card. The debt takes longer and longer to pay off and becomes ever more expensive. When you combine that with continuing to increase your debt there comes a point where the minimum payment starts to really stretch your budget. The problem with MRP is that it is this administration's fault and nobody else's, there's no one else to blame. The

Authority is facing increased financial uncertainty because of their policy decisions. In 2010 the net level of external debt was £1.4b so you have added around £750m to that. MRP payments from the Revenue Budget in 2010 were £26m. Once your payment holiday is over this will have increased to £47.45m in 2021 and £58m over 10% of the entire council budget in 21/22. That is over £30m extra that the Authority has to find either through capital receipts that are not reinvested back into the Capital Programme or in commitment from the Revenue Budgets. I have seen projections that show this in even starker terms

heading towards £100m a year over the next 10 years. Like all Labour administrations both here and nationally you end up paying more and more on servicing debt and less and less on the services people need. My Lord Mayor I've pointed out a number of problems and issues with this incumbent Labour administration however we do agree on some initiatives and credit where it's due there have been a number of successes. The recent Children's Social Care

Ofsted inspection is a case in point, Channel 4's Hub in Leeds as Councillor Blake rightly pointed out is a significant achievement as is the hosting of a range of major sporting events and the City of Culture ambition that Councillor Buckley first called for is now firmly on course to deliver. The local centres programme, the streets support initiative, all to the good and all great schemes and projects that will improve the lives of Leeds residents.

My Lord Mayor in this city we are at our best when we work together. Projects are often successful when the administration takes ideas from all sides

but that doesn't detract from the fact we believe a Conservative Council would deliver better services and lower taxes and we take our job very seriously, setting out our plan for Leeds with new proposals and new ideas. All our amendments are fully costed and as the Robustness Report reflects they represent no additional risk to the Council's Budget and no more risk than the budget being proposed by the ruling administration. Lord Mayor this city is crying out for a positive vision, members of my group seem to be spending a lot of time in Pudsey these days and I cannot overstate the number of times voters tell me and my colleagues how worried they are that the militants who have taken over the Labour Party nationally are now infiltrating Councils too. Hard-working people in Pudsey and across the city know that their Labour representatives are increasingly putting dogma before pragmatism and politics before people, this city deserves better, this city deserves a positive vision and an alternative plan for a brighter future.

Today on behalf of my group I lay that plan before Council it delivers for residents at all stages of their lives, it protects the vulnerable, helps those in need, gives a hand-up to those seeking to achieve their own ambitions and puts Leeds at the forefront of an environmental revolution in our country. For many of us our formative years are the most important of all getting a good start in life with a good education can set a child on a course to achieve their own ambitions in life. Our first group of amendments are therefore focused on just that. Early intervention to equip the next generation with the skills they will need to succeed in a modern society with a global economy. My Lord Mayor we welcome the extra funding Councillor Blake just announced for mental health for young people and will be pleased to support that at the Executive Board. Mental health has quite rightly moved to the centre stage in recent years, it is an issue in many of the cases the police face, plays a part in family breakup, is a major contributer to staff absence and has not been given the attention it deserves until recent years. Of course as Councillor Blake said children and young people are particularly affected too. On social media and in the 24/7 lifestyle that we lead these days children are placed under undue and unfair pressure, pressures that many of us did not have to face when we were growing up. We would therefore invest an additional £250,000 in the CAMHS Service to provide additional mental health support in schools for children and young people and my Lord Mayor during our last Council meeting many members across this Chamber spoke passionately on the subject of period poverty it is clearly an issue that needs urgent attention. It cannot be acceptable that in the 21st century girls are unable to afford access to sanitary products and as a consequence their education is affected as is their self esteem. We welcome Government action in this area, we welcome the things the council has done but we would commit additional resource to enable schools to provide direct support to girls both in terms of free products and pastoral support. Through this we hope to make a significant contribution to ending period poverty in Leeds for good.

Our next set of amendments are focused on supporting the majority of citizens in Leeds who work hard and do the right thing. For these people some of whom are just about managing, families who seem to be caught in the middle and who feel they never benefit from policy changes that are focused only on

those with low incomes. For the many it is the incremental taxes and creeping charges that hurt household budgets. So today I can announce that a Conservative run Council would be on the side of those who work hard and play by the rules we would increase protections for the most vulnerable and do so in a way that is fair to those who pay for it in their taxes. Now let's look at parking charges Lord Mayor. Now I hate to, no I don't hate that, I quite like singling out

Richard Lewis actually if I'm honest and to be fair he keeps giving us the opportunity. Councillor Lewis had to perform a deeply embarrassing U-turn since we last met in this place with his impassioned defence of his proposals to introduce parking charges in Wetherby, Guiseley and Garforth and of course we had his little list of all the other places that he was thinking about doing the same. There are quite a number of publicly owned car parks in Pudsey for instance that appeared on that list, I wonder why he decided to make the U-turn he did. That said it is welcome all the same but Lord Mayor it really goes to the heart of this blundering administration when they announce this in such a cack-handed way, in my own ward in Wetherby we have been working incredibly hard to improve parking and actually to work with the private sector to remove charges, we secured a million pounds from the private sector to improve the car parks of Wetherby and remove the charges on them. It would have cost the Council a million pounds back to the private sector because the condition was that our car parks were kept free, why on earth did they not think that through.

This was a ludicrous decision in the first place highly embarrassing for Councillor Lewis and we will make sure the people of Pudsey and beyond don't forget it. Lord Mayor in our amendments we would go a step further still, it doesn't seem right that we look to have free parking in Wetherby, in Garforth and Guiseley and in other parts of the city and yet in Otley we continue to charge. So Lord Mayor our amendment would get rid of those charges and I'm pretty confident that our comrade Heselwood will be inclined to support this amendment. Given her recent comments on the South and West Plans Panel where I understand she expressed deep concern that staff for a proposed new care home in Otley would have to use the public car parking spaces and end up paying for them. Well Councillor Heselwood today you can join us, you can join us and vote for our budget amendment and we look forward to having you with us on this one.

Lord Mayor on the topic of supporting our High Streets as my colleague Councillor Robinson set out at our last meeting in January we do not think this administration is doing enough to support the High Street. We know that the way people are shopping has changed and so we must be at the forefront of ensuring that all our local High Streets can be informative and continue to attract footfall. We must do all we can to support existing and established businesses to manage through an unprecedented time of change for the High Street. One way this can be done is through investment in the public realm and support for

events and initiatives that attract people into towns and villages. The administration's message on this is very mixed on the one hand they have the welcome local centres programme which we fully support yet on the other they are thinking of bringing in parking charges we have a clear strategy for our High Streets and we would invest £550,000 to support local initiatives to enhance all our village town and district centres so that they can move forward with an offer that will attract new customers back into town. Lord Mayor this year the

Government announced significant additional investment into the city's roads with £3.6m in additional resource to improve our roads, very welcome funding.

It is an issue that many of us will have dealt with in our inboxes and when meeting residents on the streets. We would rephase the capital programme to provide an additional £1.5m for highways improvements in 2019/ 20 the people

of Leeds clearly want this and we would get on and deliver it. Under a Conservative run Council Leeds would see fewer potholes in its roads and fewer black holes in the Council's finances.

My Lord Mayor when looking at the final budget papers earlier this month we noticed a welcome commitment to culture and delivering the 2023 programme which promises to be a magnificent series of events that could further enhance Leeds national and potentially global reputation. The £1.5m being set aside as a positive but we would like to make sure that the city begins work on it now. Therefore we would roll out events in 2019/20 that signpost 2023 and showcase Leeds's cultural ambitions right now as we begin the build up to 2023. We would look to initiate events that will deliver income streams that could be reinvested in this programme moving forward. We think there is scope to generate income that can be used on a rolling basis to enhance the 2023 programme. We are of course mindful of the partnership with the new trust and will be reactive to their needs and views on this if necessary the funding could be paid back in future years but we would hope and expect that income generated would mean that this is not required. We know the benefits a rich cultural programme can bring to the city economy and also in terms of community cohesion and enhancing well-being so in short my Lord Mayor we would get on with this work now and put culture front and center in 2019/20.

We have always seen the value of providing funding for local initiatives that are organically grown and support local groups and volunteers to deliver real improvements within their communities our budget amendments over the years have proven our commitment to this, this year is no exception and we will provide 2 additional funding pots to Community Committees the first one would create a £300,000 fund for community safety initiatives within localities aimed specifically at tackling antisocial behaviour and knife crime. As the YEP pointed out last week knife crime is becoming a real scourge in 21st century Britain and it's not just London it's all over the country including here in Leeds. Last week the YEP reported that serious stab wounds have increased by 40% it is clear

that this is a high priority for the police and we would look to support and enhance them through this new funding. As we all know antisocial behaviour has for many years blighted our communities, recent examples across the city and particularly in Bardsey have been of particular concern and this funding could also be used to address those issues. In addition to this we would also

encourage local solutions to environmental issues, composting initiatives, providing support to local schemes that can really enhance communities such as local anaerobic digestion projects or renewable energy schemes. My Lord

Mayor in total our amendments would allocate an additional £500,000 to Community Committees a far cry from the administration approach. Lord Mayor I want to turn to a very serious issue the council recently debated the managed approach in Holbeck on that occasion we heard compelling contributions from across the Chamber particularly from Councillor Amanda Carter and Councillor

Sarah Field. It was a good debate with a good exchange of views from all groups in this Chamber. As we set out in the motion moved by Councillor Amanda Carter we have very real concerns about the impact the managed service is having on residents and businesses in Holbeck. There is far from a political consensus on the issue with a local MP Hilary Benn also expressing reservations. We've worded our budget amendment very carefully on this as we are awaiting the outcome of the review into the managed approach but we are fully prepared should it be necessary to call a halt to the managed approach and try a different method. We've been concerned to hear many whispers that this review will not now take place until after the local elections I am hoping Councillor Coupar would provide some clarity when she speaks. Actually my Lord Mayor credit is due to Councillor Coupar on this issue and it is clear to us that she has taken seriously the debate in November and it is welcome that she secured additional funds in the budget but we would go further and provide additional resource to this and target those resources at dealing with the root causes of prostitution such as drug addiction, mental health issues, domestic violence and homelessness ultimately this would lead to getting these women out of prostitution for good. Surely that is the goal of every Member in this Chamber.

Lord Mayor having set out a raft of policies aimed at providing support in early years and for hard working families I'd now like to turn to a group of amendments focused on supporting the elderly and the most vulnerable in our city. We believe that Neighbourhood Networks do a truly excellent job in this city and I think that view is widely supported by all groups in this Chamber as a result we would match fund the additional £300,000 being invested by the CCG's in 2019/20 in these really valuable local networks. The NHS want to make a bigger contribution to Neighbourhood Networks so we will too. We believe this will make a real difference on the ground to older people in our communities and lead to reduced hospital admissions and budget savings further down the line. We should all welcome the 1% reduction in rents for many of our social housing tenants we recognise the challenge this gives the Council but our group will always support measures which put more money into Leeds residents pockets. We do not agree that the way to address this funding gap is to penalise and charge some of the oldest and most vulnerable members of our communities and so we would reverse the administrations charges for sheltered housing. Many of us witnessed the excellent deputation to Council in January 2018 from 2 young men quite rightly raising concerns about the provision of changing places toilets in Leeds. Most notably at the train station but also across the city. This is something we all take for granted but the deputation highlighted how for some people it can become an ordeal and a source of immense worry. In this day and age this is something we should all be seeking to minimise and ultimately make a thing of the past. Our amendment would enable a grant scheme to roll out to develop new changing places facilities at the train station, in the city centre and in locations across the city. Conversion of existing facilities is between £10,000 and £15,000 with new facilities costing more but we think £250,000 of capital is a good start and would enable a number of these changing places toilets to be introduced in Leeds in 2019/20. I hope that all members present will see that this is a positive amendment and will support it unlike last year when you voted it down.

Introducing our final set of amendments I'd like to talk about an issue that is uppermost on all our minds it's an issue that is set to determine all our futures, one that we will be responsible for and something that will impact most upon our children and our children's children. I am of course talking about the environment. I am proud to be a representative of a party that has taken seriously its responsibility to our natural environment with a 25 year environmental plan that has been welcomed by some of the world's most eminent naturalists. As many of us will know from our inboxes and daily correspondence Leeds residents are not happy about the introduction of charges for inert waste and bulky waste. A Conservative run Council would reverse Labour's continued waste tax, we will also be supporting the Green Group amendment to reverse the bulky waste charges as well. The YEP carried a report last week detailing the amount of fly tipping in Leeds ironically it does appear that it's Labour's own wards that will bear the brunt of this. I would think residents in Gipton & Harehills, Killingbeck & Seacroft and Burmantofts &

Richmond Hill will be particularly keen to see their members support our amendment, between them they have seen almost 10,000 instances of flytipping and I'm sure they would want you to back us on this one, so we look forward to your support. Lord Mayor it would seem that everyone in this city except the administration has recognised that these charges are totally counterproductive. It is time for another U-turn, yes it would cause you further embarrassment but it would be the right thing to do. Continuing on the theme of household waste this group and others in the Chamber have for some time been calling for an improvement in the waste service delivered in this city. The recent Government

White Paper, our waste, our resources a strategy for England provides additional strength to this argument and serve to highlight just how limited your ambition has been. You have been receiving money back from the RERF and rather than invest this in the service itself it has been used to balance the budget. Not only that but the main reason for the problem in the Communities and Environment budget has been a result of your friends in the trade unions and their refusal to adopt the Route Efficiencies Programme. We would change all that and invest any money that comes back from this source into the services that residents want, food waste being one of them. Amendment 4 does provide a glass collection service with a view to rolling both of these out city wide. The

Government White Paper clearly points the way proposing a number of measures to encourage Local Authorities to improve recycling rates including establishing a consistent set of recyclable materials collected from households, a potential return to weekly collections of food waste and free garden waste collections. To further support our ambitions we would also introduce a feasibility study to see if the Council could collect and recycle more types of plastic that are recycled by other Authorities and is again in keeping with the Government White Paper. Clearly before any of this we should be looking at how we can reduce our waste in the first place but we would look to build on the

White Paper heard in this Chamber in 2018 and actually get on with implementing a ban on single use plastics in Council buildings with £25,000 to support the drive. It's one thing talking about it Lord Mayor it's time to actually get on with it. Lord Mayor looking after the environment isn't just about how we recycle or get rid of our waste it's also about how we look after the built environment and protect its character. As this Chamber will be aware on this

side we take planning issues very seriously but one issue that all too often slips under the radar is planning enforcement so we will provide additional resource into the Planning Department to ensure the planning enforcement cases are dealt with as speedily as possible.

And finally Lord Mayor you'll be pleased to know as an exemplar of living a healthy and active lifestyle myself.

(Laughter)

It seems, the irony is not lost on me that I'm the person moving an amendment calling for you to make it a city wide obsession to get our citizens to lead the minimum active lifestyles. This comes from the Scrutiny Board I chaired last year and the Scrutiny Board I chair at the moment. We looked at the evidence of a council plan and the benefits of encouraging active lifestyles.

This is the closest thing to a silver bullet to tackle a whole range of diseases, mental health issues and social challenges. The cost we put in is indicative, the cost isn't really the point. We've seen what can be achieved in this city by making an obsession, 3 obsessions to be precise in Children's Services and Members of all parties unanimously that sat on both of my Scrutiny Boards last year and this year agreed that it should be a city wide obsession to get this city active. As an example there would be a 30% reduction in risk for all cause mortality. For active people there is a 20% to 35% lower risk of cardiovascular disease, coronary heart disease and stroke. People who are at least moderately active have a 30% to 40% lower risk of type 2 diabetes. I could go on and on and on about the benefits to dementia about the benefits

(Inaudible)

Lord Mayor this is quite a serious issue, there's an opportunity for this Council to be the first to set out an obsession to get our city active. The benefits will be enormous and if there is only one amendment of the 49 that are now available to vote on I would urge you to support us on this one. My Lord Mayor to deliver our vision for this great city of Leeds we need strong and deep partnership between national Government, Local Government, the voluntary sector and the private sector. I particularly want to pay tribute to our vibrant business community in Leeds, we thank them because it is their commitment to our city alongside this Government's long term economic plan that has delivered the following for our citizens. Average weekly earnings for employees increased by 3.4% compared with a year earlier. A record high of 32.53m in employment, up 328,000 over the last year and up by 3.5m since 2010. The employment rate is 75.8% up, unemployment is down to the lowest level since, well since records began. Youth unemployment, there are now over 428,000 fewer young people out of work since 2010, almost half, youth unemployment almost half since Labour left office and in Leeds overall during the period 2010 to 2017 there was 21.7% growth in the private sector in Leeds. 67,000 new private sector jobs were created in Leeds over the last 7 years. These positives may be an inconvenient truth for an administration that is becoming more representative of the hard left than it is the citizens it serves but on this side of the Chamber we are positive and optimistic about the future of our city and our country. My Lord

Mayor we really do live in interesting times and I say to voters across Leeds however you voted in the EU referendum we do not have to be defined by Brexit. I say this as a remain voter being inside or outside the EU with a deal or without, Brexit will be one of many factors that determines our future prosperity but it would be a betrayal of everybody who voted in the referendum if we do not

leave on the 29th of March and it is not Brexit itself which is causing the problems in the country today it is the uncertainty and the weakness of so many people that want to deny democracy. Lord Mayor these Conservative budget amendments set out a positive vision for our city, a plan that delivers for you at every stage of your life, a Conservative run Council will build on the good things that are happening across the city and we show that with a smarter approach, with greater ambition and with bolder imagination we could do so much more, more to protect our environment, more to support the most vulnerable in our city, more mental health support especially for young people, more to support

older people, more to boost our town and district centres, more to deliver affordable homes for young people across our city and more investment across all communities of our city. They may well vote against all our amendments

today but in just 9 weeks' time the people of our great city will have the opportunity to vote for something better. Residents can vote to end Labour's era of waste and support an alternative vision for Leeds, one that is built upon our core foundations, modern, compassionate Conservatism where freedom comes with responsibility where hard work is rewarded and where the most vulnerable in society are given the support they need to achieve their own ambitions, my Lord Mayor I move the amendments.

(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Andrew Carter.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW: My Lord Mayor I'm delighted to second the proposition and I reserve the right to speak which I shall be exercising.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you Lord Mayor. Follow that. You'll be glad to know that I will, but I'll be a lot shorter. First of all Lord Mayor I would like to thank Doug Meeson, Richard Ellis and Naomi Eastwood who isn't present at the moment but was also very helpful to our group in putting together our amendments and once again actually rather than painting the sunny uplands that Councillor Lamb was attempting to give us I will actually, once again, as I have done for the several Budget debates recognise the difficult circumstances that the ruling administration have faced in formulating their budget this year and that's been the case for nearly a decade now. The Prime Minister may have announced that austerity is over but just saying it doesn't make it true. Despite all the creative accounting that comes out of the Ministry for Housing and Local Government telling us that Local Government spending power is increasing, we are seeing our support grant disappearing and our business rates retention actually reduced this year by 25%. Those same businesses on whose growth our future funding dependence are increasingly jeopardised by the chaotic paralysis that a freefall Brexit brings to the heart of Government. A

Conservative Party too busy trying to govern its own members isn't even bothering to try and govern the country. The Ministry of Housing and Local Government has had 3 Ministers in as many years, none of whom have shown any enthusiasm for the office and with not a single meaningful response to the Council funding crisis between them. Ironically Lord Mayor the lack of leadership at Westminster means that the quality of leadership required locally increases. If Council coffers are diminishing the need for visible political leadership increases, if there is less to go round people need to trust that those in charge are spending it wisely and that there is a plan to improve things for the future. Councillor Blake should be applauded for her high profile nationally calling for a fairer deal for Yorkshire both on transport funding and devolution powers. She is also often at Local Government Association in London making the case for better Council funding and I will make this point to Councillor Lamb when he was pointing out just how much money was coming from Local Government and shouldn't we all be very grateful for it. The fact it has to come from Central Government is because we are not allowed to raise it ourselves and our autonomy is diminished as a consequence and thankfully, hopefully the barracking that Councillor Blake is doing at the Local Government Association will actually bear fruit in coming years. However I will say to the benches over there it is crucial that while Councillor Blake is flying the flag for our city and our county, home and abroad, her front bench is not letting her down on the day-to-day management of the city's budget and that is what today's debate is all about. We are lucky that as a city our political culture values opposition and encourages challenge. A lot of the time we agree and come together for the common good as on the Capital of Culture bid and now for the Leeds 2023 Trust. But it is just as important to differentiate and emphasise our divergent priorities and philosophies and to call out those in charge for the wrong decisions that they make and the ones that they refuse to take and in that spirit I introduce the Liberal Democrat Group's Budget Amendments.

Leeds Liberal Democrats believe in putting communities in control and trusting them to be the Chief Agents of change in this city. The Council's first responsibility should be as enablers and facilitators to allow individuals and groups to achieve, shape and deliver better outcomes for themselves, their families and their communities. Our proposals are practical, costed, bespoke interventions to bring leadership where it is currently lacking in improving the City's environment, health, transport, care, housing and civic pride. So to environment, under Labour this city's recycling rates and air quality are actually getting worse and far from Councillor Blake trying to point out that we are leaders in air quality it has to be pointed out once again that actually it was in 2011 that this Council agreed to deliver an emissions zone for this city after prompting from this group. It is now 2018, sorry 2019 I beg your pardon. I'm delirious, I blame the Strepsils. So it isn't exactly a racing pace that we've actually embraced the Clean Air Agenda and I have to say the poor record of this administration in delivering on things like that does not match the green ambitions of Leeds' citizens. Our amendment seeks to enable every citizen in this city to make a difference and through our common effort to deliver a more sustainable future for Leeds. The BBC's Blue Planet reminded us of the consequences on our environment if we just carry on as we are and behave in the same way. Councillor Dowson as Lord Mayor last year made a decision and

that is why we sit here sipping water out of glasses and 100's maybe 1000's of plastic bottles have been taken out of the waste stream as a result. Lord Mayor we need more decisions like that. When the Council's portfolio holder for waste and recycling was a Liberal Democrat we initiated the commissioning of the recycling and energy recovery facility, we introduced a pilot food waste collection scheme in Rothwell and recycling increased year on year. As we pointed out last year Lord Mayor this current Labour regime has benefited from the foresight of our previous administration and has saved millions in landfill tax, however the promise of those first millennial years has been wasted and Labour's lip service to the environment and inability to invest in our future has cost this city dear. Despite the crime, the whole concept of burning waste in opposition this administration has fully embraced it so the point where recycling is on a downward trend and the Government intervened in 2017 to try and halt the slide by making the Council work with the Waste and Resources Action Programme a subsidiary of the Government department to come up with a new strategy. However despite promising a refreshed waste strategy by last autumn the city is still waiting for this administration to make its mind up, ironically I think they might actually just be sitting back waiting for Michael Gove to come galloping over the hill with his universal food waste cavalry to deliver a scheme for them. Well I'm sorry to tell them he's got form on promises that didn't quite turn out to add up and it involved £350m a year for the NHS on the side of a bus. Even the Conservative Group who after experiencing a damascene conversion to environmentalism in last year's amendments have chosen to recycle them again rather than trust Mr Gove to deliver them for them. However this Liberal Democrat Group is unashamedly happy to recycle amendments year after year just because it's the right thing to do as Mr Gove says people want to recycle and it is our responsibility to make it as simple as possible for them to do the right thing. It is a scandal Lord Mayor that the food waste pilot set up in Rothwell has reached its 11th anniversary and still no other part of the city benefits from the service and it is the glaring lost opportunity this presents that forms the core of our recycling amendment. It is essential that food waste collection is expanded to the entire city and this amendment allocates £3m over 2 years for the provision of those bin rounds. This investment not only enables each household in Leeds to recycle more of their waste but it also provides the raw fuel to enable the city to generate cheaper clean energy. A modest revenue spend of £186,000 in the first year will raise enough capital for the city to invest in an anaerobic digester, this facility will process the city's food waste to produce methane gas. It's worth noting that at this time last year the Council already had approval to buy land close to the major gas pipeline running through Cross Green to enable the creation of a gas filling station for Council and commercial vehicles. At the time we suggested that should our proposed anaerobic digester be constructed there not only would we be able to refuel our own vehicles through the city's waste but also raise revenue for the city by supplying into the city's gas supply rather than buying from it. Because that land deal never happened Lord Mayor and because our amendment to generate our own gas got rejected, this year, the Council is currently forced to invest in a new fleet of diesel vehicles to avoid being charged through its own Low Emissions Zone. What an opportunity missed. Leeds Liberal Democrat Group also wished to address anomalies in the city's waste strategy that discriminate against those with limited incomes. This Group considers an inequitable that this city

discriminates against those who do not own a car by relying on bottle banks as the sole vehicle for recycling glass in Leeds. We are one of only 2 Councils in West Yorkshire and the only major city in England not to have doorstep glass collection and our amendment spends a £124,000 to get the ball rolling and introduce glass collections to 24,000 properties in the city. I note that the Tories have also copied that amendment and I think imitation is the greatest form of flattery so thank you. In the same vein this Group is appalled that Leeds City Council made the headlines recently as officially the worst Local Authority for illegal dumping with 26,000 reported cases of fly tipping, 1,700 of them white goods. Whilst not condoning those who do illegally dump their waste we should equally not be leading people of limited means over to the dark side of illegal activity through the withdrawal of free universal services that they rely on. Our amendment will invest £240,000 to end the DIY tax introduced by this administration. Ordinary householders who make the journey to dispose of their waste responsibly at the Council's waste sorting sites should not face the prospect of being charged for their efforts once they turn up. Singling out charging for disposal of plasterboard, tiles etc merely targets people who want to improve their homes but can't afford a builder, it is a cynical DIY tax on the poor and a Council interested in fairness would not have introduced it. Similarly our amendment commits £150,000 to end the charges for the disposal of bulky waste as once again this discriminate against those who do not own a vehicle, the elderly and the infirm and those on limited incomes.

This Group also believes that Leeds citizens are unduly suffering the consequences of environmental crime because there is an imbalance that exists in the city's civil enforcement with all new investment concentrated on private contracts focused on the city centre. Our 8th amendment invests a moderate £308,000 to invest in 8 Civil Enforcement Officers restricted to working exclusively outside of the city centre. They will primarily focus on supporting the overstretched Dog Warden service in both enforcing the surge of dog fouling currently affecting the city and tackling the scourge of dog attacks experienced city wide. A secondary role for these Civil Enforcement Officers will be to patrol town centre and district carparks to enable them to have limited ticketing, sorry time limited ticketing to avoid charging to discourage their use as unofficial Park and Rides and to properly fulfil their function in serving customers and traders on our High Streets. It is important at this point Lord Mayor that due recognition should be made that the ruling administration has listened to opposition groups and withdrawn their planned car parking charges for district centres. It seems the principle has been accepted that our town centres face different pressures in maintaining trade in the city centre and free parking is essential to future sustainability. Therefore our 7th amendment ending the car parking charges currently in place in Otley should offer no problem in being supported across this Chamber in rectifying an anomaly and delivering full equity across the Council's jurisdiction.

Lord Mayor moving towards highways and transportation, as I mentioned earlier Councillor Blake has my Group's full support in their efforts to get greater investment in public transport, to better connect our cities communities and the wider region. The Council's £174m lead transport plan is of course a consequence of the indifference of Westminster Governments of whatever

colour to commit to a rapid transit system for our city. Therefore it attempts to deliver much but unfortunately omits just as much as it delivers. My Group amendments will therefore attempt to prompt action in geographic areas our Councillors work within to remedy gaps in investment that will benefit the wider city. Congestion on our commuter rail routes is evident not just on overcrowded trains but on congested streets near to railway stations. Our 4th amendment will therefore pay for a comprehensive feasibility study to deliver new train stations at Methley and Woodside Quarry so that nearby stations can be alleviated of that Park and Ride style commuter congestion. A further amendment would release the £500,000 necessary to match funds already identified to deliver the Meanwood Road Junction Improvements, that were first called for 20 years ago when actually I was a Councillor representing Weetwood ward and could do with actually finally been put into place and would also benefit a much wider area than the physical geography of that junction.

On a more basic level our 10th amendment is about spending money well on our roads. In times of austerity it is tempting to continue to try to spread the spend even thinner however when this pertains to road surface treatments this is a false economy and the bad use of taxpayers' money. My Group is therefore withdrawing spending from surface dressing and transferring that to the full resurfacing budget, this will deliver a 5th of the length of highway works but they will last 5 times longer. So you're not offering people what is supposed to be a resurface street only for it to fall apart within 12 months. We actually believe it's better to be honest when we invest in our street works and therefore we will transfer it to the full resurfacing programme. My Group also hoped to transfer the £5m cost of the administrations investment in smart city technology to allow it to dim or turn off street lights at will into the resurfacing budget. However unfortunately that money is not available this year and my Group looks forward to including this amendment in next year's budget. Moving on to children Lord Mayor, Councillor Mulherin and Steve Walker undoubtedly deserved recent praise in achieving an outstanding judgment from Ofsted for our Children's Services Social Care service. This result was delivered by a sustained investment in individual children and the consistency of practice, however it also should be noted that Children's Social Care could always rely on the ability to substantially overspend on its budget and that other areas of Children's Services generally now under the oversight of Councillor Pryor have suffered from underinvestment and under prioritisation as a result.

One of those areas that has suffered and that this Group has chosen to champion is that of period poverty. Last year we moved an amendment to introduce a scheme to provide free sanitary products to school students affected by period poverty through a P card system. As advocated by Plan International a group currently working with the Council. Leeds is one of the worst performing Authorities in the country in the gap in attainment between well off children and their poorer classmates. One of the key factors in any student success is their ability to attend school regularly, it was the testimony of 2 Leeds schoolgirls now 2 years ago that revealed to the nation the shocking truth that a significant number of our young female students were forced to absent themselves from school each month due to the simple fact that they could not afford the sanitary protection there more well off classmates took for granted. Our amendment last

year sought to guarantee the dignity of our poorer female students through the provision of a P card that enables them to collect the products they need free of charge when they need it from a local pharmacy. The cost of that scheme which we are recycling again this year has been estimated by Children's Services to be around £400,000 with around 8,000 girls set to benefit from this scheme which is an investment in all our futures. Last year Lord Mayor the administration rejected our amendment, Councillor Heselwood was quite vocal at that point, assuring this Council that a city wide scheme was already in preparation but which when realised just months ago had no budget, no delivery network and no timescale to achieve one. So once again Lord Mayor we introduce a bespoke amendment which includes the scheme being budgeted from reserves from within the public health budget specifically associated with tackling inequality in the hope that no reasonable objection could be made to finally getting a comprehensive period poverty scheme introduced for our city. This Labour administration's commitment to making safeguarding our children its first priority I would suggest, is universally recognised in this Chamber. The level of spending that the Council has dedicated to this and our children looked after has increased year on year. However this Group believes that we should always have the option to care for our children in our own city. This group and that the lack of appropriate accommodation locally can lead to too many of our looked after children being sent outside of the city for their care. We appreciate that child sexual exploitation cases sometimes make it necessary to place victims at a distance from perpetrators, however these cases currently only account for one tenth of the placements Leeds arranges outside of our boundary. Children with complex needs could be cared for closer to home if the accommodation existed here. Furthermore it is 30% less expensive for the Council to care for our children closer to home with Children's Services overspends primarily comprising of children's placements outside of our area. Our amendment proposes the building of such a facility costing £1.6m paid for through modest prudential borrowing costs of £67,000.

Moving on to Adult Social Care Lord Mayor, following the same theme as Children's Services there is much to celebrate in Adult Social Care and its goal of making Leeds an age friendly city. The Liberal Democrat Group supports the continuing development of Neighbourhood Networks in the hope that they can evolve into something like the community care quality boards our group wants to put at the heart of a truly mixed economy for health and social care in Leeds. In the spirit of complementing the partnership working with carers Leeds it was mentioned earlier by Councillor Blake we particularly wanted to support the growing number of carers in the city coping with caring for a relative with dementia and our first amendment on the order paper repeats our call made last year for more Admiral Nurses to achieve this. Lord Mayor Admiral Nurses work with families living with dementia in much the same way that Macmillan nurses help with families facing cancer. Admiral Nurses provide one to one support, expert guidance and ensure families are able to access the additional care and support that they need. Our amendment would invest £334,000 to employ 6 Admiral Nurses to work across the city.

Moving to housing Lord Mayor despite this administration's best efforts to put the genie back in the bottle for the next few months at least this Council still

has the biggest house building target in England and many acres of green belt are still destined to disappear on the housing schemes out of the reach of the average incomes of most people between now and 2023. We have a dysfunctional housing market in the city Lord Mayor with the city insisting on a strategy that only delivers new council homes in the inner city whilst outlying areas are left to the mercy of landowners and big developers perhaps best demonstrated by the plight of the families facing eviction on the estate of affordable rented homes in Oulton which are currently proposed to be demolished and replaced with the exact same number of expensive executive homes. Lord Mayor the Leeds Liberal Democrat Group want to rebalance the scales back in favour of our distinct suburbs and villages and to make the difference to deliver the affordable homes that people want. Our amendment proposes to inject half a million pounds of capital to set up an independent council owned housing company to build affordable homes for sale and rent. The volume housebuilders insist that they require a minimum 20% margin of profitability on a housing scheme because that is a typical interest rate of the private finance on offer to them. Lord Mayor this is the reason they insist on building larger more profitable properties and even worse not to build at all even though they have permission. However Lord Mayor a Council owned independent housing company can access finance at a lower rate and therefore can operate a lower profit margin. This means that the company can build smaller more affordable homes including bungalows for both sale and rent the company can be self financing through the profit it makes on sales and rent. Because the company does not have to pay dividends to private shareholders, smaller developments on brownfield land could become more achievable and the designer developments could fit local needs better by being identified in neighbourhood plans and just before we go to our final amendment Lord Mayor it would only be fair to demonstrate where the money is coming from to pay for the improvements that we are proposing today. Members will recall that I have already pointed out how the amendment for the period poverty scheme is funded from Public Health reserves. Our amendment for Admiral Nurses also benefits from an uncontroversial funding source which is a reduction in contingency. This was deliberate so that those 2 amendments intended for the most vulnerable groups might attract the widest possible support. It was in the same spirit that our Group this year chose to leave out potential funding through a selective pay freeze for Senior Officers or reducing the trades union budget as this had proven so unpopular with Labour members in previous years. Instead Lord Mayor all of our other amendments bar one are funded through a combination of reducing contingency in a strategic budget and freezing increments for all staff. The Liberal Democrat Group's support the universal payment of this year's pay rise but we cannot approve the additional payment of some staff members and not others for simply being one year older. We do not afford the same privilege for instance to Foster Carers or to Teachers who can only increase their grading through demonstrating accruing a higher skills level. We believe that the taxpayers of Leeds will appreciate a higher value outcome for this money through improved recycling, enforcement services, improve care for children looked after and repeal the DIY tax.

Lord Mayor our final budget amendment is small but full of significance following the same logic as that on increment payments. Elected Members are

distinct in having their refreshments paid for through essential council budget.

Council employees do not have this facility and neither do the majority of workers in the private sector. Following the same logic whereby Councillors pay a monthly sum through their allowances for their city centre parking my Group is proposing a tea tax where Councillors pay 1% of their allowance towards the cost of refreshments served at their meetings thereby saving the taxpayer £27,000 a year and on that note Lord Mayor I move the Liberal Democrat Groups Amendments.

(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jonathan Bentley.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Leadley.

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: My Lord Mayor this is a second budget speech I've made the first was in 2013 when Ann Castle was Lord Mayor but former Councillor Robert Finnigan was down to speak on our behalf on the administration's budget without moving an amendment but he hadn't arrived part way through Keith Wakefield's speech as Council Leader. Councillor Golton then leant across the aisle to show me a message on his vibrater phone or whatever it's called.

(Laughter)

To the efffect that Councillor Finnigan sent apologies as one of his daughters had unexpectedly gone into labour that is she was with child not that she'd joined another political party.

(Laughter)

It turned out to be a false alarm and at the last minute he did turn up but by then other arrangements had been agreed. Further to that those arrangements I set out cogented complex financial arguments while scribbling at top speed. Weeks of meticulously painstaking research were concertinaed into a few minutes afterwards Councillor Colin Campbell was good enough to say that no one would have noticed but for the procedural obligation to explain to the

Lord Mayor and other party Whips what was going on. At the risk of self-damnation with faint praise I'd say that it was better than some budget speeches delivered by Chancellors of the Exchequer but more of that later. Sometimes we move quickly in Local Government sometimes we hasten slowly. It took 15 years to get rid of Supertram, 10 years to dispose of the NGT trolleybus and 11 years almost certainly to bring Leeds Housing targets within reasonable bounds. Councillor Wyn Kidger will have none of that lethargy. Within 3 weeks of making her maiden speech seconding my January White Paper she'd seen off parking charges in Garforth, Guiseley and Wetherby and the unspoken threat of them in Morley so the administration's budget was £200,000 adrift before it started. As

always we must thank Mr Doug Meeson and his team for preparing detailed budget reports and background information, for briefings and advice for answering questions and for confirming whether or not our budget amendments balanced. We wish him well in his retirement, it had been pencilled in for 29th March which is also supposed to be Brexit day, that cannot have been a coincidence, probably had something to do with the movement of large quantities of gold bars across continents. Unusually Jeremy Corbyn has been helpful so this, as well as backing down to support the Brexit second referendum I believe that he's now going to let us have one on whether Mr Meeson will be allowed to retire. If he does retire I trust that he won't leave behind one of those 'there's no money' notes when he clears his desk. Apparently he's quietly supported Meanwood Valley Urban Farm for many years and hopes to carry on with that. We hope that he'll find it relaxing and rewarding. After 30 years carefully observing the antics of obstinacy and skittish creatures in this Chamber he should have no difficulty in dealing with a few horses, sheep and donkeys. What's most striking about Local Government finance nowadays is the lack of room for manoeuvre. Successive cuts in Central Government settlement funding assessment grants since 2010 are well known, we're down another £15.2m for 2019/20. What's not so widely realised is that a lot of what's left is earmarked by national Government for particular purposes, so the amount of genuinely discretionary spending left in the budget really is quite small. In 2010 the incoming Government did have to deal with the problem of empty coffers left by its predecessor but austerity has gone far beyond that, we've seen 9 years of retrenchment by rightwingers, some of whom are Westminster based and hate Local Government and others who despise the public sector at large. The odd thing is that they've had only a parliamentary majority for only 2 of those 9 years, a point is reached when cuts become counter productive, it costs more to repair damaged vehicles than it would to fill the potholes which caused the damage.

Looking quickly over the other amendments it's notable that almost like reshuffling of the same cards. There's nothing beyond the standard maximum 2.99% increase and 1% for care services, no one suggested council tax cut and no one wants to provoke yet another referendum by going above 2.99%.

Although Leeds has debts that are used to conjure up alarmist newspaper articles from time to time in fact they aren't excessive in the context of such a large Local Authority and their funding is well ordered. We note that reserves are down to around £25m and agree that they shouldn't go lower and support the proposal to ease them upwards. Especially with Brexit uncertainty, financial management which has relied on long years of low interest rates and low inflation may find itself in unfamiliar territory. Those who remember the 1970's may recall 2 occasions on which annual inflation hit 24%, minimum lending rates of 15% were quite common from the 70's until the 90's. There are 2 parts to our amendment. Local Authorities have kept separate housing accounts for about a 100 years so our proposals on council housing are dealt with separately from the rest. Our first set of amendments is to do with putting more discretionary spending into the hands of ward Councillors, subject to the advice and supervision of appropriately qualified officers. In Morley North and Morley South which are covered by Parish Councils which tend to support or organise community events, the Outer South Community Committee attracts little public

interest or participation. Some of the devolutions of services to the Committee are illusory. For instance youth services, bin collections and street cleansing are dealt with better by direct contact with officers within those services. The Community Committee and its supporting bureaucracy make an additional layer which adds little other than cost and can be an obstructive time waster. It may be that some parts of Leeds which is those where there are no Parish Councils or those with a proven track record of public interest in their Community Committees should retain those committees. That would be a matter for choice which locally would vary our figures but the starting point is for Leeds wide abolition. There must be scope for overall reduction of the pool of responsibility allowances. Executive Board portfolio holders and panel and board chairman should be worth their salt but the vaguer and more marginal positions cannot carry much if any additional responsibility and aren't likely to give value for money. Also the practice of snowballing additional allowances from Leeds City Council with those from outside bodies needs looking at again. At one time each Leeds Councillor could claim only one additional allowance. It is notable that Development Plan Panel Chairmen have been paid less than those of Plans Panels, this is unreasonable DPP needs more grasp of broad-ranging policy, statistical analysis and technical detail . Treating DPP as a poor relation may have cost many millions in the long run directly in Core Strategy and Site Allocation Plan false starts and indirectly and a consequent planning appeals which have been avoided or one against, which could have been avoided or one against a sound local planning policy background. We're not proposing instant commitment to additional expenditure there would be a transitional period so that after making the savings by reorganisation we would be able to increase the amount of MICE revenue funding and Ward Based Initiative capital funding. In some non Parished areas a 15% CIL local contribution would be added to produce significant amounts of genuinely discretionary reward based spending, as they are the Community Committees have little scope for discretionary spending often less per head of population than would be likely with a moderately active Parish Council.

The second set of amendments is to do with Council housing. Nationally within Leeds there is a small, nationally and within Leeds there is a small revival in council house building. We've had no significant amount in Morley since 1980 when Birch Court near Tingley Bar fish shop at the southern end of Brig Street was finished. It's an estate of 48 flats in blocks of 4 which look at first glance like pairs of semi-detached houses. It was initiated by Morley Borough Council and taken forward by the new Leeds Authority from 1974. In recent years we've supported, indeed promoted small housing association developments on Council land. 23 houses at Glenview, Glendale Gardens and Glen Court replaced Glendale House old folks'home about 10 years ago. 22 flats in 2 storey blocks were built at Kirkness Court on the Council Highways yard in Corporation Street about 8 years ago and that's about the same time another 22 flats in a large and prominent block were built at Liberty View on Chapel Hill on land privately owned and partly Council owned which was assembled into 1 parcel by the City Council on behalf of the housing association. Morley Borough Council built well and avoided high rise, there has been little need to demolish council dwellings in the town. There's been a couple of instances of pairs of fire damaged Council houses been replaced so

since the millennium the City Council has provided land for about 67 housing association dwellings in Morley North and Morley South with scarcely a handful of new council houses. We fear that new Council housing will tend to be concentrated in those wards such as Middleton Park, Crossgates and Whinmoor at Killingbeck and Seacroft where there are easily identified pieces of land in city Council or other public sector ownership. What we lack in Morley is those easily identified pieces of public sector land. If we aren't to be left behind in council house building we'll have to take action. Our proposal seeks to set the ball rolling towards providing 50 new council dwellings in each of our 2 wards. A land search would be a small though crucial preliminary cost to determine the capacity of each site taking into account factors such as sewerage, gas and water main easements and instability caused by coal mining, quarrying and landfill. There are landlocked islands of unused land within some of our Council estates although some seem quite big when you stand in them there would have to be measured to find out whether they were big enough to accommodate access roads and turning areas and then to satisfy the necessary clearances between buildings and boundaries. There could be no soft options such as building on green space allotments or football pitches. Buying land on the open market would be prohibitively expensive, the days of getting land for Council housing at agricultural value of our compulsory purchase to confiscation prices are long since gone. I'm not convinced that we do have enough suitable public sector land for 50 houses, 50 Council housing in each of the Morley wards if we did I suspect that we'd have found most of it already. Even so there's only one way to find out and that's by going out and doing the searches and assessments. If enough favourable land were found for 2 sets of 50 dwellings or for a smaller number, finance would have to be sought from and authorised by appropriate agencies so that's why we've signalled our intention to look for £536,000 to start the project and £10.5m in capital investment to carry it out if it proves feasible. This is a project which may take 2 or 3 years to bear fruit but we must start somewhere otherwise we'll get nothing. All this would fall within the housing revenue account, it shouldn't affect the rest of the city Council's budgeting. Again there would be no instant commitment to new expenditure, land search assessment would take a little time during which loan sanction could be negotiated to match the capacity of land discovered. The further 1% cut in most Council house rents in 2019/20 directed by Central Government will serve only to weaken housing Service management without giving noticeable benefit to tenants. If Central Government had any good intention it would seek to limit those private rents which have escalated out of all proportion since the millennium and often are subsidised by the taxpayer through housing benefit. It seems particularly unjust that former Council houses are rented out at inflated prices to tenants claiming housing benefit which in effect is passed on to landlords. Something must be done to stop private landlords fleecing other taxpayers.

Well now a personal note on Brexit. This will affect the ultimate adequacy of our 2019/20 budget whether we like it or not. No one can foresee the outcome, what the outcome might be least of all Theresa May who now seems like a cork windswept along by a river in flood. It might be worth asking William Hill what odds they would give on Brexit not happening at all. Although it's hardly mentioned and not nearly as often as it should be it is a fact that

Leeds voted remain by however smaller margin. Brexit has divided every political party except UKIP which is divided so many times on everything else that there's nothing left of it. We have the weakest and both chaotic parliament at least since the 1970's probably since the 1920's perhaps ever. If our own city Council were so dysfunctional it would have been placed in special measures.

Because of the way in which Whitehall keeps it on such a tight rein and obsessively tries to micro manage it Local Government will find it more difficult to rise above the national chaos or distance itself from it that would have been the case either in the 20's or in the 70's. In those days leaders of councils and

Town Clerk's as they were then called we're given the respect that they deserved at national level now we couldn't budget fully for Brexit, deal or no deal even if we knew how to and knew what was going to happen. A clear majority of Morley Borough Independent city Councillors now and at the time of the referendum in 2016 were remainers as I suspect were a majority of all city Councillors then and today. As each day passes it becomes clearer that Brexit will deeply affect Local Government finances. We must listen to our friends in such countries as Ireland, Holland and Poland who generally holds us in high regard and simply don't want us to go. English is a leading language of the European Union, if little Englanders have their way we'd end up resigning from

the Commonwealth. Democracy has its place, there may be a democratic imperative which drives herds of lemmings over cliffs but that doesn't make it sensible and it doesn't make it any less self-destructive. No rational or impartial observer would be able to see much that was logical or sensible about what has happened at Westminster over the past 3 years. Local Government does risk being dragged down with it. It's my belief that Leeds would be hard hit by Brexit it depends on modern manufacturing, entertainment, retail, professional and personal financial services which are international in scope. It stands on a major historic West to East line of communication across Northern Europe from Ireland through Dublin, Liverpool, Leeds, Hull, Holland, Germany, Scandinavia and the Baltic states to St Petersburg and beyond. Between 1914 and 1989 that line was always blocked to some degree. Leeds relative decline in the mid 20th century and its revival during the past 30 years since movement along that line became freer are quite noticeable. When I lived in Coventry in the early

70's, I went to live there in 1971 when because of its car industry and component manufacturing it had severe labour shortages and the highest real wages of any major city in the world outside North America. From 1976 its economy flattened out and by the end of 1980 it had collapsed. There were many factory closures and unemployment rose to around 20%. To some extent manufacturing has itself to blame due to its persistent resistance to change, poor product quality, lack of investment and deplorable labour relations however the last straw was Geoffrey Howe's budget shortly after the 1979 General Election. It was immediately obvious that no one in the real world would be able to withstand this toxic mix of high interest rates, inflation and unfavourable international exchange rates.

So the farce at Westminster does matter though we might like to ignore it. There are straws in the wind which are reminders of the collapse of manufacturing around 1980. Investment and capacity are being transferred abroad. The outcome is likely to be similar, falling incomes and rising unemployment. By the time that hits the majority of people and begins to

reduce city Council revenues it may be too late to do anything about it. But you never know if a week's a long time in politics a month must be an eternity. Theresa May is a tragic figure no one should despise her she took up the most obnoxious of poisoned chalices in 2016 apparently after voting remain and for nearly 3 years she's tried to make sense of the senseless, although she's a far lesser political figure she's rather like Earl Grey our Foreign Secretary at the outbreak of the First World War she's looking over the edge of an abyss which was originally not of her making without being able to do much about it. Mr Meeson and his team are right to be building reserves we may need them. There's a greater number and variety of budget amendments this year than for a very long time, perhaps people have sniffed the air and detected a whiff of General Election or perhaps it's just occupational therapy to take their minds off Brexit. All the amendments amount to adjustments rather than radical or revolutionary change. We'll be voting on each on its merits though some look decidedly dodgy such as anything that depends on freezing staff salaries which must be contrary to agreed terms and conditions of work and anything which would plan to raid reserves and contingency funds in such difficult times. So the £145,000 a year, we might make an exception to support abolition of the Otley Town Centre parking charges which are now clearly highlighted as been out of step with policy in other Town and District Centres by making a small raid on reserves but not as part of a scheme to freeze salary increments for all staff. If we're forced by financial stress from the question of to Brexit or not to Brexit to fall back on reserves we mustn't find that someone has already been there and siphoned most of them off into non-emergency projects. Thank you my Lord Mayor.

(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Elliott.

COUNCILLOR Elliott: Thank you my Lord Mayor. I second Councillor Leadley's amendments and reserve the right to speak.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dawson, Dobson.

COUNCILLOR DOBSON: Still Dobson.

(Laughter)

Lord Mayor. I'm going to have to beg Councils indulgence this afternoon because I've had something not a painful but annoying condition called an ocular migraine so I'm seeing everything 3 times but I promise if I read it out 3 times it still won't be as long as Alan' speech so just bear with me please.

Before I move on to the comments on the budget proposals for 2019/20 and move our budget amendments on behalf of Garforth and Swillington Independents I too would like to take this opportunity on behalf of our Group to thank the hardworking officers and staff of this Council who year on year serve this city and our communities with such dedication and hard work. On this, the occasion of his last budget meeting we too would very much like to thank Doug

Meeson aided and abetted by Richard Ellis and his team on excellent fiscal management for this Authority and we would like to wish him every possible good wish for a long and happy retirement.

As a Council we often talk about choice, we need to make good choices and we need to make good economic and financial decisions around what has undoubtedly been a bleak financial position since 2010. However those choices are still there. Too readily I hear the phrase yes but we had no choice, well in reality we do have some limited choices and we hope to demonstrate them this afternoon. We do not think that any group on this Council of any political persuasion can actually put their hand on their heart and look at Central Government funding settlements in the last 9 years and say they have been anything less than harsh and yes unfair in terms of our major cities especially in the North have been asked to fund and deliver vital services. Leeds has survived actually by seizing opportunities, working collectively with other Authorities in the region around the retention of 75% percent of business rate growth sadly reduced from 100% in the coming cycle but it demonstrates to me that when Leeds is given opportunities to shape our own destiny we have the necessary skill within this Council and people who are able to maximise and exploit those opportunities in ways that at times have actually kept this Council afloat. The extremely proficient way in which senior officers in finance have best realigned council resources to maximise grant opportunities, HMRC rebates and other investment mechanisms has in no small part meant that Leeds is still here and functioning as an Authority in 2019. However that word choice, it's still there and cannot be ignored. Set against the difficult landscape outlined, there are still choices as to how we as a Council frame our budgets to achieve what our Group believe is our primary function of best supporting people in our many and varied communities that make up this city.

This afternoon we are putting forward a series of measured and costed budget proposals that we believe achieve that aim. Waste management and delivery of a clean City must be one of our core functions as a Council. This group has made the point before in Council that one of the core principles of the formation of Local Government was around the tackling of dirty cities and dirty streets while promoting cleanliness. That is not only aesthetically pleasing but has a direct and important impact on public health. Garforth and Swillington Independents will be moving a budget amendment to fund the cessation of charging for disposing of inert waste, the cessation of charging for bulky waste disposal and the cessation of charging for replacement bins and we propose to do this through 2 mechanisms. It seems nonsensical to us that we as a Council are putting money into the promotion and marketing budget of waste management that could be better utilised actually achieving the removal of the waste. That said the bulk of the money needed to fund this would come from a reduction in the budget for Leeds 23, 2023 and more of which later. At Christmas in our ward residents were told not to leave residual waste by the side of one of our satellite recycling sites as this would result in a fine. Well I think if we're going to put out messages they need to be positive ones telling people how best to recycle and to congratulate them on their efforts not using the threat of fines against residents basically trying to do the right thing and both recycle and dispose of waste responsibly. In the last 2 years there have been

52,000 recorded incidents of fly-tipping to this Authority. Clearly it is now high time for an overdue acceptance that charging for these most basic and fundamental of services has impacted negatively on our city's cleanliness and we are looking for an acceptance that this has to change.

It would be wholly wrong and disproportionate not to offer thanks to the hard-working staff of this Authority who do so much to keep our older often vulnerable residents safe from harm and living in a city where the independence is recognised, valued and most importantly supported and we welcome the injection of £36,000 into training around those working with people living with dementia. That said it's the old hobby horse we believe the closing of Council run care provision for those living with dementia and the decanting of residents into private provision that often but not exclusively do not carry the same CQC standard is a folly for this Authority and a step backwards in our Best City aspirations. 23%, nearly a quarter of private provision does not currently carry a good CQC rating. Of course the good news is that through modern medical interventions and better living conditions people are living longer but that inevitably means through the propensity to develop complex conditions including dementia this will inevitably rise and we must be ready to provide the very best care and support for our citizens. As with last year we therefore propose an increase of £100,000 in the Adult and Health budget to undertake a feasibility study to bring dementia residential care back in house. This will be funded through a like-for-like reduction through the budget for Leeds 2023.

As ward Members one of our more regular interfaces with officers are through our housing staff and we have a huge amount of admiration for the work they do in providing accommodation of a good standard to our citizens against a backdrop of many challenges not least from demanding members. We are though keen to see parity for all Council tenants in terms of rent and service charges and do not feel there is a justification for anomalies around Council tenants effectively been net winners or net losers based on such variables as to how their council home was funded at construction, all the anomaly of different levels of service charge based on attendance, age and/or accommodation type. We are therefore proposing decreases from the Housing revenue account and the release of funds from the Housing revenue general reserve to fund a 1% reduction for all Council Tax tenant rents and to stabilise charges at 2018/19 levels.

The managed zone in Holbeck was, we all believe I think, started with good intention and from the best available information at the time and it was clear then and remains so that we simply cannot return to the chaotic situation before any tangible Council or police interventions were in place. Last Saturday my ward colleague Councillor Field hosted an event in the Civic Hall to look at a new approach to tackle this matter and I bow to her superior knowledge on this matter and she will no doubt be expanding upon that when seconding our amendments. It is clear we simply cannot disengage and cease to fund the cleansing element of this that would have such a detrimental effect for all and a genuine risk to public health, therefore £30,000 would remain earmarked for cleansing. We know that £90,000 of a proposed £286,000 budget represents 50% of a figure to fund policing that will be match funded by West Yorkshire

Police, £180,000 in total. We would leave that money in situ but based on the evidence of the last 3 years we believe that the full £180,000 of Leeds City Council and West Yorkshire Police funding should be actually used to police the area rather than manage the area with an emphasis on policing. Therefore from the proposed £286,000 budget for this year we will be looking to ring-fence the remaining £166,000 which will be resourced to provide a new approach to supporting women and helping them find proper and sustainable exit strategies.

Garforth and Swillington Independents value our employees and we believe we should be setting the best possible example to anyone starting out with a career in this Authority. We believe every new starter should enter the Authority on an even playing field with complete parity around pay. We would therefore propose a reduction in the strategic budget of £50,000 from contingency, sorry to my colleagues in the Morley Boroughs, to fund a basic starting minimum hourly rate of £9.18 for all staff based on a projection of 50 full time equivalents for this year and that would include apprentices and would not be aged barred. Still with staff and whilst not a specific budget amendment of ours Garforth and Swillington Independents would not support any move to reduce trade union convener costs. We believe it is vital for our staff to have the best possible access to trade union representation and believe it is one of the fundamental pillars on which one should judge ourselves as a good employer.

It's fair to say our colleagues in the trade unions have not been particularly receptive to the Independents on this Council but we firmly believe that it is the right thing to do to continue to fund this in full in the interests of the members that they support.

I was a bit disappointed that at the 11th hour and despite submitting amendments our amendment around the distribution of highways resources into local areas was pulled following a legal intervention. However in researching that amendment I actually asked a question to Highways around the local delivery and devolution of highways maintenance budgets and this is the answer I got 'if an individual Member of Council has any particular concerns that they would like to tackle as part of highways maintenance then they should contact Highways and Transportation and we are more than willing to take a look at local aspirations into account when allocating maintenance priorities'. Well, I can give you our example in Garforth and Swillington Ward but I would ask any Member of Council is this really an honest representation of what happens on the ground, we would suggest not. Obviously city wide infrastructure projects must be maintained and progressed to enable Leeds to be a sustainable 21st century economy but we equally believe maintenance budgets would be best placed with local decision makers and we'll have another go next year.

Members of Council these are costed pragmatic amendments that keep the needs of the citizens of Leeds at the forefront of our ambitions. We do believe that we still have, and it's back to that word again, some limited choices for this Authority. Sadly the European Capital of Culture bid failed and we find ourselves out of step with the rest of the groups on Council I believe but against that challenging financial backdrop we cannot see a justification in £1.5m being set aside year on year for Leeds 2023. It will be said I have no doubt that this is

born of a lack of understanding on our part at best or at worst we are philistines living in some form of non cultural vacuum. Actually nothing could be further from the truth. Leeds has always had an excellent and diverse cultural offer and even if we weren't faced in such difficult times we simply would not be supporting this. We ask colleagues to think on this, can we really justify charging residents for the most basic services and we've heard about the fly-tipping epidemic, in addition to year on year council tax rises when we can afford to ring-fence £1.5m year on year to pay for Leeds 2023. We firmly believe the people of Leeds would prefer to see clean streets and basic services delivered free of cost with no extra charge to the existing and growing council tax burden. Members will hear I have no doubt that Leeds 2023 will be economically good for the city needed for the city and of benefit for the city. But what does that actually mean, how do we measure this and more importantly how does it impact on the day-to-day lives of actual people we are elected to serve. How do any perceived benefits impact on the often hard pressed citizens of Leeds. If we want to invest well let's invest in what we already know and have that works well, our parks, some of the finest in the country could benefit hugely from large scale injections of capital and these are areas where we know we can generate revenue in perpetuity not just for the general duration of the 2023 programme. With £1.5m earmarked for this year alone we cannot claim it's impossible. This may be out of step and that's fine because budget day at best should be around the differences in ideas and debating those differences and ideas. Indeed budget day delivers all of us an opportunity to put forward our vision for the running of our city and our aspirations for our residents and frankly

I always feel in delivering budget amendments this is the 3rd year as a constituted group on Council you should first offer up a prayer to St Jude the patron saint of lost causes. I am not the least optimistic of an epiphany on anyone's part to be honest but at the very least we hope it has given the administration some constructive food for thought and we hope our amendments may find some favour with opposition members just as we will be supporting some of the sensible amendments laid down by other groups, I'm specifically looking there to the get active amendment, period poverty, District Centre charging, the formation of a housing company and supporting Admiral Nursing. So Lord Mayor with those thoughts in mind I move our budget amendment on behalf of Garforth and Swillington Independents. Thank you.

(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Field.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thank you Lord Mayor. Can I join with the thanks towards Doug Meeson and Richard Ellis for their help and particularly to Doug who retires when the end of the world comes on the 28th March, he knows things that what we don't know but I've got a special feelings for Doug not only as he advised me every time I've done a budget amendment and when

we were in Cabinet as well but in May 1998 he actually was in charge of the count when I got first elected and he keeps reminding me of that. So I hope you have a really good retirement and can you leave your phone number so we can get hold of you next year.

As the Leader says in her speech the position is not a good one, we've had 9 years of cutbacks since the financial problems we had in that time and even before that I don't think actually Leeds was particularly well treated when it came to Government funds so it's not a new thing but the loss we have had over the last 9 years has been terrific as it has been with a lot of other Local Authorities and I think we are now at the stage where the tide has to turn or else, well basically Council as it stands would just be in charge of Social Services because that's all we'd be able to afford to do as important as that is. So we need new ways to finance ourselves, we need a fair settlement and we need to go forward and in those circumstances whatever political party we come from, I think generally speaking the line of direction is similar because we haven't got the options to argue like we once did but in that there are obvious differences. The Leader talks about this disease of tipping and waste tipping and the such and I've got to say it's true but certainly in this city I think we've actually being part of the own cause of that. Going back, what would it be, to 2004 when we were in coalition and we extended the bulky waste collections and the amount of waste was tipped dropped dramatically during that period. Alright it's had to be reduced from what it was then and by sheer fact we haven't got resources to do that but to actually start charging in lots of parts of City is absolutely diabolical, it is the wrong thing to do we need to do away with it and let's put it this way you've got 4, there's are 4 amendments now by 4 different political parties on disposable of inert waste. So we've 4 different, we've all come up with 4 different ways of resolving a problem and I think there's 3, yes 3 on cessation of bulky waste. Please please have some sense and support one of those amendments because we've got to do something about it because we're wrong, you're wrong introducing them charges we've got to get rid of them and we are not talking big bucks in any the order of things. So whichever one, I'm not bothered which one you support, support one of those amendments because that's the right thing to do.

I've got to say on, certainly on one of the amendments were it to talks about taking increments from SO grades I've got problems with that and I won't be supporting that but certainly the Conservative ones we will be supporting. I think starting affecting SO grades is going a bit too far. PO grades and senior officers maybe but not SO grades.

Anyway moving on the other thing which I was thinking about sort of youth activities during the time I was preparing my budget amendment and I decided not to go forward with that. As most of you know I'm Chair of Outer West Community Committee and the difficulty we've had in spending the youth activities fund because of some of the restrictions on it and getting it out to organisations. Now I remember when we first introduced that and I was at Exec Board and Councillor Carter asked the Leader about that and they were going to look, she was going to look or try and look at trying to loosen things up to make it easier for organisations to bid for that. What I'd say, I thought rather than try

and put some more money in there what I would do, I'll bring it up in Council in budget and please can you have a look at that to make it more easier for organisations to bid into it because it is causing some difficulties.

I'll move on to my amendments now. Right my first one is an injection of £1m into the capital programme for collapsed gullies. I have had numerous discussions with Highways about a number of gullies, one in my ward, one on the border of Armley and Farnley & Wortley where every time it rains it floods. Now we are having a time of lots and lots and lots of weird weather and heavy rainfalls. We've had floods in city. Surely keeping our gullies in proper shape is what we should be doing and what we're not doing with these it isn't a matter of just cleaning them out, they've collapsed and we have some of our highways officers are sort of 'oh well it get's blocked up'. Well it doesn't get blocked up when they put cameras down its collapsed and we need a fund for doing that and that's what I'm proposing that we put £1m capital programme so that we can actually do something about those gullies because one day one of those gullies is going to cause flooding of properties when we have heavy rain.

My next one is to take some contingency and again I've no apologies for taking contingency. Contingencies there is contingency it's not reserve. There is an end purpose for it at some point of time. Well this is what the end purpose I propose and that is to do with bulky waste and disposal of inert waste so we don't have any charges. As I said before that to me is the only sensible way forward and at least then your not giving an excuse to these people who are environmental criminals that are dumping it. At least you are giving them a right way out and with most people it works.

My next amendment out of contingency is to take away the charges for black and brown bins. I don't know about rest of you but certainly some of my residents have been uproar over that and the difficulty sometimes when a resident comes to you and says 'oh binmen damaged that on machine. When it hasn't been reported it hasn't reported back, the difficulty you've got when you know that that residents being truthful. Well the thing is that's where a lot of them, that's where a lot of damage is done by actually our own staff. So I would take that charge away or else what we're going to have is we're going to have people putting things in wrong bins and making the situation entirely and totally bad.

Then we move on to amendment number 47 and this one, I think a number of members remembers will be interested including Barry over there.

What I'm proposing is a £90,000 fund which will be given to Community Committees for their 9 priority estates and those 9 priorities estates in fairness housing do a lot for them and certainly my own Community Committee was the one that's in my ward does some funding but it's difficult, it's dependent on that Community Committee and I think something should come from Centre. The estates in question are John O' Gaunts, one in Morley Lingfield's, 7 estates, Holt Park, Heights and Bournes in my ward, Western estate in Otley, Westfield and Henshaw's in Yeadon and Horsforth estate and we, I believe what we have to do is, like we do with the priority neighbourhoods we've got to give them a bit more support and give them a bit of help and it's noticeable if you, if you say 'oh

well Area Committee should do that' if you notice 3 of them are all in same, are all in Outer North West so is it fair to leave Outer North West with 3 of them. It isn't something should come out of centre. So I'm saying £10,000 for each of those.

Then I come to my yearly attempt to, for you all to vote for turkeys voting for Christmas. I managed 11 votes for this last year I don't think I will get, it'll be 10 this year at most, we got 11 because a certain Liberal Democrat pressed wrong button, who shall remain nameless. But it's a manifesto pledge by my party. Basically the 28% reduction in special responsibility allowances is the maximum that we can claim. No Green Councillor on this Council can claim for more than the 72% of special allowances and the same with the basic allowance that's what we, that's the limit we put on there. So I am putting to you what I get what Councillor Ann Blackburn gets what every Green Councillor has got, the amount of that so join us and cut your allowances plus then a 5% cut on all levels above PO6. And before Members over there start talking that everybody will be going to food banks let us remember we are talking Director and Assistant Director level we are not talking really low paid people. And then a £63,000 out of general reserves and that is to increase wellbeing for £180,000 wellbeing budget for Community Committees. An increase £160,000 to Community Committees for environmental projects and an increase of £500k to Community Committees to Communities Environment for local parks and cemeteries and an increase of £366k for additional street team investment. All which I think are necessary all of which I believe should be passed.

And then finally I've introduced, oh I've got 2 more haven't I. I've suggested that we put a £1m into the capital programme for additional work and I don't know if anybody, everybody knows what Salix is. Salix is a Government scheme which we do energy work and things like that and what we save pays it back. But there are certain things that you might want to do say for instance if you wanted to make this building energy efficient, Salix wouldn't work you'd have to put some money in from and basically that £1m is to go in to do projects that Salix won't do.

And finally I have, we decided, we had a longish debate about this about the city Leeds 2023. I've got to say in fairness are feelings are same as Garforth and Swillington's a bit on we're a bit dubious as to whether we should be doing this at all but one of the things I've done all the times when I've been having briefings about this and I'm still not satisfied about it, I've said 'right what city are we talking about, are we talking about the whole of the Leeds Metropolitan District or are we just talking about the centre' and I can remember when Hull had their City of Culture events over there and I had to go over to a couple of meetings over there and it was very vibrant in the centre you get up North Hull where there's Council estates and that, that there wasn't a lot of cultural activity going on there and my view is is what we should do is we should take a certain proportion of that put it out to Community Committees and let them spend money on sports and culture in those wards so that we all have a share in it and not just the odd areas that happen to have the organisations there. So with that I'd move my budget and I'd just say that there are a number of the amendments from other parties we'll be supporting but we will not be

supporting any that affects trade union rights, any that effects the premium payments for staff or any that effects SOE increments. Thank you Lord Mayor.

I move my amendment.

(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Anne Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: Yes thank you Lord Mayor I wish to second the Green amendments as stated by Councillor David Blackburn. I'd just wish to state about the fact that we have for a few years now mentioned about collapsed gullies and I think we're the only ones that ever mention it but when you see the problems that it causes and the things are just left, they e-mail Highways come along and they do a bit of work but the don't actually do the work that's needed to really solve the problem and we have had actually some officers in the past that's told us yes it's collapsed you know but, well they haven't said we can't do anything about it but basically it costs a lot of money to do something about it. So yes I think we've definitely got to realise that it is a problem where these gullies exist and not only that in the future I think it's fair to say as time goes on that these could be added to, you know, general wear and tear.

The bulky waste I think a lot of us, certainly on the opposition, agree that we have to do something because we're getting stuff dumped. I mean I think it's fair to say in all our wards, certainly in ours I go into gardens and I see mattresses, I see settee's and I go away and you know, you could say yes they're waiting to be collected, no I go away and sort of weeks later on that and there still there and I mention it to Housing and I know that with housing officers have said to me it's difficult because if people can't afford it you know to get these things moved what do they do, at least they're keeping them in their gardens.

They might be making their gardens look a bit of a tip at least they're not dumping them, though of course there are some people that are. I can think of fridges I've seen on pavements and yes I've had removed but who pays for that at the end of the day, you know the Council ends up paying for it but it isn't very good if somebody's coming along in a wheelchair and can't get past cos the because there's a blinking great fridge there or something like that and it's happened more than once I'm not making it up it really has happened where you know people just put them out because they don't pay or they don't want to pay or they can't pay.

Inert waste as well has been mentioned and again there's a problem there. The black and the brown bins. Sometimes it's happened that people have had them stolen but of course you know it's a matter of proving to get another bin. I know I have reported it where there's been tops off of bins and yes they have been very good in saying they'll come along and give another bin in those instances but if they get fired on Bonfire night sometimes things can get set on fire, shouldn't happen but does, so again it's silly to say that people have got to pay £15 for a bin because if you do that and they put stuff in black bags and they put it out if you're in a non black bag area which is most of the areas

these days then they say 'oh it's side waste' and they don't take it. So I think that's got to be sorted.

I do welcome the fact to putting money in to do with sport and culture activities to, for local activities. I can only think that can be a good thing. I mean in my ward we have something that goes down really well with the kids is a weekly football session, so kids can come along when they want they don't have to come along every week. That costs £500 which we funded through MICE, this year it's gone up to £700 for 20 weeks yet the kids love it. You know not all our kids want to go to football every week or can do but they go when they can and this is a great success but £700 you know. So if we can do more of that to get the kids active in sport or culture activities it can only be a win win, you know can't it. So I hope that you've all looked and studied ...

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you Councillor Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: What we put forward ...

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: At least, at least can

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blackburn, thank you.

(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Campbell.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Sorry Lord Mayor I thought there were a couple on before me but they must have decided not to speak. Can I initially start by saying a personal thank you to Doug, Doug Meeson. I think on, we've all at one time or another had a contact with him. He's always been incredibly helpful, incredibly supportive and was always able, certainly when I had involvement in the budget process, able to point you in perhaps what might be described as ...

THE LORD MAYOR: Colin, Colin there are 2 mikes on and we can't hear you

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Well it's not my light. Do you want me to start again.

(Laughter)

OK those who didn't hear me the first time or heard me in stereo can I just, as I said say a big thank you to Doug Meeson he over the years has been very supportive not just for myself but to all Councillors. He's always been impartial, he's always been extremely helpful and as I said when you're trying to make sense of the budget he's always been able to explain, well as clearly as anybody can explain Leeds City Council's budget just exactly what's going on

and I hope he has a very pleasant and long retirement. Councillor Golton made his usual cogent and informative budget speech and he covered a range of issues but I'd personally like to concentrate particularly on amendment 30. One of the strengths of Leeds so that towns and villages which surround the centre and in the past all administrations have recognised this and worked to help keep them vibrant and viable. As we all know high streets are, in all our local centres are struggling and I think the current administration recognise this and have realised that the introduction of parking charges would have further detrimental effect on their future viability. We all support their decision not to introduce charges in Guiseley, Garforth and Wetherby however this still leaves Otley as the only district in Leeds where the Council still charges for parking. Is it morally right that Otley is singled out in this respect, no it isn't. Is there an economic argument for the benefits to Otley on this. No there aren't any. In fact the opposite's true re parking charges having a detrimental impact on shopping trips. The amendment says 2 things. 1, Level the playing field for traders by removing Otley's parking tax. 2, give the Otley High Street a shopping boost to prevent firms from hemorrhaging away, maintain local viability and encourage new businesses to thrive. I'm pleased my colleagues over here on the Tory benches recognise this and welcome their support that the removal of charges particularly as it was a Conservative Councillor who originally campaigned for their introduction though his view may have been coloured by the fact that the Council then gave him a free town centre parking spot. Still times change, times change our local centres are under increased pressure and local parking charges increase that pressure. This amendment is a simple inexpensive way for the Council to promote local shopping and by extension local businesses to keep a town centre viable and vibrant. Thank you Lord Mayor.

(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Coupar.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Hopefully you'll be able to hear me with one mic.

(Laughter)

Yeah I thought you might. I am speaking in support of Councillor Blake's budget this afternoon and I'd just like to say that we are a city that is proud of and passionate about each and every community encouraging cohesive working and ensuring that our residents are at the heart of everything we do. One of the many elements I am proud of here at the Council is the way in which we work together not only within the Council but across third sector organisations and other public bodies in partnership to ensure that we are supporting our residents and addressing key issues in our city.

I'd like to provide a few examples of the way in which we are working together. Our Street Support Team was introduced in October 2018 to help reduce the number of rough sleepers and tackle issues including mental health, addiction and clinical health support, on street and at the point of need, supporting our housing and outreach staff. We've had the new locality working

model in place for just over 12 months now and it is working really well, but why was it necessary. Leeds has been identified as having 16 Neighbourhoods classed in the 1% most deprived nationally. That is 16 areas of the city where Tory austerity has continued to drive poverty and that is something we just cannot accept. We identified 6 priority neighbourhoods to focus on as we work to tackle poverty and reduce the inequality austerity was making worse.

Improving these areas is key to these communities increasing morale and reducing the numbers of people and families living in deprivation. Dedication, teamwork, community engagement and cohesive working over the first year of this work has seen numerous new schemes introduced and has made a real difference to those communities, long may this continue into the next 12 months.

I'm looking forward to seeing the impact of this work on other communities. Leeds is leading on its development of social housing provision and the way in which it is addressing homelessness and rough sleeping. We are a national leader on social housing delivery and performing well in comparison to other key cities. The eventual removal of the HRA cap has allowed for progression and to plan ahead for a significant ongoing programme of much needed new housing in this city. I have said before but I will say it again at this budget Council that we're happy to keep all options on the table for housing delivery across the city and I'd like to ask why we need a local housing company when through grit and determination we have delivered nearly 700 homes in 2014/15 and have an ambition to deliver 1,500 homes over the next 5 years. In fact we have built more than any other council using a company vehicle. As a city we have the lowest number of temporary accommodation placements within the 8 core cities and as a city we have committed to having no more than 14 rough sleepers by November 2019 but we know that 1 person rough sleeping is 1 too many. We need to work even harder together to understand the reasons why and what more we can do. I wish it was as simple as just providing a roof but unfortunately it isn't. Where still suffering from Government austerity and continue to feel the impact on this on a daily basis. One of the biggest cuts has been to the Police which in turn has seen a national rise in crime. This impact has been seen locally and we have had to work together to ensure our residents feel safe in their homes and communities. I'm pleased to say that here in Leeds we have prioritised our PCSO's and worked tirelessly to keep these within each of our 33 wards. Something that we are aware other Local Authorities have been unable to do. Our investment was mirrored by the investment from the Police and Crime Commissioner so that's the Labour administration and a Labour PCC coming together to fund where Tory have failed on funding Neighbourhood Policing.

Regarding the managed approach and the mention of it with Councillor Dobson and Councillor Lamb. Unfortunately I haven't seen any evidence as to the strategy you wish to implement which is using the same amount of money and do you really think that residents would like to start all over again when there is currently a strategy in place that is delivering an improved position and working towards an independent review. Since additional investment we've seen a higher level of engagement with the community and improve relationships between sex workers and police.

An area of concern that still exists ...

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you Councillor Coupar.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Is how Universal Credit will affect our city and I hope you will support Councillor Blake's budget this afternoon.

(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Anderson.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: Thank you Lord Mayor. In standing to support the amendments put forward by Councillor Lamb. I'd just like to start by just reflecting back I've listened to this debate this afternoon and there's been a great shortage of vision and strategic thinking. We really, some people in this Council are only interested in navel gazing and making political points about how bad it is nationally instead of trying to solve the problems that this city currently has. Councillor Lamb set out a vision for the city all you can do is cark, cark, cark. You've got nothing positive to say about the city at all. I'll ask you a question and let's see how honest you are about this one. When was the last time you made a decision about, in this city that wasn't made for purely political reasons. Your political way you go about making decisions in this city leave a lot to be desired, you are causing problems in the area oh because you don't vote Labour, oh deary me you're going to be shafted all the time it's actually diabolical. Now one other thing not one of you mentioned MRP, not one of you so I've been asked today to rise to talk about amendment 11. This amendment is here to help you get out of your Made in Leeds funding crisis. So we've been criticised already about the trade unions trying to take money off them, trying to get rid of them. No 100% no we are not getting rid of any trade union convenors, all we're saying is reduce the subsidy, keep the same number, they've got millions in the bank they can do the same and start sector organisations, can start, you're subsidising them you've hit the third sector, you've asked them to contribute more to the problems however asking them to contribute, why do you need them you are a good and many

(Inaudible)

You'll argue you're a good administration, you will argue that your good Councillors you would never ever do anything to damage the workforce so why are they there, what purpose do they serve because you are good employers why are you serving them, what are you trying to do about it.

(Inaudible)

Let's think about how we need to run the city for everybody not just the few. You've spent the whole afternoon going on about little interest that you have you don't believe in consensus at all, when things go well it's all your fault but when something goes wrong it's everybody else's fault in here apart from yours the whole time.

Just part of the problem that's come out this afternoon is, I would bet that the vast majority of you haven't a clue how to budget, look after funds, funding and know how to allocate things. Some of you do, some of you haven't a clue as was proved on other occasions. What we're saying to you today is this amendment will increase employment in the city, we need to employ more people to sort out the debt problem that you have caused. We are going to give the staff to enable you to move on the assets that have been sitting on the books for years and years and years and nobody is trying to shift them. We're going to bring the expertise in so that we can help you out of your mess that you have caused.

Now finally before I do sit down Councillor Coupar goes on about the neighbourhood improvement areas, it's all because of Tory austerity. Is she really sitting there or standing there as she was saying that prior to 2010 there was never any poverty in those areas whatsoever and all of a sudden come the magic day in 2010 it all suddenly came about.

(Inaudible)

Absolute rubbish, it is symptomatic of the way that you are administering this city. You're short sighted in terms of what you're trying to do, you try to point the finger at people. Whether you like it or not the people who have actually represented most of these areas over those years have been Labour Councillors what have they been doing in order to try and bring them up. What efforts have they been making to try and get investment into those areas, what have they been doing. The residents in those areas need to ask, why is it by continually re-electing Labour Councillors things never improve. You've just said it yourself since 2010 they've never improved, you've been in control since 2010. Thank you Lord Mayor.

(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you Councillor Bentley.

COUNCILLOR BENTLEY: Thank you Lord Mayor and it was all going so well wasn't it, we was all been nice to each other and somebody lit Barry's touchpaper. I'm i'm obviously seconding the Liberal Democrat amendment in the name of Councillor Golton and just sort of been a bit, again, just to sort of, toning it down a bit really. We do have as Councillor Golton said, we do have some sympathy for the position that Local Authority finds itself in and we've spoken a lot about spending priorities today but not much about the sources of our income and we've all accepted without debate without saying much about it that we're going to be putting a significant tax increase on our residents, 3.99% adding all the precepts and its 5% much higher than any measure of inflation and certainly higher than any normal it will benefit increases and that's the bind that we find ourselves in as a Local Authority our ability to have real control over our finances, its limited. Our revenue raising powers are restricted to a regressive council tax that discriminates against poor families and a business rate system that just looks at rental value rather than the real economic value of land and buildings and until the Local Government finance is fundamentally

reformed ideally through more decentralisation and devolution and we can make decisions not only how to spend money but also how to raise it. We will find ourselves always on the fringes of economic development and its at the mercy of Local Government, of Central Government so we do appreciate the restraints that the administration is working under and we recognise the approach that is genuinely responsible and it's well advised by a superb finance team. A few years ago I'm not going to patronise the administration talking about do you understand MRP or not it doesn't really matter, what happened was we know a few years ago we found ourselves with an over-provision of the money we set aside to fund the cost of capital and we decided to use that to deal with some budget pressures and we all agreed on, that it was agreed by ourselves, it was agreed by the Tories as well in Executive Board that that was a sensible thing to do in order to meet those budget pressures to use that over-provision in the hope that things were going to get better, well things haven't gone better for all sorts of reasons we've spoken about today. So we do need to be building up a sinking fund to deal with the problem that is coming along and that's why I'm pleased to see that again through the skill of our finance team they found a way of increasing our reserves and building up those reserves. I am really pleased that no one has, none of these amendments is saying 'oh look all these reserves let's start using those', people understand that sensible approach. Contingency is different from reserve as Councillor Blackburn said that contingency is something that is put in the budget to spend, you decide how you spend it later on. So we're not really been over critical about the shape of the budget and the responsible and generally prudent way the administration has gone about it but really there is no evidence of any new thinking. No one is really listening in that administration to what the citizens of Leeds say they want, they tell us they want cleaner neighbourhoods but fly-tipping is out of control, we're the worst performing Council and the Council's approach that is, charge for the collection of bulky waste, charge for the disposal of waste from domestic building work, charge for the replacement of bins. Leeds citizens tell us that they want more action on littering and dog fouling but our environmental enforcement staff has been cut, they tell us they want a greener city but we're the only major city that doesn't have kerbside glass collection and we have tons of domestic and industrial food waste that we could actually recycle anaerobically rather than putting into landfill or in the incinerator.

They tell us they want a decent transport system but we've wasted years and millions of pounds on unacceptable top-down schemes that do not address the real need of local communities and the city grinds to a halt every morning and evening. They tell us that they want more say in what goes on in our local communities, that services are becoming more centralised and many communities are simply left out. So where our amendments are coming from is

...

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you Councillor Bentley.

COUNCILLOR BENTLEY: Thank you, well you know where our amendments are coming from. Thank you Lord Mayor.

(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Elliott.

COUNCILLOR ELLIOTT: Thank you my Lord Mayor. In seconding Councillor Leadley's budget amendments on behalf of the Morley Borough Independents I would also like to thank Doug Meeson and Richard Ellis and the rest of the finance team whose patience, good humour and straight talking is most appreciated and helps us all to be, appear to be competent and coherent politicians. Doug, our best wishes go with you.

Historically the Morley Borough Independents have called for a royal commission to investigate and deliver recommendations for future Local Government funding. The present system misused and abused by Labour, Conservatives and a Coalitional National Government who have consistently manipulated the financing process to put cash into towns and cities who vote for that year's National Government. It has been nothing more than a cash driven gerrymandering process for years, while local politicians of all persuasions blame the others claiming unfairness, political bias or spite. The systems of council funding is broken and needs fixing. Whatever recommendations come from a royal commission must be so watertight and agree at a cross, across a party level that they're impossible to dismantle and fair to all, not a narrow spectrum of political interest. This year's financial settlement from Central Government includes a further £15.3m cut. The comments from the Chancellor that austerity is over seem like empty rhetoric when we face a further cut on top of all the cuts, we face a further cut on top of all cuts we have faced since 2010.

This Council as met those challenges and has become a leaner and more efficient organisation but there is no further fat to cut from the Council. We are facing the inevitable conclusion that the Council will need to stop doing some of the things it presently does if we are to make ends meet and this is a bleak prospect as it will mean quality of life issues, libraries, sports centres, local community action, youth work, parks, public rights of way, community safety, support for younger and older people all face reduction or elimination as we crystallise about providing those statutory services we are obliged to provide. That would be grim future for the communities we represent and we will call on our colleagues on all sides of the Chamber to use the influence they have at national level to get a fairer deal for Local Councils. We note the changes following the Autumn Budget in 2018 and especially welcome the relief from small and independent businesses in terms of reduction in businesses, our independent traders who need a hand up, not a hand out when it comes to the challenge they face daily. It is all our jobs to support those businesses small and large that are facing challenges from many places including online and it is welcome that the Labour administration proposal for introducing parking charges in the outer areas has been stopped.

It's a blunt instrument that additional work needs to be done at a national level to resolve a long term sustainable and significant increase in Adult and Social Care funding probably requiring a hypothecated tax income, we also welcome the increasing spending on Children's services and applaud the

excellent work that department has undertaken to protect all our children and provide them with the best start possible.

We note the increase in schools budget of 1.7% but would question that is enough to cope with the challenges which our schools face.

We would like to see the Community Committees withdraw, staff absorbing to other roles and staff saving used. Along with the SRA savings to provise and enhance MICE and Ward Improvement Schemes...

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you Councillor Elliott.

COUNCILLOR ELLIOTT: Oh thank you Lord Mayor.

(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Field.

COUNCILLOR FIELD: Thank you Lord Mayor. I'm going to expand on Councillor Dobson's speech and talk specifically about our budget amendment in respect of the managed area in Holbeck. What I want to do is make it explicitly clear that this administration's budget allocation is a clear indication of which position it has adopted and which side it has taken. It has effectively legalised the commercial sex trade in Leeds and has therefore taken the side of men who place sexual selfishness above everything. I spoke to the Chief Officer of Safer Leeds a couple of weeks ago and he told me that it doesn't matter if you say prostituted women or sex worker, prostitution or sex work and in response I will say this. language will always matter, to defend or to denounce you must be able to define and to describe. We the Garforth and Swillington Independents call it prostitution and the Council administration calls its sex work. So Leeds City Council will allocate £40,000 to addiction strategies next year and there is an almost a 100% addiction rate in the prostituted women in Holbeck. To put this in context the allocation for the annual salaries for 4 police officers to work in a managed area will be a £180,000 with £90,000 of that from West Yorkshire Police and a further £30,000 for street cleansing. That's £40,000 for the prostituted women and £210,000 to patrol a zone which allows men to buy sex with impunity from addicts and then clean up after them. In moving this amendment we are calling for the money to be diverted to high-quality ring-fenced services so women can exit prostitution, the implementation of the Nordic model as done in Ipswich and that all Council money allocated, £50,000 to existing organisations associated with the manage approach be reviewed immediately and tenders put out for a new approach. Last year Charles Hymas a journalist for the Daily Telegraph wrote an investigative piece on the managed zone. Charles spoke with 2 staff from BASIS and this is what they told him and I have his permission to quote him. They said that prostituted women's work should be treated in the same way as England's World Cup footballers, as minors, as doctors or journalists'jobs. Everybody sells their body in some way they cited mothers who hire babysitters before going to sell sex in the zone then returning to their families. That the woman in the zone are not been exploited

by men even when they are addicted to drugs they can make rational transactions just as a lawyer on cocaine can still defend a case in court. So that's what this administration funds, a further £50,000 in this budget which is supposedly solely for exit work and therefore what it believes. Though when our children's tell us what they want to be when they grow up there was no difference between a millionaire footballer and a so called sex worker. Here are the known murders of prostituted women in 4 EU countries. The Netherlands, prostitution legalised in 2000, 127 murders in the 30 years prior to 2013. Germany, legal prostitution liberalised in 2002 between 2002 and 2015, 69 murders by pimps and punters, 28 attempted murders by pimps and punters. Spain prostitution decriminalised in 1995. Between 2010 and 2015, 31 murders mostly by pimps and punters. Sweden, the Nordic model since 1999, 1 murder between 1999 and 2015 by her ex-partner, not a punter. So as we keep asking, show us the dead bodies, show us all these dead women under the Nordic model, you can't because it is a complete fallacy that women can only be kept safely through legislation and so called managed tolerance zones and this Council is perpetuating that lie. This budget for the managed area is a shallow analysis, it's decriminalising the sex trade to create a ready and manifestly profitable market, nowhere in the world are their streets and brothels full of men for the use of women and how a Labour Group are not using a class analysis of this is beyond me. After last full Council there was much congratulation because members had said the word vagina in the Chamber. Well I don't think you make history by saying vagina you make history by saying that in this city our vaginas, our mouths and our breasts are not there to be forcibly brutalised many times every day by men who have been told this Council, by this Council to go ahead between 8pm and 6am. Examine your conscience and ask which side you are taking when you vote down our amendment. A city should aim high, a city should hold close each and every citizen to its opportunity and to its sanctuary. In Holbeck this city is failing and this administration will be shamed worldwide. Lord Mayor I second the amendment in the name of Garforth and Swillington Independents.

(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR:Councillor Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you Lord Mayor I am seconding the Labour Group amendment. Councillor Anderson asked early earlier if we had a vision for the city and I'll give you a vision for the city Barry. Our vision for the city is we want our £1.5b back and we are we want universal credit and the cruelty of its assessments and PIPS ended.

(Applause)

There's a vision for the city Barry, there's a vision for the city and that's the one we stand up on. I want to pick up a couple of points that were raised earlier. Stewart Golton was right and wrong as he often is on an issue. He is absolutely right that we shouldn't have to, for relatively small amounts of money, keep going back and begging to the Government to get them. The idea that we've had £1.5b taken away from us but Alan Lamb thinks we should be

cheering because we get a few tens of millions back every now and again. It's frankly an insult to Leeds and if that's how the Conservatives think we should behave I think it says a lot about what they think about us.

On the air quality zone, bearing in mind we're further ahead than any other city in developing an air quality zone and the thing that has held us back is it took months and months and months to get the money that we needed out of the Government, we should have had that money by right to get on with what we want to do and that is just an illustration.

Where I completely disagree though with the Liberal Democrat Group is their cruel assault on the lowest paid Council staff by ripping into their wages. Austerity is hard, austerity is hitting this city. A hundred £180m of the £266m a year we have taken away from us were taken away under a Liberal Democrat Government and they want to balance that on the back of our poorest and low paid workers. You'd expect if a Conservative Group to rip into staff salaries and they've gone for £1.4m but it's actually the Liberal Democrats and my calculation want to take £1.8m even more than the Conservative out of the pay packets of our workers including some of the lowest paid frontline workers, doesn't that say a lot about that group.

And I just wanted to turn on to the subject of minimum revenue provision which Councillor Anderson and Councillor Lamb raised. Councillor Bentley was quite right it was agreed by the Conservative Group. If there was such a concern about MRP the Conservative Group in any of the recent years budget could move amendments to take away money from frontline services. They did not do so, so I will, they did not do so if they were that bothered they could have dealt with it then, they did not, so we'll ignore the crocodile tears from them about that and you know we won't take, as a Labour Group, we won't take lectures about budgeting from the Party of Northamptonshire the party that crashed, crashed the first Council in this country and I don't think we'll take lectures on poverty from the party who've treat deprived areas badly, have introduced universal credit and have taken things out and we certainly won't take lectures on borrowing from the party that have borrowed more in the last 9 years than every single other Labour Government has ever ever done. That's the truth about Government borrowing.

(Applause)

And let's remember what those Labour governments did, they created the NHS, they created the Welfare State, they nationalised the railways, they brought in the Open University, they brought in Sure Start, they introduced the minimum wage and borrowed less than this useless incompetent Government has done and what have they delivered with all that borrowing, austerity, cuts, poverty, zero hours contracts. Don't ever lecture us about the number of people in work, don't ever lecture us about the number of people in work when all we hear about is the impact that zero hours contracts has on people, people not knowing whether they've got work next week, people not knowing whether they're coming in and out of work. That's what the Tories, that's the legacy of the Tories and we're proud for standing up for working people and we're proud

of our work we do with our trade unions here. The answer is, question is what do trade unions do here, they represent workers on a day-to-day basis and that is a legal right it is not a decision of this administration. They work with us on trade union learning and they work with us on the crucial work of health and safety and keeping our staff safe. That's how we work with our trade unions and many of us will remember when that lot down the other end of the Council Chamber tried to do, tried to change staff terms and conditions and tried their approach to staff relations and labour relations in this place and we had the longest bin strike we've ever seen. No one wants to go back for that, I'm proud to move this budget which is putting forward the Labour priorities of investing in public services, looking after the vulnerable, proud to look after our workers, proud to stand up against poverty pay and proud to second this budget.

(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Carter.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Thank you Lord Mayor well that having answered the first question underlines why I have a succession plan and she hasn't. My Lord Mayor can I just begin very quickly by adding my thanks to Doug Meeson and to Richard Ellis and Richard will forgive me as the rest of the finance team will I'm sure if I just comment on Doug for the moment. I've worked with Doug for many years, I shall be very sorry to see him retire. I wish him a long and happy retirement. I note the date on which he retires, let's hope we do have a backstop here and that's the last time I shall mention a 'B' word I hope.

Just let's deal with Councillor Lewis first this is the man, right, who supports Jeremy Corbyn and the intelligent half of the deadly duo McDonnell. He's the one who got up here and said how much he was looking forward to all of these policies of McDonald's and the £10 minimum wage. Does he not realise that the same 2 people have openly confessed on national television that they are already planning, in the event of a Labour Government, of a run on the pound, a crash on the stock market and international investment leaving the country by the billion and does he not understand what that means, it means the £10 minimum wage is worth £7 and the poorest in society are worse off than they are today and that's the man supposedly in charge of this Council's finance. My Lord Mayor on MRP, yes quite right all parties voted for the Council's policy and what did the report say. The report said in effect that adopting MRP was contingent upon keeping the Council's unsupported borrowing under control and that's the whole point, you haven't, so now you face the problem that everyone knew you'd get if you didn't do what the report actually said. So Councillor James Lewis get your facts right before you start talking about things like MRP.

I want to turn to the amendments from the other opposition parties. I'm going to come on to Councillor Golton first, so I use that term very loosely of course. Out of his 12 amendments 5 of them are partly or wholly contingent upon freezing staff increments and we have an amendment that freezes staff increments for a year over £29,000. He freezes increments for all staff in 5 of

his amendments including the lower pay members of our staff, that's just not on, and further more in one of his amendments he freezes increments in such a way as to make it rolling forward, it continues year after year after year. I don't think he realises that and I wonder if his colleagues at the back who love not to vote with him anyway realise that because what you are voting for is an increment freeze for the lowest pay as well as the people earning over £30,000 and for an increment freeze that rolls on and on and on. Well I'm sorry my Lord Mayor we on this side absolutely do not support that.

And now the Green amendment. Most of the Green amendments we shall be voting for but there's one which suggests a 5% pay cut for our senior officers. These are the people who we are asking to drive forward the change agenda of this Authority and all the things we need to do to keep services on track, it is utterly nonsensical particularly when as a Local Authority we pay on the lower end of the scale anyway. What message does that give to the senior staff in the Authority who you want to drive forward the policies that actually many of which we all agree on. It is absolutely crazy and certainly we could not support it.

My Lord Mayor very briefly ...

(Inaudible)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: I am delighted, I am delighted to support Councillor Lamb's amendments.

(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake.

(Applause)

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: It's alright you can stand up, you can stand up, come on. So one thing I haven't had to do this year is take a tally of the count of the personal attacks Andrew Carter made on me if that's his succession plan then I can subscribe to that with pleasure. I don't know, I'm a bit confused you know this attack on my deputy and his support for the leadership of the Labour Party. How many times did you hear them say that they support the many not the few. I mean sorry but you know I think that is the Labour Party commitments and of course imitation is the highest form of flattery and we look forward to bringing forward proposals where you actually for once do think about the many because what we've heard today is complete classic textbook of the Conservatives being in complete denial. I could have written that part in Alan Lamb's speech about 'oh you always blame the Government, you never take responsibility for yourself or the rest of it'. You know but then but then bizarrely he's recreated the compassionate Conservative and until Barry Anderson stood up I thought 'oh'. Some people just cannot be reconstructed if that's the right word but compassionate Conservative now wasn't that David Cameron I have to

say and then you know I think he really needs to go down to Theresa May tomorrow because he's obviously found her magic money tree hidden away somewhere but the really serious part about this is if you actually look at their amendments. What they are doing is taking money away from the lowest paid workers of this Authority and the trade unions that do so much to protect people on a whole range of issues, they do not understand the work that trade unions do and that is clear and as James quite rightly pointed out we don't need lessons on how to manage our workforce and the people of this city remember vividly when rubbish was piling up in the streets and absolutely there's no way they want to go back to the days of the mis-administration of the Tory and Liberal coalition.

So we've got a few things I'd like to pick up. Waste is obviously a massive issue for us as a Local Authority. We are going through the review at the moment and we will be coming forward with ideas and we would welcome ideas on how we actually address the things that are facing us as a city. The idea that Leeds is alone in facing the challenges that you outline is absolute nonsense and that's why I think Michael Gove is so desperate to bring his strategy through the LGA. The problem we've got, if you live on the edge of the city of Leeds and you've got Kirklees on the one hand, you've got Bradford, you've got Wakefield the chances are they all have different policies on how we dispose of our waste that is what we have to come together as a country to address one of the biggest challenges that we have going forward. I look forward to that debate but you cannot have a Government that quite happily takes £400m out of the budgets of Local Authorities directly related to waste management and not have some serious issues to face and I have to say that I personally would love to see food waste taken out of the waste system that would be a massive contribution and we'd love to work towards achieving that but the cost of an anaerobic digester for the city the size of Leeds is over £14m that is the reality of what we're facing and we have to make sure that if the Government comes up with a national policy on removing waste from the waste stream that they actually put their money into all of Local Authorities' funding streams to actually pick that up and deal with it.

So the issue of collapsed gulleys I'm sure Councillor Lewis would love to speak to Councillor Blackburn and talk about the problem that she's facing. I'm very happy to delegate that responsibility to her and can I just say, you know you made, someone, I can't remember who it was, made a suggestion about the team, and I count all of the Labour Group as my team, not stepping up to the plate when you know I'm doing what I do. I hope I do as much work in Leeds as I do outside of it. I have no doubt I have got the best team in any Authority in the country. I'm proud whatever your role is you all step up to the plate and I just want to put on record how proud I am of you as my group and I will not take them knocking you like that.

(Applause)

So what really really got me about Barry Anderson's comments I absolutely defy him to come up with an example where we have been running down our city, we are proud of our city, we're proud of our achievements, we're

proud of what we're doing out there and we work incredibly closely with all of the sectors, we do work with the business community, we work with all of the other public health communities that's why we are getting recognition nationally for the groundbreaking work that we're doing in so many areas, that's why when we launch initiatives like the Child Friendly Leeds Ambassadors, like the Inclusive Growth Ambassadors. We have businesses actually ringing us up and asking us how they can get involved, how they can engage because they recognise the agenda that we have in supporting the most vulnerable in the city and they want to step up to the plate. So change your rhetoric, I don't know how you have the gall to accuse us of coming out with, not having anything new. We are moving forward all the time and we're looking at ways of innovating, of doing things differently, involving different partners so that we can be the best that we possibly can be in delivering such a huge range of services going forward.

David, the youth activities fund, come and talk to us. I'm sure there's no problem about, you know if you're having problems with finding other organisations then come in and discuss it that's what we're here to do.

So I just want to pick up on the issue of period poverty because that has caused some comments in the amendments and I just think, you know for goodness sake if we are not, if we haven't learnt something in the next 9 years about how we engage with young people, about how we put their voices at the centre of everything we do then what are we about and this idea that we can dictate from in here other services you know that young people automatically flock to because we've put them in place is just so far from reality, but our ambition is there, we're working with schools on the ground, we're working with young people and we're working in a sustainable way to make sure that we can deliver for our young girls across our city and look forward to bringing that in. And I have to say Stewart I'm slightly concerned that you know where you're actually getting the money from to pay for your scheme because what you'll end up with is a massive black hole in the public health budget, so what are you going to take the money away from. Are you going to take it away from Children's Weight Management Services, are you going to take it away from Children's Centres, are you going to take it away from Children and Young People's Oral Health Promotion Services, these are all services that are funded from the budget and you didn't make any concession that you will have to make compromises if you are going to put the money that you save through your budget into that piece of work. So you know, I know you know that you haven't got a chance of ever putting your budget into practice in this Council Chamber but we do need to have serious discussions about what we do.

So I just want to finish my comments today by standing exactly where we started out at the start of the debate today. We know that our communities are under a huge pressure, we know and this is the other galling factor of the state of the country's finances under this Government. National debt levels under the Tories are £1.8t, almost double what it was under Labour in 2010. Nationally the Tories have borrowed more money than all Labour Governments combined so don't come to us giving us your lectures we run a very tight ship here, we're absolutely confident that we've got the values right for the people of this city and we will continue to do everything we can to support the most vulnerable in the

most difficult time we have. We don't know where we're going to be by the time the decisions are made whether we leave the EU, whether we have an extension, how we leave it, what the deal is going to be. But I want to say with confidence that we will work together with Local Authorities across the country, we know that if things do get difficult for any reason the Government will come to us and look to us to have the leadership we need to take things forward and I want to just give you assurance that we're taking all of this very seriously indeed. We know how shambolic it is in London at the moment, we know how we've been let down repeatedly by this Government but I want to tell you that we've got the ability to really make sure we put our communities first and do everything we can to protect them. So let's go forward in confidence, thank you all for everything you do and let's look forward to the next election and moving on and making sure that we can move forward into next year and deliver this budget on behalf of the people of Leeds. Thank you.

(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Right we will now have a short comfort break we will have 10 minutes and don't forget we've got a lot of recorded votes to come so please be back quickly.

#### **SHORT ADJOURNMENT**

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dowson.

COUNCILLOR DOWSON: I'd like to call for recorded votes please, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Cohen.

COUNCILLOR COHEN: Thrilled to second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Right, we're now having, I think 50 or 51 votes.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: 49.

THE LORD MAYOR: 49 votes and then a final one, isn't it on the ...

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: Yes.

THE LORD MAYOR: Yes. Now then all these votes are recorded it is so important you stay in your seat right through this, otherwise we're going to get a real mixed up vote. So Chief Executive.

*(Recorded votes were held on Amendments 1 to 50)*

#### **Amendment 1 - in the name of Councillor Lamb**

93 Members were present, 30 in favour, 3 abstentions, 60 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 2 - in the name of Councillor Lamb**

94 Members were present, 29 voted for, 1 abstentions, 64 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 3 - in the name of Councillor Lamb**

94 Members were present, 34 voted for, 0 abstentions, 60 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 4 - in the name of Councillor Lamb**

94 Members were present, 30 voted for, 0 abstentions, 64 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 5 - in the name of Councillor Lamb**

94 Members were present, 30 voted for, 0 abstentions, 64 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 6 - in the name of Councillor Lamb**

94 Members were present, 31 voted for, 2 abstentions, 61 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 7 - in the name of Councillor Lamb**

94 Members were present, 27 voted for, 3 abstentions, 64 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 8 - in the name of Councillor Lamb**

94 Members were present, 30 voted for, 0 abstentions, 64 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 9 - in the name of Councillor Lamb**

94 Members were present, 25 voted for, 3 abstentions, 66 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 10 - in the name of Councillor Lamb**

94 Members were present, 25 voted for, 5 abstentions, 64 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 11 - in the name of Councillor Lamb**

94 Members were present, 20 voted for, 6 abstentions, 68 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 12 - in the name of Councillor Lamb**

94 Members were present, 25 voted for, 3 abstentions, 66 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 13 - in the name of Councillor Lamb**

94 Members were present, 28 voted for, 6 abstentions, 60 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 14 - in the name of Councillor Lamb**

94 Members were present, 27 voted for, 5 abstentions, 62 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 15 - in the name of Councillor Lamb**

94 Members were present, 28 voted for, 2 abstentions, 64 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 16 - in the name of Councillor Lamb**

94 Members were present, 27 voted for, 3 abstentions, 64 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 17 - in the name of Councillor Lamb**

94 Members were present, 28 voted for, 3 abstentions, 63 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 18 - in the name of Councillor Lamb**

94 Members were present, 27 voted for, 0 abstentions, 67 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 19 - in the name of Councillor Lamb**

94 Members were present, 25 voted for, 0 abstentions, 69 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 20 - in the name of Councillor Lamb**

94 Members were present, 32 voted for, 2 abstentions, 60 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 21 - in the name of Councillor Lamb**

94 Members were present, 34 voted for, 0 abstentions, 60 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 22 - in the name of Councillor Lamb**

94 Members were present, 34 voted for, 0 abstentions, 60 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 23 - in the name of Councillor Lamb**

94 Members were present, 21 voted for, 5 abstentions, 68 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 24 - in the name of Councillor Golton**

94 Members were present, 30 voted for, 0 abstentions, 64 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 25 - in the name of Councillor Golton**

94 Members were present, 5 voted for, 4 abstentions, 85 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 26 - in the name of Councillor Golton**

94 Members were present, 30 voted for, 0 abstentions, 64 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 27 - in the name of Councillor Golton**

94 Members were present, 27 voted for, 3 abstentions, 64 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 28 - in the name of Councillor Golton**

94 Members were present, 5 voted for, 4 abstentions, 85 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 29 - in the name of Councillor Golton**

94 Members were present, 5 voted for, 2 abstentions, 87 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 30 - in the name of Councillor Golton**

94 Members were present, 25 voted for, 2 abstentions, 67 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 31 - in the name of Councillor Golton**

94 Members were present, 5 voted for, 2 abstentions, 87 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 32 - in the name of Councillor Golton**

94 Members were present, 13 voted for, 21 abstentions, 60 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 33 - in the name of Councillor Golton**

94 Members were present, 31 voted for, 3 abstentions, 60 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 34 - in the name of Councillor Golton**

94 Members were present, 10 voted for, 24 abstentions, 60 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 35 - in the name of Councillor Golton**

94 Members were present, 32 voted for, 2 abstentions, 60 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 36 - in the name of Councillor Leadley**

94 Members were present, 6 voted for, 28 abstentions, 60 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 37 - in the name of Councillor Leadley**

94 Members were present, 11 voted for, 23 abstentions, 60 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 38 - in the name of Councillor Dobson**

94 Members were present, 34 voted for, 0 abstentions, 60 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 39 - in the name of Councillor Dobson**

94 Members were present, 34 voted for, 0 abstentions, 60 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 40 - in the name of Councillor Dobson**

94 Members were present, 5 voted for, 25 abstentions, 64 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 41 - in the name of Councillor Dobson**

94 Members were present, 30 voted for, 4 abstentions, 60 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 42 - in the name of Councillor Dobson**

94 Members were present, 30 voted for, 0 abstentions, 64 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 43 - in the name of Councillor Dobson has been withdrawn**

**Amendment 44 - in the name of Councillor D Blackburn**

94 Members were present, 34 voted for, 0 abstentions, 60 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 45 - in the name of Councillor D Blackburn**

94 Members were present, 30 voted for, 0 abstentions, 64 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 46 - in the name of Councillor D Blackburn**

94 Members were present, 30 voted for, 0 abstentions, 64 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 47 - in the name of Councillor D Blackburn**

94 Members were present, 30 voted for, 0 abstentions, 64 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 48 - in the name of Councillor D Blackburn**

94 Members were present, 4 voted for, 26 abstentions, 64 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 49 - in the name of Councillor D Blackburn**

94 Members were present, 27 voted for, 3 abstentions, 64 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Amendment 50 - in the name of Councillor D Blackburn**

94 Members were present, 29 voted for, 5 abstentions, 60 voted against.  
The Amendment was LOST.

**Budget Motion in the name of Councillor Blake**

94 Members were present, 64 voted for, 27 abstentions, 3 voted against.  
The motion was CARRIED.

(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Now don't don't go dashing home, can you turn back to page 3. We don't have time to do the Executive papers but we do have to vote. So, excuse me, I suppose it's just straight, isn't it. Councillor Blake please.

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

COUNCILLOR DOWSON: Councillor Dowson.

COUNCILLOR DOWSON: Second Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Jolly good. So in that case we'll vote. (*A vote was taken*) That's CARRIED.

And as they do say you can go home.

(Cheering)

Thank you very much.

*(The meeting closed at 6pm)*