

COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY 15TH JANUARY 2020

VERBATIM

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LEEDS CITY COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Held on

Wednesday 15th January 2020

At

THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
CIVIC HALL,
LEEDS

In the Chair:

THE LORD MAYOR
(COUNCILLOR E TAYLOR)

VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

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VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF LEEDS CITY COUNCIL
EXTRAORDINARY MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 15TH JANUARY 2020

THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon and welcome to today's Full Council meeting and Happy New Year to each and every one of you that I haven't seen since the New Year began. This first part of the meeting is to recognise ex councillors to become the Aldermen and women so we've got a few names on the paper which is which is Richard Brett, Christine Brett, Gerry Harper, Thomas Leadley, Richard Lewis, Alison Lowe, Mick Lyons OBE, Rachael Procter and Keith Wakefield OBE.

(Applause)

Could I call on Councillor Blake.

APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY ALDERMEN

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you Leader. It feels quite normal actually standing up here and seeing great friends I have to say you know coming here today to receive this this great award from us. Welcome back it's so good to see you all and from our point of view to see you all looking so relaxed and well rested and all the rest of it, I really do hope that you're all enjoying post Council life to the full and it really is a pleasure to welcome you here today.

Obviously we have a very short amount of time but I would like just to make reference to Christine, Richard and Tom and Rachael and just to say you know how pleased we are to see you here today as well but it falls to me I think to also really talk about the five Members sitting at the back from my own group. I actually can't remember a time when we've welcomed back such a prestigious group of former Members. If you think ...

(Laughter)

Of the list, former Leader, Deputy Leaders, Chief Whips and Leaders of you know our communities are just such an incredible commitment that you have made and I think today it's for us to really show our gratitude to you all for the incredible hundred and fifty one years of service between you that you have achieved on this Council. I think it's absolutely right and fitting and I'm sure you'll all appreciate what I'm going to say that Alison Lowe is going to be the first Alderwoman but ...

(Applause)

It's been a long time coming Alison but we saved it up specially for you. You've been such a ground breaker in so many areas and whenever we go around the city people still come up and talk about the incredible encouragement and support and inspiration that you've given them.

Before I go on I would like to acknowledge the friends and relatives that are sitting in the balcony today. I don't think many people who aren't involved as elected representatives realise just the incredible strain and commitment from families themselves in supporting members in the work that they do so could we show a round of applause ...

(Applause)

So Mick, former Father of the House, you'll still be regarded by me as my surrogate father if that's the right way of putting it. Your advice and support is just legendary thank you for that.

Gerry your passion and complete commitment and your great friendship is just something that will stay with me forever and obviously we're only down the road from each other so we do bump into each other quite a lot in our home environment.

Keith what an incredible record and you know today later in the debate we're going to be talking a lot about devolution, regional devolution, devolution for Leeds city region. Without your work we wouldn't be where we are today but actually I think it's your extraordinary commitment to young people, the whole of the skills agenda, working out in our communities that we will remember you for.

And Richard you left us too soon I have to say there's no other way of putting it but what an incredible record you have and I think from your portfolio and I, you know split you in two and housing is running through your core but also your work in planning and all of the transportation work that we're doing your legacy on the city is felt by us every single day.

So Lord Mayor I've run out of time I haven't done them justice but I hope you will all join me in saying an enormous thank you for every single thing that you've done and we look forward to your ongoing commitment and contribution, we know where you are and we will be calling on you to support us in our work going forward. Thank you Lord Mayor.

(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Andrew Carter.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Thank you my Lord Mayor. Can I begin by associating myself and my group with all the nominations before us today and I'll say that at the beginning so please don't take offence as I've a limited time if I don't mention everybody by name but we are entirely in support of all the nominations here today.

Can I just begin by with our nominee Councillor Rachael Procter. When I arrived and saw the protests outside I thought for a minute that they were all developers here protesting at the number of times Councillor, then Councillor Rachael Procter defended her constituents against the envious eyes of predatory developers, I'm pleased that wasn't the case. Rachael specialised in planning and was vociferous

not only in defending her own constituents but the people of all of Leeds and played no mean part in us achieving a far better although not satisfactory planning outcome than we might have done otherwise.

And I suppose I could associate Tom Leadley with that and I am delighted that he's been nominated as well because we miss him on planning on Development Plans Panel.

And now if I could turn to a political opponent, but only half an opponent for a while Richard Brett who of course was Leader jointly with myself for a time of this Council and although we have a number of differing views we also managed, I think to work very closely together and became friends and I thank him for that.

And similarly Christine Brett and I'm pleased to see her here as well.

Now I know if I look at the, I'm just momentarily skipping over you to look at the, (cough), can I humorously call up the rogues gallery the three of them sat together there. Actually all friends of mine it's interesting that despite our differences particularly when Keith was Leader of the Council and I was Leader of the Council but it was never personal, we were always friends and we worked well together and I think that was good for the city so thank you Keith.

Richard of course represented the neighbouring ward of Pudsey over many years and he and I again disagreed in this place but very often agreed outside of it and I'm pleased to see that he is here today as well.

And last but by no means least Mick Lyons who of course always heckled me in this Council Chamber and Mick none of this lot match up to how good you were. But again we became friends over very many years serving in this place together and I'm delighted to see you here.

And just to associate myself with the comments made about Alison Lowe and Gerry Harper by the Leader. I think we've got a splendid team there of new Honorary Alderman and women, congratulations to you all. I'm delighted to support on behalf of the Conservative Group.

(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you Lord Mayor. The Liberal Democrat Group also wishes to wholeheartedly endorse all of our Aldermen and women that are proposed today and unfortunately in four minutes we can't give them full justice but I will offer a personal perspective on some of them as each one of them have touched me ...

(Laughter)

In a significant way at some point while I've been here in the Chamber.

Of course the Brett's often come as a team and the one thing you can say about Christine and Richard is that they are as devoted to each other as they were to the city when they represented it and that team work has enabled them to give that public service because they were never on Council at the same time they were a tag team and when Christine went Richard was offered an opportunity, a bit like the Clintons, and I know that Christine herself was very keen to be a very strong feminist voice on the council when she was here, very much like Alison Lowe in her tenure as well and of course Richard Brett himself was a Leader of Leeds City Council but one of the few Liberal Democrat Leaders of Council that we've had and I would like to point out he was quite a brave leader as well because we keep being reminded every now and again, Richard, about the bin strike and it takes some fortitude for a Leader of Council to actually take on an issue which they think is important even if it's difficult.

Secondly of course we also have Gerry Harper. I have fond memories of working with Gerry when he was Lord Mayor. He was one of the more, what's the, one of the more amenable Lord Mayors I have to say ...

(Laughter)

In terms of their teamwork and wanting to make sure that they made a big impression on the city and that was a really nice, nearly the end of your career on the Council Gerry, but it topped off your wholehearted commitment over the year.

Tom Leadley of course started off as a Liberal but he developed into something different and of course if we're talking about planning Councillor Carter, Tom Leadley made as big an impact on planning thanks to his meticulous working on all the different applications that came forward.

And of course Mick Lyons will ever be associated with the incinerator for me I know he was a great opponent of it but I'm sure he'll be appreciative of the legacy that it leaves in terms of giving affordable warmth to the city but his tenacity in raising the issue at every single Council meeting was a lesson to all Council Members in terms of making sure that you, if you think an issue is important you mention it and you mention it again and again and again until you get it changed.

And finally of course Lord Mayor, Keith Wakefield. I am personally grateful to Keith because, not to forget Richard Lewis of course, we've crossed on many times in the Council Chamber and he's shown great commitment in terms of, as was said to Housing in particular.

Keith Wakefield has left a legacy as well. He was Leader of this Council but he also made a leadership role for local government in general when he helps to publish the Commission for the future of Local Government and I have to say Keith it's a document which is too often neglected in the seats of power but it's one which should be referred to ever more in terms of the way that it talks about creating a new compact between the people that we represent and the services that we deliver and I'm really.

And Rachael of course, can't forget Rachael, on a very personal basis always made sure that I was looked after at any social event that I went to so besides been a big one for developers she was also very warm human person for me and I'm very much grateful for that.

I hope I haven't missed anybody out but thank you Lord Mayor for the opportunity to offer our support for this Aldermanship and I look forward to working with them in the future because I know they're not going anywhere. Thank you Lord Mayor.

(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Elliott.

COUNCILLOR ELLIOTT: Thank you Lord Mayor. We support all nominations today and in supporting Tom Leadley the Morley Borough Independent nomination to become an Honorary Alderman of Leeds I'm so pleased to welcome Vera Leadley who is ninety seven, this is Tom's mother, we're delighted your here today Vera. I've been given permission to give this wonderful age out, she remembers the Civic Hall been opened in 1933 and I understand that Mick Lyons who served on this Council, he tells me thirty nine years, has our support today and he knew Vera's father, Maurice Barrett, and they were both engine drivers, her uncle Joe Dickinson was an engine driver too and he was also a Leeds City Councillor for South Holbeck Ward. He stood on a joint ticket with Hugh Gaitskell who went on to become the Leader of the Parliamentary Labour Party.

It seems engine drivers and Leeds City Council have gone hand in hand and Vera growing up in Parnaby Road, Hunslet had a neighbour, William Hemingway, engine driver and the longest serving member of the old LCC 1913 to 1967. He was also Lord Mayor of Leeds in 34/35. Her cousin, Alice Waring, was for many years a member of Rothwell District Council. Vera with such association with Leeds City Council we appreciate is delighted to be here today to see Tom awarded such an honour from Leeds City Council.

Tom Leadley was Morley Borough Independent Deputy Leader and Whip for sixteen years always making sure that we punched above our weight in the Civic Hall. He was one of the earliest and most consistent critics of the Leeds Supertram and NGT Trolleybus projects pointing out many times that to be successful the mass transit must go from somewhere to somewhere else and that Leeds to Bradford is a shorter distance than most of the failed schemes.

He was one of the earliest and most persistent in highlighting the need for improved flood defences in Leeds. He got the housing numbers right from 2007 onwards and was one of perhaps no more than a handful of members with real expertise in planning. His evidence helped defeat McDonalds at Tingley White Bear which in turn led to Leeds' adoption of the formal policy to control the siting of hot food takeaways near schools. He followed the Core Strategy and Site Allocations Plan processes throughout and spoke to good effect at the various public hearings.

Lord Mayor I have mentioned Mick Lyons earlier.

Rachael Procter and Tom Leadley I am told went on a cruise together although it was only down the Aire and Calder Navigation with others from Leeds City Plans Panel to look at the flood defences.

Richard and Christine Brett were both very supportive of me during my year as Lord Mayor when Richard was Leader of Council.

Keith Wakefield much respected of the Council, the Leader on two separate occasions.

Alison Lowe brought energy and passion to this Chamber and I was delighted to see her photograph in a book which I bought and was able to give to her.

Gerry Harper during his year as Lord Mayor came to Morley often along with the Royal British Legion events. We were pleased to welcome him and Lynn is ever pleasant Mayoress to Morley.

Richard Lewis is missed from the front row of this Council Chamber. We're missing you there Richard, you seemed to be a fixture there I thought.

My Lord Mayor on behalf of the Morley Borough Independent Group I support today's nominations for those to become Honorary Alderman of the City of Leeds.
Thank you.

(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dobson.

COUNCILLOR M DOBSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. On behalf of Garforth and Swillington Independents we too are delighted to be able to welcome old colleagues back for this very prestigious occasion and to congratulate them all on becoming Aldermen or women of the city of Leeds. All well deserved.

I've never worked with Christine Brett I think Christine's time on Council was before mine but in terms of the other people who have been on this afternoon, worked with them all, often enjoyed their company and enjoyed the debates that we often engaged in but I just will pick out if I may be indulgent for a while just a few people off the list for various reasons.

Mick Lyons, welcome back Mick. When the incinerator project fell into my lap it was fair to say that Mick was the most vocal vociferous critic of that project, often to me. But what was always good about it and what I always admired about Mick is when that debate was finished and when that exchange had finished he always went back to being a perfect gentleman and I think for me that's a measure of Mick Lyon's OBE because it shows he was an excellent politician who looks after his constituents to the best of his ability but when it was done it was done and then it was business as usual and I always appreciated the fact that it was never personal it was always business and when that was conducted we went back to been on very good terms so welcome back Mick and it's nice to see you today.

Tom Leadley. A special word for Tom because I always found his contributions around the planning debate excellent and a lot of the ideas and the arguments he progressed I nicked and used them in areas where it was of interest to me, so again Tom thank you for that and also especially for the contributions in here because it's a long meeting, its often a dry meeting but Tom's contributions in Council were always witty, they were always to the point and they always made a point so it was always good to hear his contributions in Council.

And finally just a funny one really. Rachael probably might not even remember this bit I think we must have on record having the shortest meeting between two serving Councillors ever. I can't even remember the issue what we were here to talk about but I was an Exec Board Member and Rachael had an issue that affected her ward and I was called in for a meeting, it was to start at one o'clock, Rachael was late she came in about quarter past, slammed her handbag on the table and said right we're simply not doing that and I went right then and that was the meeting, that was it. So I don't know if we did hold a record, I don't think anybody was timing us but I remember that has probably been the quickest and briefest meeting of my time on the Exec Board so welcome back it was fun actually. So on behalf of Garforth and Swillington Independents, worthy recipients one at all, it's nice to see old colleagues back in the Chamber and congratulations on what's a very special day. Thank you Lord Mayor.

(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: David Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I'd like to give the Green Party's support for the motion that , well I would say pretty experienced Councillors to say the least, I mean we've got two former Leader's, one Deputy Leader, we've got Mick Lyons, mind you I thought Mick Lyons had been on council a hundred and fifty years himself like but he seems to have always been here but we have got some very prociduous Councillors there and we miss them all. I don't think we've got time to go through every one and I think it's a pity that we haven't got longer for doing this because every single person that's mentioned here has put a lot of input into this council but first of all I would like to mention Tom Leadley. I've worked very closely with Tom. Tom was in the next Ward with me, we both had an interest in planning, we used to sit next to each other on City Plans and he were like while he might have been a member of a different party he was more like a colleague in the same party that I could work with and our issues on Supertram together we worked on stuff like that and on Site Allocations Plan we worked closely there and it was an enjoyable experience. I've got to say I think anybody else that's on City Plans, it's not the same now as it was when Tom was there because Tom would come up with anything and the other thing is woe be tide minutes been wrong because Tom find's anything, he's probably only person that properly reads minutes you know and he did a wonderful job there and I've got to say I'm glad to support him been made an Honorary Alderman but I just wish he was still on Council and I mean that sincerely.

And then if I can move on to, back to Mick Lyons. I first came across Mick Lyons twenty two years ago in June and I attended my second committee meeting, it was the Environmental Committee chaired by Councillor Elizabeth Nash and this rather scary Councillor on the other side of the benches and let's put it this way we had what might be called a robust disagreement and after I'd finished I was going through the door and this arm lands on my shoulder and he says let's remember, and I wasn't the most popular person in the world, there were eight Conservatives, eight Liberal Democrats me and eighty odd Labour Members and I wasn't right popular with the eighty odd Labour Members at the time and he put his hand on my shoulder and he says Ey never mind what they say your not a bad lad you and after that we always got on great as one of speakers says he was one of the only Members including myself opposing incinerator and he kept reminding me about that every time I got up and spoke about it and he's had a wonderful career I think as a Councillor, a proper old fashioned Councillor, one of the people and the thing, I think if our debate this afternoon if he were still there I'm sure when we come to all the public transport stuff we're talking about and Mick would put a lot of effort and intelligent thought into that and I've got to say I've had the pleasure of sitting next to Mick on several trains coming and going to London when we'd been lobbying. I've got to say you need to give your ears a rest after a while but I'd rather go on a train with Mick than anybody else because he's so entertaining but what a great career he had.

And then if I can move on to Keith Wakefield who was Leader of Council then Leader of the Opposition when I was in the administration and then Leader again after that ceased. I've always found him a person you can work with and a correct kind of person. What we might fall out about over in here or in a meeting doesn't go over into anything else and where we have agreed I found him somebody you can work with, in fact he's largely responsible for the fact that the position I hold now as Chair of UK and Ireland Nuclear Free Local Authorities because it was Keith that put me on that ...

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blackburn

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Anyway as I say I'm sorry I've gone on so long but can I give the Green Group's support for motion. Thank you.

(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. It's time for us to have a vote. (*A vote was taken*). That's been CARRIED. Based on the motion just been carried could I ask the Aldermen and women to join me in the well to sign the roll. Thank you.

The Honorary Aldermen/woman, Lord Mayor and Chief Executive proceeded to the well of the Chamber.

The Honorary Aldermen/woman, Lord Mayor and Chief Executive signed the Roll of Honorary Aldermen/woman.

(Photographs)

The Lord Mayor and Chief Executive then returned to their seats.

THE LORD MAYOR: We will now close this part of the meeting.

(The meeting closed at 1.10pm)