

Proceedings of the Meeting of the Leeds City Council held
Civic Hall, Leeds on Wednesday, 20th July, 2022

PRESENT: The Lord Mayor Councillor Robert Gettings MBE JP in the Chair.

WARD

ADEL & WHARFEDALE

Barry John Anderson
Caroline Anderson
Billy Flynn

ALWOODLEY

Dan Cohen

Peter Mervyn Harrand

ARDSLEY & ROBIN HOOD

Karen Renshaw
Mike Foster
Lisa Mulherin

ARMLEY

Alice Smart
James McKenna
Lou Cunningham
BEESTON & HOLBECK

Annie Maloney
Gohar Almas
Andrew Scopes

BRAMLEY & STANNINGLEY

Kevin Ritchie
Caroline Gruen
Julie Heselwood
BURMANTOFTS & RICHMOND HILL

Luke Farley
Asghar Khan
Denise Ragan

WARD

CALVERLEY & FARSLEY

Amanda Carter
Peter Carlill
Andrew Carter

CHAPEL ALLERTON

Eileen Taylor
Mohammed Rafique
Jane Dowson

CROSS GATES & WHINMOOR

Pauleen Grahame
James Gibson
Jessica Lennox

FARNLEY & WORTLEY

Mark Swards
David Blackburn
Ann Forsaith

GARFORTH & SWILLINGTON

Mark Dobson
Sarah Field
Suzanne McCormack

GIPTON & HAREHILLS

Salma Arif
Arif Hussain
Kamila Maqsood
GUISELEY & RAWDON

Eleanor Thomson
Paul Alderson
Paul John Spencer Wadsworth

HAREWOOD

Matthew James Robinson
Sam Firth
Ryan Stephenson

HEADINGLEY & HYDE PARK

Jonathon Pryor
Alison Garthwaite
Neil Walshaw

HORSFORTH

Emmie Bromley
John Garvani
Jackie Shemilt

HUNSLET & RIVERSIDE

Ed Carlisle
Mohammed Iqbal
Paul Wray

KILLINGBECK & SEACROFT

John Tudor
David Jenkins
Katie Dye

KIPPAX & METHLEY

Mary Elizabeth Harland
James Lewis
Mirelle Midgley

KIRKSTALL

Hannah Bithell
Fiona Elizabeth Venner
John Anthony Illingworth

LITTLE LONDON & WOODHOUSE

Kayleigh Brooks
Javaid Akhtar
Abigail Marshall-Katung

MIDDLETON PARK

Wayne Dixon
Sharon Burke
Paul Anthony Truswell

MOORTOWN

Mahalia France-Mir
Sharon Hamilton
Mohammed Shahzad

MORLEY NORTH

Robert Gettings MBE JP
Robert Finnigan
Andy Hutchison

MORLEY SOUTH

Oliver Newton
Jane Senior
Wyn Kidger

OTLEY & YEADON

Colin Campbell

Ryk Downes

PUDSEY

Simon Seary
Dawn Seary
Trish Smith

ROTHWELL

Barry Stewart Golton
Conrad Hart-Brooke
Diane Chapman

ROUNDHAY

Jordan Bowden
Zara Hussain
Lisa Martin

TEMPLE NEWSAM

Debra Coupar
Helen Hayden
Nicole Sharp

WEETWOOD

Izaak Wilson
Emma Flint
Chris Howley
WETHERBY
Norma Harrington
Alan James Lamb
Linda Richards

18 **Announcements**

(a) The Lord Mayor welcomed members to this meeting of Full Council and also any members of the public who were joining the meeting and reminded those present that the meeting was to be streamed live.

(b) The Lord Mayor informed Council that in his first seven weeks as Lord Mayor he had attended more than 80 events and he had been struck by the diversity and community cohesion across the City making Leeds such a rich cultural place to live.

(c) The Lord Mayor congratulated Farsley Celtic Football Club on their achievement in winning the Deaf Final of the FA Disability Cup.

(d) The Lord Mayor congratulated all those recipients from Leeds or who work and volunteer in Leeds and who had been recognised in Her Majesty the Queen's 2022 Birthday Honours list. The Lord Mayor offered his congratulations on the receipt of the award.

(e) The Lord Mayor reported that he was delighted to learn that the Leeds Armed Forces Covenant had been awarded silver status by the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme. This was a fantastic recognition for the work of the council to support members of our Armed Forces and the Lord Mayor thanked all those involved who had worked hard to support this.

(f) The Lord Mayor informed Council of the recent death of Honorary Alderman John Hamilton.

Council stood in silent tribute.

19 **Procedural Motion**

It was moved by Councillor Lennox, seconded by Councillor Cohen and

RESOLVED - That Council Procedure Rule (CPR) 22.1 (Suspension of CPRs), that CPR 12.2 (motions and amendments) be suspended to allow the introduction of an additional not for debate White Paper on Twinning with Kharkiv to be heard at the start of the meeting.

20 **Not for Debate White Paper Motion (in the name of Councillor Lewis)**

It was moved by Councillor Lewis, seconded by Councillor Andrew Carter and supported by Councillors Golton, Hutchison, Dobson and Blackburn and

RESOLVED – That this Council notes Leeds has a long tradition of building strong international partnerships in a show of friendship and has a number of long-standing twinning agreements and sister city relationships across the world.

Council continues to condemn the invasion of Ukraine and welcome Ukrainian refugees, as the humanitarian situation worsens.

Council requests officers to explore a twinning between Leeds and Kharkiv to support closer ties of friendship confirming the City's commitment to show support and solidarity with Ukraine.

21 **Minutes of the last Meeting**

It was moved by Councillor Lennox, seconded by Councillor Cohen and

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 26th May 2022 be approved.

22 Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interests.

23 Communications

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 2.2(d) Councillor Venner drew to the meetings attention communications which had been received from Ofsted to both the Director of Children and Families and the Children and Young People of Leeds.

In accordance with a whips agreement Councillor Andrew Carter replied to the Communication.

The Chief Executive informed Council that responses had been received regarding 2 white paper resolutions in March, from Grant Shapps MP, Secretary of State for Transport on the Transport White Paper and George Eustice MP Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on the Trees White Paper copies of which had previously been circulated to all Members of Council.

24 Deputations

Two deputations were admitted to the meeting and addressed Council, as follows:-

- 1) National Endometriosis Survivors Support
- 2) Zest

RESOLVED – That the subject matter in respect of deputation 1 be referred to the Director of Adults and Health for consideration in consultation with the relevant Executive Member and that the subject matter in respect of deputation 2 be referred to the Director of Adults and Health and Director of Public Health for consideration in consultation with the relevant Executive Member.

25 Recommendations of the General Purposes Committee - Amendments to Article 17 of the Constitution, Health and Wellbeing Board Terms of Reference and Council Procedure Rules

The report of the Director of Adults and Health recommending amendments to Article 17 of the Constitution, The Health and Wellbeing Board Terms of Reference and Council Procedure Rules was moved by Councillor Lewis, seconded by Councillor Coupar and

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the proposed amendments to Article 17 of the Constitution, The Health and Wellbeing Board Terms of Reference and Council Procedure Rules as set out in the appendices to the report be approved.
- (b) That the mandatory appointment on the Health and Wellbeing Board of Tim Ryley (Place Based Lead, Leeds Health & Care Partnership) who is the nominated representative of the Leeds Committee of the West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board be noted.

26 Report on Appointments

The report of the City Solicitor on appointments was moved by Councillor Lennox, seconded by Councillor Venner, an amendment was moved by Councillor Stephenson, seconded by Councillor Cohen;

To amend the Report on Appointments to include the following recommendation:

(c) to request that the Children & Families Scrutiny Board appoint a non-voting social worker staff representative as a co-opted member.

The amendment in the name of Councillor Stephenson was declared lost and upon being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED – That the report of the City Solicitor on appointments be approved including those listed on the order paper, namely;

- 1 To note the following appointments to various West Yorkshire Combined Authority Committees and the West Yorkshire Pension Fund Joint Advisory Group;
 - Councillor Sam Firth to the Economy Scrutiny Committee
 - Councillor Izaak Wilson to the West Yorkshire Combined Authority Transport Committee.
 - Councillor Jess Lennox to replace Councillor Izaak Wilson on the West Yorkshire Combined Authority Transport Scrutiny Committee
 - Councillor Scopes to replace Councillor Martin on the West Yorkshire Pension Fund Joint Advisory Group

- 2 To note the following appointment to a Committee, Board or Panel
 - Councillor B Flynn be appointed to fill the vacancy on Corporate Governance & Audit Committee.
 - Councillor Almass to replace Councillor Maqsood on the Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board.
 - Councillor Lennox to fill the Labour vacancy and Councillor Lay to fill the Liberal Democrat vacancy on the Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth Scrutiny Board.
 - Councillor Dowson to replace Councillor Smart on the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee.

On the requisition of Councillor Stephenson and Councillor Cohen the voting on the amendment was recorded as follows;

YES – 28

Alderson, B Anderson, C Anderson, Amanda Carter, Andrew Carter, Cohen, Dixon, Dobson, Downes, Finnigan, Firth, Flynn, Foster, Golton, Harrand, Harrington, Hutchison, Howley, Lamb, Newton, Richards, D Seary, S Seary, Senior, Shemilt, Smith, Stephenson, and Wadsworth.

NO – 55

Akhtar, Almass, Arif, Bithell, Bowden, Bromley, Brooks, Burke, Carlill, Coupar, Cunningham, Dowson, Dye, Farley, Flint, France-Mir, Garthwaite, Garvani, Gibson, Grahame, Gruen, Hamilton, Harland, Hayden, Heselwood, A Hussain, Z Hussain, Illingworth, Iqbal, Jenkins, Khan, Lennox, Lewis, Maloney, Marshall-Katung, Martin, McKenna, Midgley, Mulherin, Pryor, Rafique, Ragan, Renshaw, Ritchie, Scopes, Swards, Shahzad, E Taylor, Thomson, Truswell, Tudor, Venner, Walshaw, Wilson and Wray.

ABSTAIN – 5

Blackburn, Carlisle, Forsaith, Field and McCormack

27 Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel

It was moved by Councillor Coupar, seconded by Councillor Lewis and

RESOLVED – That the report of the Head of Democratic Services presenting to Council the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel be received and the recommendations set out agreed, namely;

- a) The level of Special Responsibility Allowance for the Chair of Climate Emergency Advisory Committee (CEAC) should be 35% of that of the Leader of Council.
- b) The level of Special Responsibility Allowance for the Shadow Chair of CEAC should be 15% of that of the Leader of Council.
- c) The continuation of indexation arrangements to June 2026, which currently permit the annual adjustment of allowances in line with the headline pay increase negotiated through the National Joint Council for Local Government Employees (or equivalent).

28 Report on Scrutiny Annual Report

It was moved by Councillor Coupar, seconded by Councillor Lennox and

RESOLVED – That the report of the City Solicitor presenting the Scrutiny Boards Annual Report for 2021/22 to Council be received and noted.

At the conclusion of this item Council adjourned from 15.30 to 15.45.

29 Report on the Annual Report of the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee

It was moved by Councillor Wray, seconded by Councillor Coupar and

RESOLVED - That the report of the Chief Officer Financial Services be received and the matters set out in the annual report reflecting the work of the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee in the 2021-22 municipal year be noted.

30 Executive Questions

Q1 Councillor Stephenson to the Executive Member (Adult and Children's Social Care and Health Partnerships):-

Can the Executive Member for Adult and Children's Social Care and Health Partnerships inform Council how many formal grievances have been received from children's social workers so far this year; and where these were group grievances how many employees were included in the grievance?

The Executive Member (Adult and Children's Social Care and Health Partnerships) replied.

Q2 Councillor Golton to the Leader of Council :-

Does the Leader of Council share my dismay that despite having control of a £multi-million bus investment and subsidy budget, leadership of a supposedly innovative and ground-breaking 'West Yorkshire Bus Enhanced Partnership', and a close professional relationship with the Unite Union, the West Yorkshire Mayor has refused to use her position of influence to intervene and arbitrate

an end to the Arriva strike which has adversely affected the lives of Leeds workers, students and elderly residents since June 6th in wards such as Rothwell, which are totally dependent on Arriva services, and has still not been resolved?

The Leader of Council replied.

Q3 Councillor Mulherin to the Executive Member (Adults and Children's Social Care and Health Partnerships):-

Please could the Executive Member for Adults and Children's Social Care and Health Partnerships comment on the recent high court judgement on the Government's policy to discharge hospital patients into care homes without testing for Covid-19?

The Executive Member (Adults and Children's Social Care and Health Partnerships) replied.

Q4 Councillor Dobson to the Executive Member (Resources):-

In an age when Elected Members are faced with more and more challenges to our personal safety, does the Executive Member for Resources agree with West Yorkshire Police that when we are duty bound to progress casework to them on behalf of a resident, our role as conduits should be routinely shared with the person(s) against whom the complaint has been lodged?

The Executive Member (Resources) replied.

Q5 Councillor Khan to the Executive Member (Communities):-

Please could the Executive Member update Council on the support provided in Leeds to Ukrainian refugees?

The Executive Member (Communities) replied.

Q6 Councillor Richards to the Executive Member (Adult and Children's Social Care and Health Partnerships):-

Can the Executive Member for Adult and Children's Social Care and Health Partnerships inform Council how many children's social workers have resigned from their post so far this year; how many of those were newly qualified; and how many returned exit surveys or completed exit interviews?

The Executive Member (Adult and Children's Social Care and Health Partnerships) replied.

At the conclusion of question time, the following questions remained unanswered and it was noted that, under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 11.6, written answers would be sent to each Member of Council:-

Q7 Councillor Downes to the Executive Member (Communities).

Q8 Councillor Flint to the Executive Member (Economy, Culture and Education)

Q9 Councillor Dobson to the Executive Member (Resources)

Q10 Councillor Hamilton to the Executive Member (Environment and Housing).

- Q11 Councillor Harrington to the Executive Member (Adult and Children's Social Care and Health Partnerships).
- Q12 Councillor Golton to the Executive Member (Environment and Housing).
- Q13 Councillor Bithell to the Executive Member (Public Health & Active Lifestyles).
- Q14 Councillor Dobson to the Executive Member (Economy, Culture and Education).
- Q15 Councillor Carlill to the Executive Member (Infrastructure and Climate).
- Q16 Councillor C Anderson to the Executive Member (Adult and Children's Social Care and Health Partnerships).
- Q17 Councillor Golton to the Executive Member (Infrastructure and Climate).
- Q18 Councillor Scopes to the Executive Member (Resources).
- Q19 Councillor Dobson to the Executive Member (Resources).
- Q20 Councillor D Seary to the Executive Member (Adult and Children's Social Care and Health Partnerships).
- Q21 Councillor Golton to the Executive Member (Resources).
- Q22 Councillor Dobson to the Leader of Council.
- Q23 Councillor Robinson to the Executive Member (Environment and Housing).
- Q24 Councillor Golton to the Executive Member (Adult and Children's Social Care and Health Partnerships).
- Q25 Councillor Dobson to the Executive Member (Adult and Children's Social Care and Health Partnerships).
- Q26 Councillor Wadsworth to the Executive Member (Environment and Housing).
- Q27 Councillor Golton to the Executive Member (Infrastructure and Climate).
- Q28 Councillor Robinson to the Executive Member (Infrastructure and Climate).
- Q29 Councillor Golton to the Executive Member (Infrastructure and Climate).
- Q30 Councillor Wadsworth to the Leader of Council.
- Q31 Councillor Golton to the Executive Member (Adult and Children's Social Care and Health Partnerships).
- Q32 Councillor Robinson to the Leader of Council.
- Q33 Councillor Campbell to the Executive Member (Environment and Housing).
- Q34 Councillor Robinson to the Executive Member (Environment and Housing).

- Q35 Councillor Campbell to the Executive Member (Public Health & Active Lifestyles).
- Q36 Councillor Firth to the Executive Member (Public Health & Active Lifestyles).
- Q37 Councillor Stephenson to the Executive Member (Adult and Children's Social Care and Health Partnerships).
- Q38 Councillor Firth to the Executive Member (Infrastructure and Climate).
- Q39 Councillor Firth to the Executive Member (Public Health & Active Lifestyles).
- Q40 Councillor Firth to the Executive Member (Infrastructure and Climate).
- Q41 Councillor Firth to the Leader of Council.
- Q42 Councillor Firth to the Executive Member (Economy, Culture and Education).

31 Minutes of the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Executive Board

It was moved by Councillor Lewis, seconded by Councillor Lennox that the minutes be received in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 2.2(i).

An amendment was moved by Councillor Andrew Carter, seconded by Councillor Flynn

To add the following at the end of item 11:

To request that Executive Board reconsiders the decision in respect of Minute 10, Social Value Fund Proposal, of the Executive Board meeting held on 22 June.

A second amendment was moved by Councillor Andrew Carter seconded by Councillor Robinson

To add the following at the end of item 11:

To request that Executive Board reconsiders the decision in respect of Minute 9, Leeds Station Sustainable Travel Gateway Scheme, of the Executive Board meeting held on 22 June.

A third amendment was moved by Councillor Stephenson seconded by Councillor Richards

To add the following at the end of item 11:

To request that Executive Board reconsiders the decision in respect of Minute 13 of the Executive Board meeting held on 22 June.

Upon being put to the vote the amendments (references back) were declared lost and upon being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED – That the minutes be received in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 2.2(i).

Council Procedure Rule 4, providing for the winding up of business, was applied prior to any notified comments on the minutes having been debated.

At the conclusion of this item Council adjourned from 16.50 to 17.25

32 **White Paper Motion (in the name of Councillor Andrew Carter) - Highways**

It was moved by Councillor Andrew Carter, seconded by Councillor Lamb that this Council is concerned that the mean average highways maintenance backlog in the city is 19.8 years, pointing to significant under investment in the city's roads by the current administration.

Council is further concerned that budget amendments to increase highways capital investment have been repeatedly ignored suggesting that the administration do not see highways investment as a priority. This is particularly the case when set against a backdrop of massive borrowing and debt incurred by the authority since 2010, meaning that in 2022/23 up to £63.5m will be spent on MRP debt and interest, money that could have been spent on frontline services or prioritised towards highways investment.

Council further notes significant Government investment in highways and transport in recent years both in Leeds and nationally:

- £173.5m or the Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme
- £200m for development and delivery of a mass transit scheme in Leeds
- £4.8m in pothole grant funding allocated in 2021/22
- £2.7 billion in local highways maintenance funding between 2022/23 and 2024/25 to local authorities outside of London and the 8 largest city regions
- £20m Levelling Up funding for West Leeds transport improvements
- CRSTS funding of £830m announced in April 2022

This Council believes that Leeds residents see highways maintenance as a major priority both in terms of road safety, amenity and to prevent damage to vehicles. Council therefore calls for a report to be brought to Executive Board setting out how highways maintenance will be prioritised and how much additional investment the Council will make in the city's roads in the coming years.

An amendment was moved by Councillor Golton, seconded by Councillor Downes

In the first paragraph insert the words 'and pavements' after '...city's roads'

In the second paragraph delete everything (including bullet points) after '...as a priority.'

Retain the final paragraph and insert after '...highways maintenance' the words 'residential parking capacity, and pedestrian accessibility' and insert the words 'and pavements' after the words '...city's roads'

The amended White Paper would then read as follows:

"This Council is concerned that the mean average highways maintenance backlog in the city is 19.8 years, pointing to significant under investment in the city's roads and pavements by the current administration.

Council is further concerned that budget amendments to increase highways capital investment have been repeatedly ignored suggesting that the administration do not see highways investment as a priority.

This Council believes that Leeds residents see highways maintenance, residential parking capacity, and pedestrian accessibility as a major priority both in terms of road safety, amenity and to prevent damage to vehicles. Council therefore calls for a report to be brought to Executive Board setting out how highways maintenance will

be prioritised and how much additional investment the Council will make in the city's roads and pavements in the coming years.”

A second amendment was moved by Councillor Hayden, seconded by Councillor Carlill

Delete All after “This Council” and replace with:

.....“welcomes the decision by the Labour Administration to increase highways funding in Leeds since 2010, meaning the city tops the list of all councils nationwide for highways investment with over £20m programmed to be spent in wards all across the city this year alone.

Council notes investment in highways would have been significantly higher had the Conservative Government not imposed severe cuts to local authority budgets, including for highways, with £2.2bn cut from council services in Leeds since 2010.

Council calls on all political groups to support a communication to whoever the Conservative Party select to be their new Prime Minister to call on them to provide better, long-term, secure funding to address over a decade's worth of cuts, rather than ad hoc one off grants that are woefully small in the face of the £200M the city's roads need.

This Council also notes that Highways Maintenance is just one area where cuts to Leeds have been to the detriment of Leeds residents and calls on the Government to give the people of Leeds the funding they deserve.”

The amendment in the name of Councillor Golton was declared lost the amendment in the name of Councillor Hayden was carried and upon being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED – That this Council welcomes the decision by the Labour Administration to increase highways funding in Leeds since 2010, meaning the city tops the list of all councils nationwide for highways investment with over £20m programmed to be spent in wards all across the city this year alone.

Council notes investment in highways would have been significantly higher had the Conservative Government not imposed severe cuts to local authority budgets, including for highways, with £2.2bn cut from council services in Leeds since 2010.

Council calls on all political groups to support a communication to whoever the Conservative Party select to be their new Prime Minister to call on them to provide better, long-term, secure funding to address over a decade's worth of cuts, rather than ad hoc one off grants that are woefully small in the face of the £200M the city's roads need.

This Council also notes that Highways Maintenance is just one area where cuts to Leeds have been to the detriment of Leeds residents and calls on the Government to give the people of Leeds the funding they deserve.”

33 White Paper Motion (in the name of Councillor Forsaith) - Fair Votes

It was moved by Councillor Forsaith, seconded by Councillor Carlisle that this Council notes that the First Past the Post (FPTP) voting system originated when land-owning aristocrats dominated parliament and voting was restricted to property-owning men. In Europe, only the UK and authoritarian Belarus still use archaic single-round FPTP for general elections.

Council supports fair votes for all and further notes that:

- the UK's First Past the Post voting system curtails voter choice and leaves millions feeling unrepresented by their elected representatives. This growing disillusionment amongst voters is evidenced by low turn outs, particularly in local elections. These factors have contributed to dangerous levels of distrust and disillusionment with our democratic process.
- Proportional Representation (PR) is used to elect parliaments in more than 80 countries. Those countries tend to be more equal, freer and greener. PR ensures all votes count, have equal value, and that seats won match votes cast. Under PR, MPs and Parliaments better reflect the age, gender and protected characteristics of local communities and the nation. MPs better reflecting their communities leads to improved decision-making, wider participation and increased levels of ownership of decisions taken.
- PR would also end minority rule. In 2019, 43.6% of the vote produced a government with 56.2% of the seats and 100% of the power. PR also prevents 'wrong winner' elections such as occurred in 1951 when more people voted Labour than Conservative, yet the Conservatives formed the government.
- PR is already used to elect the Parliaments and Assemblies of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland as well as London and the Welsh Senedd is reviewing legislation on Single Transferable Vote for local councils.
- There is a growing movement of supporters for Proportional Representation, with the Unite and Unison unions now backing PR.
- There is a range of options for implementing Proportional Representation systems, any of which would deliver a fairer and more representative democracy for electors.

Council believes

- that it is essential that faith is restored in our democratic system and that the public see both Parliament and Councils as fairly reflecting their views
- that our First Past the Post voting system is a significant barrier to restoring this faith which prevents the balance of opinion among the electorate being reflected in Parliament and local councils
- that a system of Proportional Representation in which seats match votes and all votes count equally would help to rebuild public trust by ensuring that all political views are represented in Parliament and local councils in proportion to their level of public support

Council therefore resolves to write to HM Government calling for a change in our outdated electoral laws to enable Proportional Representation to be used for general and local elections.

Council further resolves to ask all the MPs who represent Leeds residents to support changing our electoral system to a fairer Proportional Representation system.

An amendment was moved by Councillor Cohen, seconded by Councillor Richards

Delete all after “First Past the Post (FPTP) voting system” in the first line, and replace with the following:

“is a tried and tested method for determining UK general elections that is well understood by voters, maintains a valuable geographic link between electors and their representatives, and is more likely than the alternatives to produce clearer results leading to stable government.

“Council notes that PR voting systems have their own disadvantages including providing a platform for extremist parties, a tendency to produce unstable coalitions, and a weakening of the link between MPs and their constituents.

“Council further notes that UK voters comprehensively rejected a proposal to change the voting system, by 68 percent to 32 percent, in a 2011 referendum and believes this result should be respected.

“Council therefore does not support any moves to change the current voting system for general and local elections.”

Motion would read:

“This Council notes that the First Past the Post (FPTP) voting system is a tried and tested method for determining UK general elections that is well understood by voters, maintains a valuable geographic link between electors and their representatives, and is more likely than the alternatives to produce clearer results leading to stable government.

“Council notes that PR voting systems have their own disadvantages including providing a platform for extremist parties, a tendency to produce unstable coalitions, and a weakening of the link between MPs and their constituents.

“Council further notes that UK voters comprehensively rejected a proposal to change the voting system, by 68 percent to 32 percent, in a 2011 referendum and believes this result should be respected.

“Council therefore does not support any moves to change the current voting system for general and local elections.”

A second amendment was moved by Councillor Golton, seconded by Councillor Campbell

In the second to last paragraph delete the words ‘...Proportional Representation’ and replace with ‘the Single Transferable Vote system in multi-member wards and constituencies.

The amended White Paper will then read:

This Council notes that the First Past the Post (FPTP) voting system originated when land-owning aristocrats dominated parliament and voting was restricted to property-owning men. In Europe, only the UK and authoritarian Belarus still use archaic single-round FPTP for general elections.

Council supports fair votes for all and further notes that:

- the UK’s First Past the Post voting system curtails voter choice and leaves millions feeling unrepresented by their elected representatives. This growing disillusionment amongst voters is evidenced by low turn outs, particularly in

local elections. These factors have contributed to dangerous levels of distrust and disillusionment with our democratic process.

- Proportional Representation (PR) is used to elect parliaments in more than 80 countries. Those countries tend to be more equal, freer and greener. PR ensures all votes count, have equal value, and that seats won match votes cast. Under PR, MPs and Parliaments better reflect the age, gender and protected characteristics of local communities and the nation. MPs better reflecting their communities leads to improved decision-making, wider participation and increased levels of ownership of decisions taken.
- PR would also end minority rule. In 2019, 43.6% of the vote produced a government with 56.2% of the seats and 100% of the power. PR also prevents 'wrong winner' elections such as occurred in 1951 when more people voted Labour than Conservative, yet the Conservatives formed the government.
- PR is already used to elect the Parliaments and Assemblies of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland as well as London and the Welsh Senedd is reviewing legislation on Single Transferable Vote for local councils.
- There is a growing movement of supporters for Proportional Representation, with the Unite and Unison unions now backing PR.
- There is a range of options for implementing Proportional Representation systems, any of which would deliver a fairer and more representative democracy for electors.

Council believes

- that it is essential that faith is restored in our democratic system and that the public see both Parliament and Councils as fairly reflecting their views
- that our First Past the Post voting system is a significant barrier to restoring this faith which prevents the balance of opinion among the electorate being reflected in Parliament and local councils
- that a system of Proportional Representation in which seats match votes and all votes count equally would help to rebuild public trust by ensuring that all political views are represented in Parliament and local councils in proportion to their level of public support

Council therefore resolves to write to HM Government calling for a change in our outdated electoral laws to enable the Single Transferable Vote system in multi-member wards and constituencies to be used for general and local elections.

Council further resolves to ask all the MPs who represent Leeds residents to support changing our electoral system to a fairer Proportional Representation system.

A third amendment was moved by Councillor Lewis, seconded by Councillor Wilson

Delete all after "This Council" and replace with:

".....recognises the frustration of people not represented through the electoral process and notes that changes to voting systems is a national government

question to answer. Council further notes that there are strong views on all sides of the debate on electoral reform.

“Council is very concerned by the Conservative Government’s Elections Act 2022 which risks suppressing voter turnout by introducing Voter ID, meaning many Leeds residents may no longer be able to vote, including some older and disabled people.

Council supports the lowering of the voting age to 16 to increase engagement in the electoral process and opposes the Government’s decision to limit engagement through Voter ID.

Council calls on the Government to implement measures to increase voter turnout by withdrawing the requirement for Voter ID and lowering the voting age to 16.”

The amendments in the name of Councillor Cohen and Councillor Golton were declared lost the amendment in the name of Councillor Lewis carried and upon being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED – That this Council recognises the frustration of people not represented through the electoral process and notes that changes to voting systems is a national government question to answer. Council further notes that there are strong views on all sides of the debate on electoral reform.

“Council is very concerned by the Conservative Government’s Elections Act 2022 which risks suppressing voter turnout by introducing Voter ID, meaning many Leeds residents may no longer be able to vote, including some older and disabled people.

Council supports the lowering of the voting age to 16 to increase engagement in the electoral process and opposes the Government’s decision to limit engagement through Voter ID.

Council calls on the Government to implement measures to increase voter turnout by withdrawing the requirement for Voter ID and lowering the voting age to 16.

34 White Paper Motion (in the name of Councillor Harland) - Household Support Fund

It was moved by Councillor Harland, seconded by Councillor Farley that this Council believes funding allocated by the Government to Leeds City Council for the Household Support Fund to help residents in financial difficulties is not enough given the current Cost of Living crisis which has followed 12 years of austerity.

Council is very concerned that the amount allocated to support residents in Leeds works out at no more than £9 per person meaning many families will not receive the support that they need at an increasingly difficult time financially for many people.

Council calls on Government to urgently increase funding allocated via the Household Support Fund to ensure residents in Leeds who need support both now and through the winter can afford to meet the price of food, heating and essential living costs.

An amendment was moved by Councillor B Anderson, seconded by Councillor Smith

Delete all after "This Council" and replace with the following:

"notes the range of global factors affecting the cost of living for households nationally and in Leeds and welcomes the actions being taken by the government in response.

"Council welcomes government action that saw a £150 non-repayable reduction in Council Tax bills for all households in Bands A-D in England but regrets that the ruling administration were unable to administer this, resulting in thousands of people receiving double payments totalling £3.7m and unknown costs in officer time to deal with the consequences.

"Council welcomes the unprecedented levels of support provided by the government through the pandemic. In addition, measures announced by the government in the Autumn Budget and subsequently will help vulnerable households in Leeds, such as:

- Increasing the National Living Wage to £9.50 an hour
- Cutting fuel duty following 11 years of freezing it
- £15bn energy bill rebate package worth up to £550 each for around 28 million households
- £650 Cost of Living payment for those on benefits
- £300 Pensioner Cost of Living Payment to 8 million pensioner households
- £140 million in Discretionary Housing Payments supporting families with rent or housing costs, and an extra £65m to support low-income households with rent debts
- Increased generosity of the Local Housing Allowance for housing benefit, with more than 1.5m households benefiting from an additional £600 a year.
- £150 disability cost of living payment
- £1bn in Household Support Fund

"Council notes that there have been two rounds of Household Support funding since November 2021 amounting to £7.1m each for Leeds, meaning total allocated funding through this scheme is £14.2m in the past 8 months. Council further notes that funding is targeted at those most in need meaning that the funding will broadly be targeted at the 63,000 households that claim Council Tax Support in Leeds which would equate to approximately £225 per household.

"Council remains concerned about increasing inflation and the potential consequences for interest rates, mortgages for Leeds residents and debt, particularly given Leeds City Council's £2.165bn net external debt.

"This Council therefore asks the Chief Executive to bring a report to Executive Board this year setting out the implications of higher inflation and higher interest rates on MRP and net external debt.

A second amendment was moved by Councillor Hart-Brooke, seconded by Councillor Howley

Replace all after "This Council" with:

"notes that:

On 1 April 2022, Ofgem increased the energy price cap by 54 per cent.

In light of the increased energy price cap, the average standard tariff energy bill will increase by £693 per year. The average pre-pay meter energy bill will increase by £708 per year (Ofgem, 2022).

On 6 April 2022, the Government increased National Insurance by 1.25 percentage points, which is projected to cost the average family in Leeds an additional £600 a year.

The Government has suspended the pensions 'triple lock' for 2022/3, meaning Leeds pensioners will see a rise of 3.1 per cent this year (instead of 8.3 per cent under the triple lock formula). This year, this will cost pensioners in Leeds hundreds of pounds.

Council notes the decision taken in June 2022 to impose a 'Windfall Tax' on the super-profits of oil and gas companies and to redistribute this as a one-off payment of £400 to households later this year. Council notes that the Windfall Tax was first proposed by Sir Ed Davey MP, leader of the Liberal Democrats, in May 2022. Though the Windfall Tax is welcome, Council believes it does not go nearly far enough and the Government should be doing much more to support local people through the Cost of Living crisis.

This Council therefore declares a 'Cost of Living Emergency' and calls on the Government to:

- Immediately reduce the standard rate of VAT from 20 per cent to 17.5 per cent for one year, saving the average household in Leeds a further £600 this year.
- Immediately re-introduce the pensions triple lock to support Leeds pensioners.
- Immediately restore the Universal Credit supplement of £20 per week, which was cancelled by the Government in September 2021.

Council instructs the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions to express the Council's demands for VAT to be cut to 17.5%, for the re-introduction of the pensions triple-lock and for the £20 Universal Credit supplement to be restored.

Finally, Council calls for a local Cost-of-Living Emergency Summit, with stakeholders, including Citizens Advice, Food Banks, Local Trades Unions, and Chambers of Commerce and will invite local MPs to attend this hybrid meeting.

The amendments in the name of Councillor B Anderson and Councillor Hart-Brooke were declared lost and upon being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED – That that this Council believes funding allocated by the Government to Leeds City Council for the Household Support Fund to help residents in financial difficulties is not enough given the current Cost of Living crisis which has followed 12 years of austerity.

Council is very concerned that the amount allocated to support residents in Leeds works out at no more than £9 per person meaning many families will not receive the support that they need at an increasingly difficult time financially for many people.

Council calls on Government to urgently increase funding allocated via the Household Support Fund to ensure residents in Leeds who need support both now and through the winter can afford to meet the price of food, heating and essential living costs.

On the requisition of Councillor Lennox and Councillor Coupar the voting on the motion was recorded as follows;

YES – 71

Akhtar, Almass, Arif, Bithell, Bowden, Bromley, Brooks, Burke, Carlill, Coupar, Cunningham, Dowson, Dye, Farley, Flint, France-Mir, Garthwaite, Garvani, Gibson, Grahame, Gruen, Hamilton, Harland, Hayden, Heselwood, A Hussain, Z Hussain, Illingworth, Iqbal, Jenkins, Khan, Lennox, Lewis, Maloney, Marshall-Katung, Martin, McKenna, Midgley, Mulherin, Pryor, Rafique, Ragan, Renshaw, Ritchie, Scopes, Swards, Shahzad, Sharpe, Smart, E Taylor, Thomson, Truswell, Tudor, Venner, Walshaw, Wilson, Wray, Dixon, Blackburn, Carlisle, Forsaith, Finnigan, Kidger, Newton, Senior, Downes, Golton, Campbell, Chapman, Hart-Brooke, and Howley.

NO – 15

Alderson, B Anderson, C Anderson, Amanda Carter, Cohen, Firth, Flynn, Foster, Harrington, Lamb, Richards, D Seary, S Seary, Smith and Stephenson.

ABSTAIN – 0

Council rose at 7.40 pm