

LEEDS CITY COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Held on

Wednesday 1st November 2006

At

THE COUNCIL CHAMBER
CIVIC HALL
LEEDS

In the Chair:

THE LORD MAYOR
(Councillor M Iqbal)

VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

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THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon everyone. Thank you, if we can all switch our electrical equipment off please, telephones, any other devices, otherwise you will have to make a contribution to Lord Mayor's Charity which will be welcome, thank you, and when - okay, before we start I think the whole Council is aware of the sudden death of our member of staff dear to everyone, Gary Broughton, and if we could observe a minute's silence as a mark of respect please, thank you.

(Minute's silence)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you everyone.

Can I welcome members of the public to join this afternoon, you are very welcome, and also welcome to join us at teatime as well if you happen to stay for that long. Thank you.

Just a humble request, Members of Council, when you are speaking, if you could not hold the papers in front of you, sometimes it dampens the volume on the sound, so thank you, and we will start today's Council business with the item number 1, Councillor Procter.

1. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13TH SEPTEMBER 2006

CLLR PROCTER: Yes, thank you Lord Mayor. I move that the Minutes be received.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Hanley.

CLLR HANLEY: Second Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: All in favour. Any against. Any abstentions.
(CARRIED) Thank you.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Moving on to declarations of interest.

CLLR D BLACKBURN: Personal interest in item 10, the item on Home Care Services, as my mother is a user of the service, and item 16 on passenger transport as a member of the Passenger Transport Authority.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. All the declarations have been submitted by Members on this - oh sorry, Councillor Blackburn.

CLLR A BLACKBURN: Yes, it is item 10 again because obviously this is my mother in law, I wish to declare an interest on item 10, my mother in law has services.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you Councillor Blackburn.

CLLR WADSWORTH: Item 13, I am a Director of Leeds North East Homes.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you Councillor. Councillor Anderson.

CLLR ANDERSON: Could I declare a personal interest in item 9, I am a Director of Leeds Bradford Airport and also a board member at Leeds North West Homes, and also item 17 as a board member of Leeds North West Homes as well.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you Councillor. Councillor Townsley.

CLLR TOWNSLEY: Thank you Lord Mayor. Item 16 as a member of (inaudible).

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Hyde.

CLLR W HYDE: Item 9 Lord Mayor as a Director of Leeds Bradford Airport.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. For those Members who have already submitted in writing I don't think they have to inform. Councillor Blackburn again.

CLLR A BLACKBURN: As a member of Leeds West Homes on the ...

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Jarosz.

CLLR JAROSZ: Sorry Lord Mayor, I need to declare on item 16 that I am also a member of West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Authority.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Thank you, okay, so most of the Members have declared their interest and the papers are displayed in the ante room and deposited in public galleries and has been circulated to each Member's place in the Chamber as well.

Can I - so the further declaration of interest have been mentioned, apart from myself. I have got personal and prejudicial interest on White Paper Motion item number 17 and 19, but I will mention the names because there is some confusions on the numbers. One Motion is in the name of Councillor Richard Lewis and the other Motion is in the name of Councillor Bernard Atha, and when we come to these items I will have to leave the Chair and the Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor Jack Dunn, will take over.

3. COMMUNICATIONS

Okay, item number 3, the Chief Executive.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: Thank you. There are no communications to report Lord Mayor today.

4. DEPUTATIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: Deputations, item 4.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: Just one deputation Lord Mayor, from the representatives of animal welfare charities regarding Local Authority tenants and their pets.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Procter.

CLLR PROCTER: Yes, thank you Lord Mayor. I move that the deputation be received.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Hanley.

CLLR HANLEY: Second Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. All in favour. Any against. Any abstentions. (Agreed) Thank you, thank you John.

Good afternoon for coming here to today's Council Meeting. You have five minutes to speak, no longer please, and you can begin by introducing your deputation and giving your name. Thank you.

MR GRAHAM HOULT: Thank you. Lord Mayor, elected Members, Council Officers and members of the public, our deputation consists of a collection of animal welfare organisations based around the city of Leeds. I am co-ordinator of Wharfe Valley branch of Cats Protection, I have a colleague from the Adel branch of Cats Protection here in Leeds, a colleague from Hope Pastures, which is an animal sanctuary in Meanwood, and a colleague from the Dogs Trust with their headquarters now in York Road.

Our contribution today is about Council tenants, their tenancy agreement and responsible pet ownership.

Today I would like to do five things with you if I can in the five minutes. One is to inform you about a problem, with some facts and some figures. The second thing is to show you some of the answers to those problems. The third thing is to offer partnership in working together in dealing with the current challenge, and then to seek a way that prevents this problem that we encounter daily from recurring again and again, and we also want to prepare all Council Departments for the forthcoming Animal Welfare Bill which is in itself a challenge to all those who have any form of duty of care for either people or animals.

Each year Cats Protection alone in Leeds is spending £100,000 neutering and treating unwanted and neglected or stray cats. All the statistics I keep in my office, and in our branch in Adel, says that 90% of this workload comes from an address or a location which is in the ownership of Leeds City Council, either as a domestic house or as a piece of land or a commercial property.

There are many households with more than a dozen pets. There are some households with figures that would make your hair curl, between 20 and up to 100 cats have been found in more than one house in Leeds in the last year. Some have been dead, some have been infested with fleas, some have been starved to death. Others are living somehow relatively tolerably in those conditions, they are a problem for neighbours and are obviously a problem for the people who are allegedly caring for them.

You have as Councillors a policy that says tenants should, (a) ask for permission to keep a pet and, (b) act responsibly when having pets. I see no evidence throughout the year in that policy being robustly monitored and adhered to.

My organisation, which is fully staffed by volunteers, receives 40 phone calls every day in my branch, which is based in Guiseley, from members of the public seeking some source of help about cats and other animals in their gardens, their houses and in their neighbours houses. For us to raise that £100,000 it means the same set of volunteers have to spend hours with tins outside supermarkets, hours on stalls at bazaars, to raise that sort of money to neuter as many cats as we can get

our hands on.

The purpose for being here today is to ask you as custodians of the public purse to recognise that some tenants behaviour is bordering on the anti social in that they are being unkind to animals, but they are certainly being unkind to your property. We enter with your Officers request many Council houses where the accommodation appears to me unfit to live in, where the property has been trashed, and where rent is likely to be lost for a substantial period.

I am not here to ask the Council for money, I am not here to ask Officers to do things that are outside Council policy. What I am here to do is to ask you if we can work in partnership with you over the next few months. By next spring, in theory, every cat that is un-spayed, every female cat in Leeds, could be part of a cycle of breeding between now and next April that could produce another 200,000 unwanted cats in Leeds within no time, such is the problem.

We have a waiting list for people to come into our accommodation, we have phone calls that we turn down every day asking for help. It has got to stop, your property is being damaged, relationships with other tenants are being spoiled, and animal cruelty, neglect and deprivation is substantial.

We can offer to anyone who is a pensioner, anyone who is on benefit or low income, virtual free neutering of any cat. Why are people not taking this up? Diffidence, lack of knowledge, we would like access to your news letters ...

THE LORD MAYOR: If you could finish.

MR GRAHAM HOULT: ...tenant forums and we ask for a working party, if it's possible, with some of your Officers, Social Services, Housing, Environmental Health and Legal to do something about the cycle.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, thank you.

MR GRAHAM HOULT: Thank you my Lord Mayor. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Hamilton.

CLLR PROCTER: I am dealing with this Lord Mayor. Can I move that the matter be referred to the Executive Board for consideration.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Hanley.

CLLR HANLEY: Second Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. All in favour. Thank you, any against. Any abstentions. (CARRIED) Thank you, carried.

Thank you for attending and for what you have said. You will be kept informed of the consideration which will be given to your comments, good afternoon.

5. REPORT

Okay, thank you Members of Council, we will move on to item 5, the report, Councillor Procter.

CLLR PROCTER: Thank you Lord Mayor, I move in terms of the notice.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Hanley. Councillor Hanley, are

you going to second item 5 the recommendation?

CLLR HANLEY: Sorry, second Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. All in favour. Any against. Any abstentions. (CARRIED)

6. QUESTIONS

Okay, we'll move on to item 6, questions. Councillor Wakefield.

CLLR WAKEFIELD: Thank you Lord Mayor. Could the Executive Board Member for Leisure please give Council details of the cost of staging the Robbie Williams concert.

CLLR PROCTER: The Council did not stage the Robbie Williams concert.

CLLR WAKEFIELD: Would he like to share with the Council at some stage how much it cost to facilitate the Robbie Williams concert, and would he come back to Council with details of the cost and income and we will work the rest out. Given it was such a popular event and we all supported it, I think it's only right and proper that the people of Leeds get to know about the cost and the income to the Council.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Procter.

CLLR PROCTER: I note Councillor Wakefield chose his words very carefully because of course he is aware of all of those matters because he has received a confidential need to know briefing. He shakes his head, the briefing took place with an Officer within the Department the week before last didn't it Keith? Keith, did the briefing ...(Uproar)

Lord Mayor, I was trying to address a question, I didn't expect the cat calls of Councillor Atha to interrupt me, and here he goes again Lord Mayor. If he actually wants to hear an answer perhaps he would zip it so we can get on with it. (Uproar)

Lord Mayor, Lord Mayor, Councillor Wakefield is aware of the issues, he is aware of the sums of money, those details were given in a confidential briefing. Why was that briefing confidential, because the matters are subject to legal proceedings, he is aware of that and to declare those matters here would be singularly inappropriate.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Bentley.

CLLR BENTLEY: Thank you Lord Mayor. Would the Leader of Council comment on the proposals of last weeks Local Government White Paper.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Harris to reply.

CLLR HARRIS: Lord Mayor, the long awaited Government White Paper did include some proposals which on the face of it should be very welcome to us, certainly the slashing of the target mentality that has plagued local government from on high for several years is a very welcome suggestion, indeed it will almost certainly allow Officers to focus more on delivery rather than on pleasing people from Whitehall.

I think there is a discussion to be had about the idea of four year fixed Councils, and I think there would be a very interesting discussion. The suggestion however that we ought to choose, without referendum as well I am bound to say,

which in itself is a retrograde step, that we should choose a model that must include either an elected Mayor or a fixed four year term Leader of Council I think is extremely undemocratic and unwise.

However, at the end of the day the real issue comes down to, as it does always, financial freedom for local government. You can give an elected Mayor or a four year term Leader of Council as much power as you want to bang the table and say we're going to do this, that and the other, but we will get absolutely nowhere without financial freedom, and this is something that Central Government just will not address itself to. Nowhere else in Europe is local government so beholden to Central Government for the money it spends, it is somewhere in the region of 80% of funding for local authorities is controlled by Central Government in Britain. The next near is, I believe is Sweden, and that is somewhere in the region of the high 50%, in other words they have wide discretionary powers to raise finance locally, through whatever vehicle, I am not here going to address the pros and cons of local income tax, or whatever else, but wide discretionary powers to raise their finance locally so that issue is within their own hands, and this is the issue that Central Government has singularly failed to address in the White Paper on the future of local government.

It is interesting that we are, to the day I believe, or very close to it, the first anniversary of the announcement from Alistair Darling that the city wouldn't get Supertram, for reasons which are still not entirely clear to us, and a year on it is certainly clear what we are meant to do about our transport strategy in Leeds because the issue revolves around purse strings. Very interesting if you put that in the context this week that the announcement that Nottingham, who not only already has a light rail tram system, has now been given Government funding of £437 million to build an extension to its tram system. Now there writ large is the problem, is it not, that good for Nottingham, I don't begrudge them the money, but given to them by Central Government. This great city of ours, by every measure supposedly the second largest authority in the country, all sorts of criteria against which we are measured as a great city, but we are not given the financial freedom with which to determine our own future, and that is where the White Paper has singularly failed to do anything that really needed addressing. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Phillips.

CLLR PHILLIPS: Thank you Lord Mayor. Would the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Housing please confirm to Council once more that this administration did not cut funding of the proof of age scheme and has worked effectively in tackling anti social behaviour in the city.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Carter.

CLLR J CARTER: Thank you. No I didn't actually, it's a first class question we've got to accept haven't we, absolutely first class.

May I just confirm that that is correct. At no stage of this authority at any time have we ever mainstreamed the proof of age scheme. The proof of age scheme, by the way, is the one that is run by the Trading Standards, you know the Trading Standards, the one that give cigarettes away and they don't seem to come back, that's the rumour about them anyway.

Can I just also talk about the question of anti social behaviour. Anti social behaviour, we have spent record amounts on anti social behaviour, we are going forward and we, well it's wrong for us to stand here and blow our own trumpet, Her Majesty's Government tell us we are a leading authority in this area, they say we are a trail blazer, they come along and say, "Will you join our Respect because you are so good", Her Majesty's Government do it, so on that, the answer, I think that's given

you the answer that you wanted I hope.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Finnigan. Sorry, supplementary.

CLLR PHILLIPS: Would my colleague care to comment on this leaflet which has gone out recently in my ward which, put out by the Labour Party and is trying to play on people's worst fears and appears to be inaccurate.

CLLR J CARTER: I've asked if it was paid for by the sale of cigarettes but I don't know. (Laughter)

May I just refer to that particular leaflet, but before doing so ... (Uproar) ... before doing so I understand, Lord Mayor, that we have a new spokesman on the other side who claims to be the Shadow Chairman of Leeds Safety Partnership. He never attends the meetings, I don't know how suddenly he gets this particular ...

CLLR ATHA: That's why he's called a shadow. (Laughter)

CLLR J CARTER: Now what Councillor Rafique could say is he is the spokesman for the Labour Party, he hardly shadows a committee which he doesn't even sit on. I am quite happy for him to be the spokesman because it does mean what he says has some importance.

Now you will remember that this administration decided we would like two PCSO's in every ward in the city. I was summoned in the normal way to the Scrutiny Board and that gentleman said, "No, that's not the way to do it, you should put more into one part of the city and less into another part of the city". Now coming back to Garforth, let's come back to Garforth for a second, we are going to put five PCSO's into your ward. Now, it wouldn't happen under the Labour Party so I want you to actually make that, again that's a clear point.

Let me just tell you a little more about what some of these other wild claims from across there concern. Let's talk about Anti Social Behaviour Orders, which is a wild claim. In the newspaper ... (Uproar) ... one of the wild claims in the newspaper the other day about the lack of Anti Social Behaviour Orders.

Lord Mayor, let me just finish, can you put some order into ...

THE LORD MAYOR: Can we have some order please. Councillor Carter, the question came from Councillor Phillips.

CLLR J CARTER: I am answering the question. (Uproar)

THE LORD MAYOR: Silence please. Councillor Carter.

CLLR J CARTER: Let me read what this gentleman is referring to, he is asking me. Is there a (inaudible). Is there a cut in the amount of anti social behaviour in Garforth, that's in the paper which he is asking me about so I have a right to answer that.

Lord Mayor, coming back to Anti Social Behaviour Orders, Labour in three years issued 140, that's your record. In two and a half years we issued 242. It's nothing to do with being macho, the point I am making to you is you should stop trying to make claims that are not true.

Let me just show you a couple of other points as far as anti social behaviour is concerned. Take drugs for example, take drugs - I am totally in order, if he doesn't

shut up I think you will throw him out my Lord Mayor. (Uproar)

Lord Mayor, let's take drugs. This year ...(Uproar). (Laughter) I should be so lucky. Lord Mayor, just one final point, anti social behaviour is something we take very, very seriously in this authority and we lead in all sorts of ways, and our latest one, our latest one is, Members should be pleased at, we have now got record numbers, record numbers of people into drug treatment. Now you may scoff at that, you may laugh, we think it's very important because under you it was failing and the Government told us it was failing, we had to do something about it. We have got record numbers and indeed in 07/08 we are hoping to have 100% of people on drugs in treatment. That is the type of record, that is the work we are doing and we are proud of it. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Finnigan.

CLLR FINNIGAN: Can the Executive Board Member for Development please confirm the present state of the Town Centre Renewal Programme.

CLLR A CARTER: Thank you my Lord Mayor, in answer to Councillor Finnigan I am happy to confirm that the plans are moving forward quite quickly. As Members of Council know we allocated £10 million in total to the Town and District Centre Regeneration Scheme which included £2.5 million for the Parks Renaissance Scheme. Councillor Finnigan I am sure is aware, because he's been involved along with his colleagues, in the project at Scatcherd Park for example where, and I paraphrase, one of his constituents or a resident of Morley has said that they never thought in their lifetime to see the park restored to its former glory. That is the level of investment we are putting in, in parks and in town and district centres, and also underlines the level of neglect that we inherited from the party opposite.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Finnigan, do you have a supplementary? Okay. Councillor McArdle.

CLLR MCARDLE: Thank you Lord Mayor. Would the Executive Board Member for Leisure tell me if it is his intention to visit Morley Library in the very near future.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Procter.

CLLR PROCTER: Yes, thank you Lord Mayor. Unfortunately I wasn't able to be present at the recent reopening of Morley Library due to another long standing library commitment in actual fact, and on that particular day I was actually in Leeds Market looking at an innovative project of a library stall that we are currently running within the market, which is I have to say a huge success.

I understand from colleagues that the refurbishment work that has taken place in Morley Library is first rate and covering a number of original features, and I Lord Mayor would like to thank publically the people with the Library staff, both locally within Morley and also within the Department for doing such a fantastic job and providing a newly refurbished facility for all of the people of Morley.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor McArdle, do you have a supplementary.

CLLR MCARDLE: By way of supplementary, yes, it is also answered by supplementary. Would he agree with me that the staff within Morley, the partners and particularly John Righton(?) and Bev Rice(?) have done a wonderful job here and it is a tribute to those for bringing this project in on time and on budget, and also a tribute to the public of Morley for their patience. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Procter.

CLLR PROCTER: Yes, thank you Lord Mayor, I would also like to add my thanks to those two particular members of staff that Councillor McArdle mentions, John Righton and indeed Bev Rice from the Central Department for all of their efforts in this particular instance.

The library refurbishment programme that is going on is almost a silent revolution that is crossing the whole of the city, and when I go to the libraries that are slowly but surely being refurbished right across the city there is a warm welcome always in store and a genuine thanks from people that those very important local facilities to all people within the community are being brought back to their former glory. Thank you Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Gruen.

CLLR GRUEN: Will the Children's Services Lead Executive Member when he first knew about the school closures in Roundhay as a result of the Robbie Williams concert.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Brett.

CLLR BRETT: Thank you Lord Mayor. As Council will know the concerts were on Friday the 8th and Saturday the 9th of September. Police notified Council that certain roads would be closed on Tuesday of the same week, that is Tuesday the 5th. On Wednesday the 6th Education Leeds was made aware of the road closures and the advice from the Police and bus companies of major disruption to transport, and Education Leeds advised schools to try and stay open but to undertake risk assessments based on their knowledge of the route taken by children.

The SILCs were advised that they would be supported in closing following a similar risk assessment for their children as a whole. Education Leeds made technical support available for schools in making these risk assessments.

On Thursday the 7th of September Councillor Harker and myself were briefed about the ensuing closures. Thank you.

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

CLLR GRUEN: Does Councillor Brett think the additional income for the Council provided by the additional Friday concert is a price worth paying of thousands of Roundhay pupils missing out on their education.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Brett.

CLLR BRETT: I am not going to get drawn into commenting on that. There has already been at a previous Council Meeting, as you are well aware, a statement from Councillor Harris saying that this was a case where things went wrong, so you are aware of that. Rosemary Archer and I continue to be mindful of our responsibilities, and I am sure Councillor Procter and his Director are similarly mindful. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Question seven has been withdrawn, Members of Council, so question eight, Councillor Lowe.

CLLR LOWE: If the recycling target is to be achieved in this city can the

Executive Board Member for City Services tell me what his Department is doing to deal with the massive problem of organic food waste which currently represents 50% of every black bin.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Smith.

CLLR S SMITH: Thank you Lord Mayor. Well I am not sure what the composition of Councillor Lowe's black bin is but food waste doesn't represent 50% of every black bin, so if you've got 50% in your black bin I am afraid it's not representative.

The figure of 50% I guess relates to organic waste overall, a significant proportion of which is garden waste. We have introduced garden waste collections very recently, the new service started last week and in fact 43 tonnes of garden waste was lifted.

There is a significant lack at the moment of necessary composting facilities for processing food waste, both nationally and regionally. However it is clearly set out within our strategy, we are exploring the development of local in vessel composting provision and we will ensure that within the overall waste solution there is flexibility to allow new waste streams such as food waste to be collected and recycled should this become a sustainable option.

THE LORD MAYOR: Do you have a supplementary Councillor Lowe.

CLLR LOWE: By way of supplementary, if you are developing options, part of the new collection service, can you tell me what progress has been made in identifying the £5 million per year that you are going to need to find in order to save us £9.5 million in 2009 and up to £53 million by 2012/13.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Smith.

CLLR S SMITH: Yes, that will be part of the budget deliberations in the coming months. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Hollingsworth.

CLLR HOLLINGSWORTH: Can the Executive Member for City Services comment on the number of vacancies for school crossing patrol wardens in the city.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Smith.

CLLR S SMITH: Well the Crossing Patrol Service is responsible for 156 crossing sites across the city, currently there are 20 vacancies leaving 136 sites covered. By way of comparison, in March 2006 there were 29 vacant posts and in March 2005 39 vacant posts, so we are moving in the right direction. Overseeing our children's safe passage to school is critically important and the Crossing Patrol Service continues to do all it can to deliver the full cover required and is grateful for the support it receives from the City's communities in continually improving the service provided.

THE LORD MAYOR: Do you have a supplementary Councillor Hollingsworth. No, thank you. Councillor Blake.

CLLR BLAKE: Could the Executive Member responsible please confirm this administrations commitment to helping the victims of rape and sexual violence.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Carter.

CLLR J CARTER: Lord Mayor, the answer is very simple, yes, yes, yes, but I've no doubt Councillor Blake is now going to give some feeble reason why we are not, but I wait and see.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake, do you have a supplementary.

CLLR BLAKE: Yes I do. By way of supplementary, Lord Mayor, thank you for that answer and I have to say that the, I would like to commend the work of agencies that are engaged in the city on this work.

Given his support for the work being undertaken I wonder if he would therefore agree with the relevant agencies in the city that there are still massive gaps in provision and support for women who have suffered from rape and sexual violence, and in particular would he join me in demanding an answer from Social Services as to where the £53,000 in their budget for a dedicated rape crisis service has disappeared to and why the work promised by that Department to find an additional 50,000, therefore giving a total of £103,000 to properly fund such a service seems never to have been undertaken.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Carter.

CLLR J CARTER: Lord Mayor, having been given no fore notice of the particular question itself may I just say this, as far as I understand it the Social Services funding the rape crisis service for many, many years, and it collapsed, Leeds Rape Crisis collapsed in 2002. It is not for me to start saying why and wherefore is the Social Services spending or not spending its money or commissioning it. I have no doubt they will have this in mind and I would suggest that I ask the Executive Member responsible for this to write to you giving the full facts.

However, I am not going to let it go away thinking this Council does nothing. I think this is one of the most serious things in this Council. I would just like to just cover a few of the agencies, and I know you refer to agencies but let's talk about Leeds Domestic Violence Strategy. That is a work that people try to do to ensure this stops. We have got rape and sexual violence are common place in the context of domestic violence, a lot of work is going on to try and help in that particular area. The Police in West Yorkshire are so keen to stop this it is unbelievable, and it's right and proper they do and we are giving our full support to that.

Can I just tell you one thing - I could actually stay all day on this because there is about 20 different areas that are trying to work on this particular subject - but let me tell you about the Sanctuary Scheme, and I am not certain Judith that you were all that pleased about Sanctuary when it came along, but you might have been but I can't remember. Sanctuary is where we try to keep females, and it is mainly females, in their homes when some idiot of a man has been causing them abuse and all sorts of things. Lord Mayor, currently Sanctuary is on its way and it's working. 61 householders have taken up the offer for secure measures. What it actually does, it secures the property which the female lives in to stop the male getting to that lady. The marvellous thing about it is that when - unfortunately when females are taken with their children into institutions their children's education suffers as well as the person themselves suffer. The idea of this is to keep them in their home, to keep the children at the same school. I am delighted that it is working. It is something we should be proud of in this Council, it is working, we are keeping people secure in their accommodation.

So there are many things, many, many things Judith. If you want a detailed answer on the specific point, fine, ask it as a supplementary, I do know a little bit about it but I don't know the full details because it is Social Services, not even my Department. I would have thought it would have been better if you'd have asked the Executive Board Member for Social Services. Not to worry if you won't, but we do take this matter, as I said to start with, very, very seriously. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

CLLR OGILVIE: Thank you Lord Mayor. Would the Executive Member for Development, mindful of the work of the Climate Change Steering Group, tell us what the current strategy is to tackle climate change in this city.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Carter.

CLLR A CARTER: Thank you my Lord Mayor. In June 2005 Leeds City Council signed the Nottingham Declaration. The Declaration contains a series of commitments designed to put local government at the forefront of reducing the effects of climate change on the UK economy, society and environment. These commitments include an agreement to develop plans with our partners and local communities within the next two years to progressively address the cause and impacts of climate change and to work at a local level to help the UK deliver its national climate change targets.

To gain support for the strategy members of the Leeds Initiative, Officers and Councillors were invited to a workshop on World Environment Day. It was proposed that a Climate Change Strategy Group be set up within Leeds, within the Leeds Environment City Partnership, and that the Group comprises of the Chair, a Councillor, the Climate Change Officer, Environment City Manager and a representative from each of the following themed groups, Planning and Development, Adaptation, that covers flooding arrangements not covered by planing, the Built Environment, Transport, Waste, Procurement, Natural Environment, Education and Awareness. Participants were invited to join a themed Group and each theme Group was asked to nominate a member to represent them on the Climate Change Strategy Group.

The proposed timetable. It is hoped that the first meeting of the Climate Change Strategy Group will take place in November or December of this year when a timetable of events will be agreed and the programme has already been drawn up which will be proposed at that meeting. I don't propose now to go through the programme but if you wish in your supplementary I can start and go through it.

The role of the Climate Change Working Party, progress to date can be attributed to a multi departmental group which has been meeting under the Chairmanship of Councillor David Blackburn since March 2005. It is proposed that this Group continues to meet to ensure that where the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan contains actions and targets that apply to Leeds City Council, activities and services, then these targets can be and are achieved. It is also proposed that a Leeds City Council Officer represents our interests at each of the themed Groups.

The Climate Change Officer will facilitate the work of the Climate Change Working Group, the Climate Change Strategy Group and the Climate Change themed Groups. The Climate Change Officer will develop the Climate Change Strategy based on an outline document that has already been prepared and a considerable amount of research has already been conducted.

The Climate Change Officer will also identify existing monitoring

arrangements and put a system in place to monitor future requirements.

The Development Department is pleased to announce that the post of Climate Change Officer will be filled by Mr George Munson(?), formerly the Regional Climate Change Officer for Yorkshire and the Humber, who is due to take up his post on the 20th of November 2006. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

CLLR OGILVIE: Thank you Lord Mayor. By way of supplementary, could Councillor Carter tell us what the current carbon emission levels are in this city and when does he envisage the city becoming carbon neutral, and could he also tell us how he will ensure that all Members are involved in this important debate.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Carter.

CLLR A CARTER: My Lord Mayor, simple, the emissions are too high, that's why we are working as we are to get them down, and I would (Uproar), but I would suggest, I would suggest to the gentleman opposite that if they stop talking so much they might do a lot to close the hole in the ozone layer. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Illingworth.

CLLR ILLINGWORTH: Thank you Lord Mayor. Which Councillors have so far been shown, sent copies or otherwise had access to the report on transportation by Paul Gough and Tim Dixon which was considered by the Development Technical Board on 13th of May 2005, and when did these disclosures take place.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Carter.

CLLR A CARTER: You. (Laughter)

CLLR ATHA: On a Point of Order Lord Mayor, if this Council is not to be reduced to a total farce (Uproar).

CLLR PROCTER: Lord Mayor, the speech has been made, this is not on the order paper, sit him down. (Uproar)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Carter, you have got amber light. Thank you. Councillor Illingworth, supplementary please.

CLLR ILLINGWORTH: Yes Lord Mayor. Is Councillor Carter aware of the conclusions from this report, that say that the A65 is at capacity, that there is evidence of peak (inaudible) and there is more trips happening outside the peak periods, that public transport opportunities have been studied and are considered unlikely to result in a significant modal shift, that future growth of the airport has been assessed and will worsen conditions of the A65 and the surrounding network, an extra 1260 car trips per day having been identified, that there have been 3,100 additional two way peak hour trips from permitted development in the corridor, and that the A65, Lord Mayor (Uproar).

THE LORD MAYOR: Can we have point of order please. Time is up where we have got to finish with this question so please, can we listen to the supplementary and this is the last question, thank you.

CLLR ILLINGWORTH: Thank you Lord Mayor. That the A65 does not have the capacity to carry all the identified additional trips in the peak period, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Carter.

CLLR A CARTER: My Lord Mayor, all Members of Council should be aware of the transport issues on the A65. They are serious and many. I would just point out this to Councillor Illingworth, had his Government stood by their original commitment to fund the Quality Bus Initiative on the A65 when they first indicated they would instead of then putting the whole project on hold, some of the issues Councillor Illingworth has raised today would now be on the point of being addressed. I do wish Councillor Illingworth would have addressed his criticism at his colleagues when they were in administration for their lack of action, and his Government for continually fudging the issue of providing us with the money to provide a decent public transport system. (Applause)

7. RECOMMENDATIONS OF EXECUTIVE BOARD

THE LORD MAYOR: Okay, that's the end of questions we'll move on to item 7, Councillor Harris, Recommendations of Executive Board.

CLLR HARRIS: Yes, Lord Mayor, I move.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Carter.

CLLR A CARTER: Second Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor McArdle.

CLLR MCARDLE: Thank you Lord Mayor. I am speaking to page 20, paragraph 3.12. I think this is to do with financial monitoring. This highlights that the Council is really a victim of its own corporate success in dealing with service and service users city wide on particularly the financial pressures in supporting people, community care packages and (inaudible) enterprises etc.

It is not helped by the withdrawal of grant from Central Government causing a loss of revenue that has impacted upon these services, and it is fine for Central Government to give local authorities the power to do things, it's not right for withdrawal of these funds, and Councillor Harris has already alluded to this earlier, it is great to have financial freedom but it might assist matters if we also get the finances first and foremost. Thank you Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Leadley.

CLLR LEADLEY: My Lord Mayor, I wish to refer to paragraph 5.2 in the report on financial health monitoring which is on page 24. This highlights a quite startling point which is that the City Council is chasing a target of getting rid of at least 3,000 Council houses by sale or demolition over a period of two years. If it does not it will suffer a penalty of £2.4 million in 2006/7, and in each following year that the target is not met.

Who has set this target? Is it of purely local origin with a view to reducing ALMO management charges, or has it been set by Central Government.

In 2005/6 1191 Council houses were sold and 231 emptied for demolition, and that is a reckoning of 1422, which is just short of the 1500. Recent trends show that we will do well to gain more than about 300 dwellings a year through the affordable housing policy, so we are looking into an abyss in the provision of social housing, and if Councillor Gruen thinks that is amusing I suggest that he tells it to his constituents.

House prices, including those of resold Council houses, have risen to sharply in Leeds since the year 2000 that many people have been priced out of the market. We must get our priorities right, unless we have reliable means of replacing lost stock we shall not be able to afford the sale or demolition of Council houses, or the setting of bulldozers against pre 1919 terraced houses.

Just to illustrate how difficult it is in one small area of the affordable housing policy, in 2005/6 the City Council collected £779,000 in Section 106 commuted sums for off site affordable housing, mostly from developed lots of just over the 24 dwelling threshold, and that is about enough for perhaps a dozen or so small houses. Only a small part of the policy but nonetheless it shows how difficult it is to replace that lost stock. Thank you my Lord Mayor. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Carter.

CLLR A CARTER: In response to Councillor Leadley, we, as we have said now I think on consecutive Council Meetings for the past twelve months, we are acutely aware of the problems of affordability, whether that is for purchase or indeed for rent, and availability of affordable housing across the city. That is why we have again over the last number of months announced what I freely admit are small scale initiatives to try and begin to combat the problem, but nevertheless they are initiatives that weren't there before.

What I can promise Councillor Leadley is that he will find at the next Council Meeting there will be a report on the issue coming through Executive Board outlining some more definite steps that we are proposing as an authority to begin to tackle the problem. We are absolutely aware of the necessity to have affordable housing, and more than that a range of housing types across this city if we are to continue to expand economically as we currently are, and there is no shortage of urgency as far as this administration is concerned.

Again, you will also see, I think probably coming through the Local Development framework, other initiatives relating to the same issue. Be assured, we are aware of the problem, we are doing more than has been done before but even that is not yet enough.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Harris, are you summing up.

CLLR HARRIS: Well, Lord Mayor, interestingly it is not always obvious from the Minutes that they indicated exactly the point that Members may make, but interestingly both Councillors McArdle and Leadley have followed up on the point I was making earlier in response to the question of the Government White Paper because both the things on which you have commented are right at the heart of it and indeed, as we heard in the last question that Andrew Carter dealt with, the response to Councillor Illingworth, again the question of funding for transport, and so both make very valid points, one to do with financial freedom and the authority, the other, not on this, but Councillor Leadley you may yet have some hope, this insanity of target mentality, and here we have a target set which is bonkers frankly, it's, you know, that we are constantly chasing targets which in the end stop us, or stop our partners or agencies with which we are working, stop them from delivering effective management and effective services, and so both points are well made.

The White Paper, as I have said, may give us some comfort with regard to the point that Councillor Leadley raised. I cannot see that it will give us any comfort whatsoever to the point that Councillor McArdle was making.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Can we call for a vote. All in favour. All

those in favour, show of hands please. Any against. Any abstentions. (CARRIED)

8. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

Item 8, Councillor Harris.

CLLR HARRIS: Yes, I move Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Carter.

CLLR A CARTER: Second Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor McArdle.

CLLR MCARDLE: Thank you Lord Mayor. I am speaking to page 32 paragraph 3.5. Just a short comment to say it's right, appropriate and sensible to close this legal loophole regarding live planning or licensing applications. I think it is just the right thing to do. Thank you Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Harris, to sum up.

CLLR HARRIS: Yes.

THE LORD MAYOR: All in favour. Any against. Any abstentions.
(CARRIED)

9. MINUTES

Item 9, Councillor Harris again.

CLLR HARRIS: I move Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Procter.

CLLR PROCTER: I second and reserve the right to speak Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Okay we'll move on to comments, Councillor Gruen.

(a) Executive Board

(i) Central & Corporate

CLLR GRUEN: Lord Mayor, thank you. I wish to comment on page 42, Minute 54(b), following up the report 54(a) in terms of the Council (inaudible) Programme. I refer particularly to the outline of the Children's Services Developments.

There is an increasing tendency at present for Officers to write what I can only describe as about superficial and thin reports with the most detailed, extravagant and far reaching implications, giving yet further delegated powers to the Chief Executive and to others without any further Member scrutiny at all. This report falls into that category.

There is no doubt all Members of Council will agree that the job of the Director of Children's Services is complex, difficult, wide reaching and probably next to the Chief Executive's the most important post in the organisation. We have considered very carefully the structure the administration has endorsed and put forward. We have spoken with partners, both relevant in terms of the Act and others,

we have spoken with stakeholders, and we have formed a view which I believe a responsible Opposition should place on record.

I believe you have thought through and worked hard on what you believe is a workable way forward. We disagree with the conclusions you have come to. That is our prerogative, and it will be I think less than honest not to stake that in Council and then hold you to account later on.

We believe this job is hard enough without imposing an elitist layer on top of the existing structure without making any changes to the Department that that structure is inheriting. Indeed Councillor Brett on one or two occasions has said, "The Government's given us this to do and they have given us no extra money". The extra money should come from the efficiencies of scale, the economies that you can make by doing what all other Councils, certainly in this region if not in the whole country, and certainly in all of the major core cities have done, reduced to integrate a Children's Services Department, taking the whole of the predecessor Departments together into a holistic outward facing organisation.

You may have the confidence to say every other Council in this region has got it wrong, and only Leeds, because we are unique in Leeds, we've got it right. The Jury will be out on that. Our view is you haven't got it right. Our view is you cannot simply add more and more posts to the structure without looking where there should be efficiencies and savings elsewhere in the existing structure. Our view is that this is not as well thought through as it should have been.

Indeed, earlier on, when Councillor Brett answered my question, here is the telling point. In practice, colleagues, in practice the Children's Services champion was told less than 24 hours before the event that Procter's 30 pieces of silver would lead to the fact that we had thousands of people unable to go to school, thousands of people, and less than 24 hours before did that decision cross the desk of Councillor Brett, and Councillor Harker, and the Director. Where was the children's champion to bang some heads together in Learning and Leisure and say, "What the hell do you think you're doing, is it worth that little bit of extra money to deprive pupils of education".

What are the children's champions doing in South Leeds. Here is a brand new school, a PFI scheme, and hundreds of children miss at least four days, at least four days of education. Now it might be outside of your control but I would like you to stand up visibly and say, "This is not acceptable private sector, you are not delivering what we want. We want more from you".

So far, therefore, we have seen a structure which we don't think works, and we have seen no essence, no actual delivery from the team to actually support children in this city to get a fair deal. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Procter.

CLLR PROCTER: Oh thank you Lord Mayor, I presumed there were other people commenting.

Let me just respond to - well, a response to Councillor Gruen. I am intrigued that he talks about pieces of silver, and indeed gave the indication earlier that in some way the Council was financially benefiting from the concert that went on in Roundhay Park. There is only - Jim, if you would be quiet you may learn.

The fact - Lord Mayor, Lord Mayor, do we constantly have to run the barrage of taunts from the people opposite when we are trying to speak, because if we do

Lord Mayor it's a sad day for this Council (*Hear Hear*)

Lord Mayor - and here he goes again Lord Mayor. Councillor McKenna, if you wish to speak, put your hand in the air, get up and say something. If you don't, shut up. (Applause)

Lord Mayor, the simple point I was trying to make was that Councillor Gruen talks about the Council receiving money and gives coded messages effectively to members of the press and others about what are confidential financial arrangements. Now I don't know if Councillor Wakefield passed that information to him, in terms of the income, I doubt that he did in actual fact, but the fact is in his earlier comments, and now again, he is alluding to a situation which in my view is wholly inappropriate.

Lord Mayor, I would like nothing more than to declare a whole string of information to this Council. The impossible, the difficult position this authority was left in. Councillor Wakefield knows of some of those matters. Unfortunately I cannot do that. I cannot reveal all of that information for legal reasons, Lord Mayor, and that is the advice that has been received. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Harker.

CLLR HARKER: Just to assure Councillor Gruen that we did deal robustly with the situation in South Leeds over the South Leeds closure. The school was advised not to close. The Governors and the Head Teacher, as is their right, under current legislation, took that decision.

As far as I am concerned the reports I have in my hand show that many of the snags which occurred, and will occur with a new build, were dealt with over half term. The burning out of the ICT equipment should never happen again, it should not have happened. It did happen. To suggest that Children's Services are not robustly dealing with any of the problems that come before us and over our desks is to mislead this Council and the city at large, and it is also to impugn my honour and the honour of other Councillors who are doing the job, and I think that needs to be taken into account.

I have taken great interest in what is going on in South Leeds. I have even spoken to Councillors who are Governors on that body and said that they should come directly to me if they were concerned. All channels are open, all channels are open, and it was dealt with robustly. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Wakefield.

CLLR WAKEFIELD: Very briefly, Lord Mayor. Councillor Procter has made a number of statements today and I think I need to clarify exactly what exchanges took place between myself and the Officer, and I hope the Officer is here.

It was absolutely true she came into brief me but I received no documents, no papers and no figures. I did get briefed on the nature of it, and the fact that it was sensitive, but I have received no information on the cost, or indeed no pieces of paper that tell me anything. I accepted from the Officer that it was sensitive because there was some legal dispute. I received no documents, and I give my word at Council to people that that has not happened and I hope you accept that.

I think the point that has been made is a very important one and we are wandering away from it. What Councillor Gruen has said is that that was a conflict, remember all of us this side support the concert and the success it brought to the city in terms of the money that it raised, I think it was used, £5 million figure. But what we

have got doubts about is what the children's champion was doing at that time allowing children to be sent home at very short notice and placing the parents in jeopardy on a very important issue. Some parents couldn't take the time off, they were given less than 48 hours notice, and from my understanding, and I am prepared to follow this through, a significant school was told to close, not to make their own mind up but they should close, and I will double check that for you, and I think it's important about the structure that if these kind of conflicts happen we have somebody on Council that can speak out on behalf of children being the children's champion, and that does reflect the structure.

We have disagreements with the structure, I articulated those at Executive Board, about whether it was powerful enough to deliver that kind of process, speak on behalf of children. We still have our doubts, Councillor Gruen has said it, the jury is out, but let me be absolutely clear, we will be watching you to make sure that there is no fudge, if something like this has happened, we want you to stand on your feet, be loud and clear and be what you are, the children's champion. Thank you Lord Mayor. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor McKenna.

CLLR MCKENNA: Thank you Lord Mayor. I rise as challenged I am sorry that we are dwelling on such a small part of Peter's question. The most important thing obviously is the education of our children and I hope Richard is going to address that when I sit down.

Councillor Procter, this is just another example of your secretiveness is it not, we are still waiting for the report, after eighteen months, from Roundhay Golf Club and the financial dealings with it. It is okay if you have been advised legally - yes we are, oh yes we are. Yes we are.

Lord Mayor, that is bad enough, but when Councillor Procter rises and he uses information from confidential figures, which clearly he has in his head, to pooh pooh an argument on this side when we don't know what he is talking about. This is not in the interests of open Government, this is a dictatorship, it is happening more and more Councillor Procter and we are noting all these secret advice you are getting to keep it to yourself. We believe in open Government, let us have the facts on both sides of the Chamber. (Uproar) Oh we do, we do.

Let us have the facts, and I speak to Councillor Harris and Councillor Carter who will soon take over the mantle or the baton of Leadership, let us have the facts on both sides of this Chamber and then we can get into a sensible argument. Let us not be put in the position where Councillor Carter can get on his high horse, and it has to be high because he is rather small, let us not be put in the fact(sic) where he has all the financial information relating to something, uses it and doesn't give to us the courtesy of knowing what is going on. We are going in the direction that none of us want to see. Thank you Lord Mayor, and I hope Councillor Brett is now going to answer the pertinent question raised by Councillor Gruen.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Brett.

CLLR BRETT: Seriously, the suggestion made by Councillor Gruen that a giant Children's Department be set up. I can see the logic of where he is coming from because he is quite correct that most Councils, smaller than Leeds, have indeed done that, one or two I think with disastrous consequences.

If you stop for a minute to think through what that means you might realise why we have decided not to go there. It means in Leeds a billion pound business

reorganising, to create a Department that would deal with two thirds at least of the spending of this Council. The number of Officers who would have to have new names, new titles, new headed paper, the disruption that that causes I believe in at least a two year period means that people have their eye off the ball on what we really want, which is services to children and young people.

The second point, which I want to stress, and what frankly I am a bit frightened that Peter hasn't fully understood this, because - okay, I am learning on this. This portfolio does not just involve Leeds City Council. If Rosemary had set herself up as the Director of Children's Services heading up a giant Department, and was then trying to deal with negotiations between the Health Service and Children's Social Services, she is seen clearly to be at the head of an organisation on one side. The advantages we think of the organisation we have set up gives a level of detachment, a level of overview which we think may be significantly helpful.

Now it may reassure Peter to know that of course we are reviewing what we have done, and if in due course you can convince us that we are wrong we will consider looking at this again. But at this point the items that you have raised today, a number of things that have gone wrong, and nobody is trying to pretend that they were wonderful and that there weren't mistakes made, you can do that in a billion pound business at every Council Meeting. There will always be some things that go wrong. What we have got to try and do is to concentrate on spending the money wisely and I believe what we are doing is precisely that. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Driver.

CLLR DRIVER: Yes, perhaps I ought to begin by declaring an interest as a Member of the Governing Body of South Leeds High School.

I am quite amazed by what I have heard this afternoon about any communication between the children's champion and the governing body at South Leeds High School. I would be quite interested to see the evidence for that. I have been in attendance at all the meetings that have taken place, both formal and informal I believe, around these matters of the four days that were lost. I know of no intervention by the children's champion in any of that.

It is interesting this because, you know, over the last two years, Lord Mayor, we have had debates in this Chamber about the role of the Lead Member for Children's Services, and there has been on a number of occasions questions asked by Members on this side of the Chamber about how well articulated that role was, and I think we are beginning to see the chickens coming home to roost now on this, that in fact that has not been properly thought through, we are not seeing the difference between the administrative role of the Children's Services Department and the Education Leeds and all the administration, and the role of elected Members in so far as they are there to communicate with the community about the services to which it is entitled.

I believe we have seen this afternoon a fudge on this and I challenge Councillor Harker to produce the evidence that the communication took place with the governing body of South Leeds High School on the matters he referred to. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Harker.

CLLR HARKER: A point of personal explanation Lord Mayor. I can deal with one part of what, this easily. I actually spoke to Geoff in Committee Room A before the school opened and expressed that I was, my door was open, he is a Governor there, at any time that I would listen to what he had to say. I was informed by

Officers that the school was asked not to close. Now Geoff, you can either deny we had the conversation or not.

CLLR DRIVER: Not relevant. (Uproar)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lowe, did you want to comment, Councillor Lowe.

CLLR LOWE: Not on this.

THE LORD MAYOR: Not on this one.

CLLR LOWE: Minute 44, page 56, right, yes, I was falling asleep, sorry, because you were getting so boring.

But anyway, I want to comment on the financial health monitoring report which details the position after four months. I have to say that in spite of, or perhaps because of Councillor Steve Smith's sanguine approach to budgeting in this city, you know, giving us a few months to find £5 million next year, I am really, really shocked at the very poor performance that this report represents for the first four months. I mean if this is the first months god help us for the rest of the year.

I am particularly disappointed about City Services performance and they are projecting a £1 million overspend, and I think that this augers very ill for the position of the Council in trying to achieve the £5 million additional income that it is going to need next year in order to deliver the new refuse collection service.

If we seriously intend to deliver the Waste Strategy, and I am sure you do intend to deliver the Waste Strategy, then you need to put in £5 million more next year, and the year after that, and the year after that, and so on, in order to be able to pay for all the infrastructure that is needed to deliver that strategy. You have got to get to 40% of all waste being recycled. You are less than 23% at the moment, or round about 23%. You have got a long way to go and you are not going to do it unless you find £5 million, at least £5 million.

I think that some serious thinking needs to be done about the way that the budgeting is being undertaken if you are waiting until next year to sort out the £5 million, and I think it's a very worrying state of affairs that we are carrying this level of deficit at the four month stage and we are not even anywhere near finding all the extra resources we need, not just for the Waste Strategy but also for other things such as supporting people (inaudible) etc.

So I would ask that those people who are primarily responsible for organising the budgeting for next year get their fingers out because this city is relying on you to deliver savings and the efficiencies that we need to deliver for this city, otherwise £9.5 million will have to be found in 2009, and thereafter we are going to go to £53 million by 2012/13 when you still won't be able to cover the incinerator, but that's another issue, and I am very, very, very worried that we won't have a city to protect or to lead because it will be bankrupt because of the very poor management of the budget by this authority. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Coupar.

CLLR COUPAR: Yes Lord Mayor. I would also like to speak to Minute 56 page 44, the financial health monitoring of the Council budget, particularly in respect of Social Services position.

We were told recently of a massive projected overspend, in the region of £11 million, for this year. However, with the effective implementation of action plans that this figure could be reduced to around £6 million. This gave me grave concern on two levels, firstly that this administration had got its figures wrong by trying to implement an unobtainable budget on one of our most needed public services. In fact I wonder whether any of them have stopped to consider that it is called Social Services and what that means.

Colleagues, we keep hearing that their decisions and their policies are somehow our fault, or our Government's fault. Well I would like to know when they are going to take responsibility for what they are doing.

Secondly, I am concerned that the action plans that have been outlined will have a profound effect on the very needy and vulnerable people who need Social Services, for instance the home care service that is due to be considered in Councillor Harris's White Paper later. The cuts in this service are already impacting on many in our communities. A case came to my attention a few days ago of a 91 year old man who was receiving three visits a day. Since his review he has been told he will now only get two visits a day and someone will leave him a flask and sandwiches for the missing visit. How can he be in less need of care now than he was previously. He is older and his abilities have deteriorated.

Other areas also merit our concern. The learning disabilities reconfiguration and Rosewall(?) Enterprises to mention just two, although it now seems from figures provided to us very recently that there has been somewhat of a miraculous turnaround of fortunes with the Social Services budget. It appears that in just one month the areas of overspend have decreased significantly resulting in a headline figure that looks very much more rosy than was predicted last month. I would like to suggest that the administration share this obvious good practice with other Departments to enable them to make such astounding savings too. Lord Mayor, either this administration are putting their foot down at Social Services or we are not being told the whole truth. Thank you. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Harris to sum up.

CLLR HARRIS: Lord Mayor, first of all Councillor McKenna's and Wakefield's intervention on this question of open government. I would simply say to both of them, because we have touched at the heart of something, when I was Leader of the Opposition if the administration offered me a confidential briefing as the Leader of my party, and as Leader of the Opposition or as the third party makes little difference, a confidential briefing, either from a portfolio holder, or in those days a Chair of the Committee, or from the Leader of Council themselves, it was confidential and I understood that, and I was insistent that such issues were never brought into this Chamber by uncontrollable Members of my Group. I took responsibility for the issue and it was not brought in here because it was for well understood legal reasons confidential, and you cannot, you cannot be given the responsibility of confidential briefings on sensitive legal matters and then allow your Group to get up and try and blow the gaffe in this place, it's not acceptable, it's irresponsible.

So, now, Councillor Lowe and City Services (Uproar).

THE LORD MAYOR: Members of Council, there is no Point of Order, can you ...

CLLR HARRIS: That is an extra 30 seconds I hope Lord Mayor.

Now, Councillor Lowe and budgeting. Well she's already had the answer, it

will be dealt with during the budgeting process. Councillor Coupar and Social Services. Well at least we are monitoring the Social Services budget. Let me remind you, let me remind you of your Group's self confessed position on Social Services as you left office when we took over. To a man and woman you all stood up and say, "We knew nothing about the Social Services budget position". KPMG carried out an independent inquiry and confirmed, confirmed, not malevolently but for whatever reason, nobody on your side had looked at the budget for months and had left it in a dire situation for us to take over. Yes, it is a challenging budget and we look at it carefully and rigorously on a monthly basis, as we do with all Departments to ensure the matter is kept under control.

Now, Councillor Gruen, and I suppose Councillor Driver. This question of the children's champion. I mean it's staggering the short term memory problem that your side have got on this. You have the temerity to lecture us on what we are trying to do for education and children in this city. Let me remind you again, and again, and again that you lot were responsible for a catastrophic decline in standards in secondary education, and you lot, you lot were responsible - Geoff Driver shakes his head, staggering - you lot were responsible for education being taken away from our direct control because of your misdeeds. You talk about things crossing desks, well nothing, if it did cross your desk you weren't there, you were all busy having chicken vindaloo in Bradford, and clearly, clearly the effect, the collective effect on you (Uproar), the collective effect on the Labour Group has been a total collective loss of bowel control because clearly you never sat at a desk again. (Applause)

(ii) Development

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake, on Development.

CLLR BLAKE: Lord Mayor, I am speaking to Minute 64 on page 48. As Council knows the decision taken by Exec Board in September to sell its shares in Leeds Bradford Airport is to say the least still controversial and has been the subject of debate in here, in the press, in the region as a whole, and particularly in the communities that are most affected by any decision that may lead to changes in the operation of that airport.

I would like today to comment on one aspect of the report and that is the assumption of growth that is referred to, and especially in the context of its role in supporting the economy of the sub region. The report clearly states that the five West Yorkshire Districts will need to ensure improved access to the airport, and in particular improved bus and rail links to cope with the impact of any such growth.

Now both Councillors Les and Andrew Carter at Exec Board ruled out the possibility of further consultation on the proposals with the communities affected. I would say surely they are entitled at least to be informed of the potential impact of such future growth, and to be assured that investment will take place to cope with the growth that has been forecast.

Now if I heard John Illingworth correctly earlier, Officer reports have identified an additional 1260 car trips a day from an assessment of future growth at the airport, and also they have particular identified the current road network, and in particular the A65 does not have the capacity to cope with this additional demand.

As well as the impact on local residents that these extra trips will have, access and reliability is surely a key issue for anyone planning to use the airport from other parts of Leeds and the wider region. Delays leading to missed flights will be a major disincentive for anyone wanting to use the airport in the future.

Could I ask today for assurance that should this sale go ahead, that receipts - of course we don't know the scale of the receipts at this precise time, and I am not suggesting that we do, but I would hope and demand that receipts from any such sale, if it goes ahead, will be used to fund the much needed transport infrastructure supporting the airport, and in particular to fund the rail link to the airport that will deliver an integrated transport strategy and support the transport studies that have already been undertaken by the current management of the airport. Thank you Lord Mayor. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor McKenna.

CLLR MCKENNA: Thank you Lord Mayor. My concerns are mainly the same concerns as Councillor Blake. I do worry about how people are going to get to and from the airport, particularly if the growth rates are to be achieved, though that may be a different matter with green taxes on the horizon, we don't know that.

But what concerns me is that there has been very little consultation with local communities. When we were in control we always made big decisions by sharing with the opposition, and we - we did, no, we did. I am sorry Lord Mayor, but we are talking about assets that's been built up by the ratepayers of Leeds since the war, worth, I don't know how much but certainly many millions, maybe a hundred, maybe two hundred millions. This is taxpayers of Leeds money, and when we made big decisions like this we did invite comment from all parties and we sat around the table and we come to a conclusion what is best for the city. Now I don't personally think that putting the airport in private hands is best for the city. I have never been in favour of selling the family silver, I never will be, but I honestly believe that the ratepayers, the taxpayers are going to pay twice for this because if these figures, if the flight figures do start to turn out to be true, then clearly we are going to have to address transport infrastructure, like Councillor Blake says it will need a railway link, may be some type of fast bus route, I don't know.

But the one thing that we will need, and we all know it because in spite of knowing better perhaps our carbon footprint is too high of everybody in the chamber, and I do use flights, and when I go to Manchester I go by car because it's the best way to get there. I know there is a train but I go by car, and the roads around Manchester that takes so many million passengers a day is clogged. Now there is no roads in that area, there is no roads to take these cars, so you are going to have to talk about building another road link, and when I look around it the only place you could build such a link is through the green belt of Horsforth and Aireborough, and maybe through Pudsey Andrew, I don't know, otherwise you go over towards Calverley. But to me it seems that somebody is going to have to pay for it, and it may well be that the Government will recognise the problem of congestion that such growth is going to take and grant some money, but it will be the taxpayer. So I think we are getting a bad deal. You know, when we take our percentage out of that we will probably have to put more into transport and I honestly believe we should go back to basic, we should talk to all parties concerned, we certainly should be talking to communities, which you are not doing, you are just in for it for the big bucks, probably an election bribe, may be not this year because you might not be able to complete a sale, but next year, but that is what it is all about.

But remember, this is money, this is assets, owned and accumulated by the citizens of Leeds and it shouldn't be sold off like this because a group of people have got together, less than half the Council have gone into it, less than half of the Council Members in some type of coalition say that we are going to put 50 years of history behind us and we are going to sell it off to the private sector who will want to, and need to, optimise their profits. They will be looking for - the way they are going to get this money back isn't it is going to have increased, big increases in flights and the

communities and the taxpayers will suffer. It will be a bad deal, I want to say that and it be on record, and perhaps in five years time we might come back to it and see what a big mistake we are making. It is sheer greed, it is selling the family silver and we should leave it alone. Thank you Lord Mayor. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Pryke.

CLLR PRYKE: Thank you Lord Mayor. My colleague across the road really ought to try the train service to Manchester Airport, it is every half hour during the day and the fare is lower than the cost of petrol and parking at Manchester Airport. I am surprised that he is not supporting public transport.

Anyway, I am speaking to item 69 on page 50 and it's about the regeneration of Cross Green phase two. I and my ward colleagues welcome the opportunity to clear this group of largely unfit housing in Cross Green. It is sad that the housing in Cross Green is so unfit, but that is the legacy of 24 years of Labour neglect. The clearance is only possible because so many of the houses are already in Council ownership. The Regional Housing Board, quango, their help is very, very limited, and it doesn't run to redevelopment of the site. We only have to look at the Hird Street site across the city in Beeston Hill where Unity Housing Association is spending about a quarter of a million pounds for each house it is going to build there. The RHB is offering us nothing towards rebuilding on Cross Green. All we can afford to do is demolish the houses and I hope, like the Scarth Avenue site in Harehills, that it will be grassed over as quickly as possible because that is better than leaving it like a bomb site.

Now obviously, given the Unity situation in Hird Street, the Housing Corporation has much deeper pockets than any the Government allows us to work with. On the day that the Abby Bank, formerly Abby National Building Society, has announced that it will lend five times salary as housing seems less and less affordable to everyone, it must be time that Government addresses the dire shortage of affordable rented housing.

In Cross Green there is a clear demand from local people for more Council housing. They specifically say to us as ward members that they don't want Housing Association properties on the site because Housing Association rents are unaffordably expensive. They say that only people on permanent benefits want Housing Association properties because their rents get paid for them, and people in ordinary jobs in the Cross Green area cannot afford Housing Association rents.

Now that the local MP is the frontrunner for Labour's Deputy Leadership, and evident Blairite favourite - Hilary - and I hope Councillor Carter will join with me in urging him to use his influence with Gordon to allow Leeds City Council's ALMO's to prudentially borrow to build much needed Council housing, and I would be very surprised if the opposition doesn't agree with me.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Golton - thank you for being patient and obviously you have got an opportunity to speak on the earlier Minutes.

CLLR GOLTON: Thank you Lord Mayor. Just to clarify, people, I am returning to the Minute previously commented on by Councillor Blake and Councillor McKenna which is page 48 Minute 64.

It is just to clarify a few points, there has been a big issue made of consultation about the airport and its future, I have to point out that the airport itself is one of the few airports in the country which has a standing consultative committee which has representation from all of the local communities, including elected

Members. On top of that we recently held a comprehensive consultation strategy because we had to comment on the Government's proposals for master plans for all of the major airports in the country, and our master plan strategy consultation covered over 30 events in local communities, including community halls, including mobile homes that were being converted into displays, I think it was pretty comprehensive.

The reason why we were doing that, Lord Mayor, is because the airport itself is very, very proud of its connections with the local community, in fact of course it is a major local employer, and that's why we have to be - sorry, we have to be a responsible institution, not just in terms of our environmental responsibilities, and as an economic dynamo, but also as a local neighbour.

One thing that's also very crucial about the airport, Lord Mayor, is that it is a body which is run by a board, and they board has representation on that which is cross party, it is also cross Council, and one of the things, one of the things - one of the things that that board is very proud of, Councillor Taggart, is that the people who are on there from the different parties take their responsibility very seriously in terms of keeping the airport out of the political spectrum, because what is most important for West Yorkshire is that that airport thrives to build the economy of our sub region, and I have to say I think Councillor Atkinson, who did a fantastic job as Chair and unfortunately is absent today, would frankly have been very dismayed if she would have heard Councillor Blake and Councillor McKenna talking of the airport in the tone in which they have done so, especially given the climate that we are in at the moment where we are going through a disposal.

I have to say, if you really do treat the airport as part of this City's family silver, don't try and make out that it's got cracks in it or that it's really silver plated, and frankly you should be ashamed of yourself bringing it up in this Chamber. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lancaster.

CLLR LANCASTER: Thank you Lord Mayor. I am speaking to Minute 91 on page 59 regarding the ring road safety improvements. This refers to a deputation at September's full Council meeting by a group of Moortown residents led by Deborah Hill. Councillors heard how this crossing point is important to the local community and is used for access to the local schools and the bus stops nearby. I welcome, therefore, the proposals for reduced speed limits and other measures brought to the Executive Board at their last meeting in response to the deputation, and look forward to the introduction of measures to assist local residents to cross in safety. Thank you Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Barker.

CLLR BARKER: Thank you Lord Mayor. I wish to comment on Minute 93 on page 59. Firstly I would like to thank the Executive Board for reaching their decision which retains the old library building for public use in Horsforth, and also resolves the problems of maintaining a 70 plus year old building that is actually the youth centre at this moment in time. The proposed renovation of the former library, which is next door to the new library and the Mechanics Institute, will in effect create a Civic Centre for Horsforth, and it will also provide a home for the Outer North West Area Management Team and of course a new youth centre with much improved use and space and facilities for the youth of Horsforth. Thank you Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Keith Wakefield on City Services. No? Oh, sorry, sorry, Councillor Carter to sum up, okay.

CLLR A CARTER: Thank you my Lord Mayor. If I could just very briefly comment first of all on Councillor Barker's comments, Councillor Lancaster's comments. I think we are very pleased on both those reports that, certainly in the Horsforth case, we were able to actually facilitate what the community wanted, what the ward members wanted, and it was a good deal for everybody. As regards the road safety issues, I personally am always happy to make sure that we put in place a review as soon as possible on what is clearly a dangerous road and where demographics have also changed considerably. The caveat always has to be of course that there are sorts of roads all over the city and they, and all of these schemes must be judged in priority order. But nevertheless, that work is going to be carried out.

If I could turn to the comments made a regards Leeds Bradford Airport. I have to say, Judith, you came perilously close to talking down the value of a major asset of the five local authorities. You know, you know very well that the operational plan for the airport was consulted upon and is currently in operation between the years 2005 and 2016. What we are selling is a business. We are not selling something which can then be altered in terms of its operation without further consultation. You know that and to try and infer that something to the contrary is absolutely not on.

Now the operational plan was consulted on, the consultative committee has been mentioned by Stuart Golton, and it is the plan which will operate unaltered until the year 2016. For there to be any alteration to the operational plan there would have to be further consultation, not least with a then wholly independent Leeds City Council with a wholly independent planning authority.

I don't have to remind you, I hope, because I was here through the debates on 24 hour flying and the extension of the runway, that huge pressure was placed on elected Members by other elected Members to make sure that we supported expansion at the airport, when actually a lot of us voted against some of the expansion that has already taken place, myself and one of my colleagues to my immediate left were two in point. We are actually far better having a business which is wholly separated from the planning authority as being one of the major shareholders. (*Hear Hear*) Whatever the rectitude of the situation, the general public must have a perception that it's too close for comfort.

Now what your comments are all about, aren't they, is that you can't make your minds up. Actually, you know, you were the group who set this whole process going. All we have done, up to this last report which you have referred to, is to revisit the report that you commissioned, and as one of your Members said to me, "Let's face it, you're only doing what we wanted to do but we couldn't get it through our group", and that sums you up, unable to serve the city because you can only serve yourselves.

My Lord Mayor, all the papers that we have seen your Leader has seen. We have got firm advice that makes it quite clear that it is the right time for the five local authorities to sell their share in Leeds Bradford Airport. Five local authorities, one of them Labour controlled, have now all agreed. It is essential that what we preserve is an airport which plays a vitally important role in the economic future of this city and this city region. It is vital also that we protect the interests of the employees, and we protect the interests of the people who live round the airport. On all those three counts I believe we have done precisely the right thing, and let me turn the question on its head, if it was a private airport now and it was put up for sale, would you be arguing to buy a share in it? I really do not think so, I really do not think so, and we'll return to McKenna economics shall we, McKenna economics.

This is the deal. You can have, for every adult in this city, the 40p dividend this year the airport would have paid, and keep it in local authority ownership. However, you will have to find 40% of the £75 million required to invest in the airport, and we know how you would get that Councillor McKenna, because your Leader only has an answer to anything, prudential borrowing. Now, prudential borrowing means that the interest is paid by the Council Tax payer, so I reckon for every 40p a year you were giving every adult in the city you would be asking him for a tenner. That is not a very good deal I don't think Councillor McKenna, so so much for family silver. The fact is we have been very lucky that the management at the airport have been able to so successfully, up to the point, build up the business in what is a highly, highly risky business, and my goodness me, surely you lot, in the Labour Party, more than anybody else, should realise what an unsafe society we now live in thanks to your Government. The time is - the time is absolutely right for this Council and the four other West Yorkshire local authorities to see that we get a good deal for everybody who lives here and that we reinvest whatever we raise wisely in front line services and in the interests of the people of not only Leeds but of the whole of the city region, and a final point my Lord Mayor, I really do not know how anybody on that side can talk to us about investment in transport infrastructure.

Tomorrow we are going to thankfully start the project on the East Leeds link road. You know, you did your best with your Civil Servants to scupper that year in and year out, along with the A65, along with Supertram, and along with a whole range of other things. Don't any of you lot lecture us about transport infrastructure when your Government, in its current settlement, has reduced the amount of money invested per head of population in transport infrastructure in the North of England, and that's a fact. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Wakefield.

(iii) City Services

CLLR WAKEFIELD: Thank you Lord Mayor. I seem to recall Hilary Benn doing a fair bit of lobbying for that East Leeds link road and may be we will have to revisit this debate later.

On this, on moving reference back on the Waste Strategy, I have to underline what we regard as being probably one of the most important issues I have faced in 19 years here, and I think many people have served longer say they have faced in all their time, and we're not talking about facing importance for now, we are talking about facing the importance for the next 25 years and future generations, and it is ironic that the Stern Report should add weight to that feeling to many on our side.

I have to say that the Labour Group took this very seriously, it actually heard a presentation from the Friends of the Earth, and it heard the presentation from City Services, and both were very professionally delivered. But there were flaws. But the Group's conclusion was this, and I think it was a very sensible one, that is if it is so important then why aren't we having a special Council Meeting on it. (*Hear Hear*) There must be everybody in this room that has a view about the future of dealing with Waste Strategy. Why isn't it we are allowed more than just Minutes and a congested White Paper which is now being moved out of sight, why don't we dedicate a special Council Meeting to this issue now. We can do it on Wednesday on December the 13th and we should be doing it now.

Now - December the 13th? We are having a special Council Meeting and that's the issue. We are having a special one - your turn will come Andrew, if you can just, because I've heard your accusations today and I'm not happy at all with some of the statements being made. But I want to come to the appeal of Councillor Mark Harris, because he appealed at Executive Board that we should be all party, we

should move along together and we shouldn't make this party political. On Monday night there was an article by Councillor Steve Smith advocating incineration. Now I don't mind walking side by side with somebody, I have done it on planning, we've done it on the cricket, we've done it on EASEL, we've done it on PFI, we've kept all party - we kept all party in this Chamber - yes we have - but I say this to you, I say this to you, that we normally start off with a blank piece of paper and sharing information, not with Steve Smith advocating incineration.

Now, I will give you the benefit of the doubt, Steve, that you said, or the article was written that 80% of people favoured incineration. That is totally untrue. Now whether it was misreported, I'll give you the benefit of the doubt. That 84% was out of a sample of 3,000, that is 0.3% of the population. Now I do think it's important that we have this debate, and I will not move, I would not take reference back until we are absolutely clear that this strategy is taken off the table and we all come back and we have a blank piece of paper in front of us before we go forward, because we are hurtling towards an environmental and financial disaster. Councillor Alison Lowe has already said it earlier, between the years of 2009 and 2013, unless we do something, this Council and the people of Leeds face being surcharged, what, well we face being penalised £57 million. That is huge. It is by European Andrew, get your facts right - it is a huge financial tax penalty, and it is going to impact - is it not £57 million? We have got urgent action and unless we can redraw the strategy then everybody in this city is going to be penalised, and I think it's right and proper when I see Members of your party talking about location, in the paper, not incineration here, you've already started to flag up your strategy so don't tell us it's an open book.

CLLR ATHA: It's not in Adel.

CLLR WAKEFIELD: I'll tell you - well, don't tell us it's an open book and we're open minded when people are saying, we will not have incineration in our ward. So what I am saying to Council is simply this, this is a very important debate, if we had listened, if we had listened to Councillor Blackburn in 2004 perhaps we wouldn't be doing this. Let me read out a local Green policy statement, manifesto, probably written by you David, "Increased targets for recycling and reduce the waste stream. This does not include the use of incineration which we believe is environmentally unacceptable". (Applause)

Now how come you are now becoming a part of it. You have now started - we have been waiting to listen, a number of people have been asking you questions David and you have refused to answer them. They have actually sent letters, they have phone called you, you refused to answer, so what I would say is this, unless this Group gets this completely withdrawn, we have a blank piece of paper, we then influence ourselves, we on this side will not share any all party basis for incineration which we find totally unacceptable. Thank you Lord Mayor. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lowe.

CLLR LOWE: In seconding this request for a reference back I would just like to raise for Council some of the key issues that our group discussed and some of these issues and the reason why we have reached the decision we have to ask for a special Council Meeting.

We believe that the issue of deliverability is key in relation to this matter. We do not believe that you can deliver this incinerator by 2012/13. We think that there is at least a seven year planning process, if you're luck. The Belvedere Plan has just been agreed in London and that has taken 15 years, and if we do not deliver this in the time frame that you are outlining it is going to cost us not the £53 million that has already been told to us by Officers, it is going to be several hundreds of millions of

pounds, and I don't think that we as a Labour Group feel that is a professional and moral way forward. We want to talk about a solution that is deliverable before 2012/13, and preferably by 2009, which is what Manchester has done. Manchester has a scheme and they can deliver that by 2009 because it isn't an incinerator it is MBT.

We were told quite a lot of thing through the scrutiny, and I have to say that while I was a member of the Scrutiny Board listening to all the information I too was influenced, I thought, yes, this is a good idea, but then I got more facts from other places, including Friends of the Earth, including from other local authorities and including the Zero Waste Alliance who have said quite clearly that the Mechanical and Biological Treatment is the only alternative to incineration. Of incineration they say that incinerators are producers of brown energy not green, they do not reduce greenhouse gas emissions but increase them, and they say that even if you are forced into having an incinerator you should only have a ten year contract because of the problems associated with incineration and the way that they then reduce recycling, and so we discussed the various issues in our group and we believe that the deliverability, or lack of deliverability of this issue means that we cannot support it without a proper debate in full Council.

We also think that the question of location is crucial, it's key and we cannot move forward on the basis of the Integrated Way Strategy without some indication of where this might be, because we represent our constituents, we are elected by them to represent their views, and yes we are leaders within our communities, but we also want to make sure that if it's going to be in one of our wards that we've got the facts and that we can properly relay those to our constituents and feel good about it and feel right about it. We don't feel right about it at the minute because we don't believe the proper debate has been had.

I think it's an unfortunate thing that we are being told 'your Government is doing this to us', I think it's a good thing that our Government is doing at the moment because of the Stern Report we are absolutely focussed in our Government, and in Europe, to reducing emission, to doing something, to doing something positive about waste, waste is an enormous problem for the whole world, not just for Leeds - yes Mr Cameron wants to do the same - but the problem is that if we don't all work together to come up with not just a solution that works but a solution that can deliver by 2009, not 2012/13, then, you know, it's just not going to work.

So I would ask if possible that the Green Party thinks about how it votes on this issue because if, if they are serious about their green principles then they will know that the only good thing to do is to vote with us to have a proper debate about this because you will have to face your electors, and believe me we will let them know how you vote today.

Finally, I just want to say that in relation to the incinerator, the Council may not be aware, and Officers may not be aware, that there is a really strong chance that the EU Biowaste Directives are likely to change in the very near future which will change the price of the bottom ash, which currently is £2 per tonn, it will actually increase the price upwards and the residuals from MBT are likely to be less costly than we have been told. So I think that there is quite a lot of information there that we need to discuss within the context of this strategy, things we didn't know about we know now, let's go back to the table, let's talk about it as a whole Council, let's agree together as a whole Council. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Harris.

CLLR HARRIS: Lord Mayor, let me just first of all deal with what I think on

the part of Keith Wakefield was a genuine misunderstanding which he has placed in the public domain with regard to the special Council Meeting in December. This is not a Council Meeting to discuss the future of a casino in Leeds, it is a legal requirement, a legal requirement from Government that we must as a Council deal with the gambling policy. It is not a discussion on the future of whether we should or should not have the casino. So it is completely different and I do not want there to be any suggestion that there is going to be debate on that in December, it is not, we are legally bound because of the timescale to have that meeting to deal purely with the legalities of the gambling policy, and that is a requirement of your Government.

Can I just now very quickly comment on what Alison Lowe was saying, because you are entitled to have this opinion, you were quoting entirely from the information given to you by Friends of the Earth. You have not, in this debate, placed in the public domain the scientific evidence which is available from other quarters supporting the energy from waste strategy, and if we are having a well rounded debate, and you may for whatever reason call for an extra Council Meeting, then the rules of this Council are that anybody can speak on this matter for five minutes, we can have a full debate, if you so wish, it's available to us, no different today than it would be if we were a full Council Meeting, the opportunity to have a proper open debate is there, an additional full Council Meeting achieves nothing except additional cost to the taxpayers of this city. (Applause)

Now, Keith Wakefield quite rightly raised the point I made at Executive Board about my key to it, that we not make this into a party political matter but rather attempt to deal with it on an all party matter, and I have to say that it is a bit rich to say that we are making it party political because the Executive Members responsible was in the newspapers on this matter on the 30th of October, when in fact Alison Lowe and your group had already issued your press release and made your position on this strategy public when it appeared in an article in the Evening Post on the 19th of October. Therefore it is not we as an administration that have struck that blow first, in fact you yourselves have done in a very proactive party political way.

Now, I spoke to Keith Wakefield in Exec Board, I spoke to him before this meeting, I have spoken to the leaders of all five parties, yes, including myself, I have to sometimes speak to myself, and what I have suggested is a clear extension to that which was put to Executive Board and it is that the five party leaders, together with the Executive responsible for City Services, together with the Director responsible, Randal Brown, and the Chief Executive, meets urgently to determine a way in which there can be an all party monitoring group established to report to Executive Board on the future of this strategy. By doing it that way, by doing it that way we remove this from the party political arena on an issue where it is by common consent an issue of gravest significance, not just for today but for the future of this city and future generations, and the role we play in the whole issue of waste management and the problems of global warming.

Now that offer is here again today. If, as you would say, you want this to dealt on an all party basis, if as you say you wish to discuss this, if as you say you do not want this to be party political, there is the offer, here is the opportunity, withdraw your reference back and let us proceed in an even handed way in the way in which I've suggested. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Finnigan.

CLLR FINNIGAN: Thank you Lord Mayor. This is a very difficult decision that is placed in front of us, of that there is no doubt, and this issue has been around for quite some time, I believe we had briefings going back a year or whatever, and perhaps that was the time to have a special meeting if we were so fired up and so

concerned about this. This is a tough decision but we shouldn't - just listen to me because it will be worth listening to won't it - it's a tough decision and it's one of these that we are obliged to face and we need to make this decision now.

We are not in the situation where we can kick this into the long grass and debate this matter indefinitely, it really isn't acceptable to do that. Now Alison has already indicated to us the penalties that will be imposed by Central Government because of European Directives. If we were in a position where we were being told (inaudible) campaign and challenge those particular Directives, or impositions by Central Government, then on that particular point buy ourselves a bit more time, promote the debate, then we would think that that is a sensible approach that we might wish to consider, and it's not as if Labour Councils haven't in other areas embraced incineration, certainly Kirklees introduced its incineration policy under Labour control, Coventry did the same, Sheffield, if I remember my history well when I used to visit my grandparents in Sheffield, it was David Blunkett who was the Leader of Sheffield City Council when they introduced their incinerator. So I am not entirely convinced the Labour Party has had a road to Damascus transformation that suggests that incineration is not for them, and then we come to the PFI financing. Now people will know that we have significant concerns about all PFI schemes, we have spoken out against them on a regular and repetitive basis, and if there was something constructive about going to the Government and challenging this way of financing and looking for alternatives, perhaps at that particular point we would believe that there is something in supporting this particular reference back at this stage.

This is a difficult decision, nobody wants an incinerator. But as Alison already pointed out earlier, we are in a situation where to convince a lot of our constituents to drive up recycling rates, to convince a lot of our constituents not to put the waste in that they are putting in at this particular point, is entirely and totally unrealistic.

Now I am not convinced. Maybe we are in a situation where this reference back is absolute and genuine, and if that's the case then I think we have had an interesting debate this afternoon. But we are in a situation where this is a tough decision, we cannot afford to go back, and I cannot afford to go back, certainly to my residents who are on low incomes and say to them, "We are thinking, we are reflecting and pontificating on this particular matter and we will be passing on any of these charges that are not imposed but by Central and European Governments and we will be asking you to pay it". I don't think that's realistic, I don't think that that is something that we can accept. (Uproar) If only I had - I will look at the verbatim, all of this stuff is going to be fascinating I am sure. (Uproar)

We are in a situation ultimately where we have a tough decision to make, I am not convinced at all that delaying making that particular decision is something that is helping the people that we represent. We will not be supporting this particular reference back, we will be looking to use any influence of power and monitoring opportunity that we've been given to make sure that we get the best deal possible for our residents in Morley. (Uproar) We will be looking - fans, fans, it's interesting, I mean what we will be asking for at the end of these particular Minutes is we will be asking specifically for a recorded vote, and at that point, if you're against it, go against it. Keith didn't, he abstained. Vote against it. If you are against it you will have an opportunity at the end of this meeting, we won't be supporting this reference back. Thank you Lord Mayor. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blackburn.

CLLR BLACKBURN: It's a queer old Council Meeting this one isn't it. You can heckle me for the first bit because I'm going to have a go at you.

Firstly, can I take the opportunity, Alison, thanks very much for that bit you put in the paper. If you ever want a job as a recruitment person for the Green Party you can come and join us now because it's been brilliant it has, and by the way Alison, just to put you right, I didn't absence myself from that meeting at the Executive Board, I was at another meeting, I was at another meeting regarding what we were talking about earlier, what Councillor Carter, regarding climate change, (Uproar) and that's part of my portfolio. Anyway, as Councillor Driver knows, I mean I had the best excuse of all that day, and a few other people know sat round here who probably have suffered since that day because of it. I (inaudible) Councillor Driver, I think it were about eight o'clock in the morning Chairing a meeting in the Boardroom. Well if I had wanted some time off, if I wanted to cop out on it, I had every excuse, I was running a massive temperature and my nose were running like a tap.

Anyway, less of that now, let's get down to it, I am going to surprise you here. Anyway, getting back to this, it's a very serious issue that is before us today. I've got to say that my group have been very much, have very much involved itself in trying to influence the Way Strategy. Not by press releases like some over there, not by press releases but by making suggestions to improve it, and sometimes as a critical friend. Councillor Smith might be too critical sometimes. (Uproar)

At all times we have engaged in this process to produce the best policy results, and I have got to say that for the most part what is in the Way Strategy has our total agreement. Can I also praise Councillor Smith and my other Cabinet colleagues who have engaged in our debates over this issue in a most constructive and positive way, and I have also got to welcome Councillor Harris's suggestion of just a few minutes ago regarding the all party group because I believe that could be a way forward.

The issue of the Way Strategy is one that we must get right, the consequences of us not doing so could be financially and environmentally catastrophic, as has been mentioned earlier. I and my group have engaged in discussions, and shall continue to engage in this discussion, in a constructive manner, as we have always done. However, there is one matter, major issue and that is incineration which I have got to say is a matter of conscience with us and on that basis we will be voting for the reference back. Thank you Lord Mayor. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jennings. Councillor Jennings, did you want to speak?

CLLR JENNINGS: Thank you Lord Mayor, yes I did want to speak but as usual during these meetings it is very difficult to hear anything with the bedlam that comes from my right. (Uproar)

I must apologise to Council because my aging memory means that I cannot remember the names of the specific people in the anecdote I am about to tell, but in the 1920's there was a very famous debate in the French Parliament, I think it was about the Maginot Line, or establishing the Maginot Line, and the then Leader of the French Opposition made the most brilliant speech, it went down in history as probably one of the best speeches ever made in the French Parliament. But during an adjournment before the vote that was going to be taken that evening a journalist went up to the Prime Minister and said, "That was a bloody good speech by the Opposition Leader wasn't it?", and the Prime Minister said, "Yes, probably the best I've ever heard but it's not going to change the way I vote, nor how my party is going to vote", and that's a bit of the problem I've got with this afternoon, not that I could ever question the Leader of the Opposition's quality of speech, I don't know whether

it was up to the level of that speech of the French Leader of the Opposition, but I've heard nothing from this side to support this referral back.

90%, or over 90% of the people in this Chamber vote as their party decides and they then are told. There are a few of us over here who can make our minds up, but from the speeches from the opposition I would like to ask for some clarification vis a vis a referral back, but then there was comments about a special Council Meeting made by Councillor Lowe, is that what the Labour Party wants, is it a referral back, is it still an open question because as soon as anybody from this side heard the word incineration they booed and jeered, and when saying that you shouldn't have incineration in the city they cheered, so it doesn't exactly sound as if the Labour Party is particularly open minded on this issue.

CLLR COUPAR: We want a debate.

CLLR JENNINGS: Here is the opportunity. (Uproar) Can I ask those of you who have spent most of this afternoon bellowing from your seats without standing up if you feel about this issue so strongly stand up and make a speech about it. You might not change their minds, you might not change their minds, they are whipped, you don't have to change your own minds, your group is whipped, maybe try and change our minds. You can't change the minds of very many people of the citizens of Leeds because they are not here - I doubt it very much Councillor - buy why have a go, I'm no longer a member of a party. (Uproar) But I promise, on this - I cannot vote for you because you haven't given me a single reason to make it worthwhile. (Applause) (Uproar)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake please.

CLLR BLAKE: Lord Mayor, as you know we received the report at the Executive Board and I have to say I am pleased that people in this debate today have actually had the courage to actually mention the word incineration, I thought we were in danger of wiping it out of our vocabulary for a while.

I believe, as has been said by others, that this is one of the most important papers we are likely to receive for some time, and I did look forward to the debate, David, in Exec Board with you because, as you have said, disposal of waste is at the top of your agenda. The problem we had is that we were told in the meeting that you were ill, then we were told after the meeting that you had been seen going out of the building to another meeting, and it wasn't clear at all exactly what the problem was. I have to say I do question, you know, your decision, this is a crucial decision and I know one on which your party has made some really, quite definite statements, it's not just a question of principle, you have said that as a first step as your party, if you got into Government, that you would introduce a waste reduction, reuse and recycling Bill and would legislate to reduce packaging and to outlaw incineration. (*Hear Hear*)

Lord Mayor, there isn't time today to have a full debate on what we, on the Way Strategy, and I fully support Councillor Wakefield's call for a special meeting to debate the matter in full. I believe there are serious flaws in the arguments presented and one I hope you will also agree with us on, David, is why the targets in the strategy are as low as they are. We have to ask why there is a target only to eliminate growth, and I emphasise growth, in household waste by 2020. Other major local authorities have already eliminated growth and are now reducing the amount of household waste entering the waste stream, why is that beyond us here in Leeds?

The financial penalties, as we know, for not addressing the waste problem are huge, and no one is denying the scale of the problem facing us, but I have to ask is

the solution to put all our eggs in one basket, to put all our eggs in one basket, and also to tie ourselves into a waste contract for 25 years that demands burning a fixed tonnage of waste regardless of the technological developments and future need. Where, in this policy, is the incentive to improve our recycling rates, reduce the amount of waste we produce, or indeed to reuse whatever we can before it hits the waste stream. Do we really want to be in a position where we have to burn biomass, by which I mean specially grown wood, if we haven't got enough waste of our own to burn. Can you believe the impact that that will have on the environment from the emissions from lorries that will be needed to transport the stuff into the incinerator to keep it going.

The risks in this strategy are enormous, and the most obvious risk is whether we will be able to find a site where the incinerator will go. The development department has been considering options but have not told us what, or more importantly where they are. Some local authorities have had delays of up to eight, nine years on trying to get planning permission for similar sites. If we fail to get a site approved how many millions of will that cost the Leeds taxpayer, and I think it is very interesting, following on from Councillor Wakefield's comments about Members opposite in the press, and the person that I've seen in the press is Clive Fox from Adel and Wharfedale. Clive Fox said, "I don't believe many people in my ward would welcome the prospect of having an incinerator operating locally. However, that is somewhat academic because there isn't the slightest prospect of our getting one because an incineration plant would need to service the whole of Leeds where as we are very much on the periphery".

So that's all right then, as long as it's not in North Leeds. Don't the residents of South and East Leeds have a similar right to oppose such a facility in their back yard. Do they not have a right to know such a facility could mean in the future two HGV wagons going down their street every two minutes. What impact will that have on their environmental well being and their future health. Lord Mayor, the depressing thing about all of this is that there are alternatives and there is a reason for us to have a reference back and a proper debate. Other authorities are not going, Greater Manchester is not going for a mass burn solution, we need to give full consideration to all the other technologies available. Thank you Lord Mayor. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor McArdle.

CLLR MCARDLE: Thank you Lord Mayor. In 2002 I was extremely fortunate enough with Councillor Finnigan and a couple of others to visit the Seaton(?) site in Kirklees and you would be surprised actually how clean that site is. It has a broad mix of composting, recycling and incineration. They actually use - the wood they use, if it can't be recycled, they use it to create power for the local old folks home across the road. So I cannot see a problem - I think that came into service in about '96/97 at a cost of around £60 million from memory, and I can't see what the problem is with incineration. It's a - hang on - it's a broad mix of recycling, composting and waste management. I really can't see a problem.

The only problem is where it's sited. Well, well, hang on a minute, I would be extremely keen to have any recycling site in Morley because it's - hang on a minute - we've got the M62, we've got the M621 and we've got the M1, we have links to do this. We could work in conjunction with Kirklees, with Bradford, Calderdale and Wakefield Council. I really can't see a problem. I will be supporting the administration on this. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Carter.

CLLR A CARTER: Thank you my Lord Mayor. I mean there is no doubt at

all that this is one of the most major issues that is going to face this authority probably whilst most of us are still on the Council. It has been a major issue for a number of years and you would think, to hear Labour talk, you know, that we've done nothing. In point of fact this Council - let's talk about what we've done well. We have one of the best recycling rates of any of the core cities, I think in fact the best. You know, that is an amazing achievement in a diverse city like Leeds, and we've done extremely well, but we are faced with here a huge dilemma and, you know, one of your lot talked about people taking responsibility for things. Well, to be frank with you, you know you don't take responsibility for anything.

You have been made an offer - hang on - you've been made an offer by Councillor Harris to join in this debate which is going to go on for a long time. What we are saying is there has to be a strategy, and to be frank with you I think most of us, whatever the strategy is, will feel some discomfort about it because it's a very difficult issue to tackle. But there has to be a strategy which we are pursuing whilst at the same time monitoring and investigating all other possible channels, and I for one want to see that happen, and you've been given that assurance. Actually you were given the opportunity in the Executive Board and I think they have answered your question, Councillor Finnigan, I mean you only have to see the usual suspects roaring and bellowing over there to know that for them this debate is about one thing and one thing only, political advantage, that's all it's about.

Well I have to tell you that you all in your party have a major problem over the environment and pollution because your Government is going to try and introduce a raft of green taxes - hang on, hang on, if you listen you'll understand. Any future Government is going to bring in a raft of green taxes, but your problem is that you have so milked every community in this country on taxation that whatever Brown does will not be seen as an environmental tax that people can buy into because it's right, but just because it's another way of lining the Chancellor and the Treasury's pockets, and that's your problem, and you'll not be able to get over that problem, and actually the people of Leeds know, you know, for you to try and play this card, I think you are making a huge mistake. Well, you can live with it because the people of Leeds know who it is, which Government it is, that has signed up to something which will introduce fines on this authority of £9 million in the first year moving up to £57 million. If we don't tackle that, if we don't have a policy that will deal with that, it will hit hardest the most vulnerable, and it's your Government, your Government that has signed up to it and that is what you must take responsibility for, or, or disagree with your Government, do what Councillor Blackburn's just done, show a bit, have a principle for once, and when I see - hang on, hang on (Uproar) - when I see, well, you see, actually it speaks volumes doesn't it, it speaks volumes. I think there isn't a Member on these benches here who hasn't an issue on which, and I include all of you, an issue on which you would have to say no if you were told to vote for it. If you haven't such an issue, and if you had never thought about that in your heads, then you shouldn't be a politician, because you are people of no conviction. I have never, ever seen any of them, despite going out of this Chamber and coming up to us and whispering in our ears how much they disagree with something they had just voted on for this lot when they were in power - ever, ever have the courage, have the courage (Uproar), yes, self serving, self seeking, which is what this Motion is all about. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Steve Smith please.

CLLR S SMITH: Thank you Lord Mayor. There are a number of issues that we'll debate in this Council which many of us could say, "That doesn't affect me, I don't have a car, I don't use this service", but one thing which we all do is produce waste. There is nobody in this Chamber who can put their hand up and say, "I don't produce any waste", we have to deal with that.

Keith, most important issue, I agree with you, it is probably the most important issue. Judith, and a number of other speakers have said that. On that we absolutely agree. You come to your decision based on listening to what's happened on the presentation of City Services, and from Friends of the Earth, that's absolutely ...

CLLR WAKEFIELD: We've been to Manchester.

CLLR S SMITH: Well all right, you've done some other things. The press release that you put out talks about listening to the two sides of the argument. Well, let me just read a submission to the energy review which was made in April this year citing Woking Council as an example of best practice in enhancing energy efficiency as a means of tackling fuel poverty, and that submission stated, "Importantly it is worth noting that by creating a new energy service company Woking Council was able to provide energy at low prices for the fuel poor". Who said that? Friends of the Earth. Friends of the Earth big ask climate change campaign action pack 2005 says, "Woking has led the way in taking climate change at a local government level. They have used an innovative combined heat and power scheme to dramatically reduce CO2 emissions in their borough", and in Friends of the Earth literature they regularly encourage people to take a look at the exemplary efforts of Woking's climate change strategy, and that's with what, a heat and power scheme. Can anybody tell me what a heat and power scheme is? An energy from waste, yes. So (inaudible) critically I would say to you.

You said you wanted, Keith, more than just some Minutes to go by. Well let me tell you that the first integrated Way Strategy for Leeds was approved in 2003, over three years ago, and, well who started it, it certainly wasn't me, it certainly wasn't anybody on this side, so there has been a direction of travel on this issue for some time.

There hasn't, you make out that all of a sudden a couple of weeks ago that some papers landed on the desk with a strategy on it, well that's not true, it has been the subject of widespread consultation, it has been looked at by Scrutiny Board who approved the direction of travel. So it isn't just a blank sheet of paper.

Alison talks about deliverability, and the time frame, well I will come to that shortly, and the subject of MBT and greenhouse gasses, but I will come back to that.

Judith, you talk about fixed tonnages Judith, well if this is so important to you I suggest that you actually read it because it is not a case of fixed tonnages, it is a range, so, you know, please read it if it's important to you.

There has been a review taking place recently which has had widespread consultation with key stakeholders, and I know you talk about the few numbers of people in Leeds who responded but that included the Citizens Panel, which is a demographically representative survey of people in Leeds. It also included experts in various disciplines, and at the same time a technical options appraisal has been completed on a wide range of available technologies. The result is an integrated strategy which looks to comprehensively address all the issues in terms of reducing, reusing and recycling waste, and in the last category we aim to at least double our current performance. However, whatever anybody's performance in these key parts, reducing, reusing and recycling, any waste strategy involves residual waste and the issue of what to do with that residual waste.

The result from our appraisal showed that energy from waste is the best performing option in terms of environmental issues and cost, and I come back now to Alison who talks about deliverability. Well, if it is difficult to deliver an energy from

waste plant which is environmentally better than the other options, then those decisions in planning will be made on emotion, and I'd rather think that decisions in planning were made on the basis of fact.

The biggest threat to Leeds, both environmentally and financially, is if we fail to commit to a solution that fully addresses the need to drastically reduce waste going to landfill, and when combined with our commitment to not limiting recycling the solution proposed by the Council has been clearly proven to be the best environmental option.

Leeds residents, both in the consultation we have carried out and in recent press surveys have consistently been of the opinion that an energy from waste facility for dealing with our residual waste is the right choice for Leeds. We are determined to keep the process transparent and to keep all interested parties involved and informed. (Uproar)

Finally, Lord Mayor, if I just may say, today we have made an offer which can bring together the Leaders of all parties on Council and for them to be involved in the process - well it's important, do you want to hear it? (Uproar)

I hope that everybody in this Chamber supports the solution that is in the best interests of the city. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Hanley.

CLLR HANLEY: Thank you Lord Mayor. Can I move under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 22.1 that Council Procedure Rule 3.1 be suspended to allow all comments on the receipt of the Minutes to be discussed.

CLLR SELBY: Second Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Okay, we'll call for a vote. All those in favour. Any against. Any abstentions. (LOST)

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: For the benefit of Members, could I be clear that the request that has been made and seconded is for a recorded vote on the reference back, that is the amendment in the name of Councillor Wakefield. The vote on the suspension order has been accepted, we are moving now to the substantive business of the Council.

So would all Members ensure please that they are in their allocated seats. Will Members please press the button marked P on their desk units in order to activate the unit. Would those Members in favour of the amendment in the name of Councillor Wakefield, which is the proposed reference back, please press the plus button. Those Members against that amendment please press the minus button, and any Member wishing to abstain and have the abstention recorded please press the zero button.

THE LORD MAYOR: Okay, there is 93 Members present, 41 in favour, zero abstention and 52 against, therefore it is lost. (LOST)

Councillor Phillips.

CLLR PHILLIPS: Lord Mayor, I would like to comment on Minute 70 page 51 which deals with the Executive Board report on the gypsy and traveller community Government guidance and the implications on Council.

The guidance requires the Council to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the community's needs. Where need is identified it places a requirement for the planning process to identify new sites. It will no longer be acceptable just to specify planning criteria for these sites. Local authorities will be expected to identify land where there is a clear need, probably established by an unaccountable regional body. If local authorities fail to identify sites then the Secretary of State has the power to direct them to do so.

It is clear that we are facing a *fait accompli* with this issue, and that the Government is trying to distance itself away from the blame quicker than David Blunkett's diary revelations. The Government clearly prefers to push the responsibility on to Councils like Leeds to find sites and prefers that we take the negative fallout for doing so.

Rumours and scaremongering claim that a permanent gypsy camp is headed for Garforth. I would welcome the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Housing clarifying the situation in his comments and look forward to what I am sure will be a defiant attitude. For my part I would like to inform those stirring up the rumours and reassure local residents that no such site in Garforth will receive support from me.

Lord Mayor, I am seriously concerned that the local planning system and our control over it is losing its teeth. Contrary to shifting the fallout for new gypsy sites, an area where the Government seems to relish being 'bad cop' is overturning planning decisions against the wishes of local decision makers and local people. As a specific case overturning the Council decision on not to allow facilities for seasonal workers caravans at a Garforth farm is a bitter blow to the views of local residents.

For those not familiar with the case, Sturton Grange Farm provides caravan accommodation for seasonal agricultural workers throughout the summer. Garforth residents are rightly reluctant to see the caravans become permanent features. So when the farm applied for planning permission to provide permanent water, sewage and electricity facilities, myself and my two fellow ward Councillors supported local residents in opposing the request. Leeds City Council listened to those concerns and rightly refused planning permission. Now a Government Planning Inspector has overturned the Council's decision, sweeping away all of those local objections with the stroke of a pen. Yet another example of a Labour appointed Planning Inspector applying a Labour made law and ignoring the views of local people.

However, (Uproar) - if I may continue Lord Mayor. However, the Inspector did see fit, he did see fit to impose conditions on the new facilities in that they can only be used from the 1st of April up to the 30th of October each year. It is depressing to be fed such a crumb, but I am determined to ensure that the Council does all it can to enforce this condition so that the caravans themselves do not become a permanent feature.

My Lord Mayor, why should residents, or indeed any of us, have confidence in the planning process when local decisions made by local decision makers, who have listened to and reflected local objections, are overruled by pen pushers at the Government's Planning Inspectorate. It is also true from my earlier description of the guidance that we should have no confidence at all that any local objectors to authorised gypsy sites will be listened to or indeed taken into account.

Lord Mayor, I do not wish to see any new gypsy encampment in this city treated with the same disregard to the planning system as has been the case at Sturton Grange Farm. Local people should feel that they are engaged with the process and that at the end of the day their views carry some weight over these

decisions. It should not be the case that in the same presidential way that the Labour Government runs this country the Government Inspectorate can do the same with such important issues to local communities. National politicians moan about people not wanting to get involved in politics, not wanting to engage on local issues, but I ask you, looking at the case of Sturton Grange, can you blame them. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you Members, the time for questions is over. If I could invite Councillor Harris to sum up please.

CLLR HARRIS: Lord Mayor, and Members of Council, unless I am very much mistaken I believe my six months as Leader of Council are rapidly running down and once more my - well I was coming to that, I was coming to that actually Peter. Peter, I was coming to that, I will come to that in a second - and my mate Andy will soon be sat here again, to carry on the good work.

Of course Peter Gruen reasonably raises the question, is this my last stint, well that actually is in the hands of the electorate to some extent, and also in the hands of my colleagues, I am always, you know, careful about who I allow to sit behind me but fortunately Javed Akhtar, I can trust him, and my sister is sat next to him just in case I cannot and she'll certainly look after me. But I fully expect, I fully expect in just over seven months time to be sat here again and we will see, we will see.

However, however, since this is my last winding up speech in my current stint as Leader of Council, would any Council Meeting be the same without me offering an apology to the people of Leeds, the famous Harris apologies which I always feel driven to give. Now earlier today a Labour group, I think it was Peter Gruen, asked whether, at what stage the champions, the dynamic duo to my right, the *champions* for children would offer an apology to the people of Leeds and they have asked me to do it for them.

So I conclude by offering that apology, collectively, in fact I will offer the apology on behalf of the entire administration. We apologise that standards in education are higher. We apologise that attendance is better. We apologise that children's behaviour in school is better. We apologise that investment going into our schools is at an all time high, and we apologise that our children are happier, healthier, safer and more successful. Long may I continue to offer such apologies. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you Members of Council, we will move on to White Paper Motion, item number 10, White Paper Motion. Oh, sorry, we need to call for a vote. Those in favour, to accept the Minutes, yes. Any against. Any abstentions. That is carried, thank you. (CARRIED)

10. WHITE PAPER MOTION - HOME CARE SERVICES

So we will deal with one White Paper Motion, which is item number 10, then we'll go for tea, adjourn for tea, so Councillor Harrison, thank you.

CLLR HARRISON: Lord Mayor, having watched the BBC Look North programme, The Shocking State of Care for the Residents of Leeds, I was so horrified that I decided to bring this White Paper to Council and to request that this matter be referred to the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board.

The administration made such a mess of the privatisation of the grass cutting I would have thought they would have learned their lesson, but it would appear not. Social Services was the next Department on the list and I wonder how long before

the Department is just a commissioning body. Since Leeds City Council appointed Care UK in May people of all ages have been affected, vulnerable older people and those with disabilities are missing their medication and are left waiting hours for meals.

I am going to quote a few examples of the poor services that have been made to these vulnerable people. A young disabled woman said visits had been missed, no one arrives to put her to bed or to get her up. She has been left without meals. She has made repeated complaints to Social Services but nothing has happened. The relatives of an 89 year old woman are seeking a judicial review over an inappropriate care package. They do not trust Care UK to be reliable. An employee of Care UK stated that she wants to leave the company as she says staff are no longer given training or the support they need.

At a previous Council Meeting I reported that several complaints by another home care provider, Anchor. I have also had a list of complaints from another company, Springfield, sent to me. I would just like to share a few of these with you.

Client reports no service on Springfield, have no cover. Clients awaiting evening visit during which his catheter bag needed to be emptied. He received several calls from Springfield advising him that the care worked had been delayed. Eventually Springfield rang to say that nobody would be able to get to him that evening. The caller instructed the client, who has severe mental health problems, through the process of emptying his own catheter bag.

Separate complaints by two clients who have not had their morning visits. Both were still in bed at 11am. They were telephoned by Springfield who explained that the staff had lost their way. One client reported that on more than five occasions she had been left in bed as late as 12.30. On one occasion Springfield did not appear at all. Client reports that Springfield has failed to appear on numerous occasions and the on call number is not answered when he rings.

When are we going to realise that these cuts to home care and farming out services are putting people's welfare and well being at risk.

The figures concerning complaints made about service providers from April to July speak for themselves. 46 against private home care providers where only 15 against Social Services in house. Does this not speak volumes. 61 complaints for Social Services in three months, this means 61 vulnerable people in the city. I deal with people not numbers, Peter.

So far this financial year 1,616 reviews have been undertaken with 410 home care service users told they are no longer eligible. 405 people have been receiving reduced services. These people have been signposted to private home care providers and been given lists of companies that provide cleaning, shopping and gardening services. Prices start from £7 per shop, cleaning ranges from £8.50 per hour to £20 an hour, gardening from £5 donation to £25 an hour, with a company charging up to £40 for a visit. These services look even more expensive to older people who have been used to home care and they are out of touch with the cost of living, and this comes as a shock to many who worry they cannot afford it. There is only one option and that is the back street cleaner which puts many of the older people's lives at risk.

You can dress this up as signposting all you like, but really we are fobbing people off and treating(?) the Council's moral duty to provide the vulnerable people of the city with the care that they need and deserve. Well all I can say is god help us if this is the best we can offer in this great city of ours.

Back in July a Council spokesman quoted that we are investing £1 million in the voluntary sector so that people who are no longer eligible for Council services will be offered other sources of support. Well so far I have seen little evidence of this.

I visited a 94 year old lady who had her cleaning services stopped. She claims that she was put under pressure by the review team into agreeing to sign the documents. She did not understand what she was agreeing to. Then there was a case of a 99 year old man who was frail and registered blind after his home care review, and he was told that the cleaning and washing services would be withdrawn. A very frail 94 year old woman who was wanting help with meal preparation, her request has been refused as she can manage to dress herself, although this is very difficult. Unbelievably she was offered a perching stool and a trolley with wheels for her kitchen. She has refused these devices as she feels they are unsuitable. Then there is a 19 year old man who is registered blind and has his care reduced to 15 minutes visit in the morning when a carer would make him sandwiches for his lunch and a flask of tea, and a 15 minute visit in the evening.

We must consider the staff of these outside agencies. I have been told that staff are expected to take 30 minutes over a visit then move on to the next one. So the first visit at 9.30am and a second one at 10am, however no time is scheduled for the travel in between appointments. This means the visits need to be cut short in order that staff can get to each client. Consequently service users are suffering.

The situation is intolerable and as Councillors have a duty to refer this matter to Health and Scrutiny Board for an immediate inquiry.

Furthermore, Lord Mayor, on top of the recent home care cuts we now have the attempted closure of The Breece. I and my Group absolutely cannot support the closure of The Breece Hotel, and I understand that The Breece is in a state of disrepair and needs urgent money spending on it, but I have to question whether or not the ruling administration understands how much impact the loss of The Breece on the lives of the people of this city, people who otherwise would not have a holiday, people who go for respite care, people who go year after year with friends they have met there, people who without this would be confined to their homes. The Labour Group will not condone the closure of The Breece and will continue to oppose it until a fully funded and acceptable alternative is found. This is simply not fair to deprive the older people of the city of this facility without offering an alternative that offers the same level of care, an alternative that allows every elderly citizen to continue to enjoy a holiday that offers them independence.

I want to read you an extract from a letter sent together with a petition from the manager of The Breece begging for it to be kept open. "We are enclosing signatures and a petition to hope that it makes you realise how wrong it is to shut the only place that we can go, meet up with our friends, get looked after day and night, feel safe and have good food". The author of the letter goes on, "We will have nothing to look forward to and now I don't(?). The 137 people who have signed this petition have nothing to look forward to, I hope you feel proud of yourselves".

Councillor Peter Harrand is quoted in the Yorkshire Evening Post as saying a vigorous marketing campaign was undertaken. I have today been sent the details of this campaign, brochures and leaflets sent to the voluntary organisations. I have only received this today. So far I haven't, I have spoken to a handful of organisations, Help the Elderly. Not one of them received any information on The Breece or a copy of the A to Z of the Old People Services that contain advertising of the hotel. If this wasn't bad enough, one organisation said that the last time they received any correspondence relating to The Breece was from former Councillor, Christiana

Myers.

This particular organisation spoke to Social Services at Christmas trying to get a referral to The Breece. They were turned down by Social Services as they didn't know that the situation about the funding of The Breece. The gentleman spoke, he said the impression he got from Social Services that The Breece was fully booked. His organisation remains extremely keen to make referrals and was surprised when I told him that The Breece was under used and not fully booked as he had been led to believe. To my mind this is not a vigorous marketing campaign and to claim that it is is disgraceful.

Until Councillor Harrand stands up and says that a fully funded and viable alternative can be found to offer the same level of care in the holiday destination we will campaign against this closure and stand up for the people. Without The Breece they have nothing to look forward to. I move the White Paper Lord Mayor.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Coupar.

CLLR COUPAR: Yes, thank you Lord Mayor. The privatisation and the cuts that have occurred in the home care service have resulted in the most vulnerable and needy in this city being left without adequate care, care I might add that this Council is obliged to provide and is failing to do so, for example the cases highlighted by Look North and the Evening Post. These failings cannot and should not be ignored by this administration. Let's not forget that it was the in house home care service that came to the aid of the 60 or so people abandoned by the private company.

The changes in the home care service that are being implemented are not only having an impact on the elderly, the vulnerable and those in need of care, but also the people who work in this service. At the last Council Meeting, when we were guillotined and prevented from discussing this very important issue, we were given some insight into how this is affecting the home care staff. There has been a reduction in the amount of home carers, no positive moves to recruit more home carers and no interest in improving their terms and conditions. We have also seen an increase in the independent providers of home care. Quite frankly, this administration seems determine to privatise this service and become a commissioner and not a provider of the service.

Lord Mayor, I have to ask why on earth would they choose to do this given their track record. Remember the farce that ensued when they privatised the grass cutting. All our wards had examples of grass six foot long causing nuisance and danger. Then the administration blamed the contractor or the growing season, basically anyone or anything but themselves.

Some home care services are provided to help older people carrying on living independently in their own homes. We know that the older generation is less likely to complain if their home care is late or fails to turn up, because they do not want to appear a burden, or cause other people extra work. Without this vital help they would find it almost impossible to sustain their independence. What is more, this administration, or those that have stopped to listen to the debate, seem hell bent on penalising the older citizens of Leeds. They have already stopped day centres for the elderly opening on weekends, increased charges for the elderly using the Council's leisure centres, and cut home care visits for shopping, cooking and cleaning, and now want to close The Breece.

Lord Mayor, it is time this administration realised it is dealing with people's ability to live their lives to the fullest and not just figures on a spreadsheet. It seems

they are at worst happy to see these cuts, bearing in mind who is left in the Chamber, and changes, or at best happy to bury their heads in the sand and hope they will go away. Lord Mayor, I second the White Paper. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Hussain.

CLLR HUSSAIN: My Lord Mayor, I wish to move the amendment. There is no use pretending that we did not encounter a problem on that weekend in August, and it is I think the sort of thing that we should, as elected Members - too many of the things that we discuss here are of little importance or of no interest to the people who elected us but this I guess is different. Perhaps I can explain what actually happened on that day.

Social Services received a telephone call from the managers of Care UK, which is one of the seven external organisations that we as a Council employ to provide some of our domestic care services in the North West and the West areas of Leeds. They told us that they were not able to provide the proper services over that weekend and would we help.

The staff of our Social Services Department came in on their leave days, all the services were provided, some a little later than planned, we acknowledge that, but everyone was looked after on that Saturday and Sunday. On behalf I am sure of all Councillors I would like to thank Margaret Reece(?) and her team for the excellent work they did on those days. They were a credit to our city and we should say so publicly.

Care UK is a national company supplying social care services to 55 other local authorities. We had not previously had problems like this with them and we were as disappointed as anyone else when this blew up.

Members of Council, since then the Leeds Manager of Care UK has decided to pursue his career elsewhere. Secondly, 30% of the work previously undertaken by Care UK has been redistributed to the internal and independent providers. The cost of their work provided by our internal Officers has been deducted from the amount payable to this company. I can also say weekly meetings are held between their management and our senior management in the Social Services Department.

Finally a serious legal official warning has been given to the provider that one more incident like this will lead to the termination of the contract. I also need to stress that none of the other providers have caused us these problems and I think they have all got the message loud and clear.

We are happy to arrange for Members of the opposition parties to be given further briefings on the subject as and when they require. Furthermore, the comment about the Scrutiny Board is legitimate and we welcome that. I believe that this has already started and I am under the impression that Scrutiny has asked for a further report to monitor and to ensure that further steps are taken to avoid this in the future.

These are the facts of the case my Lord Mayor. Councillor Harrand will pick up any of the other issues that are arising during the course of this debate. I move the amendment Lord Mayor, thank you. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Harrand.

CLLR HARRAND: I second Lord Mayor and reserve the right to speak please.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Nash.

CLLR NASH: I wish to speak about the proposed closure of The Breece. I was going to speak earlier on in the Minutes but obviously we didn't get to it, to that, and the reason I do so is because I have a sheath(?) of letters from people in South Leeds who wish to keep The Breece open, but these are people who know about The Breece. I would bet that for every one person who knows about The Breece in Scarborough there must be a hundred of our citizens who have never heard of it.

Now when Councillor Harrand wrote to all Council Members last July saying that they had placed an advertisement in the Evening Post but the response had been very poor, I then sent an e-mail back to him and said that my previous job, my day job was PR and marketing, and I suggested ways in which the Council could do this. I never got a reply from Peter, which I was surprised about, but more importantly the suggestions I made were totally ignored, and there is no reason why this is the case.

When I received the report which went to the Executive Board, the opening sentence is, "It is not part of the Council's core business and it does not fit with the Council's agreed policy on short breaks. The decrease in occupancy rate at The Breece coupled with the increasing financial subsidy paid by Leeds Social Services mean that it is no longer operationally or economically viable". Now that tells me and everybody else that they didn't want to market it, they were intent in closing it from the start.

Both the Evening Post and the Yorkshire Post run advertising features on residential care, and I used to place loads of advertisements along these features, and although they are in competition with other advertisers advertising residential care and holiday breaks, people who are interested in knowing about it, their attention is drawn to it.

We could also send a leaflet out to every citizen in this city. We send a Council Tax demand. We have included literature with Council Tax demands before. We only need 300,000, which is peanuts to print, and may I suggest that it be a decent leaflet. The brochure, so called brochure which The Breece has is a scrappy photocopied A4 smudged paper. Who, if they had never heard of The Breece, who weren't connected with anybody who knew about it, would think, "This is the place to place grandmother or grandpa for respite care", or which elderly person would want to go themselves when they see such a scrappy piece of paper. It needs a decent brochure.

Now all this is not rocket science, it's just simple, basic marketing. I didn't really want to make the political point here because I think it is a very sad day. I am just asking you, I am pleading with you to defer the decision on The Breece for another twelve months, even six months, but market it properly, do it professionally, and if there are no takers, hands up, I will agree to its closure, but I know that if elderly people knew that this facility existed you would be inundated with applicants. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Bale.

CLLR BALE:anyone by the cases disclosed by Look North. Labour has no monopoly on compassion, and when Members opposite suggest that it has, suggest that you care more than us, you demean yourselves and you cheapen the political process. (*Hear Hear*)

When those problems arose in the summer I was involved in looking into

those problems and I discussed them in great detail with the people concerned. I discovered that, yes, there had been isolated problems, but they had been addressed with energy and professionalism, and I place on record, as Councillor Hussain has done, my commendation of those Officers who stepped in and dealt with the sort of situations that arise in any organisation from time to time. The charge of botched privatisation really doesn't stand up, where there were 27 contracts, seven new ones were entered into, following a rigorous process, and I have looked right the way through that process, which involved evaluation of cost and of quality.

Being charitable I will assume that the phrase 'botched privatisation' is just a convenient cliché, but it does reveal an assumption that any form of privatisation is bound to be botched, that only service delivered by directly employed staff can be trusted. That really is unfair to the care workers concerned, and it is unfair to service users whose confidence it undermines.

I have heard the cases that Councillor Harrison has mentioned, but everyone in this room knows that we could go around and collect as many case histories of cases where people are wholly satisfied by service as you have been able to recount isolated cases where people are concerned.

In a Government spending climate where we have to do more year on year with less year on year, it behoves us to spend as wisely as we can. The outsourcing of some of that service to independent providers enables us to make costs more predictable, it introduces an element of market testing and competitiveness in relation to cost and quality, and it allows in house staff to cope, to concentrate on the most complex cases, and to manage problems as they did on that weekend in August when problems occur, because problems will always occur.

It really is time that Members, Labour Members faced up to the realities of achieving value for money in the delivery of Social Services rather than simply sloganising. At the very least you ought to explain to electors, be honest to electors, about the way in which Government, the Government squeeze on the Supporting People budget forces us to make, to engage in highly efficient procurement and to pursue partnership in delivery in the way that we have.

As the population ages, Lord Mayor, as more and more of us are going to need some sort of care at some stage in our lives, we need to be able to deliver that care with ever increasing efficiency. This is a national challenge, similar to the environmental challenge that has been referred to earlier, and it is arguably more direct and more urgent.

Just two days ago the Chancellor of the Exchequer said that the environmental challenge was so demanding that it required market mechanisms to solve it, and I quote, market mechanisms to solve it. I fail to understand why Labour Members continually refute that economic logic in relation to the equally important challenge of delivering care in this city to all the people who need it. Thank you Lord Mayor. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lancaster.

CLLR LANCASTER: Thank you Lord Mayor. As the Scrutiny Board Chair, before I saw Councillor Harrison's White Paper at the last Council, when unfortunately it wasn't heard, I had already asked for a report into what was going on, and the last week we had that report referred to the Scrutiny Board and we continue to monitor it bi monthly. Yes, some of you might not think that that's what we call an inquiry, but my scrutiny role is to ask for reports and then to discuss them with the rest of the Board members, and it was agreed that we would ask for a report back in

November to ensure that we wouldn't have the same problem this Christmas, and I have to say one person who doesn't get the service that they need is far too many, we agreed that at the Scrutiny Board, but don't come on that, you know, mistakes are not made.

My understanding when I became an elected Member was that's what we were there for, to pick up things that weren't happening and to challenge them. I have been on the Council seven and a half years and I have always referred them to Mike Evans and other Officers, to John England, and I have had replies and I have been able to resolve issues. It is not a perfect world, I wish it was, but I think we would all be redundant if it wasn't perfect, and the other thing is we all come on the Council for different reasons. I was a foster mother for six years and I felt that the Social Services had not backed me, and that's why I suppose I came on with an agenda, but I learnt a lot from that, and I learnt how to challenge services so that we do get the best for our people in Leeds. Thank you Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Akhtar.

CLLR AKHTAR: Yes, thank you Lord Mayor. I felt it was important for me to say a few words in respect to what Councillor Nash has brought the item. Can I just make this absolutely clear, my Lord Mayor, I always believed in politics, but I never use the vulnerable people of our city as a political tool. Time after time (Uproar), time after time, time after time we hear in this Chamber, there are other channels that we can use as politicians in this city, we can help many of our residents, we don't have to use vulnerable people as a political tool.

Talking about The Breece, and the Councillor opposite has just said that she was a PR/marketer, can I ask the lady, if I may Lord Mayor, over the last 27 years, the last 27 years The Breece has been operating, how come someone like myself who has been a Councillor for twelve years on and off, not a single individual from my ward has approached me about this particular Breece in Scarborough. Is that the failure of the Opposition, or is that a failure, so please, so please don't use (Uproar), don't ever use the vulnerable people of our city as a political tool, and I dare you to use it again. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Harrand.

CLLR HARRAND: I would now like to make three speeches. I will first deal with the intemperate outburst from Councillor Coupar in the previous debate. I have never heard such economically illiterate comments on a budget. If you believe those figures were anything like anything any accountant would believe - (interrupted), yes, well that's exactly what I am offering you, if you would like to go across to Social Services accountants tomorrow and they will make you wiser, well if not better informed. They were as far away from the truth as any set of figures quoted in this Chamber for a long time, which is certainly saying something.

On the question of The Breece. The Breece is a sad fact of life, it is costing £1,000 a day to keep that place going and we could do with the money back in Leeds. We are not closing it for any personal benefit or so we can decrease the precept or anything like that, we need the money back in Leeds to spend on mainstream activities.

The petition that was referred to, I have seen it, if it's the same one, at least half the signatories lives in Scarborough. They were shopkeepers in Scarborough. I wonder how totally objective their opinion about the future of The Breece was.

People ring The Breece and say, "Can we come, we've heard about it?", and

then we say, there are two en suite bedrooms and they are booked up six weeks in advance, and they say, "Oh no thank you, I'll go somewhere else where it's more in tune with what I have at home". That's the reason The Breeze doesn't sell, lack of capital investment for 20 years. (Uproar)

We then ask you if your policy is as I thought one speaker said, every elderly citizen in Leeds is entitled to a holiday, now if that's the policy and if that's what you are going to finance, god help the Council Tax in 2000 and whenever it is you're back. (Uproar)

Every elderly citizen will get a holiday? That was the policy. It's a bit different, that's what you put (Uproar), and then we have the impression that it is fully booked. Well I cannot refute impressions. It isn't fully booked, it's not been fully booked for months if not years. I finally would like to ask you would you open this again? If we close it will you buy it back and open it again? No I think perhaps that was. I suspect not, and if there was one sentence that summed it up it was Councillor Nash's, it's a place to put grandma and grandad, absolutely, that's just what it is. This is East Germany 1957, you can go on any holiday you like except it's got to be in Scarborough and it's got to start on a Wednesday and you can't have a toilet in your bedroom. That is miles, years out of date. It is no longer a place to put grandma or grandad. Older people are more intelligent and independent than that seems to imply.

Right, now we'll get to the main debate that we are supposed to be talking about on this White Paper, and I wish to start by thanking publicly and sincerely John Bale for the way he dealt with the crisis on television. Those who saw it will see it was one of the most professional and articulate explanations of our case that you could possibly hope for. When these problems arose I was 10,000 ... (Applause) - let's not get carried away however. I was 10,000 miles away in the Australian outback. I tell you John (Uproar) - and if it happens again John, I shall not let that happen again. John represented the Council with great professionalism and calmness.

What got me in this resolution was 'botched privatisation'. Now we accept that you on your side have a lot more experience of privatisation than we have over here. Who began the privatisation of home care? Who began the privatisation of home care, the Labour Party. The contracts we signed in 2005 were practically your contracts. The use of private sector home care began in 1994. I know that because it was a Unison official that came up to me (inaudible) told me, and how much were you going to pay on privatised home care when you were doing your last budget, £100,000 a week. Your budget was for £5.5 million of privatised home care, that's what we took over in 2004. Who is pushing this privatisation of home residential care? The Government say here's tens of millions of independent living project money. Pure New Labour privatisation, and who sets the guidelines, the Labour Secretary of State for Health, he gives us points and red stars and ticks in boxes if we privatise, and who introduced the first profit making company into education in Leeds? It wasn't us. Who introduced Capita, as in capitalism, into education? It wasn't us, capitalism in education began when you were in charge. So I wonder if this reference to our effectiveness at privatisation is just a change of policy. Would there still be contracts for the private sector if Labour was in power? Would you bring everything back in house? Who is going to tell the auditors this is our policy? (Uproar) They would bring everything back in house. So this White Paper is Blairism after ten years, the Labour Party that you joined, don't privatise like you do, privatise like we do, we are better at privatisation than you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you Councillor Harrand, thank you.

CLLR HARRAND: Is this why you joined the Labour Party? Thank you Lord Mayor. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Wakefield.

CLLR WAKEFIELD: Thank you Lord Mayor. I want to try and deal with the issues that have been raised. Firstly I am grateful for Councillor Nash's exposition of the marketing trade in this issue because it's the very point I made at Executive Board. Everyone accepts that we've got a demographic pressure, that is absolutely correct, and just look at the next ten, 25 years, and in some ways you would actually think there would be more demand for Breece because that's the age profile going up, so I did wonder why we haven't had more people going, and I accept that this building is in need of refurbishment. So the obvious question was, given that I amongst many other people here have tried to market it myself amongst colleagues, and I mentioned that at Executive Board, and asked for marketing material to be sent to us so we could see the effectiveness. I am still waiting for that Peter, because I think it's right, and I'm glad that Councillor Nash has spoken, because I am absolutely convinced, judging by the phone calls and letters and other activities in the city, there is still a demand and there is still a need, and so really what our position was is that we will not agree with The Breece until we see proper evidence of market failure, marketing and indeed low demand.

I want to go on to the issue of home care, because the cases that Councillor Harrison read out I think reflected two issues with this, and we've said this before. Firstly the assessment. It is clear there is something going wrong with the assessment. When you get people of 94 year old, diabetes, some registered blind, having services withdrawn, you have to ask about the process of assessment, and as you've said, and I think you've said it John, there is bound to be mistakes made, but they clearly have been and we only get, well in terms of the city I imagine we have a significant sample but clearly not enough, and I think there is something about monitoring that.

The other issue the capacity, the capacity of the voluntary sector. Every voluntary sector want to do it but they haven't been given enough money, or, as the previous points have been made, haven't got the staff, and that is an issue about how you grow the capacity of the voluntary sector to take over all the duties and all the jobs that have been withdrawn.

Now Councillor Bale, I thought - he usually makes some very thoughtful contributions - but I thought he made one major error in this one, he talked about the market. When Gordon Brown spoke about the environment he was talking about the market finding solutions to deal with technologies. We are talking about human beings here. We are talking about human beings and people who are vulnerable and elderly and in need, and yes, this Labour Group is committed to public services, and if you look at the complaints, between the complaints about the Council and the complaints about the private sectors you will find that the private sectors are well into double figures and well away and we are still under ten. I will give you this assurance, John, if that's the divide between you and us then let's be absolutely clear, this Labour Group believes in public service and public services, as we did yesterday at the meal, and rewarding people who have worked for 30 odd years here because they are dedicated to the public service ethos, they are dedicated to the elderly and they want to make a difference, and I am not embarrassed for our Group to be totally committed to public service and we have to get this right for the interest of those elderly people in this city. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Harrison to sum up please.

CLLR HARRISON: Lord Mayor, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Yorkshire Evening Post and Look North for covering these cases and make sure that this appalling situation is kept in the public eye. I would also like to thank Officers of Social Services who did try very hard to sort out the situation of that weekend. I would also like to ask that the administration how long they can continue to deny that cuts have been made in Social Services when the evidence is contrary and continues to mount up (*Hear Hear*), and how long can this administration continue to blame the Labour Group and realise that the cuts are down to them and that they hold the purse strings.

I am tired of hearing promises of improved care that just does not stack up with the experiences that people are continuing, are contacting me and other Members of the Labour Group about the appalling services they are receiving. It is about time the coalition stopped playing at politics and opened their eyes to the real situation that has developed in this city. (Uproar)

Over the last two years I have heard many denials from this administration of cuts to Social Services, but the time has come to say no more and think about the dignity of the elderly and disabled people. The amendment put in by Councillor Hussain implies that the difficulties are down to one weekend, well I can tell you it is not true. Here is a list, an e-mail from Social Services Department covering complaints from April to August which was sent to Councillor Wakefield and myself from the Social Services Department. Councillor Hussain also stated that complaints were dealt with that weekend. I can also tell you that this also is not true, that at the last Scrutiny Board an Officer reported that some of the complaints were not dealt with.

Lord Mayor, I mentioned earlier today about a 94 year old lady who I visited who had her home care cut from one hour every three weeks after ten years. Can someone please tell me how an Officer can come to this decision? Over ten years her condition has deteriorated from having arthritis, angina and eye problems, many spells in hospital. What has changed in ten years, has she had some sort of a miracle cure, well we all know that this is not the case.

I asked the Department to look at this again as this lady was totally unaware of what was going on. She was asked to sign a form by the Review Officer but had no idea what she was signing. This is in her own words. The reviewing of this case went to the independent review panel who after due consideration agreed with the report. Who are these people, why are no elected Members involved in this panel?

I went to visit this lady who the Department state is independent and does not need help. Well I can tell you, Members of Council, that if a local voluntary organisation who takes her to luncheon clubs and shopping, she certainly would not be independent.

Councillor Blackburn stated a number of Council meetings ago, and shouted very, very loudly and banged on the desk that there were no cuts made to Social Services. Well I can tell you David that - this is true because this lady lives in the Kirkdales which happens to be in your ward. (Uproar)

To The Breece. I recently went to visit The Breece after a visit last year with Councillor Taggart about twelve months ago, and The Breece, the people that I met in The Breece were people - I mean I am glad you find it very amusing because these are people that I visited did not find it amusing that this place was being shut. Elderly people going to The Breece, many of them go there because they have no families, that they are totally there for the nursing care. How can we as elected Members for this city stand here hand on heart saying that we are doing the right

thing when we are neglecting the older people of this city who may never, ever get a holiday again. I am sorry but this Group will not stand for that and we will continue to campaign.

Yes, The Breeze is in a bad state of repair and yes it does need money on it, but there must be other ways of dealing with The Breeze. If Leeds City Council cannot deal with The Breeze well may be it's time then we handed it over to some sort of Board to look after it. No, not privatise it. Down in Wales there is a hotel which is run by the Blind Association, why can't we look at possibilities like that, because it's just easy to get rid of it.

Lord Mayor, I would like to move the White Paper. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. We will call for the vote. We will call for a vote and in the vote for the amendment in the name of Councillor Hussain, all those in favour. Those against. Any abstentions. (CARRIED)

That is carried, so therefore it becomes the substantive Motion. All those in favour of the substantive Motion in the name of Councillor Hussain. Thank you, those against. Any abstentions. (CARRIED)

Thank you. So Members of Council and members of public, we will adjourn for 30 minutes and members of public are welcome to join us for tea in the Banqueting Hall. Thank you.

(Short adjournment)

11 WHITE PAPER MOTION - NHS FUNDED HEALTHCARE

THE LORD MAYOR: Okay Members of Council, we will proceed with Council business. Item 11, Councillor Grayshon.

CLLR GRAYSHON: Thank you Lord Mayor, good evening. In March 2006 the BBC television programme Panorama investigated how sick and elderly people are compelled unlawfully to sell their homes to pay for NHS care. The film prompted the biggest viewer response Panorama has ever received with over 1,700 e-mails and 3,000 phone calls.

A second programme, The National Home Swindles, A Growing Scandal, was broadcast on Sunday the 23rd of July. As I watched the programme the content became more and more disturbing. People who were obviously unable to care for themselves and needed medical or health care were being forced to spend their savings, in some cases sell their homes, to finance health care which is the responsibility of the National Health Service.

The need of these people is health care not social care. It was quite clear that the individuals involved could not look after themselves and required a greater level of care than that which could be offered by Social Services, this being termed social care. How do we differentiate between health care and social care, what is the criteria? The legal definition can be found in the judgment given in the case of *R -v- North East Devon Health Authority ex parte Pamela Coughlan*. In that case the Court held that where the primary need is health care then the responsibility is that of the National Health Service, even where the individual has been placed in a home by a local authority.

The programme gave a number of examples where the need of the individuals were clearly *Coughlan* compliant. That is to say they would meet the criteria decided upon by the Court of Appeal. However, the National Health Service

had chosen in each case to ignore the *Coughlan* ruling forcing individuals and families to pay for the cost of health care. Clearly this is wrong.

As I researched further into this subject I became even more concerned by what I discovered. The long awaited national framework for NHS continuing health care, and NHS funded nursing care in England, was published as a consultation document. The consultation period ended on September the 22nd. The solicitor, Luke Clements, was given a copy of the document and has made, amongst others, the following observations. The consultation document fails the *Coughlan* test in that Miss Coughlan would not qualify for NHS continuing care funding under the new regime. The proposed national framework document fails to address almost all the problems that have been identified with the current NHS continuing care arrangements. It seeks to patch up a system that has been roundly condemned by persisting with criteria that are not *Coughlan* compliant and have been rejected as opaque, unfair, inaccessible and at times incomprehensible.

I suppose I should tell you what injuries Pamela Coughlan suffered as a result of her accident. Miss Coughlan was grievously injured in a road traffic accident in 1971. She is tetraplegic, double incontinent requiring regular catheterization. She is partially paralysed in the respiratory tract with consequent difficulty in breathing and subject not only to the attendant problems of immobility but to the recurring headaches caused by an associated neurological condition. I am sure you will agree that Miss Coughlan could not be expected to look after herself.

Where the responsibility for health care falls to the National Health Service it should meet those responsibilities, it should not be forcing families to sell their homes to finance care which is clearly defined in case law. Please support my White Paper. If the injuries Pamela Coughlan received are not enough to receive funded care from the National Health Service according to the proposals contained in the framework document, the NHS has failed us all. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Harrand.

CLLR HARRAND: Second Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jarosz.

CLLR JAROSZ: Thank you Lord Mayor. Can I just say from the outside(sic) that my Group will be supporting this White Paper and I just want to make a short comment.

I am extremely pleased that the Government has recently undertaken a consultation exercise entitled The National Framework for NHS Continuing Healthcare and NHS Funded Nursing Care in England. This consultation was completed in September and has taken place as the Government is determined to establish as simpler, fairer and more coherent system of assessment to determine eligibility for NHS funding and long term care outside hospitals. The national framework sets out a national policy on exactly who should receive NHS funding and it proposes a standard practice for assessing eligibility for these services in order to support consistent decision making. I am therefore sure that the problems Councillor Grayshon highlights will soon be a thing of the past. Thank you Lord Mayor. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Grayshon to sum up.

CLLR GRAYSHON: Thank you Lord Mayor. I am very pleased that Councillor Jarosz has told us that the Labour Group will support this paper. My only

concern is that the consultation document, as I pointed out in my earlier speech, is not *Coughlan* compliant and really it should be to fall within the parameters of the law of this country and I do hope that the Government take into consideration the *Coughlan* test and ensure that people who need the care under that test receive the care that they wish to receive, but thank you very much Councillor Jarosz.

THE LORD MAYOR: Can I call for a vote on the motion. All those in favour. Any against. Any abstentions. (CARRIED)

Very, very impressive, I hope we can maintain that unity on the future motions.

12. WHITE PAPER MOTION - EAST LEEDS LEISURE CENTRES

Okay, item 12, Councillor Harington.

CLLR HARINGTON: Thank you Lord Mayor. There are a number of things I hope in what I say we can be united about before we get on to one or two things which may be we cannot be united about.

I would like to begin by, as I didn't have an opportunity to say so with the questions, that I do support the decision to move to a Sports Trust for the sports centres in Leeds. I know that there can be problems about whether or not the money that you gain from non domestic rate and VAT actually does get reinvested because sometimes it can get swallowed up in maintenance, but it does seem to me the best decision and I look forward to seeing the progress implemented. (Applause)

I would also like to begin by saying what an excellent provision I think Leisure Services manage in the city in often difficult circumstances. I think that this is borne out by a recent survey that there was amongst users of the service, and 78% professed satisfaction with the service, and that is obviously tremendously to the credit of the people who work in Leisure Services providing this.

I am sure we can all agree also that because of the incredible importance at increasing participation of people in sport and exercise we want to do all we can to provide the best facilities in the city. The Government, as you may know, is hoping for a 1% year on year increase in participation, and obviously we want to try and provide the best encouragement to people, that is partly for personal fitness of course but it is also for their own health with knock on effects for the NHS.

We can also agree, when we look at the figures, that an awful lot of money needs to be spent on our sports centres. There is a deteriorating stock and money has to be found. There is about £29 million as I understand which still has not been earmarked to get money from any particular pot, and so obviously the money from the PFI credits needs to be used that the Government has made available and I am delighted that the Council has applied for it. The issue is where the money is to be spent. This is where we come to points where may be we cannot be entirely united. I will continue, even though I am ahead.

We can also see the attraction, considering the deficit in the three East Leeds centres, why you should be proposing to close those three. We can see why that piece of land is attractive, although at the moment there is nothing on it I know that there have been plans to build on it in the past and also it is on - I am sorry? I have heard of the gentleman in question - and also the attraction of putting the building on an arterial route, that obviously has attractions.

However, Councillor Lyons will speak from how it appears for him where he

is, so you can look forward to that, and Councillor Ogilvie will talk about South Leeds. As far as East Leeds is concerned a number of residents of course have expressed their opposition. They think of it as their green, precious green space and so not surprisingly have objected very strongly to being, it being built on.

My guess is that some would be open to persuasion if there was the proper kind of consultation. I think there are many who don't want anything on it at all ever, just don't do discussion. But there are some who I think may be, if there was a proper consultation, might be able to be persuaded or see the logic. Unfortunately, the one consultation event that there was happened at very short notice, at four o'clock in the afternoon when many people obviously who were working couldn't get there, and it happened in the Fearnville Sports Centre which has one of the worst acoustics on the planet, and so very few people could actually hear what was being said, and although the Officers I must say did valiantly they couldn't do other than present the case they had been given, which came across to people as *a fait accompli*, no discussion, this is it, and I must say also the presentation to Councillors was a bit similar.

We had been told of course that there wasn't to be any closing of course that there wasn't to be any closing of Fearnville Sports Centre until after the election, and then when we had a briefing we were told that we had to decide about this new centre by the end of June. It was, I would say, a bit of The Godfather tactic, "I'm gonna make you an offer you cannot refuse". (Laughter) "So, you wanna sports centre or you don't wanna sports centre, you don't wanna sports centre, okay". There was not, I say, much room for consultation. (Laughter) We didn't precisely get the horse's head in the bed but we weren't - maybe that's coming later - but we didn't (interruption), well, I look forward to that. But we did not get any encouragement to discuss the wider picture.

Now, Councillor Procter knows that I have made this point before, and I shall make it again. It seems to me that we do need a sense of the whole city to see where centres are going to go. I am thinking of course of Gipton and Harehills, but I am not - well and Burmantofts we have mentioned - but I am actually thinking of the city as a whole, because of the importance of the sports agenda, because of the importance of trying to increase participation, how does it look, city wide, to see where we can put provision.

Now the other key issue of course that we then come to is if you don't close Fearnville and you want to refurbish it, how on earth are you going to pay for it, and this comes to the next issue which I know we don't agree about, which is where EASEL fits in. Now it is of course a very sensible and responsible argument to say, you can't talk about EASEL money when we haven't even got a contract yet. I understand that. However, however, I don't think it is coherent to be telling us, forget EASEL for the moment, when at the same time briefings are being provided for Councillors, and for residents, and we are being asked to look at how the money might be spent and we are being specifically asked to see whether money might be available for sports centres. But in addition, the briefing to area management also specifically talked about the Fearnville Sports Centre as being a vehicle for regeneration, part of EASEL. So at the same time as telling us not to bring in EASEL you are also telling us that we need to think about how it relates to the regeneration of the area and the sports centres.

John, I just need to comment briefly on John's amendment, well I don't know whether it is an amendment or another motion because it brings in a whole lot of - and I am not quite sure what he means, I look forward to, saying about, I quote here, the endorsed, proposals endorsed by Government. Well the general idea of there being a sports centre in East Leeds as I understand it has been endorsed but not the

specific location, that has not yet been endorsed, and that is not made clear here, and also, as I said, I support the Sports Trust and hope it will be successful, but at the same time we don't know yet how much of the money that you gained from non domestic rate and VAT actually will be able to be reinvested, I hope it is, but it is premature to talk about it being the largest investment ever until we know that any of these things are actually being put into practice.

So I am saying that there hasn't been proper consultation with residents, there hasn't been proper consultation with Members, I think that if we don't get a city wide picture we won't be able to get a clear idea of what's needed, and to put the centre in this place on those fields, Killingbeck Fields, would be a mistake, and so I submit the paper in my name. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Lyons.

COUNCILLOR LYONS: Thank you very much Lord Mayor. Well you'd expect me to stand up and start arguing for sports centres that were built on Halton Moor. You know, why was it built on Halton Moor, why was it built in East Leeds?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Because you lost the seat to the Liberals.
(Laughter)

COUNCILLOR LYONS: I expect another minute of that, I would expect somebody that doesn't know what Halton Moor is, and is a Temple Newsam Councillor, to come out with a remark like that. But nevertheless, nevertheless Lord Mayor, if they want to hear why we are putting White Papers down then we can go forward because there is another paper out tomorrow night called the Yorkshire Evening Post, watch that.

So what I will, what I am saying is why were it built on Halton Moor? It was built on Halton Moor specifically, and it was opened by Douggie Gabb(?) who was the Lord Mayor at the time, and it was put there to overcome the difficulties we had and problems with anti social behaviour in that particular area. The amount of money that we were paying out, and would pay out if this sports centre closed down, is far, far more than if we kept it open.

It is pretty obvious that when you've got a poor area in East Leeds like Halton Moor area, that were not long since called the zoo, in the Yorkshire Post it were called the zoo, but now you can't get a house there. I've got to go argue with ALMO's, and everybody else, to get people a house at Halton Moor. Nobody can get a house up there unless they are very special circumstances. That is the way that we have turned it round, and how we've turned it round, how we've turned it round is mainly with the sports centre.

Who uses it, who are the people who use it? Well there is SKIN that use it, that is Safe Kids In Need. That doesn't cost you anything, it's a voluntary organisation by the people on the estates that use it for 60, 70 disabled kids in that particular area. What you would do is take that off them. Who else uses it? There is young mums in the area. Well all of you are arguing that we should be looking after them and watch youth pregnancy to see about how we can keep it down etc, and you need laugh John, you need laugh but it's a serious bloody issue, and it is very serious when you've got a young lass of 14, 15 and 16 that's having babies that need looking after, but keep on laughing, you keep on laughing while after May. If you think that young mums on their own don't want looking after then all I think about the Tories is true what is coming across.

We have got all the schools, we've got all the schools - I listened to you so

listen to me, listen - we've got all the schools in the area, the ones that Richard Harker isn't about to close down, we've still got, we've still got, so we need all the schools to go to this sports centre. We've got youth and youth provision that brings them altogether. They have barbeques and they've all sorts, instead of going and breaking in people's cars now what they do is they join in the local community in seeing where we are going. The effort that has been done across there with the youth centre and with this sports centre is unbelievable.

Where is it built, it's built in the middle of a Council estate. Where else would you expect to do what the Government and you are saying we should be doing, what are you saying, with the need provision put in there, without having to put a bus on and ask Ryk Downes to put a bus on because he's Deputy Chair of the Passenger Transport Authority, but what they said is, no, they won't even give me one from Colton, 88 to go to St James's.

So, you know, it looks like you want this to close. So what are you doing, you are closing this by stealth - I am sure you put that clock fast - putting prices and lettings up for people that can't afford to go. As far as I can see, I will go across to where you're going to build the new one, what you going to do before things is over is the only green thing that will be left in East Leeds and round that area is the green flag on the Irish Centre. There won't be any fields, it will be green flag on the Irish Centre that will be left.

I am telling you all, what we want is our sports centres remaining open. You have done a lot of speaking today, Andrew, on what should happen and what should happen, what I'm telling you, you'll spend more money in Social Services, Police, Probation Services, if you close this down than whether you keep it open. So I am asking all of you, I am not asking for more money, not yet because we'll be taking over shortly, we'll be taking over shortly and I'll make sure we get money to keep these sports centres open.

I ask, Lord Mayor, and I ask everyone, it isn't a matter of just building a new sports centre, it's a matter of keeping sports centres open that will actually save this Council money and do a service for the area. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Procter.

CLLR PROCTER: Yes, thank you Lord Mayor, thank you Lord Mayor, follow that, well my God.

Do you know, I have to say there is a huge dose of amnesia that seems to crop up amongst Members opposite. But you only really need to look at - and I don't blame Councillor Harington for this, he is a new Member to this Council, he is relatively inexperienced in what he is doing, he clearly has not listened closely to his major mentor, one former leader of this Council. Roger, you really do need to spend an hour or two, or a day or two having a chat with George Mudie don't you to figure out just how and why we have the leisure provision in the city that we do have. Mick asked an interesting question, why was it built on Halton Moor? That is a very good question, and Councillor Nash there gives the game away, because George wanted it. (Laughter)

Because George wanted it, and that's the truth of it, and let's just have a little look round, and I look to the Members opposite who have been here a number of years, and you all know that that's the case. Why do we have in a certain area of Leeds, we have got Fearnville, we have got Halton Moor as Councillor Lyons calls it, but East Leeds actually, East Leeds, John Smeaton, a scheme started under your administration, Garforth and Kippax as well. It is almost an embarrassment of

provision, almost an embarrassment of provision, because if you look to the rest of the city, some areas which colleagues over here represent, there is precious little provision at all, and that's the truth of the matter, and the fact is, isn't it, is that for years and years you went on blindly providing every more facilities in your areas that you then never maintained, and that is why we are in the sorry state we are.

Bernard's idea of splitting culture and recreation, as he did a number of years ago, was very clever, because Bernard was able to hive off the budget into culture and all his pet projects, and the leisure, recreation element of it, as it was, and Phil Towler and various other people I remember from the dim and distant past - but we won't go into that - people who remember the dim and distant past, they were left to struggle with precious little money to fund anything, and certainly not to provide for maintenance of these centres.

Up until recently all of the problems that were stored up in these buildings were you guys, you didn't actually provide the money in the first place to improve these centres year on year, and we have been left with a position of trying to bring together a whole range of funding streams to improve the sports centres within our city, and that is what we have done.

If you actually look critically and honestly at it, Councillor Blake was involved in pulling together a PFI proposal for funding some years ago. She may not recall it but that was the case, because under your administration, that's what you wanted to do, you wanted to put in a PFI bid to help refurbish and remodel the sports centres, it just so happens that there wasn't a PFI round within that sector while you were in administration, and it came along when we were in administration, and we pressed the button because we wanted to do it. The options appraisal of the sports centres that would close and merge and all the rest of it, it was done under your administration. The report was drawn up for you. It was your Councillors who saw it, it was your Councillors who effectively rubber stamped it and let it go on its way. Now some of you may deny that, some of you may not want to believe that, but that's the truth, and if you want to see the papers you are more than welcome to see them and we can supply them to you.

When Roger Harington talks about the way in which this has come about, I have not pretended the way that we have moved forward in terms of this PFI process is the best process, it isn't, it is a lousy process, it is a process that has been laid down by Government unfortunately and we have to conform and comply or else we get no money, and that is precisely what we have been trying to do.

Councillor Harington mentions the issue of look city wide at provision, indeed I would love to look city wide at provision, I would love to do that, but you people are not prepared to do that. The consequence of looking city wide is to say we have over provision in one area and we have under provision in another area, it is time that we reordered our services.

We can't do that, the moment we look at anything you cry 'cuts'. You would rather have something that is dilapidated, outdated, not required any more than you would have a state of the art new facility, and I have to say if you honestly think that there are votes in depriving East Leeds from a £10 million brand new facility, you are wrong. If you honestly believe that the kids on Halton Moor, on the Seacroft estate, and far beyond, do you honestly think they don't want to come to a leisure water park, of course they do, they would absolutely love it. My kids would love it, anyone's kids would love it for goodness sake. We haven't got it in this city, they have got it in Doncaster, they have got it in Sheffield, they have got it in Bradford, what have we got, outdated sports centres with lousy pools that are not interesting enough, and we talk about getting more young people into sports centres, that's the way to do it, to

provide the facilities that they want, that they want to see, that they want to get involved with as well.

Roger mentions, mentioned EASEL. The big problem that I have with Councillor Harington I have to say in this place, and again I am pleased in a sense that he took on board the comments that I had a couple of Council meetings ago when I asked did he actually realised that he had been appointed by the Labour Group as the spokesman on leisure because Councillor Atha seemed to be filling his boots - I notice Councillor Atha scribbling away vigorously now, no doubt he's about to jump on his feet and give us the benefit of his wisdom once again before Councillor Harington comes back.. But in this chamber, Councillor Harington, you are very measured and very reasonable, the sad thing is when you get out there that all changes, you are not reasonable, you are not rational, you are not pleasant even I have to say Roger, and the bile that comes from - the bile that comes from these sorts of leaflets quite frankly is inappropriate.

Now I have been told on a number of occasions, you shouldn't blame Roger because he doesn't write them, it's all George's doing. Roger, there comes a point in everything where you really shouldn't be led into such a trap, even if he is writing the stuff you shouldn't allow yourself to be pictured - I might actually say you're actually featured in this one as well - but - indeed - but again, Lord Mayor, there is a message for us all, be careful who you are photographed with.

But the fact is that in these publications, and the press releases that are put out on your behalf, Roger, they tell a very different story. When you come into my office and you come with the people from the Wyke Beck Valley Trail people, you are measured, you are reasonable, you are rational, you thank me for allowing you to stay as Chairman and involved in that organisation. I have to say I was happy for you to continue in that organisation, I don't know that that is now the case, I don't know that that is the case. It was a position of trust, a position of trust that was given to you that I have to say you have abused. What is even worse is the organisation that now seeks to criticise us, that you head up, and that you are quite pleased to get in the press and be associated with, it is actually funded by my Department as well, which is even more galling I have to say, we are funding ourselves for this level of fissum(sic).

Councillor Harington, I am sorry to do this in this way, but I feel we have reached the point where I am going to have to say thank you for your services involved in that organisation but I don't believe that you are the right person any longer to represent this authority on it. I have already approached Councillor Taylor to take over that particular post and that particular responsibility (Uproar) (Applause). I am pleased that he has accepted that post and has pledged to be completely non political, non political in his dealings and his actions, something I think is wholly appropriate.

Lord Mayor, I have news for Councillor Lyons, he will see - he talks about things in the press tomorrow, I am hoping the press will carry something tomorrow, the press should carry the news tomorrow that the East Leeds Leisure Centre will not be closing as part of our proposals. Thanks to the good work of Councillor Schofield and Councillor Hyde (Applause), who have led a campaign vigorously to keep that facility open, I am pleased to be able to inform Council that the proposals currently being considered by the Government Minister are to rebuild in its entirety at its present size the provision in Morley, and also to build a new facility in West Leeds - that is option one - the second option, Lord Mayor, is those that I have mentioned and in addition rebuild the Fearnville Sports Centre. Thank you Lord Mayor. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Brett.

CLLR BRETT: Thank you Lord Mayor. I am seconding the amendment in Councillor Procter's name because sadly on this issue I believe Councillor Harington is in a dream world. It is understandable that he wants to keep the two aging swimming pools in Inner East Leeds, but to suggest, as your motion does, that my residents in Burmantofts would find it easier to get to Fearnville or Halton Moor than the Killingbeck site is ridiculous. There are clearly some problems with the Killingbeck site but ease of access and geography are certainly not one of them.

It is all very well saying 80% of the users of a group of leisure facilities are happy. Of course that cuts out people who live in an area where there is no leisure facility, because they never go and that sort of survey never asks them whether they are happy or not.

Now I know that some of my residents are very unhappy that they live in a ward where there is no swimming pool at all, no public pool. The Burmantofts and Richmond Hill Councillors have campaigned for a new swimming pool for the residents of Harehills, Burmantofts and Richmond Hill for at least three years. But it isn't just our ward. As Councillor Harington knows full well, the Harehills part of his ward adjoins our ward, again there is no pool. We have a huge tract of central Leeds which has no local swimming pool. I calculate at least 70,000 residents in the area covered by my ward, the Harehills part of Gipton and Harehills, Hyde Park and Woodhouse, and a major chunk of City and Hunslet ward have no easy access now to a public swimming pool. Until recently some of these folks had some access to the former International Pool, but I think most of us know which group started the process of closing it. Now this administration has promised to work towards a new public swimming pool in the city centre, and in my view this is already overdue.

What says it all for me is when I read some of the things that the Youth Service are doing in my ward. They actually listen to the young people whose job it is that they have to serve, they are listening to what they want. They want to go swimming in an interesting pool, so we actually pay for a trip to Barnsley from Inner East Leeds because that's where the modern pools are.

This amendment is factually correct. We are trying to get the largest investment in sport this city has ever seen, and I am sad to say that all we are getting from Councillor Harington's motion is politically motivated negative criticism. Thank you Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

CLLR OGILVIE: Thank you Lord Mayor. I would like to comment on the White Paper in the name of Councillor Harrington. If I can start by congratulating Councillor Lyons - where has he gone, he's left the room - on a very successful campaign to force yet another U turn by this administration.

I want to comment specifically on the issue of South Leeds Sports Centre. As Council will recall, we as local Councillors in Inner South Leeds, along with local residents, ran a successful campaign to get this sports centre reopened, forcing another U turn from the administration, and I have got nothing but praise for the community organisations and residents who ran SPLASH, who I am sure you all recall came to speak to us a few meetings ago.

However, the centre is not yet reopen and what local people would like to know is when exactly the centre will be reopening. Now I welcome the news that a manager is being recruited, but we do want to know when the centre will reopen.

However, the other issue is that there are rumours swirling round that the centre is only going to open for a twelve month period, and obviously there is grave concern on the ground in Beeston, Holbeck and Hunslet that this is but a temporary stay of execution for the sports centre. Perhaps someone from the administration can say whether this rumour is true or not.

I can assure Council that we as local Councillors will be doing all that we can to encourage people to use South Leeds Sports Centre, and the SPLASH organisation is forming itself into a Friends of the Sports Centre to encourage people to use it. Starting from this Saturday we are doing an event in Beeston, in Cross Flatts Park, where people can come along and pledge their support on how they will use the sports centre.

The communities of Beeston, Holbeck and Hunslet, as we have said before, very much need sports and recreational facilities such as the sports centre, we need to be doing all we can to encourage people to be more active and healthy, that's why it's so important.

So finally, Lord Mayor, as I've said, we'll be doing our bit to encourage people to use the sports centre, we need to hear from the administration what you will be doing, what marketing strategy, what initiatives, what incentives will you be putting in place to help people get through the door. Thank you very much. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Pryke.

CLLR PRYKE: Thank you Lord Mayor. Well short term memory loss has hit the Labour benches yet again, and Councillor Ogilvie, who I think was present when the announcement was made about the South Leeds Centre, I believe the last meeting, should have heard, the same as we heard over here, that it would be a temporary stay of execution if the local people didn't use the centre. Now if your residents use the centre it will stay open. If your residents don't use the centre it will close. So that will be in the verbatim for this meeting, it will be the second meeting in a row that it will be in the verbatim, I urge you to click on the link, open it, read it, perhaps memorise it, and come back and fib at the next meeting perhaps, I don't know.

Anyhow, on to Councillor Harington's motion. Members may not know exactly where the Department was proposing to build the leisure centre on Killingbeck Fields because of the, well, propaganda about it that has gone around since. The exact location, as explained to us by Officers, and Councillor Harington was at the meeting, is where the circus goes at the moment. If you know York Road you will know where the circus usually locates, it is just down from the balancing pond, right next to the A64, opposite the Highways Flats, that's the area where the Department was doing soil tests earlier this year which some residents at the public meeting referred to said made it a foregone conclusion that it would definitely have to be there and nowhere else. They were quite wrong because they were tests for the ground.

Now this ancient meadow land, quote George Mudie, which is so beautiful with so many rare species, turns out not to have the rare species there after all, it's not ancient meadow land, it doesn't have lots of wild flowers, it is, as Councillor Procter has just reminded me, an ancient tip site.

The other thing about the site that was proposed by the Department is that it was the best location for the centre according to the Government's criteria as given to the Department. The new centre, to justify the massive investment of PFI money - no, I don't like PFI but we're saddled with it, never mind - had to be in a location that

was accessible to a large proportion of the residents of East Leeds. Now like Councillor Brett I am very keen for the residents of Harehills, where I live, and Burmantofts, who I represent, to have access to a decent, modern swimming pool. I would like a nice pool like Barnsley's, like Doncaster's, like Selby's, but we don't actually have them in Leeds. I'd quite like three, and I'd quite like Morley to have one, and maybe even Armley, but most of all I would like one in East Leeds. What I don't want is the grotty facilities we've got at Fearnville at the moment, because that is inaccessible. As Councillor Lyons pointed out, because our Government I am afraid hasn't deregulated - I am sorry, hasn't re-regulated bus services, we are saddled with a transport system that stops people from Harehills and Burmantofts getting to the leisure facilities that exist. That is going to be another White Paper later on. Now let's hope that can be reversed, but at the moment the people of Burmantofts and Harehills cannot get to the Fearnville Centre.

As a letter in the Evening Post said from a certain Shirley of Gipton about - yes, Shirley, you must be joking, no - "A new sports centre at Killingbeck, definitely. The existing site at Fearnville is hard to reach and poorly lit with reports of people being attacked over the years. The new site will only take up a small area of Killingbeck, it's near a main trunk road and I for one would definitely feel safer going to it". That, I think, says it all. Thank you Lord Mayor. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Taylor.

CLLR TAYLOR: (Applause) Thank you Lord Mayor. Thank you for the congratulations, and thank you, John, for the trust that you have placed in me. It came as a total surprise.

Can I go back to Roger's White Paper, and thank you, Roger, for the generous remarks that you made about all that we are doing on this side in order to look after sport issues throughout the whole of the city, those remarks were very generous.

In all things, I think probably what hasn't come across quite clearly in some of the things that you were saying was that throughout all of this debate, and throughout the past couple of months when this issue was being discussed locally, that both my colleague, Councillor Akhtar, and I have been 100% consistent in what we have been saying to the residents of Gipton. We have said all along, we have said all along that we favoured the sports centre at Fearnville, not only being saved but also being refurbished, and there is nothing at all in your White Paper to indicate that, and I think in that sense it is rather weak and it is rather negative. Had there been something there to sort of say further investment into Fearnville then some of us might have looked at what you had to say in the paper a little more sympathetically. But it wasn't there. As far as I know at the moment, and no doubt, John, you would correct me, is that the whole of this financial business remains with the Government. It is in the Government's hands and I am led that it has been in the Government's hands since the last Labour Conference. So can I invite you, Roger, to be a joint signatory with Javed and I to the Minister to ask that that money be released into this city so that the Fearnville Sports Centre can be rebuilt quickly and as soon as possible. (Applause) And I hope you are going to be generous on that one.

At the end of the day, at the end of the day Lord Mayor, this debate wouldn't have been taking place had not the sports centres within our city been maintained to a sufficient standard. They have been allowed for the past 25 years, I am sorry to say it, of your administration to fall into decay, and it's only because of the pro-active approach of ourselves that things are now changing, and changing for the better. Thank you. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Akhtar.

CLLR AKHTAR: Thank you Lord Mayor. Can I take this opportunity to thank John for his commitment and hard work he has put into this particular project in Fearnville. Can I also extend my thanks to the Leader of the Council and the Exec Member for the Neighbourhoods and Housing for visiting Gipton and Harehills on numbers of occasions, and Councillor Smith.

Can I also remind the Members of the Council, my Lord Mayor, that the - I remember when I said to you about this vulnerable lady with a disabled child who rang me at the late night crying, literally crying and saying, "Councillor, your administration are going to close the Fearnville Sports Centre". Can I beg the opposition, and I have said earlier on as well, please do not make political tools out of vulnerable and the decent citizens of our city. Vulnerable, let me repeat this again, vulnerable, decent citizens of our city.

Now can I also remind Members of the Council, not only the leisure facility but also the EASEL which will bring a lot of regeneration in the Gipton and Harehills, can I also remind the opposition when you are in this Chamber or out there, you have got to think of those people who are unemployed, and it's one of the highest unemployed ward in the city, and those people are vulnerable, and I keep saying vulnerable so it gets through to you and you can learn how to be in a position, and I think you need to learn and quite rightly the Deputy Leader, Andrew Carter, has said that they will be there for many, many years, so learn the tricks and if you fail(?) you have got people like Mark and Andrew to teach you a thing or two.

Now can I also thank all those people, and I would like to thank all those people on the record in Gipton and in Harehills for running up a campaign, and those who have written to us, myself and Councillor Taylor, for our support, so we would like to thank them for bringing the attention on our way, and we have listened. Thank you, John Procter, and his office, and I hope that we will be delivering better services, beside the point what opposition, the politics they play. They have failed on the sports centres, they have failed on the Social Services, they have failed on the housing, and keep crying, and that's all I say. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Nash.

CLLR NASH: Thank you very much my Lord Mayor. I felt that I just had to stand up and put the pomposity and arrogance of Councillor Procter down. He speaks, he speaks to our Members as though they are new and he is an old hand at the game, and he knows better than anybody else. Well let me tell you, apart from Councillor Atha I have been in this Chamber longer than anybody else.

Now then, he makes the accusation that we only built in our areas, ie Labour areas. Well my maiden speech in this Council was in the mid seventies moving a White Paper to build Fearnville Sports Centre, and your lot turned it down, you weren't having it. You then - listen and you will learn something - you then came back, you then came back with plans - oh, and incidentally the Fearnville Sports Centre was a state of the art sports centre designed by our architect John Thorpe - you then came back with plans to build Fearnville, Scott Hall and South Leeds on the same plan cheaper, and you were boasting that you built three sports centres instead of the one that we proposed. Surprise, surprise, they haven't worn or haven't lasted as well as the other sports centres which were better built.

Now, I did say why the sports centre was built on Halton Moor, yes, George Mudie did want it there, and he wanted it there for the right reasons. It was the most deprived area, at that time the most deprived area in our city, and he built this sports

centre there so that the youth could have something constructive to do with their time, and what he also did, did George, is that during the school holidays children were admitted to the sports centres for swimming and I think the price was about 20p, something, nothing, and that was so that our children could take advantage of this.

Now then, regarding other sports centres, I became Chair of Leisure Services in '81 where I stayed until '88, and I was very fortunate in the position that the committee backed me, and we had the biggest development of sports centres that this country, not the city, has ever known. We had more sports centres, more public libraries, more parks and open spaces per head of population than anywhere else.

Now the accusation that we only built in our areas, we built the marvellous sports centre at Aireborough. There was already the swimming pool there and we built the sports centre at Aireborough, and much to the annoyance and anger of my group I invited Councillor Bill Hudson to open it, which he did. I campaigned for the Otley Chippendale Swimming Pool to be open to the public, I spoke in this Chamber about it and eventually it was. Holt Park was a joint facility with a school and we expanded it and made it more accessible to the public. Les Carter knows, because he was on the Holt Park Management Committee. John Smeaton, and these at the time are all Conservative wards. We got that open to the public and expanded it and made it accessible for the public. Wetherby, we, I think, we built additional facilities there.

Now we get on to - yes, and incidentally talking about the river, this Council spent a hell of a lot of money repairing the weir at Wetherby which was destroyed in a flood.

Now then, you talk about a super duper, you talk about - my Lord Mayor, could I just have an extra time because of this - you talk about a super duper sports centre on Killingbeck. You will have to attract a far wider participation of clients than just East Leeds. I visited Herringthorpe in Rotherham, I visited Barnsley, I visited Great Yarmouth, I have visited that place on the South Coast where they all have these wave machines and palm trees and so on, but the cost of going in is a few pounds, not a few pence, it's a few pounds, and it means that when people are on holiday, yes, they will make a special effort, they will have a trip, they will go there, but you have to charge a great deal. So the two are not mutually exclusive. By all means have a super duper centre but we need our local centres for our local people. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Members of Council, can I request all sides please to let speakers speak, all sides have been abusing - no, no, earlier on, on both side, I am not accusing one side - both sides have been speaking and heckling, if you could listen to the debate carefully please, and also everybody is going, been going past the red light and using 30, 40, 50 seconds, and I have been lenient. I know it has been six months, nearly six months since I showed my cards last time and maybe I need to remind you again. So, okay, now we'll move on to Councillor Atha.

CLLR ATHA: Can we start the clock from now Lord Mayor. First of all I want to say I think the advice you are giving about keeping quiet will be very useful during this next five minutes.

Can I say we have heard from Liz Nash for the first time in this debate some real hard facts, and they may have been facts that were unpalatable, but they were factually accurate and showed that there was no desire when we were in power to actually select places where sports facilities would be, and of course Councillor Procter is totally inaccurate in almost everything he says. Apart from being rather pompous, and apart from adopting Councillor Carter's habit of sticking one finger up

and going, "That lot over there", he is copying that and it doesn't suit you, suits him, doesn't suit you.

The fact of the matter is - he is at it again Lord Mayor. He in fact said that the idea of splitting one Department into two was my idea, I opposed it totally. You were wrong. Similarly when we come to the sports centres you mentioned, I remember when we were being reorganised, I was going round the new, the areas that were going to come into Leeds, saying to them, officially I am told to tell you not to do all this building because we can't afford it, but secretly I was saying, for gods sake go on and build your sports centres because if you don't they are not likely to get built for a long time, and so we were actually stressing places, and I went to see the Kippax pool when it was half built, before we came into power, and at that time I was Chairman of the Sports Council of Great Britain, in charge of the technical facilities and the development taking place, and I was able to say the contour of the pool is absolutely ludicrous for a pool that size. So it was slightly amended but not greatly, so there was no desire of us to put sports centres merely where we thought our voters might be, and that is a calumny I would strongly, strongly resist, and I don't believe actually, you may think it Councillor Procter but I don't think your other colleagues will, and most of the people on the Liberal side will for a moment, because they don't have that malign view of their opponents.

When it comes to the PFI, the PFI I think is a monstrously poor system, and we all tend to agree on that and so it should be. Why don't we as one all party open your arms, I'll open mine, well be careful because I have seen you hug Councillor Lyons, I didn't like that, we ought to open our arms to each other and say, let's go down and see the Minister and say we know how best to spend the money, not you, let us spend it where we think it will be best spent. Let's do that, let's have a shot, and if you don't have a shot you never succeed, and I'd like to see us do that on this particular issue.

When we come to the current plans, Councillor Procter has said the current plans for closure, the ones that went through and excited us all, were Labour plans. He said he's got the documents, I shall ask for those documents, but quite frankly Councillor Procter, twice I've asked for the documents that you've quoted from, given to you by Officers, yes, I've actually referred to the Freedom of Information Act and I still haven't got them, and the first request was made literally two and a quarter years ago. You, it is true and I'll prove it, and I will do what I did recently when I sent - it is not, I have not misconstrued any speech you have made because you haven't spoken yet.

CLLR PROCTER: Well he requested a piece of paper that I told him never existed, a briefing that he thought I had from Officers, I didn't, they simply told me the indebtedness figure, the accumulated debt of the riding for the disabled, which he disputed and now he agrees with.

CLLR ATHA: That's not true, the paper I asked you for, and the minutes start again here given that introduction, was in fact the one I referred, the Freedom of Information, and that is the one still waiting, and the Freedom of Information people are still pursuing it, so when it comes to roost. This is what you are dealing with when you deal with Councillor Procter. He doesn't have the integrity, it has the force and the bullying but not of others because it's just not fair.

When we come down to the South Leeds promise of one year, that's new, the South Leeds people don't know it's only for one year, and apparently it's not even open, but I can say we are pleased, if we had not stood up and fought for what we believed then we wouldn't have had this victory which has just been announced today, the victory in Fearnville and East Leeds. That shows you that if we put a

strong enough case and enough political force you have to give in to reality and to an argument that you cannot resist. You may say, oh no it wasn't that, but what else was it, because if we had not shouted and screamed then in fact those would have gone ahead.

I can't hear you.

CLLR J CARTER: Do you think shouting and screaming works?

CLLR ATHA: Works. I don't know what works for you, I'll tell you what works for me. So it is in fact a victory for us, it is in fact something we can enjoy today and go home feeling very satisfied. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Harris.

CLLR HARRIS: Well a couple of points on some of the things that have just been said. I was, didn't fully understand the pertinence or significance of Liz Nash's comments about Fearnville being a state of the art centre when it was built, it merely begs the question why that has to be said because if it wasn't state of the art when it was built why did you build it in the first place, I mean it - well it's an absurd thing to say, you know - no, it's the issue, just because something is state of the art when it's built it doesn't mean it remains state of the art for time immemorial and that is the point. I am sure the Colosseum was state of the art when it was built but, you know, time moves on and the issue is what happens as time moves on.

Now Bernard says that nobody has introduced any facts into this debate except Liz Nash, I don't altogether agree with that but just to help the thing along I will introduce a fact of significance which somehow doesn't appear to figure in this discussion, and the fact is what impact did the decision to go ahead with the then South Leeds Sports Complex have on the future of general provision across the city. Well we talk about the South Leeds Sports Centre itself, what was the impact on that of what is now the John Charles Sports Complex, it is bound to have had a major impact, not just in terms of numbers but availability of finance to refurbish and improve the existing centres. Now those were your decisions that you took and somehow you just don't want to talk about that at all.

However, let me again remind you of the outstanding, the outstanding achievement of your administration with regard to the South Leeds Stadium. You spent £10 million over budget on it. Now where would £10 million have gone in terms of sports centre refurbishment if you lot hadn't have squandered it on that stadium? (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Schofield.

CLLR SCHOFIELD: Thank you Lord Mayor. Before expressing pleasure at the outcome of the deliberations over the future of sports centres, particularly the one in Halton Moor, if I can contribute my own good memory about the geography and history of politics in East Leeds from 1982. Older Members will cast their minds back and remember that in 1982 six safe Labour wards unexpectedly fell to a whole host of promising newcomers, Garforth being one, but I always felt it was unfair that whereas Doreen Hamilton got a well deserved commemoration in the Older People's Centre, that Steven Sadler, the man who shocked the Labour Party to the core by winning Richmond Hill, never got any thanks for the effect his shock victory had. It wasn't only sports centres which were put in favoured locations to buy back votes to the Labour Party, it involved community centres, refurbishment of sports grounds, Council estates, the roofs, you could go on the train through Osmanthorpe, glistening grey slate roofs everywhere, the whole estate was done from top to bottom and it paid off because we were treated to the presence of Councillor Lyons with us for

many more years afterwards.

The good people of Garforth, the good people of Garforth benefited from the period when I was secondment from Halton to represent Garforth, we had community centres, we had gas central heating put in every house, I had pensioners ringing me up in tears, "Councillor Schofield, they are putting gas heaters in my bungalow". I said, "Well that sounds great Mrs Harrison", "But we're not on the gas system". They had everything. (Laughter)

Greg Moakes and myself, we got through millions, and I am glad to say that the good people of Swillington, and Methley in those days, got lots of things that shouldn't have been coming their way if the Labour Party hadn't have been scared of losing any more seats and thereby losing control of the Council.

Coming to more recent times, there has been full consultation, sometimes Councillor Lyons has been in the same room with tenants, with people from the schools, the people who use that Halton Moor Sports Centre, the Forum meetings, all these issues, good points have been made by residents in the Halton Moor area which were passed on to Officers, Officers that we inherited from you, made a presentation earlier this year, they looked at maps - and maps do not tell the whole story about people and about children - they looked at maps and thought it was a good idea to consolidate on one site. It wasn't exactly a Morrisons offer, instead of three for two it was a one for three, and quite rightly the people turned it down, it was a long way on foot from Halton Moor to further afield, crossing busy roads, and Councillor Lyons was in the same room when some of those points were made, you and I heard it together and we welcomed the contribution that local residents quite genuinely made, and the good thing was that the Officers who received the feedback, not only through the meetings we were at but informally through letters and from representations from the schools, and other community groups and church groups and so on, those views were listened to, not only by the Officers but also by elected Members and thankfully by the Executive Member himself, and it has been a fine outcome at the end of the day.

Councillor Lyons also paid tribute to the good housekeeping that has taken place on the Halton Moor. It's no coincidence that the last two years has seen Halton Moor transformed from a place that people avoided, where your administration were bussing people up from London to try and fill the empty houses, it's not a coincidence that in two years people are queueing up for a much improved neighbourhood, improved housing and a new improved environment, and it's thanks to the new administration that there's been a fairer share of resources. Councillor Hyde will bear witness to the Youth Service, they didn't know that anywhere existed east of the Halton Moor/Richmond Hill boundary. We had to give the Youth Service and some of the education people maps to show that life did exist beyond, they had never ventured into Halton, Whitkirk and Colton before, they didn't know they were any youth facilities required there, but they do now, and the other parts of Temple Newsam ward are getting the fairer share which was denied them for much too long. Play facilities, youth facilities are coming our way because the administration is giving a fair share, unlike the many years when we suffered under Labour rule where preference was always given to the Labour areas, and particularly the marginal wards.

There is one further point on the Halton Moor Centre itself, which bears witness to the good housekeeping by this administration. The security bill, which was a nightmare under you, has been reduced in two years from over £120,000 to under £80,000, we have made a saving of £40,000 in the running of that one centre in only two years, and other improvements and savings have been made, and thank goodness that amenity has been saved for the local people and it's thanks to this

administration, working with the community down there, and not being politically biased as were in the past. Thank you Lord Mayor. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Cleasby.

CLLR CLEASBY: Oh yes I shall. Lord Mayor, since I was first elected in '95 there have been a lot of new Members of Council so perhaps I can bring them up to date with my version of the history, from '95 onwards.

In '96 I became quite interested in education in the city, particularly in Horsforth, the lack of nurseries in my ward, and I did a lot of research on it. I thank the Labour Party for that time I was one of five to get the computers on the very first roll out of them. I spent night after night, and I mean night after night, not evening, researching through the Council files and was horrified to find that there had been, starting in 1987, a ten year plan to provide nurseries at every primary school. Admirable. Every Member of the Council at the time signed up for it, because it was admirable. Ten years, every primary school in this city would have a nursery.

Well it was running out, it was coming to '97, and I thought I had better look into this, and do you remember the famous chart that I did that showed that the chance of a child in the various wards in this city getting a nursery, I was horrified. When you then coloured them in in the traditional colours of those wards, all the reds were at the top, all the blues and the gold were at the bottom, and you might like to know this Councillor Pryke, your ward was 16th, that's how deprived your ward was under Labour, because remember it had been a Liberal ward and then a Liberal Democrat ward, so that's how they shared things out, and this is again, now I come to the White Paper Roger, you give the game away now because your White Paper isn't about this city, it's about me, me, me, and it isn't about the future Roger, the very end bit of yours is, and that's to reassure all communities in Leeds that they will not lose their major leisure facilities. Well, I don't think, Councillor Carter, you have a major facility in your ward do you, I don't have one in mine which is the neighbour ward, so there are many wards that don't have them, so what about a PFI scheme, but we don't like PFI's but if it's the route to funding, the route to the future, and remember Barnsley is not that far away, it's part of our city region, if we could emulate Barnsley and get some of those facilities, those quality things, we'll get more patronage into our sports centres, more revenue and as a consequence of more pleasure we'll have the revenue to keep them up to date, unlike the way you treated yours, ours, in the first place. Thank you Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Grahame.

CLLR GRAHAME: Thank you Lord Mayor. Councillor Harrington, I am glad you mentioned regarding June of last year, the meetings where there was a rush for us to decide where we would have the site, and Killingbeck Fields - oh Councillor Procter is back, good.

Councillor Procter, before you said that Councillor Schofield had saved East Leeds Centre.

CLLR PROCTER: Quite correct.

CLLR GRAHAME: Now I wonder when you got this information how he's done it, because we have the timetable for the Leeds Leisure Centre PFI Project don't we, and the outline business case when it's to be in, December, and this goes right the way through to April 2008, and this morning at eleven o'clock my Officer phoned through, I will read what came back. "As it stands the Department are still waiting for feedback from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport regarding the

PFI bid. Until firm support has been received for the bid no decisions can be made about individual sites". So I didn't see Denise Preston run in here to tell you anything, and I only met with Denise Preston yesterday, and Mark Allman, regarding any decisions and they were not in favour of the individual sites being kept because they cannot afford to upkeep them. So I wonder if you could let myself know as Chair of Scrutiny, and also the other Members, where and how Councillor Schofield has saved that site. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Feldman.

CLLR FELDMAN: Lord Mayor, may I just bring a bit of sanity into this meeting. We have been listening to all the johnny come lately's to this Council. It is very seldom that I disagree with Councillor Liz Nash, but I am afraid she's not the second oldest Member of this Council because she came, as she has told us, in the mid seventies, I came in '71 and I can remember perfectly well she used to be on the Water Committee, and I remember her having a row with one of her own colleagues.

CLLR NASH: '72.

CLLR FELDMAN: Well, there you are, you are not the oldest Member. I also remember, Lord Mayor, when Fearnville was built, and Irwin Bellow said to the then Albert King, "Why have you spent so much money?", and he got no answer, so he spoke to Tony Stanley, who was the Council's architect and said, "Why did they spend £4 million", I think it was, "on Fearnville?", and his answer was, "I wasn't given any figure I was just told to build it". So even in those days economy was not the name of the game, and Irwin Bellows turned round and said to him, "Well I want two for that price", and he got two, but not for the £4 million, it was about £5.5 million. So it kicked off roughly in those days, and that was the sort of attitude that took place at the time. Fearnville was built and we were about to take office because it was built if I remember rightly, the paperwork was signed at the beginning of May and it was obvious that we were going to take control the first Thursday in May, and Irwin said to him, "Leave it, don't do it", but the answer was, "No, we're going to do it", and that was the time that Fearnville was built. So I have listened to all these youngsters, with the exception of Bernard, who are telling us what has happened, now you have heard it first hand. I am quite sure Bernard will remember it as well.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Carter, Andrew Carter.

CLLR A CARTER: Yes, thank you my Lord Mayor. One of the most enlightening parts of this debate has been the amazing U turn that the Labour Group appear to have done because Councillor Harington, in his opening speech, informed us that they were now in support of Sports Trusts. Now there is plenty of time for the debate to continue so I really would like that confirmed, because of course when we discussed this at the Executive Board Councillor Wakefield, as is his wont, sat on the fence and reserved his position as I recall.

Now, I mean I think the people of Leeds and the people who have, are lucky enough to have sports centres that we are trying to refurbish have a right to know whether the oppositions policy is now to support our view that Sports Trust will bring more investment and improvements to our sports centre, which is clearly your official spokesman's view, or whether, as usual Councillor Wakefield, you don't know what to do. Now I really would like, and I am sure everybody else would like, some clarification on that particular issue.

Let me just say that when Councillor Procter took over the leisure portfolio, like all the rest of us he was faced with some pretty mammoth tasks. The backlog of maintenance across the Leisure Department was some £28 million, split into various

different parts of the undertakings of the Leisure Department. However, on the specific issue of sports provision, as an administration we have set about, for the first time in 24 years, an honest attempt to identify funding, to give the people of this city, across this city, the best possible sports facilities we can provide. When somebody compared the derelict states of our sports centres, that you left, that you left, with what's available in adjacent areas they were exactly right, and it is a disgrace that a city of the standing, of the importance of Leeds has to put up with that sort of sports facility, and this administration, and whatever you say the people outside here know that this administration is trying to do something about it, but when I hear Councillor Atha casting aspersions on Councillor Procter's integrity, a very personal comment, let me remind Councillor Atha about the sort of thing that David Schofield rightly reminded us about.

When we set up the ALMO's they had to put a mechanism in place to rectify the imbalance of spending on essential repairs in council properties because one area of Leeds had, historically had a higher level of investment and repairs carried out than any other. You know a leaking roof Bernard in Kirkstall is as bad for that tenant as is a leaking roof in Seacroft. Why didn't you do something about it. Don't cast aspersions on anyone in this Chamber on this side when you sat for 24 years and allowed the worst sort of Tammany Hall politics to govern this place when funds - and I will give you another example, the man over there, he took your Leader to the Audit Commission of whatever it was in those days for demolishing a building I think. You know, things just got said and they were done. It doesn't happen anymore, so, you know, I look at the Members for Pudsey and for Kirkstall, and for Armley, and they sat here, year in, year out while their tenants, while their constituents got a worse deal in the same position than somebody else's, and that is absolutely wrong. Don't lecture us about that sort of thing, you've too much to answer for yourself. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Mulherrin.

CLLR MULHERRIN: Thank you Lord Mayor. While everyone is going down memory lane I might just point out that 20 years ago I wasn't sat in this Council Chamber, I was going to school in Halton Moor and making use of the facilities at East Leeds Sports Centre.

I am very pleased to hear Councillor Procter telling us this evening that East Leeds is to stay open, and I am very pleased to hear that because clearly Councillor Harington and Councillor Lyons have fought a very good campaign in forcing you into a U turn on that position. I didn't catch all the details of Councillor Procter's announcement this evening, but one of the things he did say was that the Morley Leisure Centre would stay the same size as the existing centre when it is rebuilt. This again will be good news for the people of Morley and for my ward which, like other people have mentioned this evening, does not have any sports facilities of its own other than the playing fields and a cricket club, we have no sports centre or leisure centre.

What happened at the Morley public meeting, however, was that in a very crowded and arguably a room with even worse acoustics than the East Leeds consultation meeting, the people that were gathered there were concerned about three things, one, that the facilities would be no less than they are now when the centre is rebuilt, two, that they were worried about the siting of the new building having been told that the existing leisure centre would close for twelve months whilst a new centre was built, and three, and most importantly, fears that this twelve month closure was in effect closure permanently by the back door because of what had happened up the road at South Leeds. People did not believe that if the centre was closed for twelve months that it would actually reopen. The reason for this is that this

administration has poisoned the well from which we all drink with regard to the leisure centre renewal process by its failure to reopen the South Leeds Sports Centre when it was closed for refurbishment, and its failure still to deliver on the promise at the last Council meeting that that leisure centre would reopen. The sooner you reopen the South Leeds Sports Centre the sooner you will quell the fears of people throughout Leeds that these proposals are effectively closing and losing facilities for people rather than improving them. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Hanley.

CLLR HANLEY: Lord Mayor, can I move under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 22.1 that Procedure Rule 3.2 be suspended to allow all White Paper Motions to be debated.

CLLR SELBY: Seconded Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Can I ask for a vote. Members, all those in favour of Councillor Hanley's - okay, all against. Abstentions. It is lost, okay. (LOST)

Councillor Lewis.

CLLR LEWIS: I would like to come back at Councillor Andrew Carter who clearly has had a speech stored up that he wanted to make earlier on and didn't. In terms of spending on Council housing, as somebody who was Deputy Chair of the Housing Committee as well as Chair over a period of a decade I can assure him the money was spent all over the city, as people like Ronnie can affirm, Moortown, plenty of money, Lingfield Estate, I made sure during my time as Chair of the Housing Committee that money was spent all over the city, and I stand by my record, nothing can go against what - my record, you have a look at it, Moortown Estate, it's call Moortown Estate Mark, I know it's not in Moortown ward, but that's what it's called. You have a look at where spending is done, the only spending that you didn't get in Tory areas was Estate Action which was the way the Government at the time, a Tory Government, made the spending go so that - you will bring back Estate Action will you.

Well let me remind you, Andrew, how Estate Action money worked for this city, because what it meant was that you effectively were forced to spend money on the areas where really you didn't want to spend it, the areas that didn't wash their faces, and that's what deprived plenty of other parts of the city of spending, because it was all part, it was match funded, so you had to rob some areas to go along with Estate Action, so just remember that Andrew.

So as I said, I just came back (Uproar) - let's not have, let's not have your total distortions about Tammany Hall and all that crap, we spent money all over this city and I am proud of it, thank you Lord Mayor. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Campbell.

CLLR CAMPBELL: Thank you Lord Mayor, if we get a lull in the bickering over the other side I'll start.

Can I say I'd like to welcome Councillor Procter's statement. Like many people today I fully support the principle of us getting sports centres and having sports centres that provide a facility for all the people in a particular area. Hello, Councillor Lyons has woken up again. It's a biblical reference, it's not often we get a reference from that book in this Chamber, but there we are.

I would just like to say - you failed to do so I'll say a big thank you to Councillor Procter. Actually what I would really like to be saying to him is a big thank you for spending extra money on maintaining and improving the sports centres in the Otley area, I'd really like to say that, unfortunately we don't have any, and there's a reason for that, there's a reason for that, because a certain Chair of the Leisure Services, as it was in those days, Committee made a political decision - well he's still a Member, let's say he's still a Member of this Council and has aspirations to theatrical tendencies. (Uproar) Come on, you're not supposed to barrack me, I'm supposed to be speaking, right.

The point is, quite frankly, and I appreciate comments that have been said on the other side, everywhere in Leeds should have a sports facility, we all should have that right, every community within this city should have that right, but certain communities don't have that right. Now what we've said, I think what Councillor Procter's said is that certain areas in certain parts of this city, are going to ensure that that right is maintained. Actually there are other areas that have never had that right, have always had that right refused to them by political decisions being made by groups on the other side.

Now we touched on housing, and I was just jokingly saying next door in the old days, and Ronnie will remember this, in the old days of the budget when a certain Member of Council, I think he's the MP for East Leeds now, when he was the Leader of the Council there were two budgets, there was the Seacroft budget, and if there was any money left over ...(Applause) it got spent on South Leeds. (Laughter)

Now, I'm not - the subject got broadened out slightly because it got on to housing, and I can give you a good example of Labour managing the housing stock, certainly in the Otley area, to the utmost, and in fact you talked about whole house improvements, and we used to have a joke in Otley. We used to apply for a whole house improvement and they would get it in Bramley, so on at least three occasions we asked for a whole house improvement and on at least three occasions there was a whole house improvement in Bramley. Those houses in Bramley were improved so flipping often that by the time they had finished there was none of the original material there. (Laughter)

The Labour Party did, I must be honest and say the Labour Party did do some sterling work. If you remember the design of the council houses in Otley they were of a particular design, some of them, and they had a toilet which was downstairs and outside the back door in the porch, and so there was a push from Government to say get rid of outside toilets, and so the Council put in for a bid, put a bid in to the Government, got a whacking great pot as it was in there's the money to get rid of the outside toilets. What did they do, they moved the kitchen door from the kitchen (Laughter) to the porch, and then you had an inside toilet. (Laughter) Now that was a whole house improvement in Otley.

I am happy, I'm happy Lord Mayor, I'm happy Lord Mayor that the Labour Party have accepted the principle of the Trust to deal with the sports centres because it is actually a very good mechanism of getting money into the system. I am pleased we have had that acceptance from them. I have a bit of a problem with the hypocrisy, but - the red lights on, thank you very much Mick, thanks for telling me that - it's nice to know Lord Mayor that Councillor Lyons is looking after you and making sure that the meeting is being chaired properly, thank you. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Harington to sum up please.

CLLR HARINGTON: Well I must say it's all be very illuminating, and in

particular this question of how apparently I can be quite rational here but I am a very unpleasant person indeed out in the ward.

It is interesting I think just to look at the kind of leaflets that we have been put out because it is a very interesting, I think, illustration of how political life actually works. We put out a letter which said, I think, two or three things that were right, and I will admit one thing that was wrong. We said there was a proposal that there should be the closure of Fearnville Pool, correct. We said that there was going to be a proposal to build the new sports centre on Killingbeck Fields, correct. We also said that there was a proposal for this to be a private centre, wrong. We were too, we said it would be closed for most people, but nevertheless it was wrong, it was not going to be a private centre, but we were right about the pool, there being a proposal for the pool to be closed and right to say that there was a proposal to put the pool on Killingbeck Fields.

However, Councillor Procter had enormous fun back in April in dismissing this, not just as two thirds correct and one third wrong, but absolute garbage. Now it may say something about the way they treat garbage in Wetherby because they obviously throw away everything that some people may keep, like in this case some of the truth, because we were right but we were not told that we were right in any aspects. So it is obviously difficult to be clear what is going on, so I am not entirely convinced when Councillor Procter tells me he can't trust me when he's told me things or given me the impression that something that I said was completely wrong when in fact it was 75%, or 66 and two thirds percent, 66 and two thirds percent dead on. But of course we were hoping that we would get illumination from the Lib Dem leaflets, and intriguingly they said that the Fearnville Sports Centre was to be refurbished, so in a way Alan, congratulations, you have been consistent, however it was confusing for us to be told that the Lib Dems were going to have the refurbishing of the centre but then of course after the election, as Councillor Gruen pointed out in the election meeting, in the Council meeting back in April, it was being denied, being denied until after the election and then, hey presto, it's all going to happen.

So here you have an illustration of political life in the sense that no one, and I myself included, was quite telling the truth, you could say, but, but I would say - yes, I do, yes (Uproar). I am admitting that this is what happens in political life, we don't get a decent discussion because nobody is quite telling the truth. I am sure you will all be - well, on the occasion of sports centres you definitely denied that there was any truth in what I said and you were wrong because there was truth in what I said but you did not admit it.

However, I am sure you will be familiar with the writings of St Augustine who talked about people being damned in perpetuity, the *massa donata*(?), and obviously politicians are all damned by original sin, and in this case let he who is without sin cast the first stone. I am also interested in this charge I think Councillor Procter and may be Richard Brett made the same, and I don't know Javaid perhaps as well, about politicking about this. If you had been to the meeting at Fearnville you would see there was no need for me or anyone else to stir up any people, they were already furious by the proposal and so that's why they were there, so it wasn't me stirring it up, and further on your point, Javaid, about the old lady, well there was a proposal, not from me, but there was a proposal to close the sports centre. So I don't know what you're kicking up a fuss about, it was that proposal from your Group to close it. Alan, your point about Fearnville, well I did say that I did think we needed to have money to fund, to keep Fearnville going, the issue is where you get that money from and obviously we have a disagreement about whether or not that can come from EASEL money or not.

I cannot follow all the points, not least because half of them were about

housing, but also, John, again, I mean I would very much like to be in a loving, trusting relationship with you, but I did write to you, two years ago I wrote to you to say I am a present Chair of the Wyke Beck Valley Way, you never replied to my letter. I wrote to you last autumn, I wrote to you last autumn to say I understand there is some PFI money and is there any chance of it coming, and you didn't reply. So I don't think I need a lecture from you about how on earth people should be trusted.

So now, because you have not been strictly honest with me about what the plans actually are it's difficult to know now what exactly is going to happen, where is the money going to be spent, especially as the Government have not yet okayed a single proposal for sure. So we don't know exactly where we are.

So I still say, and you didn't answer this, and again, who else, oh, Brian Cleasby, Brian, I didn't say me, me, me, I made a whole point of saying that we need something city wide, I emphasised that - well, I made a great point of saying city wide.

Anyway, it's all getting very late, I still think we need a city wide plan, I still think we needed to have, and still could have better consultation with residents so we can be clear about where the centres are going to be needed.

I had a very nice story, I wasn't able to get there because I was on holiday, but I understand at the residents meeting for Wyke Beck residents the other day, Javaid said he was there listening, that was all very good, but he did volunteer that when the bulldozers came, if the bulldozers came on the Killingbeck Fields Councillor Taylor would lie down in front of it. So I urge you to support - yes - I urge you to support the Motion and save a vicar.

THE LORD MAYOR: Can we move to vote, can we vote for the amendment in the name of - recorded vote, okay, I'll hand over to the Chief Executive.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: Thank you. Would Members for the final action of the evening please ensure that they are in their allocated seats. Please refer to desk units and press the button marked P. Those Members then in favour of the amendment in the name of Councillor Procter could you please press the plus button. Those Members against that Motion please press the minus button, and any Member wishing to abstain and have the abstention recorded would you please press the zero button.

THE LORD MAYOR: Okay. Members present are 86. 49 in favour of the amendment, zero abstentions, 36 against. (CARRIED)

So therefore the amendment is carried and it becomes a substantive Motion, and I suppose you want a recorded vote again. Okay, thank you.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE. Again, would Members please press the button marked P to activate the desk unit. Those Members now in favour of what has become the substantive Motion which was previously the amendment of Councillor Procter please press the plus button, those Members against the substantive Motion please press the minus button, and any Member wishing to abstain and have their abstention recorded please press the zero button.

THE LORD MAYOR: Okay, 85 Members present, 49 in favour of the substantive Motion, zero abstention and 36 against, therefore the Motion is carried. (CARRIED)

So that is the end of today's business, Members of Council, thank you for the co-operation, good evening.