

**LEEDS CITY COUNCIL**

**ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

Held on

Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2008

At

THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,  
CIVIC HALL, LEEDS

In the Chair:

THE LORD MAYOR  
(Councillor B Cleasby)  
(Councillor F Robinson)

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**VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS**

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VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF LEEDS CITY COUNCIL  
ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 22<sup>nd</sup> MAY 2008

THE LORD MAYOR: Could I welcome everyone to the Annual General Meeting of Leeds City Council on 22 May 2008 and, as is usual, remind everyone that if a mobile phone goes off in the Lord Mayor's presence it is £50 to the Lord Mayor's charity and I understand that that could well be the case for the next twelve months too, in case there is a change in Chairmanship tonight.

ITEM 1 - ELECTION OF LORD MAYOR

THE LORD MAYOR: Could I call upon Councillor Andrew Carter.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Lord Mayor, Vice Lord Lieutenant, High Sheriff, Members of Council, ladies and gentlemen. It is a great pleasure for me this evening to be able to move this resolution to appoint my Ward colleague, Councillor Frank Robinson, as the Lord Mayor of the City of Leeds.

I have been very fortunate over the years to have exceptional Ward colleagues, all of whom - at least the ones on my side of the fence - have been personal friends. I am particularly pleased to see one of my former Ward colleagues here this evening, Honorary Alderman Iris Bailey.

Frank and I have worked together extremely closely over the past ten years since Frank was elected to this Council. The time has certainly flown by. Indeed, Frank and his wife Sheila were Deputy Lord Mayor and Deputy Lady Mayoress of the City of Leeds in 2001/02. I think those people who have been deputies and then gone on to become Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress of the city all agree it is a fine training ground to have been deputies first.

Frank is a man of many parts - perhaps some of them not known to everybody in this Chamber. His secondary education was at Crossley and Porter School in Halifax. He had two periods at Loughborough College which was split by his war service. As many of you will know, he was a Bevin boy and so only a month ago, actually on the day we were counting the votes at the local elections here, he had to scoot off to Wakefield to receive his medal. I know that made him extremely proud and I think many of us think the awarding of medals to Bevin boys was long overdue.

He began teaching in Bradford, becoming Head of Physical Education at a large secondary school and then moving to Fairfax Community School as Head of Lower School. During his teaching career he was President of the Bradford National Union of Teachers and still chairs the Bradford Retired Teachers Association.

When early retirement came along Frank was able to indulge his passion for improving the environment and has on many occasions with many organisations been able to do that. He joined the Keep Britain Tidy group and became the Community Manager for the Yorkshire region. That actually was the first time that I met Frank, when he was doing that particular work.

This interest in work in the environment really got him involved in the Yorkshire in Bloom competition and, as many of you know, he is a long-standing judge and a past chairman. He still gives talks to organisations all around the city and beyond on Britain in Bloom.

Back to sport. Frank was awarded the Queen's Silver Jubilee Medal in 1977 for his encouraging of sporting and outdoor activities in schools and the youth service, particularly with the Duke of Edinburgh's award scheme, and in 1988 the Keep Britain Tidy group recognised his years of work in the community programme by awarding a special mention certificate with the Queen Mother's Birthday Awards. Frank gained a similar award in 2000 from the Keep Britain Tidy group, this time under the heading of Green Excellence in the Region.

In supporting floral beauty amongst all communities, Councillor Robinson's enthusiasm is reflected in the awards of gold and silver gilt that have been achieved in Yorkshire and Britain in Bloom competitions by the City of Leeds. He is an advocate and great supporter of the work done by all the In Bloom groups around this city. I am sure he will be delighted with the result of the Leeds garden at Chelsea this week when, of course, the garden was awarded a silver gilt medal.

In other aspects of community involvement, Councillor Robinson is currently Chairman and founder of Pudsey and West Leeds Central Committee of Neighbourhood Watches and continues to support local neighbourhood policing. Frank is extremely enthusiastic about supporting the police in their work in combating crime. I had a slightly embarrassing experience not long ago when a friend of mine, a young friend - believe me, I do have some young friends apart from you, Les, yes (they don't get much older than Les!) - said, "I spotted your colleague coming out of a certain establishment in Leeds escorted by two policemen at 2.00 in the morning." I thought this does not sound like Frank. We have recently formed an organisation in Calverley, which we loosely entitled the Calverley Gentlemen on the basis that Frank being a gentleman was the only member who was and that qualified us to call the organisation the Calverley Gentlemen. I quickly began to revise my view of the title when I was told that Frank had been escorted from this establishment in the centre of town at 2.00 in the morning.

The following day we were at our surgery and I said to Frank, "What's all this about this club last night?" "Oh," he said, "yes, it was awful." I said, "I can imagine, being escorted out by two policemen." He said, "No, we had gone on a visit. We were doing a visit round Leeds supporting the police, seeing what they were doing in dealing with crime and we had gone into this club. It was very noisy so I said, 'I have seen enough, let's go', and we walked out." I said, "Well, you were seen by one or two residents of the village, our electors, who are convinced that you were being escorted out between two policemen for causing antisocial behaviour and I would have thought you had got past that!"

Anyway, he has not been able to live it down because it went round the villages of Calverley and Farsley like wildfire. I actually think he was quite proud of it! *(laughter)*

One thing else about Frank; he is one of the older members of our group but I have to say to you he is one of the few who still actively participates in sport. Many of the rest of us long since gave it up but Frank, until very recently, was still playing competitive squash, something that I think he should be extremely proud of.

There is something else about Frank Robinson. He has a lovely family. Everyone likes Sheila. She is a great support to Frank and she was a splendid Deputy Lady Mayoress of this city. His son and daughter and their children - not children any more, young people, I see them sitting there at the back - are a great pride and joy to him, as well they should be.

I have no hesitation, ladies and gentlemen, in recommending to you that we elect Frank Robinson as our Lord Mayor for the ensuing municipal year. I know that

Frank and Sheila will make an excellent team. They are a true lady and gentleman and will do a great job for all of this city. I think together with their chosen deputies they will do a splendid job and will make us all proud that they are our team of civic heads.

It gives me great pleasure, ladies and gentlemen, to move the resolution that Councillor Frank Robinson be Lord Mayor of the City of Leeds in the coming municipal year. I move. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: I call Councillor David Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Lord Mayor, honoured guests, Members of Council, ladies and gentlemen. I am delighted to be seconding this motion in support of the election of Councillor Frank Robinson as Lord Mayor of Leeds. Over the last few days I have had the honour of being asked to speak to support a number of Lord Mayors, but when my good friend Frank Robinson asked me to second him, I was particularly delighted.

Frank and I were both elected to this Council on May 7<sup>th</sup> 1998 and from our first meeting during the weeks following that election, we instantly got on. In fact, I think I can say with confidence that Frank, in his mild-mannered, pleasant way, has over those ten years on Council gained the respect and friendship of many members across all sides of this Chamber. Frank is an extremely popular choice as Lord Mayor.

Frank has always been involved in environmental and green issues. He is known for his Yorkshire in Bloom activities and Leeds in Bloom. It is one of his passions and he has done much through this to encourage the beautification of our city.

Before Frank became Mr Leeds in Bloom - if he does not mind me calling him that - he was involved in the Keep Britain Tidy group. In fact between 1980 and 1984, after taking early retirement from the teaching profession, he was appointed Yorkshire Community Manager for Keep Britain Tidy under the MSC programme. He also did much work during 1983 for the Beautiful Britain Campaign. He tells me that the Keep Britain Tidy group's philosophy was anti litter, recycling and floral beauty, a philosophy that Frank still follows to this day.

Through his work in this area Frank received two Queen Mother's Birthday Awards for environmental work but his environmental work goes back further. When he was teaching during the early 1970s, through the raising of the school age, he was put in charge of a rather imaginative scheme that suited him to a 'T'. He was put in charge of reluctant pupils, the ones who were not over-chuffed at having to stop an extra year at school. His great idea was to use a class or two to clean up Fagley Beck at Ravenscliffe. For those who do not know the area, the beck forms part of the boundary between Leeds and Bradford. I can tell you as somebody who regularly walked the paths in that area at that time, it sure needed cleaning up.

Frank organised the young people and much work was done, including pulling several wrecked vehicles up the hill. While this operation was undertaken very successfully, Frank tells me he returned at the weekend after doing it to find the same vehicles had been put back down the hill, which he and the young people were very frustrated about.

Frank was also a great supporter of the Leeds Swap Scheme, a unique initiative and he tells me that he believes that in today's climate much can still be learned from this scheme. Franks says, "In order to understand environmental

issues better, there are two buzz words - sustainability and biodiversity” and as Leader of the Green Group I have got to entirely agree with him. The unfortunate thing is, though, this man with all his green credentials, will not fill in the application form I gave him to join the Green Party. It just proves that even Frank is not totally perfect!

Saying that, I can assure him that he has today and will continue to have for his year of office the support of my group, the Green Group.

I said earlier that Frank was pleasant and mild-mannered and I am sure his charm when chairing Council will overcome the most badly behaved member but members beware - do not cross swords with our new Lord Mayor. As I only found out today, Frank used to be a good swordsman. This guy is dangerous!

Frank as a young man went down the pits as a Bevin boy. He is made of tough stuff. He spent large parts of his working life teaching classes of 30-odd teenagers and if you can control class of teenagers successfully, then 99 Councillors are a piece of cake. One wonders if he might introduce detention in the Blue Room for those who misbehave.

Anyway, getting back to being serious, I and my group wish Frank and his wife Sheila all the best for the coming year and I hope you really enjoy the experience and I believe you will be a credit to our wonderful city.

Lord Mayor, I second the motion that Councillor Frank Robinson be elected Lord Mayor for the City of Leeds. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Can I call Councillor Parker next.

COUNCILLOR PARKER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. It will be several years ago that, following a Council meeting we were having tea in the Banqueting Suite and Frank came across to me and said, “We have something in common, Keith. I understand you were a miner and I did part of my life as a Bevin boy.”

“Bevin boy” was a term used in the war years when young men at 18 were called up into the armed forces but as the mining industry was key to industry, electricity and gas fires in homes, there was a shortage of miners and so I think it was one in every ten got diverted into the coal industry, Frank being whether - I do not know if he was fortunate not to go to war but I can honestly say it was a dangerous industry and certainly at that time it would be in private hands, it had not been nationalised until late in the 1940s.

When, I found out about Frank’s period of time in the mining industry, he described himself as a “hurrier”. I worked 35 years in the pit and never heard that term ever, but I guess it is something to do with haulage that would mean that Frank would be involved in getting empty tubs into the pit for miners to fill and getting the full tubs out. That may seem quite simple but it was a hazardous job. It would be at that time of life before nationalisation and certainly the conditions underground in the older pits - I worked at a relatively modern pit - would be concerning to many people and to do this job that Frank would have done would mean he was supplying the tubs for colliers to fill, it was hazardous to the effect that whether they were pulled by ponies or on a haulage system, tubs inevitably got off the road. If it had been coming out with three or four tubs all carrying a ton of coal and one came off the road, you are on your own - getting a tub full of coal with a ton in it was not a simple task, so the colliers then would be thrown behind and would not be able to earn their living. I am sure the colliers of that day would not be any different from my day and they would not be saying, “Where on earth is Frank? Shall we go see if he needs a

hand?" They would be saying something a lot stronger and I am sure when Frank got back to them they would be using some language not suitable for this Chamber.

I am sure whatever Frank tackled he would be good at. I am reliably informed in his mining time he played with Hunslet Engine Company at Rugby in their Under 18's side. Obviously he was above average at the sport and was signed by Hunslet Rugby League Club. He then moved from there to Bradford Northern. Now there may well be people who are as old as myself in the room and it would be about the 1947/48 time when Frank signed for Bradford Northern, but he was still working at the pit and so he was working six days so if he had wanted to play in the afternoon it would be following a morning down the pit.

I remember in 1948 I was watching the Leeds Rhinos as it is now, but Leeds RL at the time, and Bradford played Leeds in the Challenge Cup Final of that year. Frank unfortunately did not make the first team but there was a Frank that played in that team which was a guy called Frank Whitcombe who was the biggest man I have ever seen on a rugby pitch, but prop forwards were big people in those days, not like they are today. He has a love of the sport and could have possibly played in a cup final if he had probably not been working down the pit.

He tells me that following his failure to make the first team at Bradford he went back to Loughborough College, passed his exams and did whatever, but he also had a passion, as a lot of Yorkshire people have, for cricket and representing Loughborough they did play a university final against Leeds University. He was ashamed to tell me that they were beaten, but the highlight of his performance, he did a hat trick, so he must have been a bowler of some repute and achieved something that many cricketers never, ever do which was to take three wickets in three balls. It is a great passion of mine is cricket, so there are many things that me and Frank just seem to knit together with.

Certainly everybody knows in the room that he is passionate about Leeds in Bloom and it would have been wonderful possibly if he could have gone down to London to receive a gold award, but it is not to be. He does assure me that he does favour Kippax when it is going round (*laughter*) and I am quite sure we still have not achieved a gold award in Kippax but something might improve this year, I just hope so.

I know it is in gardening but miners working underground, dark, dusty, not the best of conditions, a lot of miners actually love their gardens and so whether that influenced Frank many years ago that miners were splendid gardeners I am not quite sure but certainly we learned something new when the Geordies came down and everybody started growing leeks.

I think the most famous Bevin boy is Jimmy Savile. Jimmy always gives the impression he was digging the coal out. I think he would not have done much more than what Frank was doing and not worked on the face - hardened colliers whose sons followed their fathers and whatever, indeed, like I did, but before he ever would have been classed as a full-blown miner. He never mentioned pigeon racing - that was a sport that many miners were involved with - and similarly greyhound racing. Many miners had kennels with greyhounds in and that was a sport they did.

Finally, I would just like to say that I welcome Frank's appointment today. I just hope that sometime early next week he will be welcoming home a very victorious Leeds United Football Club (*hear, hear*) after winning the Championship game.

I wish him all the best for the future. I notice David mentioned he ought to be in the Green Party. If he has been a miner there is only one party he ought to be in

*(laughter)*. Thank you very much and I am pleased to support Frank as Lord Mayor.  
*(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Could I call Councillor Townsley.

COUNCILLOR TOWNSLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Vice-Lord Lieutenant, High Sheriff, honoured guests. The previous speakers have introduced various aspects of Frank Robinson's life, so rather than repeat, as has previously been said, I thought I would hopefully add a little insight and maybe a few tips, if you are intending to enter a Leeds in Bloom exhibit, into Frank's love of horticulture.

Here is me talking of such matters - I do not know one side of a spade from the other - but having said that, Frank is one of the nicest, quietest, roll your sleeves up and get on with it sort of a guy you could ever wish to meet. His contribution to Council committees, etc, matches any of us. I actually sit with Frank on one of the Liquor Licence Panels, along with Graham Hyde. We are in fact referred to as the heart gang - we all have heart problems on that particular Panel and I am not so sure why we are doing that job! *(laughter)*

These things you have heard before but I think they are worth repeating again. Frank in his younger days was more involved with sporting activities and outdoor pursuits including - and these have not been mentioned - potholing, climbing, skiing and, for the youth, dare I say in Bradford, he did for ten years leading walking activities in Switzerland. In recognition of his work with youth he was bestowed the Queen's Jubilee Award.

However, to Frank the subject he is probably best known for within the Council, Frank is our very own Alan Titchmarsh - Mr Green Fingers himself. Frank tells me that he first became interested in such matters, as you have heard before, around 1980 during the Keep Britain Tidy Campaign and then subsequently became Community Project Officer. This led to his interest in the Yorkshire in Bloom initiative and he became its Chairman in 1995 and remained so for the following six years.

I asked Frank about some of the antics which competitors would use to try and gain more favour with the judges. As I said earlier, Frank is a mild-mannered man but the hair stood up at the back of his neck when he referred to past practice, as he put it, of some people. Putting a row of plantpots out at the last minute and then moving them to another site. A tip from Frank - "I always look underneath the pots to see if there are any creepy-crawlies - a good sign that they have been there for some time."

He said that he might not be with us today because of an incident when he was judging a Leeds in Bloom village. "I was nearly decapitated when we were travelling in an open-topped bus and the driver took the wrong route, driving us under trees with low-hanging branches. We all had to duck for cover or risk losing our heads. Another notable instance is where, when we were judging in Holmfirth and a flock of local sheep decided that floral displays were far more appealing than the grass in their own field. This action did not go down well with the locals who had toiled for many months to put on what they thought was an award winning display."

Similarly in Saltburn where, for some inexplicable reason, the hanging basket displays were watered with weedkiller added. *(laughter)* Finally, in a South Yorkshire village where to this day nobody knows what happened in the mystery of the missing daffodils. One day there were masses of them; the next the entire display had vanished. Was this the result of balmy local Council management, mowing them away to keep the grass tidy, or was it sabotage from a neighbouring competing village?

Frank is passionate when it comes to floral displays and to Leeds in particular. His catchphrase is "Going for gold" and that Leeds should have, as he puts it, "the wow factor".

To finish, Frank will see the other side of the coin when it comes to the Yorkshire in Bloom awards. As Lord Mayor he will be having his photograph taken with the award winning towns and villages of Leeds. I know because I had that on being the Lord Mayor in 2004/05. You are never off your feet. He will be sitting down or walking back to the stage at very regular intervals, taking on almost yo-yo proportions. I am telling you, it is most rewarding but an incredibly tiring day.

I can say, however, Frank and Sheila will have a wonderful experience - my wife and I did. Therefore, Lord Mayor, on behalf of the Liberal Democrat group, I would like to support the motion that Frank Robinson be elected as Lord Mayor for Leeds in the municipal year 2008/09. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Elliott.

COUNCILLOR ELLIOTT: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. Vice-Lord Lieutenant, High Sheriff, members of Council, ladies and gentlemen. On behalf of the Morley Borough Independents it gives me the greatest of pleasure to support Frank Robinson's nomination as Lord Mayor of Leeds for the coming year. Over the years he has put tremendous work into our city. His involvement in the In Blooms in the area is well documented and has resulted in the transforming of many parts of Leeds. In addition, his help and input into the health and physical wellbeing of both our young and not so young has had a significant and positive impact on the lives of many of our citizens.

Frank is a man who has never stopped working on behalf of individuals, groups and the City of Leeds and in doing so has done much to foster civic pride which is so important to our society.

How appropriate, then, that someone who has already done so much for Leeds should become our First Citizen and public face for the next year. The Morley Borough Independents believe that Frank and his wife Sheila are an excellent choice to fulfil the role of Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress of Leeds and we support them wholeheartedly. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Could I put it to Council that Councillor Frank Robinson be elected Lord Mayor of the City of Leeds to hold office until the date of the Annual Meeting of the Council in 2009. All those in favour? Can I put it to Council that that is unanimous? Please record that. Thank you, Council.

*(The Lord Mayor left the Chamber preceded by the Sergeant at Mace)*

*The Party Leaders made their way via the well of the Chamber and the gangway through the Opposition benches to join the procession out of the Chamber.*

*The Chief Executive and Assistant Chief Executive (Corporate Governance) followed.*

*The procession assembled in the Blue Room where the Lord Mayor elect and Lord Mayor's Secretary were waiting.*

*The Sergeant at Mace removed the chain from the retiring Lord Mayor.*



*The procession left the Blue room and returned to the Chamber.*

*The Chief Executive, Assistant Chief Executive (Corporate Governance) and Lord Mayor's Secretary resumed their seats.*

*The procession proceeded to the well of the Chamber.*

*The Sergeant at Mace assisted the retiring Lord Mayor to affix the Medallion to the Retaining Chain.*

*The Party Leaders, in order of precedence, each placed one loop of the chain round the Lord Mayor's shoulders.*

*Members of the procession resumed their seats.)*

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: The Lord Mayor will now make his declaration of acceptance of office.

THE LORD MAYOR: I, Frank Robinson, of 19 Sunnybank Lane, Thornbury, Leeds, having been elected to the office of Lord Mayor, hereby declare that I take the said office upon myself and will duly and faithfully fulfil the duties thereof according to the best of my ability and judgment.

*(The Lord Mayor signed the Register)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Distinguished guests, colleagues and friends. This is a really momentous occasion as you can recognise, and it is for both myself and my wife, sitting beside me. I must say in my wildest dreams I could never have imagined this moment. Waiting in the wings I thought I felt my ears burning a little - goodness knows what was said - but no doubt you have heard much of my previous careers and my activities; I do not quite know what they were.

You may have wondered how the path of life leads to politics, or through politics and to be the First Citizen of Leeds. Fifty years ago it was all go with career and with family, packing in sport and outdoor activities, but looking back it is amazing really how many associated interests grow and develop. It seems that voluntary work is really the norm and whether it is working with sporting organisations, whether the schools or whatever, whether you are in union work with the NUT, whether it is community interests that you are involved with, should I say, such as fighting about BD postcode in Bradford when you actually live in Leeds and t

That, of course, does rather get you involved. Then, of course, there are planning issues that you come across and really a fair bit of my time was promoting racial harmony, running sports festivals, really, and some of you will know the Guru Nanak Trust who were very, very supportive in gaining racial harmony. Really, the list becomes endless about voluntary work and what you can do and what you cannot over the years.

Then, of course, you throw in Neighbourhood Watch, which has taken 20 years of my spare time as well. Yorkshire in Bloom takes even more time and that has no doubt been mentioned, but it is all about improving the quality of life. You then realise that this is also the work of Councillor, Councillors in general, so in a way the transition to politics and Council is really seamless because obviously it goes on and on.

Really just a quick statistic for you. There are within the Leeds area, Leeds in Bloom, 34 In Bloom committees - 34 - and that really covers 19 Wards and if you

multiply that out, we have got 57 Councillors in this room who are actually supporting, maybe helping to finance In Bloom groups and their committees, their good work. We are all in the same sort of striving for quality of life, aren't we?

Needless to say, all of that work by all those In Bloom committees is going a long way towards our entry in Leeds in Bloom in the Yorkshire competition because we are going for gold again and that is the aim of this particular summer.

Now I will go on and it gives me great pleasure, really, to announce my charity for the year; not universally known, but certainly needs and requires the very best of support. It is called Andrea's Gift. It is a charity that is concerned with brain tumour and brain tumour research and support.

I will just tell you a quick bit about Andrea's Gift. Andrea's Gift was founded in 2003 and raised over £500,000 to support people affected by brain tumours in Yorkshire, primarily those who had received treatment through the Leeds Teaching Hospitals. Brain tumours are considered rare compared to other cancers but the surgical and oncology teams in Leeds alone see over 600 adults and 25 children each year as newly diagnosed patients. Sadly, around 20% of patients are diagnosed with the most aggressive tumours and will die within twelve months. Frighteningly, due to lack of research, brain tumours now kill more children than leukaemia.

The charity is co-funding the development of a brain tumour research facility which will be based at the Leeds Institute of Molecular Medicine and aims to be operational during 2008. The centre will look to develop novel brain tumour treatments, looking at tumour cells affecting both children and adults. A patient and carer support programme is in place to help families living with the devastating effects of a brain tumour diagnosis. The charity provides funds to help ease the financial burden that often occurs with a terminal diagnosis.

In contributing to this charity, the money would really be allocated - for instance, if we had £75,000 it would fund two lab technicians directed by a senior researcher exploring novel brain tumour treatment. £25,000 would allow a research team to buy new pioneering equipment to facilitate their research, plus making five hardship grants to patients in financial crisis due to their illness. £10,000 would keep the research team centre open for two weeks and provide funding for two lightweight wheelchairs and a Christmas party for children and adults affected by brain tumours. £500 buys a specially adapted sitting room chair. £250 buys visual aids to help the patient remain in his home. £100, even, would pay for a meal for a family to give them that touch of normality.

A very good cause indeed and, of course, we will be announcing quite a number of events to support that charity.

I welcome my colleague, Councillor Gerald Wilkinson and Pat, as Deputy Lord Mayor and Deputy Lady Mayoress and I am sure we will make a great team.

Last year the Lord Mayor reminded us of a few anniversaries, so I will just give you one. Do you know, it is 100 years ago since the Old Age Pension Act was passed? It was means tested and was worth five shillings per week and you had to be over 70. That is 100 years ago. Did I hear somebody say it has not gone up much since then? I do not know. *(laughter)* I am pretty certain during the year there will be some celebration in Leeds, I know for a fact, to celebrate 100 years of the State pension. We will see what you think of that, then.

Finally, I thank you all who have sent messages and good wishes and it is, I must say, much appreciated. Thank you for all the advice that I have received on how to run my year in office. I am thinking of writing a book really and passing it on to others.

Now I will conduct the rest of the Council business before, of course, adjourning to the Town Hall. Thank you. (*Applause*)

## ITEM 2 - VOTE OF THANKS TO THE RETIRING LORD MAYOR

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 2 on our sheet here, vote of thanks to the retiring Lord Mayor. I call on Councillor Lancaster,

COUNCILLOR LANCASTER: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. With all this talk about Leeds in Bloom I feel I ought to wish you a blooming good year!

My Lord Mayor, honoured guests, Members of Council, ladies and gentlemen. On behalf of his friends and colleagues of the Liberal Democrat party, I congratulate Councillor Cleasby and Mrs Jocelyn Cleasby on a very successful year as Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress. It did not start very well though, did it? This time last year, after the event at the Town Hall, a little bird told me that you went home and the house alarm went off....

THE RETIRING LORD MAYOR: And off and off and off!

COUNCILLOR LANCASTER: So your first day really started with a lack of sleep, but I thought history does not repeat itself and you will be having a good night's sleep tonight.

Your eagerness to do a good job has been plain for all to see. Brian's boyish enthusiasm for every event shone through and your obvious delight and enjoyment at the events I personally attended was infectious and a lot of people mentioned the word "charming" and you were obviously embracing everything that you attended.

I know that you never really had any aspirations to be the Lord Mayor - we discussed it quite a few times - but I bet now that you are pleased that you were persuaded and had the courage to accept this very demanding role. You have been really involved in your charity and I am sure that you will update us on that when you speak later on and I understand that you did the training as well to go into schools to give talks about heart research, your fund.

I am sure that you will both have a lot of memories about your exciting year and I would also like to mention as well that our thanks go to Alan Taylor. I am sure you enjoyed your year as well and I am sure that Brian will acknowledge how much support you gave him in his year.

I think that is all, really, because I am sure that you will say some more, Brian, so I would just like to move this vote of thanks on behalf of the Liberal Democrat Group. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Iqbal.

COUNCILLOR IQBAL: My Lord Mayor, Members of Council, distinguished guests. On behalf of the Labour Group I would like to congratulate the retiring Lord

Mayor, Councillor Cleasby and, of course, his wife Jo, the Lady Mayoress, on their year in office.

Judging by what I have seen in the papers, it looks like they have had a fantastic time; enjoying the delights of the aptly named Lord Mayor's original own brand coffee, meeting the granddaughter of the great Indian leader Mahatma Gandhi and, of course, hosting a civic reception for all the conquering Leeds Rhino Rugby Team.

I have to say, Brian, that I did notice in many of the pictures it seemed that glorious food prepared by the good people of Leeds was never too far away from your lips. *(laughter)* Of course, not that you did not deserve these treats. I know how tiring being Lord Mayor can be and I hope, Frank, you have been working out in the gym in preparation.

I remember Elizabeth, former Councillor Minkin, in supporting the election of Brian as Lord Mayor last year told us all that you worked at Yorkshire TV for many years. She spoke last year about a few difficult moments you encountered in Belfast and with the live tiger at Tippi Hedren's ranch. This made me wonder, Brian, what is worse - facing a tiger on a ranch or facing Councillor Lyons in this Chamber? *(laughter)*

THE RETIRING LORD MAYOR: I can assure you, there is no contest!

COUNCILLOR LYONS: I am a pussycat! *(laughter)*

COUNCILLOR IQBAL: Maybe you can tell me later but I can say, Brian, you have managed the Council meetings with authority, good grace and with much needed humour in those very, very rare heated moments. I know Councillor Lyons has been very impressed! *(laughter)*

We all hope you now enjoy a well deserved respite on the back benches and will very quickly be joining in with the good natured heckling of our new Lord Mayor at future Council meetings as soon as possible.

Your hard work and dedication throughout the year will have raised an amazing amount of money for your chosen charity and you should be very proud. The memories which you have experienced this year are absolutely unique and ones that we are sure you will quite rightly treasure for many, many years to come. Thank you. *(Applause)*

COUNCILLOR BALE: Lord Mayor, honoured guests, ladies and gentlemen. Lord Mayor, it is an honour and pleasure to address you as such and to support the vote of thanks to the retiring Lord Mayor on behalf of the Conservative Group.

Brian Cleasby has been a wonderful, enthusiastic expression of civic pride throughout his year and has been superbly supported by the charming Lady Mayoress and by his Deputy, Councillor Alan Taylor. Council owes the retiring Lord Mayor and his civic team a debt of gratitude.

Brian and I were together last week at a performance of Jekyll and Hyde by the Grove and Rawdon Theatre Company - a story as full of angst as the average Council meeting and, like a Council meeting, delightfully harmonious. *(laughter)*

As Brian and I were talking, we were reminiscing a little in the bar after the show and I mentioned that 50 years ago - just about exactly 50 years ago - I remember being at my last School Speech Day in Wolverhampton Civic Hall and the

Speech Day being addressed by the Mayor of Wolverhampton, whom I recall was a Labour Councillor and an engine driver. I think that is the first time in my life I understood something of the nature of civic leadership, that ordinary people just like any of us are brought to high office and serve as an expression of civic pride, serve as civic leaders and serve as expressions of democratic authority.

Brian, you have done that ably over the last year. If I can remember clearly what happened to me 50 years ago, some of the children you met and enthused during your year of office may remember that in 50 years' time and who knows, one of them may speak about it in this Chamber. Thank you and congratulations.  
(Applause)

COUNCILLOR GRAYSHON: Thank you, good evening. Lord Mayor. Vice-Lieutenant, High Sheriff, Mr Honorary Recorder, I bring greetings to you this evening from the town of Morley and my Morley Borough Independent colleagues. It is a very great pleasure to support the vote of thanks to the retiring Lord Mayor, Councillor Brian Cleasby.

It has been a momentous year for Brian and Jocelyn, and they have both conducted themselves with great dignity at the events they have attended. I remember in particular the Royal Bank of Scotland's fun day at Hyde Park which Brian and Jocelyn so very kindly agreed to open. I also recall the incident when Brian decided to steal a police officer's bicycle and ride around Hyde Park with his Mayoral chains on. You will be pleased to know, Mr Recorder, that he returned the bicycle so the definition of theft was not quite breached - he returned it.

On the other hand, Brian has seen his more serious side when he came to Morley to the Festival of Remembrance and delivered the Kohima epitaph at the end of the festival. Brian was very obviously moved by the event, as were a number of people in the audience and I think it is safe to say that Brian was at that point in tears. Brian was in tears at quite a lot of points in his Mayoral year.

In Brian's year of office we saw both the fun side, i.e. him riding a bicycle round Hyde Park, and his more serious side when he came to Morley and delivered the Kohima epitaph and I know that Brian did a lot of very, very serious things.

I am sure that your charity will have brought great benefits to the field of cardiology and heart research in Leeds. It has been a great pleasure to work with both you and Jocelyn and you have my heartfelt gratitude and congratulations this evening. I hope that you now enjoy the rest that you are going to have. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (Applause)

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: My Lord Mayor, Members of Council, honoured guests, ladies and gentlemen. On behalf of the Green Party Group I support the vote of thanks to the retiring Lord Mayor, Brian Cleasby, and his wife, Jocelyn.

As the Green Party Whip, I heartily approved of Brian's changes to the Whips' Dinner. He made it less of a posh affair by introducing a serve yourself running buffet type meal instead of the usual three course meal with waitress service. He mentioned at his first meal with Whips that he had brought his kettle into the Lord Mayor's office so he could make himself a cup of tea when he wished. This, it seems, was a surprise to the Lord Mayor's staff, who usually make the Mayor a cup of tea on request.

Brian asked me to be on the Lord Mayor's Charity Committee and I remember that the meeting a few days before Christmas time went on much longer than normal.

This was because Brian was determined to come up with some more good ideas that would raise large amounts of money for his chosen charity. I think I can speak for the other Councillors on that committee when I say that we did not mind though, as due to his enthusiasm we enjoyed trying to help him and did not realise the time going on.

I remember Brian's first meeting as Lord Mayor, when he lifted the gavel stating, "This is the Lord Mayor's gavel" and then he lifted up a large hammer stating that this was his gavel and that he would use it if members did not behave themselves during the Council meeting.

Though Brian has not used the hammer, he has used his authority as Mayor to control members who overstepped the mark, which I must say is not an easy task but a very necessary one.

Brian, thank you on behalf of the Green Party Group for the good humoured way that you have dealt with Council during your office and congratulations and thanks again. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: I will now present the past Lord Mayor's badge to the retiring Lord Mayor.

THE RETIRING LORD MAYOR: Doesn't time pass quick? It seems only a few minutes ago I was Lord Mayor!

*(Presentation)*

THE LORD MAYOR: The next item, then, the retiring Lady Mayoress will present the Lady Mayoress with her insignia of office.

*(Presentation)*

*(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: The Lady Mayoress will now present the retiring Lady Mayoress with the past Lady Mayoress's brooch.

*(Presentation)*

*(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Now I will ask the retiring Lord Mayor to say a few words.

THE RETIRING LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Lord Mayor, distinguished guests. The Lord Mayor just turned to me and said, "Would you like to say a few words?" Yes, of course!

It has been an amazing year, one I would recommend anybody to do, except this downhill bit. This is the hard bit because it has stopped and you have to start and you have to get uphill now. It seems to take for ever to get up the hill and then suddenly the race starts and you are running out of time to do all the things you thought you wanted to do and, in fact, you have done them and forgotten because the programme is so enormous. If, like myself and the Lady Mayoress, when asked the question, "How will we know, Lord Mayor, what you will accept, what engagements you will accept?" you have to think, obviously, but the answer comes very quickly. If it would not offend the Council or the city, then we do it, and we have.

That has resulted very often in five engagements a day and occasionally six and rarely two days off together. The weekend that I am looking forward to enjoying I have not had for about twelve months, although it does not seem like that. Some of the pleasures that I have had - it has been mentioned, my charity, Heart Research UK. They trained me to go into schools to give the Healthy Heart message and that has been really wonderful. I just wish I could have £1 for every time one youngster said, "Lord Mayor, are you very, very, very rich?" to which I replied, "I am sorry, I am only very rich!" *(laughter)* The next question is, "Lord Mayor, do you live in a very, very, very big house?" and, of course, the obvious answer, "No, we just live in a very big house" and then I waved and smiled and then we tried to diffuse the situation and get them to understand that we are just ordinary people doing a very special job.

That special job in the schools, hopefully, hundreds of youngsters will not smoke as a consequence of the lesson, because we do it very carefully and at the very end of the lesson is where they are shouting out the message which is a form of indoctrination and hopefully a very valuable indoctrination and we will see in the future a lot less heart disease as a result of those who smoke and damage their lungs and damage their ability to live a really healthy, normal life. That has been a good point.

The people I have worked with in the office are just amazing - probably the best members of staff in this Council. If the bin men are listening I do apologise but they really do go the extra mile. They have been working on their days off this week to organise the new Lord Mayor's election and also to help me wind down at the end of my year and that is absolutely tremendous to have staff so dedicated and at the same time so capable. Lord Mayor, you can trust the staff with any questions you need asking and if you do not even think of asking the question they will point out the answers. It is absolutely wonderful.

I have been fortunate to go on one or two trips abroad which have been, I believe, incredibly rewarding for the city. To Durban where the Lady Mayoress and I went together. I took a thermal vest with me, planning to sneak into the toilet on the aeroplane and put it on so I did not get a chill when I arrived back in Leeds. I wore it for the first three days in Durban! They kept apologising for the weather and we kept pointing out no, it is all right, we recognise it, this is English weather.

The wonderful thing about it, they could not show us the beautiful South Africa; they had to show us South Africans and that was important to a Councillor, to a Lord Mayor who was concerned about people. If anyone has ever been to Durban to see the way many of them as a result of apartheid have to live still, then you have to be concerned.

I think it is wonderful that our city is twinned. I joke about it because people say to me, "Why is Leeds twinned with Durban?" and I point out that Durban is a massive port on the Indian Ocean - and it is massive, we saw it every morning from our bedroom - and then I point out that surely Leeds is a massive port on the Leeds/Liverpool Canal, so we have obviously got a lot in common! *(laughter)*

Another trip, whilst we were in Durban one of the wonderful things that we were able to do was start the planning of fruit trees. For rehoused people, Leeds companies had provided money for fruit trees. They get three fruit trees, they have the choice, to plant in the gardens so they can nurture them and have some shade, somewhere to stretch clothes lines, all the normal things that we do in our gardens and the plan is to have them all in place for the World Cup that is going to happen in South Africa and Durban is one of the places that that is going to happen. It will be wonderful because of the colour of the blossom and so on. At the end of it, they can barter and swap the fruit and so on if they nurture it, and they obviously want to do

that. That was so well received. I actually did a live phone-in back to Radio Leeds the morning after but on the day I was interviewed by South African Television.

Our foreign trips are incredibly useful to the city to let the world know that Leeds cares and is involved in the world.

My last trip - I say my last trip because the Lady Mayoress stayed and completed the assignments that we had already accepted and that was just before Christmas - and Tony, sitting there, was close many times - in fact in the week she did five carol concerts! In the week my main task in Beijing was to lead the delegation to meet the Chinese Olympic Committee and - officers had been working on this for some time - to finally convince them of the value of Leeds. I believe we have achieved that because our swimmers and our divers have already been to Beijing and have practised in the new Olympic Swimming Centre there. They are aware that there is every chance that members of Leeds Swimming Club may well be bringing some of the medals back from Beijing, but what we are trying to do is for 2012 to make sure that the Chinese are training and acclimatising in our city, which will be of enormous value to us.

I tell you that because obviously since December we have all become concerned about China and I think the best way to show concern about China is to get involved with the people. We have about a thousand students at least in our city and our universities. They are the people that we can impress on our values and they will take them home so we do not need to be demonstrating in the streets, we do not need to be damaging the Olympic faith. There are other ways of doing it.

I would like to finish by being a little light-hearted at my expense, because I have a poem, Lord Mayor. If you would all be helpful if I could do that, if you could give me a few moments. Shall I have a go?

This is called "Life After the Chain".

Can things ever be the same  
When I know that Lord Mayor is not my name?  
When I enter a room and nobody stands,  
I give forth my views and there is no clapping hands.  
When I am no longer dressed up in red  
And nobody hears a word I have said.  
When I attend functions, those that I am able  
And find my place is not at the top table.  
Shall I find I am bewildered, lost or perplexed  
Now the day has arrived and I am turned into an ex.  
Well I have met many exes and quite rational and sane  
And so I feel sure there must be life after the chain.

*(Applause)*

### ITEM 3 - DEPUTY LORD MAYOR

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Brian. Item 3, I will move that Councillor Gerald Wilkinson be appointed Deputy Lord Mayor of the City of Leeds to hold office until the date of the Annual Meeting of the Council in 2009. *(Applause)* Can I have that seconded?

COUNCILLOR M HAMILTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor, I would like to second that and wish you a very good year.



THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. A vote for that - all in favour? Against? Any abstentions? No, that is CARRIED then, thank you.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: The Deputy Lord Mayor will now make his Declaration of Acceptance of office.

THE DEPUTY LORD MAYOR: I, Gerald Wilkinson, having been elected to the office of Deputy Lord Mayor, hereby declare that I will take that office on myself and will duly and faithfully fulfil the duties of it according to the best of my judgment and ability. (*Applause*)

#### ITEM 4 - ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 4, any reports?

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: There are no announcements, Lord Mayor.

#### ITEM 5 - MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 9<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2008

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 5, then, Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2008. Councillor Hamilton?

COUNCILLOR M HAMILTON: Can I move the Minutes be approved, Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Those in favour? Any against? Any abstentions? That is CARRIED.

#### ITEM 6 - ELECTION OF LEADER

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 6, Election of Leader. Councillor Hamilton?

COUNCILLOR M HAMILTON: Move in terms of the Notice, Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Those in favour? Those against?

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: Shame, I thought we were all unanimous.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: The vote is lost, Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: It is called democracy, Les.

THE LORD MAYOR: I believe that is CARRIED. (*Applause*) I think I must ask for abstentions. None.

#### ITEM 7 - RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 7, Recommendations of the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee. Councillor Hamilton?

COUNCILLOR M HAMILTON: Lord Mayor, I move in terms of the Notice.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: All peace again - I second.

THE LORD MAYOR: Those in favour? Those against? Any abstentions? That is CARRIED.

#### ITEM 8(a) - ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMITTEES AND APPROPRIATE TERMS OF REFERENCE

THE LORD MAYOR: 8(a) is establishment of committees and appropriate terms of reference. Councillor Hamilton?

COUNCILLOR M HAMILTON: Move in terms of the Notice, Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Those in favour? Those against? Any abstentions? None. That is CARRIED.

#### ITEM 8(b)(i) - MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES/BOARDS/PANELS

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 8(b)(i) - Membership of Committees/Boards/Panels. Councillor Hamilton:

COUNCILLOR M HAMILTON: Lord Mayor, I move in terms of the Notice with the following amendments; that Councillor Dowson replace Councillor G Hyde on the Licensing Panel; that Councillor Illingworth replace Councillor E Taylor on the Scrutiny Board (Health); Councillor E Taylor replace Councillor Illingworth on the Scrutiny Board (Adult Social Care).

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Those in favour? Those against? Any abstentions? CARRIED.

#### ITEM 8(b)(ii) - MEMBERSHIP OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 8(b)(ii) - Membership of The Standards Committee. Councillor Hamilton.

COUNCILLOR M HAMILTON: Move in terms of the notice, Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Second.

THE LORD MAYOR: Those in favour? Those against? None. Abstentions? None. CARRIED. Thank you.

#### ITEM 8(b)(ii) - APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 8(c) - Appointments to outside organisations.  
Councillor?

COUNCILLOR M HAMILTON: Lord Mayor, I move in terms of the Notice.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Those in favour? Those against? Abstentions? None.  
CARRIED.

#### ITEM 9 - SCHEME OF DELEGATION

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 9, Scheme of Delegation. Councillor Hamilton?

COUNCILLOR M HAMILTON: Move in terms of the Notice, Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: We are nearly there. Second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Those in favour? Against? Abstentions? None. That  
is CARRIED. We are getting there, don't worry.

#### ITEM 10 - PROPOSED CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 10, proposed calendar of meetings. Councillor  
Hamilton.

COUNCILLOR M HAMILTON: Move in terms of the Notice, Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Those in favour? Thank you. Those against? Any  
abstentions? None. That is CARRIED.

#### ITEM 11 - EXECUTIVE ARRANGEMENTS

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 11, Executive Arrangements. Councillor  
Hamilton?

COUNCILLOR M HAMILTON: Lord Mayor, for the final time, move in terms  
of the Notice.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Indeed, second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, indeed. Those in favour? Thank you.  
Against? Any abstentions? None. That is then CARRIED.

You will be pleased to know that concludes the meeting and I invite you all  
down to the Town Hall for refreshment, socialisation and a most enjoyable evening. I  
look forward to meeting you all down there. Thank you. (*Applause*)

*(The meeting closed at 7.30 p.m.)*

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