

LEEDS CITY COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Held on

Wednesday, 15th September 2010

At

THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,

In the Chair:

THE LORD MAYOR
(COUNCILLOR J McKENNA)

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VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF LEEDS CITY COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 15th SEPTEMBER 2010

THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon again, everybody. Welcome to today's Council meeting and can we offer a special welcome to the city's newly appointed Chief Executive, Tom Riordan, who is attending his first Council meeting. We wish him well. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: All members of the Council have come across Ian Walton of Governance Services, who has provided support for full Council meetings for many years. However, what many of you will not know is that Ian retired from the Council last week after 38 years' service. It was Ian's wish to leave without any fuss and he certainly achieved that! (*Laughter*)

However, I feel that it is only right that we record our formal thanks to Ian for his dedication and long service and send him all good wishes for a long and happy retirement. (*hear, hear*) (*Applause*)

It is with regret that I have to inform you of the following deaths. Lady Edna Healy, wife of the former Chancellor of the Exchequer and East Leeds MP Denis Healy, Freeman of the city. Edna dies on 21st July. Denise Preston, the former Chief Recreation Officer, who died on 23rd July following a long battle with cancer. Honorary Alderman Linda Middleton, MBE DL, who served on West Yorkshire County Council from 1981 to 1986 and Leeds City Council from 1986 to 2002. She served as the city's 104th Lord Mayor in 1997/98 and was very much involved in Early Years education. During the time she served on the Council I was in fact her Deputy Chair in 1998 in my first year on the Council and it does not say on my notes but I think we should note that Linda was a great, great supporter of Leeds United Football Club and one of the small group of women that I know who could talk very well about her team. Linda died on 13th August and she will be much missed.

Can I ask you all to stand now in a silent tribute?

(Silent tribute)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, members. Can I call on Councillor Gruen, please?

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Lord Mayor, I move the suspension of Council Procedure Rule as in the order paper allowing for the time taken with the Honorary Aldermen Special Meeting and I move that we extend the duration by 35 minutes. That would mean that we break at 5.35 instead of the normal five o'clock for tea. I so move.

COUNCILLOR LOBLEY: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Can I call for the vote please? (*A vote was taken*) That is clearly CARRIED, thank you.

ITEM 1 – MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14th JULY 2010

THE LORD MAYOR: Can we move on to item 1, please, Minutes of the meeting held on 14th July.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: I move the Minutes be approved.

COUNCILLOR LOBLEY: I second, my Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Can we call for the vote on the Minutes? *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

ITEM 2 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

THE LORD MAYOR: Can we go to Item 2, Declarations of Interest? The list of written declarations submitted by members is on display in the ante-room, on deposit in public galleries and has been circulated to each member's place in the Chamber.

Are there any further individual declarations or corrections to those notified on the list?

COUNCILLOR SMITH: Thank you, Lord Mayor. On item 8 on the Minutes page 11 there is a reference back. As I have seen the list of organisations which may be affected as a member of the Shadow Cabinet, one of them is a client of mine and I think that gives me a personal and prejudicial interest and I shall leave the meeting at that point. Thank you.

Under item 9, White Paper Motion, I will declare the same interest but this time as there is no mention of any of the organisations, that is just a personal interest.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Smith. Any further declarations?

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Lord Mayor, there has been some discussion about the declaration surrounding what Councillor Smith has just made. My understanding was that the appropriate advice was going to be given in terms of those who do and do not have to declare an interest. Clearly there was an issue when it was first discussed at Executive Board and members declared an interest and those members are not declaring that interest here today. It seems some advice is urgently needed in that regard.

THE LORD MAYOR: I call on the Chief Legal Officer to give that advice.

THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE (Corporate Governance): The issue being considered today is not Council making a decision regarding proposals to reduce grants but quite distinctly it is a question of a reference back of a Minute to ask Executive Board to reconsider their decision.

The Minute and papers before Council do not include the names of the organisation in the exempt appendix considered by the Executive Board on this matter. The only members entitled to see the exempt appendix were those members of Executive Board who took the decision, members of Scrutiny who dealt with the call in this morning and Shadow portfolio holders. Regardless of any declarations those members may have made in those particular roles, the question being considered now is whether a decision of Executive Board should be referred back for reconsideration.

My view is that this specific question is one step removed from a decision as to whether or not there should be reductions. Therefore, it is my advice that, despite any previous declarations that may have been made in previous roles by members,

those members do not have to declare any interest on the specific question on the reference back of the Minute to ask Executive Board to reconsider their decision.

However, as members have heard me say many times before, the question of declaration of interest is entirely a matter for each individual member.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: A point of information, my Lord Mayor. Can the Chief Legal Officer tell us what recourse members might have should they profoundly disagree with her judgment on this particular issue?

COUNCILLOR: You have heard the Legal Officer, Lord Mayor.

THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE (Corporate Governance): If members consider that they disagree with my view, then they personally can choose to declare a personal and/or prejudicial interest at the meeting. If members have concern regarding the accuracy of my advice or, I suppose, the competence of myself in giving that advice, then they need to raise the matter with the Chief Executive under the Member Officer Protocol.

COUNCILLOR LOBLEY: Lord Mayor, I think there are a lot of members around the room who are in a situation where they do not know if they need to declare an interest or not. They have not seen the papers, they do not know whether the organisations - all of us around this room are involved in organisations many of which may or may not be affected and the outcome of a different decision by the Executive Board could be something which we are impacting on today.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Lord Mayor, I am very happy to abide by the advice, as always, given by the Chief Legal Officer. She has given this advice consistently - at the Whips' meeting yesterday evening, at the meeting with the Lord Mayor, less than an hour and a half ago, and the matter was discussed by the Whips then. I find it surprising that the Whips in other groups have not talked to their members since the Executive Board meeting, since the publication of these order papers, since their group meetings on Monday and now have actually to waste their own time - they are not wasting our time - in Council still on the same issue. It is a matter for each member personally, looking at the advice given by the Chief Legal Officer. I am sure my colleagues on this side will welcome that we stick to those kind of usual procedures.

COUNCILLOR HARRIS: I was going on to declare an interest in something else, Lord Mayor. Might I do that, or do you want me to wait?

THE LORD MAYOR: You can declare your interest while you are on your feet.

COUNCILLOR HARRIS: Fine. White Paper 11, Lord Mayor, in view of the fact I am a personal friend of Ken Bates and I do business with Leeds United. If the World Cup, if Leeds succeeds it has got to be for the benefit of Leeds United so it is wise that I declare that interest. On the other issue, just for safety's sake as an Executive Member of Sinai Synagogue which is in receipt of grants from the Council from time to time and a member of the Leeds Jewish Representative Council, it is as well that I mention that in Council.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Mark. Councillor Campbell, please.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: With reference to the reference back, could I ask a further question in relation to declarations of interest then? If the reference back succeeds, would the Chief Legal Officer's advice be to members on the Executive Board that they should re-declare their interest when it was discussed?

THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE (Corporate Governance): If the reference back succeeds and the matter needs to be reconsidered by Executive Board, then again Executive Board members, depending on the wording of the report in front of them, will have to make a decision as to whether or not they need to declare an interest at that time.

THE LORD MAYOR: Can we move on? Councillor Golton, please.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Lord Mayor, sorry to labour the point but those members of the Executive Board – and I am one – and those of the Scrutiny Board will have had access to a certain amount of information which will give them confidence that they do not need to declare an interest, or whether they need to declare an interest because, as you have pointed out, your advice is advice and is not the instruction. It is up to individual members and their conscience how they declare an interest.

I would suggest that because there are several members of this Chamber who have not had access to that restricted information, they may not feel that same confidence as other people who have sat on Scrutiny Board and Executive Board and they may wish to request that information to take a decision with confidence at this meeting.

THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE (Corporate Governance): If Councillor Golton is saying that members need to see the exempt appendix in order to assess whether or not they have got an interest to declare, then Standards for England Guidance is quite clear that if you do not know information then you do not need to declare it. You do not have to search it out in order to then declare it.

COUNCILLOR M HAMILTON: Some advice, Lord Mayor, in relation to the timing of this decision. Is it not the case that if the reference back succeeds today, then it will be referred back to Executive Board at some future meeting at which time the decision will be reconsidered and a further decision made. If the reference back fails today, then effectively the decision is released. There is a time period issue here.

Surely members who are on the Boards of some of these organisations who have seen the pink papers may be able to communicate to those organisations perhaps there is a grant that they want to apply for, perhaps there is some other funding they want to look out. The timing of this decision does have a bearing on the financial stability of those organisations, it seems to me, therefore if they are members of those organisations, then how they vote today may actually impact upon the financial viability of those organisations. I think it is a personal and prejudicial in those circumstances.

THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE (Corporate Governance): I still repeat my previous comment that if members are not aware as to whether or not the organisation with which they have a connection is on the pink sheet, then they cannot have an interest to declare because they do not know if anything is going to be influenced or not and Standards for England Guidance is very clear on that.

COUNCILLOR M HAMILTON: To come back to that, that was not the point. The point I was making was that members who are aware of what is in the pink

papers and who are members or on the Boards of those organisations, the timing of the decision does have an impact on those organisations, it seems to me. It may be that for some of these organisations a decision today will have one impact and in two weeks' time it will have a different impact. It may be that their financial situation gets worse or maybe they get a grant coming in which stabilises them.

I think the decisions of those members today does have an impact, it seems to me, and that is the point I am making. It is not the people who do not know – it is the people who do know and the decision they make today impacts on the organisations they represent.

THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE (Corporate Governance): The only thing I can say is that it is up to members to take their own view as to whether or not they wish to declare an interest. Members have received my advice. They either wish to follow it or they do not.

COUNCILLOR CLEASBY: Lord Mayor, some advice from you, the Chief Legal Officer, or our new Chief Executive. I am concerned because as a Shadow member I get pink papers. I am fully aware as a consequence that this item was only pink papers, that therefore those who are not Shadow or not in Executive positions have no knowledge of this at all. It seems we are being led towards making a really poor decision here and the advice given is leading us to make a poor decision.

Member are being asked – will be being asked – to vote upon something they do not know about and therefore do not understand when a decision has already been made by those who are privileged to the information.

Lord Mayor, surely – correct me if I am wrong - the reason this information is exempt is because it could be prejudicial to the Council and/or the people concerned in the paper. On that basis what we are being led towards, therefore, without knowledge, is a bad decision. I ask advice. Am I right in thinking that, Chief Executive?

THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE (Corporate Governance): It was open for either Executive Board and/or Scrutiny Board when they considered the call in to decide whether or not to open up the pink papers. That is a particular decision that the Executive Board have to make as part of the agenda and it is a decision that Scrutiny Board could consider as to whether or not to open up the pink papers. Executive Board did not choose to open up the pink papers and make them publicly available and neither, so far as I am aware, did Scrutiny Board this morning at the call in meeting. Therefore, members have of all parties have had the opportunity to seek to open up that information if they so wished at the appropriate times.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: Lord Mayor, may we move – I am not moving, I am just asking – may we move suspension of Standing Orders which will allow us as a Council to decide this is no longer an exempt item?

COUNCILLOR: No.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: I am asking them!

COUNCILLOR: We are all lawyers!

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: Are you a lawyer?

THE LORD MAYOR: I am aware, Councillor Carter, that we have not actually voted on it yet. We are having a debate. The next thing on the agenda is a vote

whether we agree or not and I think perhaps until we get there you might be a bit premature.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: It is just a question. Surely the Chief Compliance Officer, are we allowed to vote in this Council Chamber that we believe as a Council this item is not exempt, in which case it will stop all this nonsense and let people look at it.

THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE (Corporate Governance): The matter that is before full Council is not an exempt item, is not an exempt matter, therefore there is nothing to open up. I think what you are saying is that you do not think members have got all the information that they wish to have in order to have an informed discussion and to take the decision. If that is what members think, then what they could do is they could seek to adjourn that particular item in order to obtain additional information in order that they could then be sufficiently informed as to the information in order to inform them to take a view.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Lord Mayor, can you clarify for me whether we are on Declarations of Interest at the moment? (*Laughter*) Lord Mayor, if that is the item, do we think it would be possible that people could either declare or not declare an interest and we could then move on?

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: We are trying to.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: We have not got the information to declare or not declare.

THE LORD MAYOR: We are on Declarations of Interest and members have been seeking information from the Chief Legal Officer. That is where we are at the moment. Councillor Chastney.

COUNCILLOR CHASTNEY: Lord Mayor, Councillor Gruen, please, I will do exactly just that. I have seen the now infamous pink paper so I will declare a personal interest as Director of Hyde Park Source. Thank you. Was that inappropriate for me to declare it? (*Interruption*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Are there any further – Peter, sit down, I did not call you yet, please. Are there any further declarations or do you wish the Chief Legal Officer to reiterate her advice? It seems to me that has been fairly consistent. No further declarations.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Lord Mayor, in assessing whether I should declare an interest or not I am content, as the Chief Legal Officer has suggested, to wait until we get to the appropriate item and we then may look to adjourn Council to get that information above the line. (*hear, hear*)

THE LORD MAYOR: What about in the meantime, do we need to declare further interests for the items that come before that? No, we are OK? You are all comfortable? It is entirely up to you whether you declare an interest or not. All right then, we shall move on.

Can I ask you then, please can members, by a show of hands, confirm that they have read the list or the list as amended and agree its content insofar as they relate to their own personal interest? Have we got agreement on that? (*A vote was taken*) It is CARRIED then, *nem con*.

ITEM 3 – COMMUNICATIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: Can I call on the Chief Executive to make an announcement, please? Tom.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. To report that following the resignation from the officer of Councillor on 1st September 2010 of Stuart Andrew for the Guiseley and Rawdon Ward, a bye-election in respect of the vacancy will be held on 14th October 2010.

ITEM 4 – DEPUTATIONS

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: On the deputations, to report that there are three deputations – number four on the Order Paper has withdrawn – and they are Leeds Youth Council regarding the Equality and Diversity Action Plan; local residents concerns at access arrangements at Throstle Nest Villa, Horsforth; and Unison Leeds Community Health regarding NHS Leeds and Social Enterprise.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gruen.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Lord Mayor, I have just considered whether I ought to declare an interest in being part of the Youth Leeds Council but I do not think I need to, so I do move that all the deputations be received.

COUNCILLOR LOBLEY: I second, my Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Can I call for the vote that the deputations be received? *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

DEPUTATION ONE – LEEDS YOUTH COUNCIL

THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon, and welcome to today's Council meeting. Please now make your speech to Council, which should not be longer than five minutes, and please begin by introducing your deputation.

MR T RYAN: Good afternoon Lord Mayor, members of Council. My name is Thomas Ryan and this is Peter Brockeridge. We are from the Leeds Youth Council. I am going to give you a bit of background about the Leeds Youth Council now.

In October 2009 Leeds Youth Council was approached with an invitation to participate in a programme of work being undertaken by Leeds City Council Equality Team. More specifically, the work formed part of the department's Diversity Action Plan and would be undertaken in partnership with, and supported by, the following:

Geoff Turnbull – Senior Project Officer, Equality Team
Anne McMaster – Strategic Equality Manager, Equality Team
Daniel Hardy – Deputy Labour Group Support Manager Liz Bavidge – Fair Play Partnership
Lesley Reed – Senior Youth Worker, Youth Service.

I am just going to tell you about what the LYC, which is the Leeds Youth Council, has found.

Information does not appear to be readily available around such issues as disability, ethnicity, religion/belief, sexual orientation, or social class – the latter being perhaps more difficult to capture as would be largely self-defined. This probably leads to people forming their own conclusions through visual observation which in

turn could lead to misconceptions. The diversity or lack of it, of the Leeds City Council cannot easily be ascertained because of this lack of information.

Based on conversations with other young people and some adults plus their conversation and discussions with Elected Members, the group felt that there was a real lack of political education at local level. Many people, young people and older, are not fully aware of what the role of a Councillor entails. This is probably one of the main reasons why local elections do not attract more diversity of potential candidates.

Finance was highlighted as a possible barrier for prospective candidates as Elected Members in general, i.e. excluding those who perhaps hold an Executive post, do not receive a high salary and often work long hours. It is often the case that Councillors need to supplement the salary through other sources of income e.g. having a part of full time job as well as being a Councillor; being in receipt of a pension.

It was felt that there was a practical issues that created barriers – possibly more so for females than males – e.g. safety concerns when out campaigning for votes; child care considerations.

In undertaking this programme of work the group also reflected on their own equality and diversity as the larger group of Leeds Youth Council and realised that they too needed to address the issue of being more representative of the young people of Leeds.

I am just going to say about some recommendations that they said.

On joining Leeds Youth Council, members complete a registration form which includes questions about disability, gender, ethnicity, other activities and organisations we belong to. This information is saved on a database and can be provided, with respect to members' rights to anonymity, to Leeds City Council, funders etc as and when needed. Perhaps if such information were also obtained from Elected Members and made available to the public, via the Leeds City Council website, in an anonymous, purely statistical manner, equality and diversity could be more openly demonstrated. This is an exercise that could be undertaken on an individual and ward basis and may also aid the selection process of potential candidates.

Education on local politics should be included in school curriculums and delivered more to the wider community. These are our suggestions on how this could be achieved. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you for that. Can I now call on Councillor Gruen, please.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Lord Mayor, thank you. I move that the matter of the deputation be considered by the Executive Board.

COUNCILLOR LOBLEY: I second, my Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you for attending today and for what you have said. You will be kept informed of the consideration which your comments will receive, and good afternoon to you both. Thank you. *(Applause)*

I am sorry, we did not vote. I apologise. *(A vote was taken)* CARRIED.

DEPUTATION TWO – LOCAL RESIDENTS, THROSTLE NEST VILLA,
HORSFORTH

THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to today's Council meeting. Please now make your speech to Council, which should not be longer than five minutes, and please begin by introducing your deputation.

MR M BOUCHER: Lord Mayor, Members of Council, may I thank you for the opportunity to present to you today. My name is Martin Boucher and I am presenting on behalf of concerned local residents. I am accompanied by my neighbour Mr Andy Senior and by my wife Mrs Julie Boucher.

As local residents were are concerned that Leeds Planning Services has given insufficient consideration to the impact on highway safety in granting planning permission for the change of the use of Throstle Nest Villa to form six two bedroom flats and two houses (please see document 1).

Our concerns relate to the existing access on to New Road Side Horsforth that I shall refer to as Access A, and a proposed new access road onto Newlay Wood Crescent that I shall refer to as Access B.

Access A (see document 2) is a narrow single-track driveway extending from Throstle Nest Villa through the gardens of Throstle Nest Grange, emerging on to New Road Side at an approximately 45 degree angle, north west. A high retaining stone wall, approximately six feet high, obscures the driveway from both directions and overhanging trees on both sides of New Road Side reduce the ambient light. This is particularly a problem for pedestrians coming down New Road Side, as the driveway is not visible until a few feet away (please see the photographs in document 4). This causes an unseen danger especially to young children, the partially sighted, parents pushing prams and people walking their dogs on leads to the nearby woods and river walks.

There have been a number of instances of "near-misses", with cars emerging too swiftly from the driveway and not stopping until they reach the kerb. Police records confirm a cyclist was recently hit and injured by an exiting vehicle.

The driveway is too narrow for passing vehicles, so if other vehicles are exiting at the same time, vehicles entering have to back up blind across the pavement on to New Road Side. This is very dangerous. Furthermore the driveway is also the only pedestrian access for the residents of and visitors to Throstle Nest Grange and the police have been notified of a number of incidents of vehicles from Throstle Nest Villa being driven too fast for safety along such a narrow driveway.

We believe that the proposed development of Throstle Nest Villa will lead to an increase in the traffic using the driveway and we are very concerned about the consequent increased danger to pedestrians and cyclists in particular, at the exit on to New Road Side.

Access B (see document 2) is a proposed new access road to be built at the rear of Throstle Nest Villa emerging on to Newlay Wood Crescent. At present there is no such access from the Villa and we are concerned about the increased danger to highway safety that this new access road will cause.

In July 2008 West Yorkshire Police issued a letter (see document 3) to residents of Newlay Wood Crescent following complaints about the number of vehicles parked at the roadside and obstructing pavements. We believe the

introduction of another driveway for villa residents and visitors will exacerbate what is already a serious problem.

The proposed access road between the boundaries of two other properties is too narrow for emergency vehicles and confronting vehicles will have to back out with difficulty on to Newlay Wood Crescent causing danger.

We ask that you please refer the matter back to the Chief Planning Officer to consider a new separate dedicated access from Throstle Nest Villa on to New Road Side – Access C (see document 2). This will obviate the need for Access B and will reduce the danger from the present Access A driveway.

Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Martin, for addressing the Council today. Can I now call on Councillor Gruen, please.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Lord Mayor, thank you. I move that the matter of the deputation be referred to the Executive Board for consideration.

COUNCILLOR LOBLEY: I second, my Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Can I call for the vote from member, please? *(A vote was taken)* CARRIED.

Thank you for attending today and for what you have said. You will be kept informed of the consideration which your comments will receive. Good afternoon. *(Applause)*

DEPUTATION THREE – UNISON LEEDS COMMUNITY HEALTH

THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to today's Council meeting. Please now make your speech to Council, which should not be longer than five minutes, and please begin by introducing the people in your deputation.

MR D SYMS: Lord Mayor, Council Members. To my right I have Brian Wheeler, Unison Regional Officer; to my left I have Anne Szczepanska, Unison Health Safety and Welfare Officer; next to Anne is Paul Bullivant, Health and Safety Representative. My name is David Syms, I am the Branch Secretary for Unison Leeds Community Health Branch.

We are here today to speak to you about NHS Leeds proposal, to transfer Leeds Community Health Services into a Social Enterprise, which is a business run for profit but instead of a portion of the profits being spent on shareholder dividends they should be spent the "social causes or objectives". We have a number of significant concerns which we believe you will share and we ask you to refer to the Council's Scrutiny Committee and proposed changes to the provision of NHS services for the population of Leeds. UNISON considers that there has been a lack of meaningful consultation with the trade unions, staff and the people of Leeds in relation to the rush to become a Social Enterprise.

The Government requirement in regard to the setting up of a Social Enterprise is that the staff, in this case of NHS Leeds have the 'right to request' the formation of a Social Enterprise. NHS Leeds decided, with our support, to consult staff over whether or not they want to become an Social Enterprise and held a ballot

in August of 2009 for staff to have a chance to have their voice as to whether to become a Community Foundation Trust or a Social Enterprise. A total of 1373 staff voted with 1335 in favour of a Community Foundation Trust - that represents 97% of the vote; 3% or 38 people voted for Social Enterprise. Our view, supported by this evidence, is that staff do not want to work in a Social Enterprise; they want to work in the NHS.

In December 2009 the Department of Health announced that they were not going to create any new Community Foundation Trusts. However that position has changed and new NHS Community Foundation Trusts are being agreed.

In the interim, NHS Leeds began to pursue the option of becoming a Social Enterprise. It is our view that NHS Leeds has not given proper consideration to the other NHS options that were/are open to them.

It is our view that while the NHS Leeds has held what it calls consultation meetings across the city, these meetings do not constitute meaningful consultation with staff. As the meetings were designed to promote the advantages, as seen by NHS Leeds, of social enterprise, in our view it would appear that they have not seriously pursued other NHS options which would keep Leeds Community Health Services within the NHS, subject to rigorous governance arrangements and under public control.

If the move to a Social Enterprise happens it is the start of the break up and privatisation of the whole NHS. If the decision to become a Social Enterprise goes ahead, then it is the beginning of the end for the NHS not only in Leeds but the whole county.

I have worked in the NHS for many years and as a member of staff, a union activist and a resident of Leeds I do not want my NHS services to be privatised.

On the 6th September 2010, at a meeting of the Transforming Community Services Advisory Board, it was announced that Leeds had been provisionally approved in the second wave of Community Foundation Trusts. We are waiting for the Department of Health to confirm this.

On the 9th September 2010 NHS Leeds sent out the following in an e-mail to all staff.

“As you are aware we are pursuing all avenues to become a stand-alone community based organisation. We continue to work on our ‘Right to Request’ social enterprise application but have also been waiting to hear if it was possible to reconsider the Community Foundation Trust option”.

Our concern is that while NHS Leeds continues to pursue a Social Enterprise, they may well miss the opportunity to become a Community Foundation Trust, given the now tight time scales.

Is this what residents of Leeds want for their families and friends? I respectfully submit that it is not. What the people of Leeds want is high quality, efficient and effective local NHS Community Health Services to tend to their Community Health needs, not a private business run for profit, albeit with a social conscience.

If the Social Enterprise bid continues and is successful, then no political party will in the future be in a position to undo or indeed influence in a significant way what

is happening to our Community Health Care in Leeds, so we ask you again to refer NHS Leeds proposal to pursue the transfer of services to a Social Enterprise to the Council's Health and Social Care Scrutiny Commission. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, David, for your speech to Council today. Can I now call on Councillor Gruen, please.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Lord Mayor, I have great pleasure in asking Council to refer this matter to the Executive Board for consideration, please.

COUNCILLOR LOBLEY: I second, my Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: (*A vote was taken*) CARRIED. Thank you for attending Council today and for what you have said. You will be kept informed of the consideration which your comments will receive. Good afternoon to you, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you. (*Applause*)

ITEM 5 – REPORTS

THE LORD MAYOR: Can we now move to Item 5, Reports. Councillor Gruen, please.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Lord Mayor, can I move as in the terms of the Order Paper with the amendment that the Scrutiny Board referred to is actually not the Adult Social Care but Adult Health Scrutiny Board. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR LOBLEY: I second, my Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Can I call for the vote on that, members? (*A vote was taken*) CARRIED.

THE LORD MAYOR: Can we go on to item 6, then, Questions?

ITEM 7 – RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Lord Mayor, may I explain to Members of Council that if you look in your Order Paper, Item 7 is the GP Committee and that GP Committee recommends the Council today that we allow at the end of Question time, once it has started, to proceed with the supplementary, but unless we take it first then it would not apply to this Question time, so I am now moving under provisions of Council Procedure Rule 2.3, that the order of business be varied to allow Item 7 to be considered before Item 6.

COUNCILLOR LOBLEY: I second, my Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Can we vote on that, members, please? (*A vote was taken*) That is CARRIED.

Can we now go on to Item 6?

ITEM 6 - QUESTIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: Can we now go on to Item 6, Questions. Councillor Carter, please, first questions.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. Can the Executive Board Member for City Development confirm that the reduction he has agreed in spending on highway maintenance is the £476,000 outlined in the Executive Board Report that went to the August cycle?

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Carter. Councillor Richard Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Lord Mayor, thank you. The figure, for the benefit of member, that Councillor Carter refers to is included in the appendix to Financial Health Monitoring Quarter One Outturn Report which went to Executive Board in August.

As a result of a reduction in grants from the Government and a response to assumptions made in the previous administration's budget and revenue income not being met, the department, like all others, is being forced to look for significant in-year savings. Income from services such as planning and building fees has not recovered as quickly as the budget anticipated, and as such the department must look for savings. The highways maintenance budget is by far the department's revenue spend and, as such, cannot be excluded from the search for savings.

Following discussions with services the number of savings have been put forward by services that they believe to be achievable. This includes a saving of £1.25m from the highways maintenance budget, those £774,000 of this will be offset by the additional grant received from the previous Government which was to tackle potholes caused as a result of last year's extreme weather.

This leaves a total saving to be found of £476,000. All efforts will be made to achieve this saving by reducing costs and maximising income. Everything possible will be done to reduce the front line impact of highways maintenance work.

It should be noted – and I am sure Andrew will recall – that a similar situation occurred last year where, due to falling income, the department had to make an in-year saving to the highways maintenance budget. I have not got the figure but perhaps Andrew can confirm that that was half a million pounds. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Lewis. Councillor Carter?

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Yes, my Lord Mayor. I am grateful for Councillor Lewis's candour but could he tell me how it is possible to justify using £774,000 given specifically by Government, albeit his previous Government, to reduce the spend on highways maintenance when that money was given specifically for the purpose of repairing potholes that the Government deemed we required to do? Is it not tantamount to defrauding the Council Tax Payer of work that should be done for a specific purpose, and tantamount to defrauding the Government who have given us a specific grant for that purpose?

My Lord Mayor, how does Councillor Lewis expect Governments to react to this Council when we use specific grants given for specific purposes to be used to save money when it should have been found elsewhere?

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Effectively the money is being spent where the Government said it should be spent and I say no to Councillor Carter, I do not agree with him. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Laughter)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Mark Harris.

COUNCILLOR HARRIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can the Executive Board Member for Environmental Services please confirm if the figures highlighted in the YEP on 8th July 2010 regarding the cost to the Council of the bin strike last year are correct?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Murray.

COUNCILLOR MURRAY: Thank you, Lord Mayor, and can I also thank Councillor Harris for giving me this opportunity to give the complete answer this afternoon.

For clarity, the position again regarding the cost of the industrial action last year, the cost to the refuse collection service was £385,000 which was the figure quoted in the Evening Post. Savings from other areas affected by the strike, however, reduced the total impact to £50,000 on the department's budget, so there are actually two figures and there is the £50,000 was the total impact on the department's budget. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Harris?

COUNCILLOR HARRIS: I appreciate Councillor Murray's candour on this occasion. Can I just ask why it has taken Councillor Murray four attempts to give that answer, bearing in mind that he may not have been able to have answered Councillor Lewis's original question at the last Council meeting, he did have the opportunity under Minutes and then after tea to speak again. Can I ask why it has taken four attempts to give that answer to Council?

COUNCILLOR MURRAY: Thank you, Councillor Harris. I think, as we just dealt with under Item 7, at the time I was waiting for a supplementary question and I think that supplementary question would have helped me to actually put the true figures, the rest of the figures to the Council on the cost of that, and following the confusion in the questions and the challenges that we made after that, Mark, I think I made it clear that what I would do is take away the question and reply in answer to all Councillors with the information that they were asking for, and I think I did that. Included in that was an apology saying that if I left an impression that I was trying to mislead, then I apologise for that.

You are a role model yourself for doing that, we all know that in the past if you have made mistakes you have put up your hand and said "Yes, I have got it wrong, I might have misled, I will accept that" and in some case that is the advice that I was following, although in some sense I must temper that answer because, of course, Councillor Golton has now called the Lib Dem Group a bit eccentric, so I am not quite sure if that is an eccentric part of your nature, but that is the kind of position that I took and that is why I did what I did. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Murray. Councillor Dobson, please.

COUNCILLOR DOBSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Would the Executive member for Environment and Neighbourhoods please confirm the cost to the Council of Court Orders and cleanups in respect of travellers encampments since 2004?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gruen, please.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Lord Mayor, can I begin by thanking Councillor Dobson for the very topical question which I know all members are interested in hearing the answer. Can I also pay tribute to the way he has represented his community in Garforth when these incidents have occurred, and I know other members similarly have taken up the issues locally.

Coming to the figures, can I first of all say that these costs include the legal fees, the clean up, staff time, overheads, security, supplies and services, fuel and transport. Figures for the totality of the costs have been kept since 2003/04, so I am going to give you the answer year by year, as you have asked, from 2003/04 onwards to 2009/10. In the first year, £143,560; in the second year, £232,518; in the third year, £240,885; in the next year £135,091; in 2007/08, £259,806; in 2008/09, £266,353; and in 2009/10, £335,995. So far this year, just up to 9th July, the cost already is £329,853.

The total cost of these actions on behalf of the Council, therefore, in the six years of the Conservative and Lib Dem administration, comes to nearly £2m.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: How much?

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Two million pounds.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dobson.

COUNCILLOR DOBSON: Clearly, Councillor Gruen, in the light of those figures you will be aware, no doubt, that the matter has now been referred to a Scrutiny Board enquiry. Whilst it would be wrong of you to pre-empt what that enquiry should cover, what areas of concern remain with yourself and how would you like to see them addressed perhaps in that debate?

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Thank you very much. I am very grateful to Councillor Anderson and the Neighbourhoods and Housing Scrutiny Board that they have agreed to look into what is clearly, according to these figures and the activities over the summer alone, a very predominant issue affecting a lot of wards. If I say to you that a comment made by the Judge hearing one of our submissions about moving on travellers on the 16th June 2010 said:

“I regularly deal with these cases and it seems increasingly that the claimant [Leeds City Council] is spending money to simply push the problem on. This seems almost an abuse of the process of the court.”

Colleagues, we face therefore a serious situation across the whole of the Council and I think it is a tribute, as I say, to the Scrutiny Board that they are willing – and I think Councillor Iqbal summed that up – to consider it on a non-political basis, on a non-partisan basis, but to look at the facts, look at the statistics, make recommendations and then have the problems properly aired.

I was pleased to note that Councillor Rachael Procter and Joe over there as well were continually positive and helpful in their comments in an all-party coming together to look at the problems.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Gruen. Councillor Hussain, please.

COUNCILLOR HUSSAIN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Thank you, everybody, for listening to me. This is my first opportunity as an elected member to speak in this Chamber, although I have spoken here in other capacities before.

My question is, would the Executive Member for Children's Services care to comment on the impact of the threatened cut in funding to the national Playbuilder scheme on proposed projects across Leeds?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Councillor Hussain. Just by way of background, the Playbuilder Initiative in Leeds attracted £1.5m worth of grant to create 22 new and improved play areas across the city for implementation between March 2009 and March 2011. We have completed twelve of those 22. Eleven were completed in year one and one has been completed in year two. The project is now on hold awaiting a decision of the final year's allocation from the Department for Education.

I think all of those who are fortunate enough to have one of the refurbished play areas in their area knows the impact that these have had on their community. The play areas have transformed the space to meet the needs of children and young people and it has also been able to change the practice of our Parks and Countryside Department and they have recognised completely their role in the delivery of services for children and young people.

A key element of the roll-out of this programme was consultation with children and the communities in which they live. Some examples of the play areas that have been completed are, for example, Horsforth Hippo at Horsforth Hall Park. This has been a refurbishment of an existing sand play area designed by us for all children and a particular feature of this one has been the ability to work with disabled children and young people, a fully inclusive play area which I am sure we would all welcome and it is fully accessible to all. Feedback has been incredibly positive since this was installed.

A second really successful area is Potter Newton Park. This was refurbished, the existing play area, and is a very popular park with a very diverse community to support. It has involved the inclusion of very imaginative play equipment and again has become very popular.

A third very popular site is Brookfield Recreation Ground and, again, has seen extensive community involvement in its implementation.

These play areas are much needed. We have talked for a long time in this Council of the need for more play equipment and the range of play particularly has linked very closely to the Wellbeing Agenda. I think we have all heard about the health benefits that we need to develop amongst young children through play.

In July the Department for Education requested that all Local Authorities provide information on the current year's projects and after this was given, it gave guidance that any of the projects that were not already started for completion were to be put on hold and that information would be sent to Councils by the end of August to tell us whether these could go ahead. This means that we are waiting for ten outstanding play areas to be implemented. As you are aware, we are now well into September and we still have had no news from the Department of Education.

We know the anxieties this has caused and the media statement from the Department of Education has said that no decisions have been made, and they acknowledge the anxiety that this has caused. I have to tell you that the only one play area that has been continued is at Tinshill Garth in Cookridge.

We are left with ten schemes that are on hold, uncertain about their future. This is extremely disappointing for the young people, the children, the communities that have been involved but it is even more serious than that because four of the outstanding areas have attracted significant external matched funding which could be lost to the city if these fail to go ahead. Clearly, if they do fail to go ahead it will be the most disadvantaged children in our city who suffer the most.

I can only ask that all Council join with us to continue to lobby the Government to re-implement these schemes, to give us the money that is due to the children of our city. As I said, this work is not idle; it is about the really important aspects of health, play, social mixing of young children that this city greatly deserves.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Blake. Is there a supplementary, Councillor Hussain?

COUNCILLOR HUSSAIN: No, Lord Mayor, and I thank for the detailed reply from Councillor Blake.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Andrew Carter, please.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Will the Executive Board Member for Environmental Services confirm that savings to the City Council (and therefore the Council tax payer) that will result from the re-routing of the refuse collection service and other related issues are now estimated at £2.4m a year?

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Carter. Councillor Murray, please.

COUNCILLOR MURRAY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Yes, I can confirm that the estimated savings arising from the re-routing of the refuse service, the improvement in bin management, the revised Christmas catch-up arrangements and improved attendance due to sickness within the refuse collection service will now amount to approximately £2.4m in a full year.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Carter?

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: My Lord Mayor, I have no supplementary as Councillor Murray appears to have learned his lesson. *(Laughter)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Monaghan, please.

COUNCILLOR MONAGHAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can the Executive Board Member for Environmental Services provide an update on the progress of implementing the Streetscene change programme?

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Gruen?

COUNCILLOR MURRAY: Thank you, Councillor Monaghan. As you are aware, perhaps more than I am, there was some delay in the initial three months of the January/February/March to get the service back to normal but since then work has progressed very well, so we are talking May/June/July. In truth, you asked the same question at the last Council but we did not get round to answering it, so let me

just read out what it does say, so it does tell Council the situation around June and July in the service. I will read it out. I am learning, Andrew.

“In recent months the Council has been working closely with the workforce and trade unions to review refuse and recycling collection routes around Leeds. The work has been carried out with the assistance of specialist companies dealing with work studies in collection round routing arrangements and a series of new collection rounds has now been produced and are currently being tested both as a desk top exercise and a number of situations by live road testing.

This process is nearing completion and proposals for the new collection arrangements that will affect all residents will be available by the end of this month.”

By reading that out, James, you can certainly see what it is saying is June, July, beginning of August we were going to have new routes and we were going to get these new routes up and running in the city. August being a holiday month, of course, these were planned, these new routes, to kick in by the end of September. Complete rationalisation, every house affected, member would find out, the public would know and find out what was going on, but there was a complication and there is a complication. It is a big complication, in a way. The deal you made with the unions and the workers was not just about negotiating new routes, new teams, new times. It also involved a little bit of performance related pay. Currently there are no problems with the unions signing up on that but the Leaders of the Council have yet to sign off that part of the agreement and when that happens, then the route and the service, the new routes, will then kick in.

If I was to continue, that is not all that is going on, of course. The situation is that work is under way to introduce new street cleaning arrangements that would see the introduction of more seven day a week cleaning across the city, operation arrangements have been reviewed at the household waste sorting site, the proposal to change opening hours at various sites will be brought forward in the next few months. Scrutiny has done a recycling report which is excellent and typically Barry has about 20 recommendations, it is a thorough job that and, of course, we are telling and talking to the Area Management Committee about how those services can link with Area Management over the coming year.

I think if you look at it in total there is a great deal of progress being made over the last three months but, of course, that will not stop you saying the service is in chaos. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Murray. Councillor Monaghan, please.

COUNCILLOR MONAGHAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I was slightly concerned to start with that the Labour Group did not know who was actually responsible for implementing the Streetscene Change programme but, given that progress is being made and you intend to make these changes by the end of September - and this is a change to every refuse collection route in the city affecting every single resident in the city – do you think it is acceptable, with less than two weeks to go to that period, that not a single resident in the city is aware of these changes and the fact that their bin day may change, and the fact that an officer recently told us in a briefing this week that the changes could mean that some households go up to seven weeks before they get a green bin collection once the changes are implemented.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Murray, please.

COUNCILLOR MURRAY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I hinted at an explanation of why we are where we are in my first answer in this very sensitive part of the deal that is going on at the moment and I suggest that you follow that up perhaps with me later.

What I would actually like to comment on is the same service and how it appeared in the Yorkshire Evening Post in September. It is worth actually talking about this. The reforms which we are trying to introduce, actually, were due to be implemented on June 1st, having been put back to October.

“In a move branded ‘wasteful’ by a senior Liberal Democrat Councillor. Councillor Golton, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, said, ‘A vital part of the deal between the Council and the unions to end the strike was that the bin service should be more efficient and we agreed for these reforms back in November with a deadline of June 1st to implement them.’”

That his terrific, isn't it? June 1st to implement them and I described in my first part of the answer the situation that we inherited. There was no way this city, that service, was ready to implement any service on June 1st. We were only in power for a week. You had November, January, February, March, April and May to implement the very deal that you had with the unions. You got nowhere, things have changed since you have been out of power. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dunn, please.

COUNCILLOR DUNN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Would the Executive Member for Children's Services care to comment on the recently announced A Level and GCSE results, please?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Councillor Dunn. I would like to hand over to the Executive Member for Education to answer that question for you.

COUNCILLOR DOWSON: Councillor Dunn, if you will give me your permission on behalf of the whole Council I would like to thank the dedicated staff, the teachers, the support services, the parents and most of all the children for what have been an outstanding set of results.

Exams are not easy and there are people who say exams are getting easier. I heard an analogy that was quite interesting about running. I am looking round and thinking how many athletes have we got in the Council Chamber. Jim Hines, 1968, ran the 100 metres in 9.95. Usain Bolt broke the world record recently at 9.58. Nobody is saying that the 100 metres is any easier – 100 metres is still 100 metres. Please let us get away from this. Exams are exams. Our children work very hard. They are not easy.

I want to concentrate on a few headlines. Farnley Park Maths and Computing College – 44% of the pupils achieved a 5 A* - C including English and Maths and that compares with only 32% last year.

Another one I would like to highlight – and I do not know of Penny Ewens is still in the audience *(Laughter)* – you are an audience, this is like a theatre I think

sometimes. The Comedy of Errors. It is fairly important because I am making a really valid point about the dedication of the school governors. Many of us are school governors. We are all corporate parents. City of Leeds, we took a bit risk in the Labour Group by taking a chance and trusting the plans that City of Leeds had and told us about and listening to the governors, listening to the parents and the support services and the colleges around to say that City of Leeds would work hard, they would improve and putting it in its social context it would actually achieve. City of Leeds saw a 25% of its pupils achieve 5 A*- C. It is not nearly enough, we have to do better, but compares with 12% the year before and I think the staff really have done extraordinary things, along with the children and the support staff. 49% of those children achieved 5 A* compared with only 24% the year before – again, spectacular results.

We have not got the detailed headlines yet and those will not come for a couple of months so we will not know about how we have narrowed the gap and how we have done with the children on free school meals and so on and so forth. We are receiving early indications that the results for looked after children are nothing but spectacular, but we will have to wait and drill down into the detail to actually give you more than that and hopefully I will be allowed to come back at a later time with those results.

Again, I do not want to go on too long, just to say a big thanks to everybody. 2010 has been a really good year. Some schools in their social context have not achieved as well as we would hope. We will work with those schools hopefully to do better in 2011. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Dowson. Jack.

COUNCILLOR DUNN: I thank Councillor Dowson for that excellent report and I have no supplementary.

THE LORD MAYOR: Can I have Karen Groves, and it is a maiden question.

COUNCILLOR GROVES: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Could the Executive Board Member for Leisure please update Council on the plan to renovate Middleton Park?

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: Thank you, Lord Mayor, and thank you, Councillor Groves, for your question. I am delighted to be able to say that, as I am sure members will be aware, we were successful in getting money from the Heritage Lottery Fund and this is in no small part due to the hard work of Councillor Blake, Councillor Groves, Councillor Driver and former Councillor Coupar working with the Friends of Middleton Park, Wade's Charity and our park staff to secure £1.9m worth of investment into Middleton Park which would bring major improvements including a new visitor centre, performance area or bandstand, footpaths, public art and other major improvements.

The park already receives over £2m visitors each year and we hope to build on this. It has the potential to be a great amenity for the whole of south Leeds and should be held in the same esteem as our other great parks in the city and we will be doing all we can to make sure that happens. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Groves, supplementary? No. Councillor Hyde, please.

COUNCILLOR W HYDE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can the Executive Board Member for Neighbourhoods and Housing confirm where he plans to locate the administration's new gypsy and traveller accommodation?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gruen.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Lord Mayor, there are no current plans.

COUNCILLOR: Pardon?

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: There are no current plans to establish more permanent or respite traveller sites in Leeds. The Scrutiny Board for Environmental Neighbourhoods agreed on 13 September to carry out an enquiry into the challenges associated with unauthorised traveller encampments. This enquiry will cover a range of issues, including the merits of developing additional sites. The enquiry will be informed through a range of sources, including the views of people who have lived in close proximity to previous unauthorised encampments. The findings of the Scrutiny enquiry will be considered by the Executive Board.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Gruen. Councillor Hyde?

COUNCILLOR W HYDE: By way of supplementary, Lord Mayor, and far be it from me to appear in any way to want to disrupt the apparent new-found cross-party harmony that Councillor Gruen referred to earlier on this subject, but specifically can he please advise Council whether or not he is considering the former wholesale market site on the edge of the Temple Newsam ward? It might ring bells with some people.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: It wasn't about an incinerator he was asking, was it? He wanted it as a gypsy site!

COUNCILLOR W HYDE: Also, would he care to rule out any sites in Guiseley and Rawdon or Roundhay? Thank you, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Hyde. Councillor Gruen.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Lord Mayor, I have had the pleasure of working with Councillor Bill Hyde for many years and I have never found him to be a harbinger of peace and harmony, so I am not surprised at all that his supplementary is somewhat loaded. I simply refer you back to my previous response. There are no plans for any – any – further sites. I await with interest the deliberations of the Scrutiny Board. That is why we have set up a Scrutiny process, to become involved in policy development, to look ahead not just back and I have great faith in all the people on the Scrutiny Board that they will bring their wisdom and courage to bear.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Gruen. That is the end of Question time so those members who have not had an opportunity to ask a question will receive a written reply.

ITEM 8 – MINUTES

THE LORD MAYOR: Can we go on to Item 8, Minutes. Councillor Wakefield, please.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Can I move the reference in terms of the Notice?

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: I second and reserve the right to speak.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Akhtar, please.

(a) North West (Inner) Area Committee

COUNCILLOR AKHTAR: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. I would like to speak on page 251 on the Area Committee. I wish to congratulate the Executive Board on deciding to keep Leeds School open and for listening to the views of local people and requesting that Education Leeds look again into its plans to close the school.

Anyone who was at the public meeting, which I have been told by my colleagues took place in Leeds Hall at the beginning of this year, could have failed to be impressed with the passion of pupils, staff and the local community encouraging education facilities to remain on the site.

Their dedication and support was simply too big of a positive factor to be ignored and showed just how important the school is to the local community. While obviously a school that had had problems in the past, it has been improving in recent years, staff governors and the local community's confidence has given the chance for the school to make their major improvement and give pupils the kind of education that sets up for the adult's life.

Thank you for this administration they now have the chance to prove this. The decision to develop a new governance system for the school will hopefully mean it has a much brighter future.

It is now essential that the project team, which includes representatives of the school's governing body and the City College, Education Leeds and the Leeds City Council put together a plan to make quick but marks important at this school. We want this school to be for the local people who are proud to have this facility and want to send their children and continue to improve the great or better outcomes of young people living in Hyde Park, Woodhouse and Little London. Thank you, my Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Akhtar. Councillor James Lewis, please.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking to Minute 6 on page 251 of the Minute Book and specifically refer to the reference to houses of multiple occupation.

I thought it would be quite an interesting exercise, given that there are Lib Dem leaflets going out across the city promising the Lib Dems making a real change to Britain at the moment, to see what actually happened to Councillor Chastney's letter that he sent to his Housing Minister, Grant Shapps. I had a little look to see what has happened with the issue and it turns out that Grant Shapps, on 1st October, I believe, is tabling a Statutory Instrument to abolish Labour's changes to HMO use class law, directly in contravention to the wishes of Leeds Inner North West Area Committee.

Whilst I do not want to get involved, I have no training as a marriage guidance counsellor and I do not want to get involved in the internal workings of the Coalition Government, it does seem in this case that the Lib Dems have actually achieved no

change and what has happened is that the Housing Minister has abolished something that the Lib Dems were very keen on and I wonder how the campaign moves forward from here.

I will be also interested to know, as well, what weight has been given to the views of the National Union of Students, many of whose members live in the north-west on this issue as well.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Lewis. Councillor Gerald Harper, please.

COUNCILLOR G HARPER: Gerald! I like that. I would like to speak on the same Minute, Lord Mayor. Leeds has around 10,000 houses of multiple occupation. The majority are in the area of Inner North West and this has altered the area and the character of the area. The area, I believe, has declined because of it. The area has problems with the shortage of family homes, problems with crime which has led to one of the highest burglary rates in the country, problems with neglected homes and gardens which also has large amounts of graffiti and litter. The existing law prevents landlords from turning family homes into HMOs without planning permission.

The new Housing Minister, Grant Shapps, has proposed to overturn this legislation which will enable landlords to change the status of a property without planning permission. He says that Councils do not need top-down rules from Whitehall to deal with problems that do not exist and he does not want to create unnecessary costs to landlords which he believes will put the supply of rented homes at risk.

I believe that this will make it more difficult for communities to stop more houses of multiple occupation in their area and it will also loosen the conditions and controls on these issues. I think it is unfair, not just to the areas where there are lots of HMOs but to areas where at present there may be and are fewer. Landlords will be able in future to purchase large properties wherever they wish and turn them into HMOs without planning permission or without consulting local communities.

I think this will affect the whole of Leeds overall and create problems in areas where the problems do not exist at present. As James said, the Inner North West area committee has written to the Housing Minister calling on him to stop this proposal and support the legislation which makes landlords apply for permission.

I hope that all of you on your Area Committee will take these concerns on board and support the opposition to these new proposals. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Harper. Councillor Illingworth, please.

COUNCILLOR ILLINGWORTH: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I rise to speak on Minute 10 page 254. I would also like to comment on Minute 6 page 251.

First of all Minute 10, the Area Manager's report. This fairly pedestrian item contains within it one of the success stories of the Labour Government's modernisation programme. This is the much closer co-operation between different agencies as exemplified by Operation Champion on the Hawksworth Wood estate.

Operation Champion required a co-ordinated approach by Leeds City Council, West Yorkshire Police, West North West Homes, the Probation Service, HM Revenue and Customs and Education Leeds. Officers tackled a wide range of enforcement issues, supporting one another and leaving offenders quite literally with

nowhere to hide. Warrants were served, arrests were made, truants identified and a significant number of motor vehicle offences were disclosed.

On a more positive note the team identified abandoned properties, ordered property repair work and referred residents to support services. Waste was identified and moved from gardens and a team of offenders undergoing community pay-back cleared an area of fly tipping and graffiti.

Lord Mayor, many parts of local and national Government are still operating in private individual silos but in Kirkstall at least we do have effective co-operation between different agencies and this improvement has been broadly welcomed by the local community.

Lord Mayor, I now want to turn to Minute 6 page 251, which concerns the Open Forum. The Open Forum has been one of the success stories of the Inner North West Area Committee, where we have well attended public meetings and very lively public debates. On this occasion member of the public raised the matter referred to by my colleagues previously – a great concern to Councillors from all political parties. This is the issue of the Use Class order and the conversion of family homes into houses of multiple occupation, or HMOs.

I know this is an issue in many areas of Leeds but it is a particular problem in the inner north west where numerous houses have been converted to temporary student accommodation during roughly eight months of each year. In many streets almost the entire population moves every year. In such circumstances, it is very difficult to build a stable, settled community. It is the transience of the occupation that causes problems, despite the best efforts of many of the individuals involved.

For many years local communities campaigned for the planning controls to restrict the ability of absentee private landlords to convert family housing into HMOs. Until recently the law has not distinguished between the settled family with elderly relatives, parents, children and grandchildren and an HMO occupied by six unrelated individuals with a very narrow spread of ages. The resulting social patterns are associated with high levels of crime, especially household burglary, and with particular problems in street cleansing, refuse disposal.

All members of the Inner Area Committee were delighted by a Statutory Instrument 2010 No. 653, the Town and Country Planning Use Classes Amendment Order (England) 2010, which came into force on 6th April. This introduced a separate use class, C4, for HMOs and probably requires – probably requires - planning consent for the conversion of family homes. It was one of the last acts of the outgoing Labour Government which is sadly in the process of being overturned by the incoming Conservative and Liberal Democrat Coalition.

On 17th June the new Housing Minister, Grant Shapps, announced their intention to amend the Labour legislation to give more discretion to local Councils. Councils will be able to choose whether to apply the legislation or not but in order to implement the new Use Class they must seek an Article 4 direction from the Government and this process can take up to twelve months.

It seems, Lord Mayor, that the Tories have been true to their class instincts by creating the most enormous loophole whereby any aspiring landlord has the door wide open to do exactly as they please for the next twelve months, at the end of which period the Government will loudly close the door long after the horse has gone. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Illingworth. Councillor Penny Ewens, please.

COUNCILLOR EWENS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I was not expecting to follow that. I was more expecting to follow Councillor Harper but I would like to point out that eight years ago – which was the previous last time that Councillor Harper stood in the ward – I had become a governor of City of Leeds and I have worked very hard for the city since. I would like to thank Councillor Dowson for what she said because she is dead right, we have worked very hard (*hear, hear*) with the students, with the staff, with the governors, with local people who are prepared to support us, industrial firms, charities, the primary schools. We want to work with people and it is doing that that is making us successful.

I get a bit sick of being told how, when we had a mass meeting on March 10th, all of the candidates in the bye-election supported city of Leeds but I was the only one that had done any work for it. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Ewens. Councillor Hamilton, please.

COUNCILLOR M HAMILTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to speak on Minute 6 on page 251, again relating to the issue of HMOs.

I am glad to see that Councillors Harper, Lewis and Illingworth are supporting the Lib Dem group in their opposition to the Government's proposals on this particular issue. We do think that what it proposes is misguided. I have to say, we waited ten years for anything, from a peep out of the previous Government on this issue, so let us not get carried away about this.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: And in six months the Lib Dems up and overturned it.

COUNCILLOR M HAMILTON: Yes, James, you have spoken, I think I will just carry on and ignore what you just said.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Because it is uncomfortable for you.

COUNCILLOR M HAMILTON: Lord Mayor, there is no doubt that what the Government is now proposing on HMOs is not well thought through and I think on the surface it appears to be sensible but actually it does lead to some real problems. I was interested, though, Lord Mayor, to hear particularly Councillor Akhtar expressing such concern about this issue, given that at the recent Plans West Panel he specifically opposed using Section 106 money that would arise from the Leeds Girls' High School development to purchase off-site houses that are currently HMOS and would be converted into family accommodation. Councillor Akhtar opposed that at the meeting, he was very clear about that, so how that sits with his sudden opposition to the Government proposals I am not sure. I think there is a bit of double standards there, to be honest.

We do not think this is the right move and we have already arranged to see the Chief Planning Officer about the matter to see what we can do. Incidentally, all the core cities which represent all the major parties wrote to the Minister opposing these proposals and suggesting alternatives, so it is actually a cross-party issue. There is definitely something gone wrong here and I think the civil servants, from what we hear, have not quite understood what the details are and what the real problems are with what they are proposing and I am very hopeful that there will be some changes.

However, Lord Mayor, it is easy to criticise, it is easy to oppose. It actually takes a bit more work to do something about this, so there are two specific things that I would request from the Labour benches.

The first thing is that if this legislation, if these changes go through on 1st October, I would like a commitment from this Council that they would immediately apply for these discretionary powers, the powers to create a zone within the city whereby planning applications would have to be submitted for HMOs. I want the commitment that we would do that immediately if this comes through on 1st October.

Secondly, I would also like to see the Council supporting the judicial review that has been launched by Milton Keynes to actually question whether or not what is proposed is legally watertight. Milton Keynes are doing this. I will be speaking to the Chief Planning Officer soon, I will be raising this issue. I hope by then a conversation will have been had with him such that it will be confirmed that Leeds City Council will join with Milton Keynes in taking this matter to the courts and hopefully getting it overturned.

Talk is cheap, Lord Mayor, but action takes something more of an effort and I am not convinced we will see that from the Labour benches. Thank you, Lord Mayor.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Martin. Councillor Leadley, please.

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: Lord Mayor, could I point out that Councillor Hamilton did refer to a live planning matter there which is currently still under consideration by Plans West and I would emphasise that I shall not be allowing myself to be boxed into a corner where I am pre-determining any decision that the Panel might make on that particular application when it comes forward again.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Tom. Councillor Chastney, please.

COUNCILLOR CHASTNEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I will start with City of Leeds. It is quite simple, we as a Committee, I think we have been pretty consistently united that we all wanted to see education on that site and see that continue and all of us over several months and even years backed the local community and the local governors to come up with a future plan. It is right that a lot of people have said a lot of people, governors and the community have worked really hard on that and I am glad that people have picked out Councillor Ewens in particular for putting a lot of effort into that. Councillor Dowson, thank you for updating us on some of the exam scores. Again yes, you are right, we have still got a long way to go but I think we have come a long way and I think a lot of people need a lot of thanks for the effort that has gone in and we just hope that that will go from strength to strength.

I will briefly mention Operation Champion. John, I completely agree, I am glad to hear it was a success in your ward. We have had one or two in the last couple of years in our ward and we see it ourselves, the residents say the same thing, they are working really well and they are really effective. I think it is one of those great illustrations of one time when Area Management does work and it helps to do the job it really should be doing in co-ordinating all the other different organisations and partners. I think they are absolutely brilliant.

I think one of the key things that has come out today has been obviously the HMO legislation and again, a bit like City of Leeds, I think we have been fairly united in this cross-party amongst us in our opposition to the legislation. We all welcomed

the laws when they came in, albeit, as it was pointed out, it took many years frankly for it even to come forward. Yes, we are all disappointed about the current situation and as soon as we heard that they were even going to consider changing it, I wrote as Chair on behalf of the Committee to the Ministers straightaway in a letter which read extremely well to quote Councillor Atha – and I could not have hoped for a better endorsement.

We have not head back from the Minister yet. That is disappointing but I, and I am sure the rest of the committee, will encourage me to continue to chase up a response on that and we will keep cross-party opposition to this legislation change and yes, how we are going to lobby on that, Councillor Lewis, all I would say is that I hope that we will lobby the Minister on this and hopefully we will be more successful and just as successful as we were on that as we were in lobbying against Minister Ed Balls in his efforts to close City of Leeds. *(Applause)*

I think the broader point is, there has been a lot of reference to the Open Forum in the Minutes. That is really what all these are about and all I would point out there is that, given the context of certain – I think I will try and put this politely – ill-judged proposals regarding our committee and its future, I think it is worth pointing out the benefits of actually having an effective Open Forum to which all these Minutes have come from, all these different issues have been raised by member of the public, various people from the local community have come up and actually raised these things. Councillor Illingworth, you are absolutely right, it is working well as a committee and this is how these points have been raised and it is an example of something working well.

I do not think many other areas can actually boast that level of engagement. I think we should boast about that in the Inner North West, that we do have a really good level of engagement, a really vibrant Open Forum which I would not want to change and I think lastly on that same point about possible changes, those who are mistakenly perhaps seeing a divergence of interests or needs amongst the various wards in the current Inner North West, I think I would point out one thing, that if you look at both those Minutes there in the Open Forum, both those issues of the student housing or the City of Leeds, these were raised, even though they related to all wards – in fact particularly Hyde Park and Headingley, for example – both of which happened to be raised by residents from Weetwood. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Chastney. Councillor Mulherin, please.

(b) North East (Outer) Area Committee

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am going to speak on Minute 10 pages 262 and I start by saying that I am very disappointed that the North East Outer Area Committee have called for the dog control order consultation to be scrapped and started again, ostensibly so that elected members can be more involved. I would question whether the North East Outer Area Committee are aware of the deliberations that took place on dog control orders at the Environment and Neighbourhood Scrutiny Board. They should be, since one of their members was on that Board and, as I recall, there was agreement among all members of the Board across all parties and representing a wide geographical cross-section of the district from Farnley and Wortley to Harewood, that the mess left by irresponsible dog owners was becoming more widespread and that the Council needed to do more to tackle it.

Our Scrutiny Board looked at this issue in some depth in 2008/09 and continued to receive reports throughout 2009/10, pressing for better enforcement

against irresponsible dog owners in order to keep our public playgrounds, playing fields and streets cleaner and safer.

We also debated this issue at some length in the Council Chamber last year and all Area Committees were invited to comment as part of the formal consultation.

Let me take a moment to dispel a few of the myths that have built up about the proposals that were consulted on. There is no proposal to have a blanket ban on dogs in our public parks. There was instead a consultation on a number of sensible proposals to exclude dogs from children's playgrounds, to designate areas where dogs must be kept on a lead and, finally, to limit the number of dogs that any one individual could walk in a public space at one time.

I do not want to pre-empt the outcome of the consultation that has taken place which ran for some six weeks longer than it was obliged to do but I certainly know that the great many member of the public in my ward who have been pressing for the Council to take more action against irresponsible dog owners would not welcome any further delay in moving forward and I am sure the same could be said of Councillor Marjoram's ward or Councillor Ann Castle's ward or Councillor Anderson's ward.

To ask for a consultation has been properly carried out to be repeated for more involvement of elected members on an issue that has already been looked at in detail at Scrutiny Board over two years, debated here in the Council Chamber and considered by all Area Committees might smack of navel gazing to ordinary members of the public. I would also like to ask if members opposite seriously consider that repeating this consultation at this time would be a good use of taxpayers' money.

I understand that over 2,000 members of the public have responded to the consultation that has now taken place and it would clearly cost thousands of pounds to repeat it, if we include officer time which would be spent duplicating work rather than improving services for the people of Leeds. I for one do not think that would be the best of use of taxpayers' money at this time and I hope that we can now move forward once we receive the results of the public consultation that was carried out this summer. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Mulherin. Councillor Procter, please.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I don't know, you really, really, really should just remember only a few months ago, should you not, you did not say any of that in relation to barbecues at Woodhouse Moor, now did you? You did not say then, "Oh, well, no, members cannot get involved and on no, there should not be greater public consultation." If you actually read what was said at that particular meeting of our Area Committee, what we are saying was that members need to see the outcome of the public consultation. What is wrong with that? Why is that such a crime, that elected members simply see the outcome of the public consultation before we move forward. That is what we are here to do, aren't we? We are here to reflect upon what members of the public have said and then appropriately act. I do not think that warranted the attack that Councillor Mulherin...

COUNCILLOR ATHA: Vicious attack.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Vicious attack, indeed, Councillor Atha and, indeed...

COUNCILLOR ATHA: She made me tremble. *(Laughter)*

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Indeed I can tell you the people of Wetherby will be outraged - outraged – by the comments that she makes. Clearly, Lord Mayor, I do not think I have heard so much drivel in a long time in this Chamber. All members were saying at that Area Committee was in light of the presentation that was given by officers, that more work needed to be done

What Councillor Mulherin clearly is not aware of, because she probably has not even spoken to the officers, is that in light of the conversation that took place at that particular Area Committee, those officers are actually liaising now closely with one of those elected members who raised most of those concerns and have said that they are happy to take his advice – take his advice – upon this particular matter. Perhaps you need to talk to the officers who are actually implementing this before you come to this Council Chamber. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Procter. Councillor Wilkinson to sum up, please.

COUNCILLOR WILKINSON: I think it is quite obvious from Councillor Mulherin's comments that she did not read or understand the comment that we made in the Area Committee. First of all, we are not against control of dogs. What we are concerned about is the consultation exercise. We felt that it was a bit of a dog's dinner was this exercise. *(Laughter)*

First of all, it did not include ward members. Secondly, it did not include ward and Parish Councils. Who best know what is going on in their ward than ward members and Parish Councillors.

You mentioned that 2000 of the residents commented on this but not one single Parish Councillor or Ward Councillor. What we are suggestion is that it goes back and there is a little bit more work on consultation which includes Ward and Parish Councillors. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Wilkinson. Councillor Murray, please.

(c) East (Outer) Area Committee

COUNCILLOR MURRAY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. It is page 270, Minute 10 and it is about a number of green and environmental projects that have been undertaken across our Area Committee. It is definitely worth mentioning and advertising because the project is a huge project and will have an impact on a number of wards and will have an impact also across the city. It is a huge project.

It is a huge project with a long history. It has got a long post-industrial history. It is a wasteland, it has been coal mined, it has been open-casted, it has been flooded and it has been back to open casting and from that, from the ashes of all of that we are going to have a nature themed country park, which has more or less been done by now.

It does say that it has the potential to be a major resource for West Yorkshire on a scale that could be nationally significant, so we welcome it, we are looking forward to it and this scheme going to the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds will open it up to the public. That is what is intended to happen.

There are probably three little concerns, anxieties, within the local population. One is how is that going to be used? It is a huge inland lake, really, there is an awful lot of water in that and we need to know what use is going to be made of it. If it is going to be nationally significant people will then ask how many people are going to come to it and the answer might be in the thousands – Keith, you might know the answer to that – but the question is, where are they going to park, where are the cars going to go and how is all of that going to be managed. They seem a bit negative but on the other side, the positive side is that this is a major recreational site in the Aire Valley which will grow and it will offer opportunity of jobs and businesses. All of that needs to be managed, all of that needs to be involving members and the Parish Councils. We all want to see it move along quite quickly and we need some of those concerns addressed. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Murray. Councillor Paulene Grahame, please.

COUNCILLOR GRAHAME: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I wish to speak on Minute 12 page 271, Achievements and Update Report. This provides information on apprenticeship scheme provided by Cross Gates Good Neighbours. Cross Gates Good Neighbours has worked with John Smeaton School to provide an apprenticeship programme which leads to an accredited qualification. From November 2009 until May 2010, a student worked with professional painters and decorators and has now received their accreditation. This young person is working on the Garden scheme until November to achieve a similar qualification. This is a good example of an organisation working to provide job opportunities for young people in their community.

In the current climate when so many young people are finding it hard to find work or even stay in education, such schemes are extremely valuable. They are likely to prove even more valuable in the future and even more of the burden for providing training and job opportunities for young people will fall on voluntary and community organisations in future after the Government scrapping of the Future Jobs Fund (FJF).

The FJF sees a Government pay for six month placements for young people in social and green companies. It provides opportunities for young people to get work experience and learn new skills whilst earning a wage. Many find full-time employment as a result and they are also given help with their CVs and job searches. However, the Government announced in the Emergency Budget that the FJF would be scrapped, with funding withdrawn from April 2011. The FJF has created around 90,000 jobs nationally and hundreds in Leeds, so it will be a real blow when the scheme is scrapped.

Central and Corporate Scrutiny Board last year, when it undertook its enquiry into employment and skills, recognised the Future Jobs Fund as a valuable way to dovetail with existing arrangements for apprentices to give much needed opportunities for young people. I am sure Councillor Ewens will be saddened by the actions of her Coalition Government as Councillor Ewens as a member of the Scrutiny Board at that time was a great champion for helping young people find meaningful work. However, there are organisations such as Cross Gates Good Neighbours who are still prepared to give young people the opportunity to find work and they should be applauded for doing so.

It is also worth approaching companies who still run apprentice schemes. A success story, a 16 year old leaving school, his parents ask for help as he had no success in seeking employment or training. Carillion, working in Swarcliffe, were approached, he was accepted, he moved from Burmantofts to Manchester to be able

to attend the training centre, he was awarded Apprentice of the Year 2009 by Carillion and is now in employment, thanks to support from his new local Councillor Ron Grahame. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Grahame. Councillor Lyons, please.

COUNCILLOR LYONS: Thank you very much, Lord Mayor. I am speaking on Minute 12 page 271. It is addressing worklessness. As far as I can see, the funding has been by Yorkshire Forward and what happened is, they provide an officer to go round and speak to people to show them how to apply for work, how to speak when they go for interviews etc and how to make their CVs out. That might to some of you seem rather daft. If I tell you that some of these people involved, nobody has ever worked in the families. They are not used to any type of jobs whatsoever except being on a building site for backhanders now and again. It would seem to me that these officers were trying to get the target of Job Seekers' Allowance, instead of having Job Seekers' Allowance, what they have done is got these people back into work – or a lot of them back into work.

In the worst areas it was considered that by putting an officer there, we could cut the Job Seekers' by two per cent. What has happened in our area, they have managed in Halton Moor and Osmanthorpe, to get 50 back into work in that particular area – 50. (*Applause*) Plus the fact that they have got a number of people who have never been employed into full-time employment.

We are talking about an area that not long ago was in the Yorkshire Evening Post – do you want to buy a house for £1,000 and they couldn't get any offers. Also, they boarded up houses in the areas, there were more houses boarded up – we used to call them wooden windows and we did not mean that they were wooden framed window – we meant that they were wood boarded up on the houses. This is the sort of areas that we certainly need people going in to get people into work. If there is anything that will cure and get people properly back into society, it is the right to work. Give them the right to work.

What I am saying at this particular stage, last week I went to a five-a-side football match against the police and the local lads. There was only one red card given and that was for kicking a copper and the copper said. "Well, I arrested him last week", so it was all right. What we are saying is that now if you want to live on Halton Moor or Osmanthorpe you have got to put your name down for a house along with another 200 other people that are seeking to move on to Halton Moor and Osmanthorpe. The estate has completely turned round with the help of people getting into work and people being able to assist them.

What in Heaven's name have we got Ministers down in London saying what we want to do away with is these scroungers. This is what they say – don't pull a face, Stuart, this is what your Government are saying. They are saying scroungers who will be made to go back to work, so if we are going to be making them go back to work, where the hell are we going to put them? It is far better to be putting a few quid into getting people back to work than coming out with daft threats in Government – and I do not care what Government it is. If they are coming out with silly remarks like that then they should not be there. They should be there – in politics, we are all in politics to assist the people of areas that we represent and we all do it to the best of our abilities, all of us in whatever groups that we are and we should do it in our areas and what I am saying is that this scheme that has been put forward by Yorkshire Forward is now fearful and officers have been to me fearful that we are going to get the cuts that – we don't need that officer. That might need about 50 that is unemployed in that area. That might need another 50 coppers what we are

not going to get because we are going to cut the coppers and we are going to go back to boarded up houses, etc.

It is ridiculous. It saves money for the Government, it saves it for everybody else if we can continue to support the people and get them where they should be, working and looking after themselves and who knows, in no time at all they might be selling those houses for more than £1,000 in that particular area.

I would think that as far as I am concerned, the Lib Dem and the Tory Government need to think hard, if it only on economics let them think. Do not think we are bleeding hearts, think on economics. It will be much cheaper for us to employ people to get these people back to work than it will be coming out with daft threats and making cuts. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Lyons. Councillor James Lewis, please.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I hope I can start this on a fairly uncontroversial note and say how pleased I am to see for the first time Area Committee Minutes at the top of the agenda paper. I think it shows that where the previous administration maybe had some disregard for Area Committees and the work that Area Committees do *(Interruption)* – I thought it would be an uncontroversial point. Obviously the party or parties opposite – I am not sure whether they are in Coalition here – can find a point *(Interruption)* of controversy here. I think what we can all agree on is it is a matter of fact that never in the six years of those parties' or that party's administration were Area Committee Minutes ever...

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: 2:45:40

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: ...ever at the top of the agenda.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: He is quite right.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Stop digging. Sit down. *(Laughter)*

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: I did think, Lord Mayor, I did hope to start on an uncontroversial note. *(Laughter)*

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: I thought you were finishing. Come on"

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Trust Councillor Procter to be a fly in the ointment on that one but I did hope to start to on an uncontroversial note because I do think it is important we do talk about Area Committees at these meetings, like I say, rather than disregarding them at the end of the Agenda as has happened under the previous administration. I do think it is important we reflect on some of the work that Area Committees do and the Council does in our communities on a much smaller level than sometimes projects and sums and figures we discuss in this Council Chamber.

Just to pick on a couple of examples from my own ward of Methley Festival, where a very, very small amount of money and support from the Council's Area Management Committee was able to support a group of volunteers who put on a magnificent event. It was opened by the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress and saw a large number, a large proportion of the residents of Methley attend a fantastic festival in Methley. Also other groups are supported, like Kippax in Bloom which made a real difference in Kippax to the environment and represented the village itself and also the

city at a national level at Britain in Bloom. Also groups like Garforth Net which I am appointed to as a member. They have done a great amount of work supporting volunteers in the area, providing services for old people and has been able to take on under the Future Jobs fund, sadly to be abolished, people to learn the important skills in social care and get people on the job market. I do think it is really important we are talking about Area Committees, I think it is great to be able to talk about some of these smaller schemes.

I am disappointed some members over there find what I think is rather a gentle point controversial. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Lewis. Councillor Schofield, please.

COUNCILLOR SCHOFIELD: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Item 9, page 269. The first paragraph in particular, the report about the project work to be funded through the Wellbeing Budget.

In recent meetings of East Area we have had lots of very worthwhile schemes and, as members know, part of the Temple Newsam Ward consists of a very deprived area. This was referred to earlier just now by Councillor Lyons who seemed to think that it was some kind of accident that the state of the Halton Moor and Osmanthorpe estates was transformed for the better over the six years between 2004 and 2010.

When this joint administration took over, Halton Moor and Osmanthorpe were in such a bad way the Labour administration were having to bring people in from London to try and fill up the empty houses. It is not a comfort to know there is always somebody worse off than yourself, but if the Labour Councillors in London were decanting people to a Labour run authority in Leeds, it shows what a bad state both boroughs were in, stuck with two Labour administrations.

Resources for law and order through PCSOs, extra police involvement, bailing out the cut backs on neighbourhood wardens by this administration before things changed, all sorts of work that was done by Housing, not entirely the Council but lots of agencies were brought in and co-ordinated thanks to the good work of the administration and particularly the department which Councillor Les Carter headed.

We have had several meetings where the officers have been able to bring to East Outer Area Board all the good work that has been done not only in the deprived part of Temple Newsam ward but in also difficult areas of other wards, parts of Kippax, Garforth, Cross Gates and so on.

I think the decision to cut discretionary funding to Area Committees is disgraceful. The Minutes of this meeting refer to a meeting that took place in early July; two weeks later news that the money would be cut for our area by a sum of about £10,000. Every pound counts in East Leeds and particularly in the deprived parts of Temple Newsam. In the city's pecking order Temple Newsam ward, despite being of mixed housing and mixed economic background, Temple Newsam ward is the twelfth poorest ward in the city, according to the magazine that comes out every quarter from our planning department. Even with the outer parts of Colton and Austhorpe, the leafier parts of the ward, the extent of deprivation in the inner part is so bad that it is disgraceful that any money at all is being cut which might jeopardise some of these very worthwhile schemes which the area officers have been bringing to us not only at this meeting referred to in July but in the meeting we had the other week. It is shameful that these cuts take place and we will certainly do all we can to oppose them and to mitigate the effects. *(Applause)*

COUNCILLOR LYONS: It is your Government doing all of this.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Schofield. Councillor Jamie Matthews, please.

COUNCILLOR MATTHEWS: I am afraid Councillor Schofield has beaten me to it. He pointed out the hypocrisy before I did. I am speaking to the same Minute as Councillor Lyons.

He started off well, I actually agreed with him on the employment issue, that is a really good initiative and I think that is really interesting and hopefully that can be spread across the city as an initiative. However, how is that expected to happen when, as I say, they are cutting the budget for the outer areas by £10,000? Every pound counts and they are cutting it for the outer areas. Why Halton Moor? It is your decision.

Actually, to quote him back, if you come out with ideas like that, maybe you should not be there.

All we have seen so far from the Labour Green Coalition – and it is a coalition - I am afraid David Blackburn is not biting – all we have seen so far is the disregard for Area Committees. It is, as we refer to it in the Inner North West, the Gerry Harperry – sorry, gerrymandering (*Laughter*) where it creates artificial boundaries, so all they have done for us is they have cut budgets and cut boundaries. Is that respect for Area Committees that Councillor Lewis was quoting? How wonderful if there is strength – absolute rubbish. Manipulation for Labour's favour areas. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Matthews. Councillor Gruen, please.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Lord Mayor, I was going to wait till we came to the Order Paper later on on the reference back about the Wellbeing grant and those issues but clearly seeing the comments of the last two speakers I think I ought to perhaps make a contribution at this stage.

There are absolutely no apologies in terms of looking for fairness across the city.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: No consultation either.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Fairness across the city and I think whether it is £10,000 or not, frankly when we come to the debate, £15m a year being taken out of the budget on Area grants, then this is absolutely infinitesimally small. When we talk earlier on about people saying how good Operation Champion was and Councillor Chastney agreed with Councillor Illingworth and other people agreed. That funding is slashed, absolutely almost reduce to nothing, so therefore how are we going to take those kind of initiatives forward that the community wants?

The last administration was extremely clever in terms of giving more responsibility to Area Committees, let us say community centres, and absolutely no brass, so community centres, here we have a problem, let's give it to the Area Committees and let them sort it out. All of those issues, whether it is adaptations – let's give them a quarter of the budget, we know it is going up sky high, we know they will be millions and millions and millions of pounds out of pocket but let's give it to the ALMOs, let's give it to other people and we will save the money centrally.

I am not going to take any moral or ethical lesson from anyone on that side because you have been scabbing around in the mud for six years and we are going to elevate this debate much higher than you are. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Gruen. Councillor Selby, please.

COUNCILLOR SELBY: Same minute page 271, Minute 12. I wish to pick up on the point that Councillor Matthews has made in respect of the word "gerrymandering".

COUNCILLOR HARPER: Leave me alone.

COUNCILLOR SELBY: I will happily leave you alone because you are an innocent party. The gerrymandering that we saw by the previous administration on polling district boundaries (*Interruption*) was to say the least disgraceful.

We have heard all about gerrymandering in this Council Chamber before. On 28 June 2004 Councillor Andrew Carter alleged falsely, mischievously and maliciously, that Councillor Taggart had colluded with the Electoral Commission to deal with the ward boundaries.

COUNCILLOR TAGGART: Outrageous.

COUNCILLOR SELBY: That is when he was talking about gerrymandering and I am dealing with the issue of gerrymandering that Councillor Matthews talked about.

When he had the polling district review first of all in 2007, officers advised – and many of the proposals that were put forward by the Conservatives and Liberals the officer advice was that they were poor, they were against the policy, against the interests of the people. (*Interruption*) again, as I said, picking up the point of gerrymandering that Councillor Matthews talked...

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Selby, you are speaking on a Minute that is not on the Agenda.

COUNCILLOR SELBY: No, I am. I am picking...

THE LORD MAYOR: Would you tell me again what Minute you are speaking on?

COUNCILLOR SELBY: It is page 271. I am picking up on the word that Councillor Matthews used, "gerrymandering".

THE LORD MAYOR: Can you sit down, Councillor Selby, please? Thank you for your comments. Councillor Campbell.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can I just echo Councillor Lewis's comments about how pleased we are that the Area Committee minutes are now being discussed as the first priority of the Council and can I say to him that I am sure that my electors in Otley and Yeadon ward will be only too happy to know that we spent 35, 40 minutes discussing East Area Committees Minutes and I am sure that they will be very pleased to know that we thought they were much more important than anything the Executive Board has done in the last month. Many people would agree with that, of course.

I do think I have to come back to the Methley Festival and I am sure Councillor Parker attended the festival and will tell us that it was a great event and I do not doubt that for a minute – I am sure lots of people really enjoyed themselves. I would also like Councillor Parker, if he would, to take up Councillor Gruen's point about removing £1,000 or £10,000 from an Area Committee budget was something of no consequence. I wonder if he would like to indicate to us how the removal of all that large amount of money will affect next year's Methley Festival, given that his colleagues have decided that there are more of their favoured areas for that money to be spent on. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Campbell. Councillor Parker to sum up, please.

COUNCILLOR PARKER: Eventually! I think I will probably start with Councillor Grahame and Councillor Lyons who were talking about employment, apprenticeships and whatever. I am pleased that that emanated from the gardening scheme that we have run for a number of years and the people doing it have taken on an apprentice and successfully got that lad into employment.

Councillor Lyons and myself some months ago visited a school in Mick's area. We met the careers officer who was concerned about children leaving that school with not a lot of qualifications and where would they get work, so Councillor Lyons and myself then moved on to visit a large employer in the area who promised to look at it and whatever, and then I am not right sure what the progress is from that, Mick, but I bumped into the careers officer in Leeds some months ago who congratulated me on our help and assistance to the school and shook my hand and walked away and said, "Thank you very much, Councillor Lyons."

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: You are better looking, Keith"

COUNCILLOR PARKER: So I understand the two members and I think everybody on the committee would like to see more apprenticeships and more people get into work, facing opposition because open cast mining was a threat to deep mine coal and including myself there were many miners in that area thought it was a threat and we should oppose it.

Sure enough, the site flooded, was drained and completed the coal mining and horrendous, but my concern about that one is that there has not been the local consultation I would like to see and when it flooded, that site, it was owned by British Coal. British Coal had an agreement with Ferrybridge Power Station to supply coal down the canal straight to Ferrybridge by barge, so there were lorry loads of coal delivering open cast coal to St Aidan's, they were emptying it off, it then went on to a barge down the canal to Ferrybridge. We were consulted then about the chance of having the coal through the good village of Allerton Bywater. Councillor Wakefield I am sure remembers it well. We negotiated a considerable sum of money for the people of Allerton Bywater because of the lorries coming through that village – a six figure sum – and I worry about discussions with RSPB. They are wanting a visitor centre and the suspected attendances are there, it is 150,000 a year. A lot of people travelling mainly, I would have thought, by car. The main roads are quite minor, there is no motorway access so the good people of Methley, Swillington, Great Preston, Allerton Bywater, to some degree Garforth and Kippax will certainly have the problem of vehicles travelling through that, so I would ask - I know it is on the Executive Board a bit later - there should be more consultation with Parish Councils in those villages and really get the feel of what people are concerned about.

To conclude on some of the good things that have come out of the area Committee at Allerton, the gardening scheme, we are doing up, certainly exceed 400

gardens this year, mainly for elderly people or disabled people, single parent families. One or two clubs have escalated, there is another one started. We have playing fields developing at Methley. I spoke to the Lord Mayor only this week, a possibility of me being able to get a Leeds United footballer to open it with us. After last night's performance I think we should... *(Laughter)*

I say finally, the cricket coaching idea which has really escalated this year – I know Councillor Schofield likes his cricket and so do many others - Councillor Townsley tells me that up to 250 boys and girls were actually getting cricket coaching over three weeks in the summer holidays. Councillor Townsley was able to attend a cricket school meeting that I had to attend my apologies to and tells me that they were offering congratulations to me because there were two kids from Kippax actually playing at international level at – I forget the year group - was it under 12s? I think these are probably children who benefit from the coaching that we had provided over a number of years and who knows, we might have two county cricketers coming out of the village shortly - it might be a year or two – and then hopefully go on to international honours.

I think I will leave it at that, Lord Mayor, and thank you very much. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Parker. Councillor Coulson, please.

(d) West (Outer) Area Committee

COUNCILLOR COULSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I was just mulling over what Mick Lyons was saying in his speech - he never gives short words, it is always a speech – about his five-a-side football visit. I got the wrong answer. I guessed the answer and guessed it wrong when he said only one red card – I thought it was probably him who had got the red card!

COUNCILLOR LYONS: Wouldn't let me play!

COUNCILLOR COULSON: I want to speak on page 280 Minute 14, Health and Environment Action Year End report. If you blink you will miss it. There are about two and a half lines but we did get a bit of information, even though that is all I am going to talk about.

The report highlights a lot of good work that has been done on health and environment action over the past year in the Outer West wards. This includes 135 requests to deal with fly tipping, 510 complaints about noise - I think they all come from Calverley – 465 service requests for our warden service and 35 abandoned vehicles.

We get a reasonably good service, I think, in Outer West. I would not criticise the present service by any means. This work contributes to making the neighbourhood the type of neighbourhood that people like to live in. That is one of our biggest problems. We often say that everybody wants to come and live in Outer West – Farnley, Calverley, Pudsey. Every time there is a housing request there is about 250 for one house. We are taking care as well.

It shows a lot of work to improve and maintain the local environment. The Area Committee are quite keen, I think to have a bit more power over the way that these services are given. I think we need a dedicated ginnel team in Pudsey. We have more ginnels than I think in catacombs. One of our biggest problems is keeping ginnels clear.

Last week, although we have not had a lot of information, we all received a letter informing us of the proposal being developed that could lead to a significant delegation of responsibility to Area Committees. If these plans go ahead, it will be a move in the right direction.

I remember longer than I want to remember, actually, going back to CIT days the early CITs – and I see Councillor Anderson has got a little grin on his face when we mention that – when it kept being mentioned we are going to delegate more powers to CITs. That is before the Area Committees ever came. Well, it never happened. I only hope – and he has gone – that this does happen. It will be good for all wards in Leeds, not just the Outer West. I think all councillors would like to have a little bit more control over their environmental services – street cleaning, dustbin emptying, all that sort of stuff – which is a major part of complaints.

I would just like to say, Lord Mayor, this is a movement in the right direction and let us hope that it continues moving. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Coulson. Councillor David Blackburn to sum up, please. I am sorry, I did not see that. Councillor Mulherin is speaking, please, David.

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to speak on Minute 14 page 280. One of the many concerns the public in Leeds have when it comes to health and environmental action, of course, is tackling dog fouling – one I take seriously and one that most members in this Chamber would take seriously, although I have to question whether Councillor Procter and Councillor Wilkinson do, given their comments earlier.

I would say their personal attacks on me were the worst kind of hypocrisy or a desperate attempt to cover their tracks. The Minute in the North East Outer Area Committee actually says that, “In the view of this committee the current proposals should be scrapped and the exercise commenced again, this time with greater member involvement from the outset.”

Let it suffice to say that before accusing me of not reading their Area Committee Minutes before commending on them, perhaps they ought to try reading them themselves. *(Applause)*

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Make it up as you go along.

THE LORD MAYOR: Can we have Councillor Blackburn in, please?

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I have got to say I share a lot of what Councillor Coulson says and I also welcome the opportunity of getting more powers delegated to Area Committees and I have done for a long time but I have got to say these have got to be meaningful and members, local members have got to have proper input. It should not be just a rubber stamping job because I think Area Committees are one of the best things that has happened on this Council in many years.

When the city came to this present side in the early 1970s, what it did was we finished up with a city that was, in my viewpoint, too large and too cumbersome and these Area Committees are allowing things to get down to the human level again, and any powers we can do, I think all Area Chair, whether it be myself in Outer West, and all members would welcome that. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, David. Can we move on to Adult Health and Social Care. Councillor Gabriel, please.

(e) Executive Board

(i) Adult Health and Social Care

COUNCILLOR GABRIEL: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to comment on Minute 42 on page 32 and the Personalisation of Adult Social Care: Update on implementation of self-directed support. I am pleased to see the Adult Social Service department is making good progress on self-directed support in Leeds, especially as this is in line with the previous Labour Government's policy on offering people choice and control of the care for their service.

However, I am deeply concerned to hear that the current Liberal Government plans for the National Health Service. As most of you will know I have worked in the National Health for over 39 years but thanks to this Coalition I now find myself in the unenviable position of being one of the main people in the public who has caused the condition of the economy at the moment. Not unlike the bankers, the fat cats who got the bonuses, they were getting bigger bonuses than I will earn in my entire 39 years plus all the years I will get as a pension, so the public servants have not caused the problem but the press, the Mail and Coalition have caused people to think this.

I feel at the moment that the National Health Service is under the greatest attack it has ever been in its 62 years of service. (*hear, hear*) As this Government is putting in place legislation that systematically is breaking up the National Health Service, it will no longer be a national service but it will be run like the railways, the buses and other services that have been privatised. This has already begun with GPs who do not work for the National Health Service who are privatised and self employed and now able to buy service outside the National Health Service. The next stage is the Government allowing and encouraging Leeds PCT to become a social enterprise. A social enterprise is outside the National Health Service, is a private company. I am speaking for myself and for the people of Leeds – is this what they voted for when they voted in a Coalition Government?

I would like to finish by giving you all what I refer to as a Scarborough warning. Please do not sleep walk into allowing the National Health Service of this country to be broken up. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Gabriel. Councillor Cleasby, please.

COUNCILLOR CLEASBY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I wish to speak to the same Minute and ask Councillor Yeadon to explain to Council how we are going to achieve the funding for this change from the present system of support to the personal budget that are taken up rapidly by our residents. This change is growing faster than I am aware that we can find the money, so it does appear that something has got to give somewhere like, perhaps, the closing of day centres that are not as efficient and effective and as populated as they used to be; even though there may be a political desire to keep them there is obviously a personal desire for people to have their personal budgets and to exploit them and use them and gain satisfaction in the way that they can from them. I would like Councillor Yeadon when she stands to explain to us how she is going to reach this shortfall between this growing budget for the personal budget that has been created and simply make up that shortfall. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Cleasby. Councillor Yeadon, please.

COUNCILLOR YEADON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. First of all, thank you to Councillor Gabriel for her passionate contribution. In regards to the personalisation agenda, it certainly is an interesting step in the delivery of social care and, as Councillor Cleasby points out, it is not without its challenges. Perhaps not everybody will want to access it but for those who do, it is an exciting opportunity for an individual to have greater choice and control in their lives, which must be seen as a positive step.

I did wonder whether Councillor Cleasby would try and get the question that we had just run out of time for in, and he managed to get his question in, so I can provide you with the answer that I had written earlier.

Thank you, Councillor Cleasby, for highlighting our major budgetary crisis that we have inherited from the previous administration and as we await the comprehensive spending review, adult social care is certainly in a very difficult situation. Under these circumstances we have to consider savings across all our services but it would be reckless of me to make any premature announcements without having proper consideration, proper consultation and without any decisions going to the Executive Board. As yet no decisions have been made but when they are made, it will be done in the right and proper way.

In regards to the NHS, I am sure the majority of us in this room are great defenders of the NHS. I know from my own personal experience, having been a regular attendee of the majority of hospitals in West Yorkshire since my birth, that without the NHS I would be in a very different place and I am sure many of us can say that in this room.

The proposed White Paper which I have sat through several briefings about and still baffles me is extremely concerning and we must do all we can to protect the jewel in our crown, which is the NHS. We must not in any way criticise or demonise the good public servants who work for that organisation and we must say clearly with our voices that the NHS should not be destroyed, should not be dismantled and should not be fragmented. With that I will end but I think it is going to be a very concerning time within our adult health and social care for the Local Authority and for the NHS. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Yeadon. I now move on to Resources and Corporate Functions. Councillor Golton, please.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to begin by referring back to a previous conversation about this reference back, which was that to perhaps assuage a dilemma that certain members feel in terms of a lack of information in terms of what their interest might be or might not, that we might adjourn so that that information might be provided to the members of Council.

THE LORD MAYOR: It has been seconded by Councillor Procter. Can we move straight on...

COUNCILLOR PROCTER: Can we have a recorded vote, Lord Mayor?

THE LORD MAYOR: Certainly.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: This is a resolution without debate, Lord Mayor.

THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE (Corporate Governance): Without debate.

THE LORD MAYOR: Without debate. A recorded vote has been requested.

THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE (Corporate Governance): There is a query as to how long members have to get back to the Chamber when a recorded vote has been called. In any situation where it has been agreed that a recorded vote shall be taken, there will be two rings of the bell and at least half a minute will elapse between the end of the final ring and the taking of the vote. I think that time has expired by my explanation. *(Applause)*

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: Can I just take this opportunity to pay tribute to Paul Rogerson and the role that he played, if I do not get any other chance. He is an excellent Chief Executive of this Council and to thank him for the work that help put in to help the transition to be as smooth as possible to me coming in.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: However, he did not warn you about what you have just witnessed, did he?

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: I will not comment on anything else.

Members have requested a recorded vote on the motion to adjourn the debate in order to obtain the exempt information in the name of Councillor Golton.

THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE (Corporate Governance): Can I point out that Councillor Atkinson is at the back of the Chamber and is not able to be in her seat, so I will take her vote from here. Can I confirm, Councillor Atkinson, that you will be voting with Labour on this particular vote? Thank you.

(A recorded vote was taken)

THE LORD MAYOR: Colleagues, thank you for your patience. We do have a result. There are 98 members present. The "Yes" vote is 44; abstentions 6; the "No" vote is 49, so that adjournment is LOST.

Could I ask Councillor Golton, please, to continue with his moving the reference back.

(ii) Resources & Corporate Functions

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. In bringing this reference back, as has been mentioned in much of the debate today, the Council is facing a severe financial environment. Decisions taken in this building will affect every citizen, business and organisation in the city. I was at the call in earlier today which was not successful, and I did note that Councillor Lewis, the Deputy Leader, said "Everyone in this room has to understand political responsibility." Political responsibility, Lord Mayor, means taking the rough with the smooth and political leadership means being able to take the people with you when making decisions in those rough times.

This decision has been marked by an absence of leadership by the new administration at its very first test.

Lord Mayor, when you are taking difficult decisions in adversity, you need to offer a clear vision, a clear action plan and have major involvement and transparency in that process. Lord Mayor, this particular paper which is a response to the in-year reduction in grants from central government, has been put off and delayed to the

point where this Authority was one of the last to have a formal response to those in-year cuts. Also, this paper is disproportionate in terms of those areas of the city's life that it affects. It is focusing overwhelmingly on Children's Services which might be the same area that other Authorities have chosen to do, but in this particular Authority we should think twice before making that part of the Council the one that takes the biggest hit.

Secondly, Lord Mayor, cuts are also focused on our voluntary partners. Unfortunately, because of the restrictions that have been placed on this debate by the administration, we cannot actually discuss who those partners are but there are a significant list of voluntary sector organisations that have committed themselves to doing great work in this city and now are bearing the brunt of in-year reductions.

Lord Mayor, the detail of this is out of the public gaze. By being out of the public gaze it means that as a Council we are making decisions in a fog. We are not able to consult with our residents in terms of what those decisions might entail in terms of consequences and, more importantly, Lord Mayor, some of those reductions that are mentioned within this paper have been challenged because it is suggested that contracts that have been taken up with such organisations cannot be terminated or challenged until that contract is up or that underperformance has been proven. Therefore, the decision which is before us is one which does not stand up to scrutiny and I would therefore request the reference back. *(Applause)*

THE LORD Mayor: Thank you, Councillor Golton. Can I call on Councillor John Procter to second, please.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Lord Mayor, I second and reserve the right to speak.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, John. Councillor Ann Blackburn, please.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: Yes, thank you, Lord Mayor. I think in fairness nobody wants to see anything cut but there again we have to ask, why these cuts are the fact is why these cuts because there has to be cuts on every Council, not just Leeds City Council, there has to be cuts and why is that? Because the government is not going to pay us the money that they normally do. If they had done, then we would not be in this position. *(Interruption)*

The other thing I just have to say briefly is, you do not want these cuts, as I say none of us do, but I would like to know, then, where you would make cuts, thank you *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Blackburn. Councillor Pryke, please.

COUNCILLOR PRYKE: Three brief points on cuts, Councillor Blackburn and Councillor Lyons, anyone who has commented on Operation Champion, the things that Leeds City Council does in Operation Champions have been cut and are being cut because you cut, your government cut the NRF money to Leeds. It is nothing to do with the current government. It was your government.

Councillor Blackburn, the reason for the government cuts on Leeds are because the Labour Government, as was, bailed out the banks. Where is Councillor Gabriel? Who piled so much of our money into the banks without asking us? *(Interruption)* Who piled up public debt without consulting about it? The deficit deniers on the other side will probably speak later in the White Paper and they will dig their grave even deeper on that. We will wait and see about that.

The matter about the bankers' bonuses, who allowed the bankers their bonuses having bailed out the banks? It was your government and it was your Minister Balls who advocated that, remember.

The next point is on secrecy. There is a maxim in law that decisions taken in secret are bad decisions. It is an axiom of government that secret decisions tend to be bad. This decision, taken in secret, is a bad decision as well.

It will come back to bounce on you again. Remember - you have probably learned this from your own government, that your decisions in government on secret came back to hit you. Iraq war – taken in secret. Bombing Belgrade – taken in secret.

Another thing, James Purnell deciding to target people on incapacity benefit to force them back into work. Remember that? You cannot really blame us for that. You were doing it.

The last thing is for Councillor David Blackburn. You have a letter in the evening paper saying "Don't blame us for these cuts". We all know how power is sorted in this Council – it is on a system laid down by the previous labour government which we have to adhere to. We vote at the Annual General Meeting to elect a Leader and an administration. Councillors Blackburn, plural, voted ten times in succession, recorded votes, to put all power into the hands of Keith Wakefield and his Executive colleagues.

It is your responsibility, you are jointly responsible in this joint Labour Green administration. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Pryke. Councillor Procter, do you wish to comment before Richard Lewis sums up?

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Yes,

THE LORD MAYOR: I have not had notification of anybody else, if you want to wait a bit longer, John.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: I am sorry, Lord Mayor, I thought there were other names on the list. I am happy to go now;

THE LORD MAYOR: Can I just say I have had no further indication of anybody to speak but I notice Robert and Mark, so I will call them.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I have to say I am amazed at Councillor Ann Blackburn's intervention, so Councillor Blackburn says there have to be cuts. Is that right, Ann? There have to be cuts, that is what you said.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: Not ---

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Ann, just let me finish. The question is do there have to be these cuts and what you do not know, unless you have seen the paper – have you seen the pink paper?

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: Yes

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: So you have seen the pink paper. You have seen the pink paper. I am not quite sure under what basis you have seen the pink paper and I am going to now ask the Monitoring Officer under what basis (*Interruption*) as an Executive Member, or is it because you go to Cabinet? It is an Exec member, not because you attend Cabinet. OK, that is fine. Lord Mayor, in terms of---

COUNCILLOR ATHA: Can he conduct the business properly by not addressing another person?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Atha, will you sit down please? Can I say to the Whips that we have had no notification of people who are going to speak and I was going to invite Councillor Lewis to sum up, I invited Councillor John Procter and suddenly we have the Whips in behind us and two people who we have not been notified want to speak. I think I am conducting the business OK. I think the Whips are not doing such a good job, Councillor Atha. Continue and in fact there is so much disruption it is hard to hear what Councillor Procter is saying to make a judgment.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: And I know you would want to do that, Lord Mayor. Lord Mayor, the issue really is – and I am astonished really at Councillor Blackburn – what she does not know and no member of Council knows unless they have asked to see another set of figures which I have asked to see and have now got in my hand, is what the percentage of cuts are on the list. They range from anything from 10.22% to 25%. The issue that we were trying to get at today in Scrutiny, the issue that colleagues were trying to get at at Executive Board, is who decides what gets 25% cut and what gets 10.22% of a cut. Can any of you answer that, because the officers have not told us at Scrutiny today no elected member has told us that. No answer was given at Executive Board. The truth is that you have all made a decision in the dark.

None of these organisations yet know of the scale of the cut that is proposed, but you can bet your bottom dollar that the minute they do know of the scale of the cut that is produced they will be on to all of you and all of us saying “What on earth is going on? What on earth is going on?” You will say “Oh, it’s nothing to do with us, it is the nasty horrible government.” Let us save that for the White Paper that debate shall we, but the fact of the matter is that this will come back to haunt you. Dare I say it, we know some of those issues. We know Councillor Harrand has had some of those people and those organisations who came back and made our life very, very difficult and one of the lessons that I and colleagues learned from that was actually closer consultation is needed with all organisations in an open and transparent way.

What I said at Scrutiny today applies to all of these lists. When I was an Exec Member we made cuts to major arts organisations. Before making those cuts, though, we had dialogue with them, we shared that information with others of all parties in terms of our intention and we made sure that those organisations could cope with the cuts that were being proposed, yet that is not what we have got here at all. We have not had that. It appears that these are arbitrary cuts that have been negotiated by officers on a basis we know not what that is, some organisations cut by 10%, some organisations cut by 25%. I do not know if those organisations are still viable or not viable. There is no information in any report that has come to any elected members. You do not know if those organisations are viable or not. All we are simply saying is this is something that should be concerning all of you.

I know enough colleagues opposite to know that that actually will be concerning you. You will vote how your Whip tells you to vote today but think on, when you go back you will be thinking, actually, what is on that list? What are those

organisations? Which ones are in my ward? Which is going to affect me and the community I represent and what the heck am I then going to do about it? Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Procter. Councillor Mark Harris, please.

COUNCILLOR HARRIS: Lord Mayor, first of all I apologise, I did not give notice. This is a debate and the whole idea that the democratic forum of debate is that if you hear something you should be entitled to participate. I apologise that the Whips had to be told off by you. It is not their fault, it is my indiscipline. *(Laughter)*

First of all, Councillor Blackburn. I do not think she is actually talking about this debate. Nobody, as far as I know, is saying we are voting against cuts. There are going to have to be cuts but I freely admit, as somebody who is quite semi-detached in terms of what I do in the Council at the moment, I have no idea what I am being asked to vote on today. I am entitled to be told something but we have got a paper which I am not allowed to see and I have got to make a decision on something that I dare say in the end there are going to have to be some extremely unpalatable decisions made, but you cannot ask us to make a decision without the information on which to come to a balanced view. That is the point of the reference back, not that we are stopping or denying that there will have to be reductions but to allow everybody to make a decision but in the light of a reasonable level of information.

When I was Leader of Council there were times, actually, when I have to say against Andrew and when David was the Leader of the Greens with us, against their wishes, when I did used to distribute information in Council in writing in an effort to enlighten the debate. There were occasions when I felt that if valid requests for information were being made, then I felt that information was not available to all members I did, at some considerable expense to my standing, I allowed things to be withdrawn in order that all members could be properly informed and consulted. That is all that this reference back is about.

It is about allowing people like me who do not sit at the top table in any respect any longer to have the information with which to come to a proper balanced decision. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Harris. Councillor Robert Finnigan, please.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor, and this is going to be one of those "Plague on all your houses" discussions, debates, on this particular point. A lot of this discussion has surrounded whose difficulty these problems actually are. It is utterly pointless to the people out there for one lot to blame the other lot, because you could argue that it is the Tories in the mid 80s and their deregulation of the financial market; you could argue it is the Labour Party who from 1997 onward did not do anything with the banking industry; you can argue from here till Doomsday. The fact of the matter is the communities out there are looking for some genuine leadership in very difficult times and the last thing they want to see us doing is bashing the crap out of each other arguing which party is actually at fault on this particular occasion.

It is not in any shape, way or form useful.

The other thing we would actually say is that this infamous list, we are the only group that has not actually seen it because the rest of you are all represented on

the Executive Board. Morley is excluded – we have concerns and people know that we have got concerns about that. We are the only ones who have not seen this list. All of you, the rest of the parties, including the Green, have actually seen this list and had an opportunity to have at least some honest, open discussion about this, but the fact of the matter is these are tough times, there are tough decisions to be taken.

In an attempt to try and get something positive out of this there needs to be some sort of cross-party starting or something that discussed how we approach this, how we deal with these particular groups, what we can do in a more appropriate way to deal with this, because the way it is working at this particular point is not acceptable to the people out there, they will be wholly disappointed at hearing what they have heard this afternoon.

We are not going to play this game. We are abstaining on this particular one because we do not think any of you have come up with an appropriate way of dealing with this particular matter. These situations needs to be dealt with better, these situations need to be dealt with with more sensitivity than all of us knocking the hell out of each other and blaming each other about the problems that we are actually in.

I would suggest and I would propose that in the future these sort of difficult decisions where at least everybody is actively involved in the process. In that way we can make those tough decisions and we can say to the people out there, we are being honest and open with you and we are not going to make cheap, party-political points that achieve very, very little.

That is our position. We will continue to restate that particular position. We think we need to move forward from here and offer real leadership to our communities who ultimately are the ones who are going to suffer with this. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Finnigan. Councillor Andrew Carter, please.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Yes, thank you, my Lord Mayor. As I serve on the Exec Board I have seen the list and I would just say this, that any member of Council who has not seen the list would be hugely unwise to do anything than vote for the reference back.

This actually goes to the very heart of the predicament that we are in and I actually agree with virtually everything that Robert has just said apart from him saying they were going to abstain because that seems to me to be a very convenient little cop out – and Robert says “What, me?”

However, I understand that but the point that he made that is entirely valid is that the people out there will not thank us for playing the blame game. When we get into the White Paper we no doubt will, at least for a little while, play that but actually this is very serious.

I do not recall ever a report coming to the Exec Board ever – not just when we were in control but when you were in control before – outlining a detailed list of significant funding cuts to a whole series of organisations in the city that were on the pink paper and I am astonished, I have to say, that officers have allowed that to be the case – absolutely astonished. I do not believe it is right and, furthermore, I do not believe it is right that people who declared an interest at the Exec Board should now be allowed not to. I am sorry, Miss Jackson, but I profoundly do not. I think it is the wrong advice that you have given and I think it should be challenged in any way that is humanly possible. It cannot be right when you see significant sums of money here

and members on the Exec Board have declared a pecuniary interest, they have to have an interest in what happens to a reference back. They absolutely have to, and I think we could find as many lawyers as you could find that would give us precisely the reverse advice.

It is much more important than that because, you see, over and over again the leadership in this group – and I take their word for it, let me say – over and over again say “We are going to face some very difficult times. We will have our arguments in here, there will be things we will not be able to agree on but” – they have been saying this since the last week in May – “we are going to have to discuss what we do and see where there are grounds for discussion.” They have still not had those discussions with any of the other political parties here – not one single discussion other than saying “We have to have them”

What has happened is, this report comes on the pink paper; another report which outlines a whole list of cuts in terms of the amounts of subsidy we give to particularly sports groups who use our school premises, that was taken by the delegated decision of the officers. What is going on? Either we have a Council who are scared to death to take decisions publicly or we have a Council that are so scared they want the officers to take all the decisions, but what is certainly not happened is that any discussion is taking place on the areas that we will have to agree on.

Actually it comes down to this. The choice is yours. You can either have a blood bath every single meeting because you have failed to consult, you have tried to conceal, you have done precisely the opposite to the things your Leader says he wants to do and, as I say, I take his word for it, but then when I see the things happening at the F&GP and the General Purposes I saw last week where we all agree on a very, very serious matter about which I will not go further, and then the Chief Whip – it would be, wouldn't it? – brings forward a paper which even his own Leader describes as “wafer thin”. *(Laughter)*

My Lord Mayor, this is no way to get co-operation, no way at all. You had better start doing it differently. *(Applause)*

COUNCILLOR: Or what?

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Andrew. Councillor Lobley, please.

COUNCILLOR LOBLEY: Thank you. Lord Mayor, I would like to seek leave of Council for two items. First of all under Procedure Rule 13.2C I would like to seek to change the order of business in the agenda to hear the reference back on page 12 of the Order Paper in the name of Councillor Matthew Robinson after the completion of this reference back, and further, on my second seeking of leave of Council, under Procedure Rule 13.2J, which refers to procedure of 22.1, I would like to seek to suspend the limit on commenting on the Minutes to allow the second reference back in the name of Councillor Matthew Robinson to be heard.

COUNCILLOR BENTLEY: I second, Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Recorded vote, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Chief Executive.

THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE (Corporate Governance): Can I just clarify, Councillor Atkinson, I presume you are voting with Labour on this particular vote? Thank you.

(A recorded vote was taken under Rule 13.2C)

THE LORD MAYOR: I have got the result of that vote. There are members present and voting. 96, Councillor Atkinson. The “Yews” vote is 47, there are no abstentions and the “No” is 49. That is LOST.

Then we go to the next one.

THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE (Corporate Governance): Again, can I clarify with Councillor Atkinson that she is voting with Labour on this particular matter?

COUNCILLOR ATKINSON: Yes.

(A recorded vote was taken under Rule 13.2J)

THE LORD MAYOR: It is exactly the same result as last time, 95 members voting – 96, add on Councillor Atkinson again – the “Yes” vote is 47, abstentions none and the “No” vote is 49. LOST.

Can I move on now and ask Councillor Lewis to sum up. I have no further notification of speakers.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I thought you were going to miss me out after all that!

THE LORD MAYOR: As if I would.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: As if you would. This is one of those few reports that you really wish that people had read. I am not talking about the pinks but it is worth looking at because it is a report about 25 million quid’s worth of in-year cuts to this Local Authority. £25m – not £2, not £2 just affecting the voluntary sector - £25m of which £10m is capital, £15m revenue.

We seem to have obsessed about the £2m hit on the voluntary sector but if you read the paper you will see that actually we have done our best to mitigate the impact on that particular sector. I think people should go away and read it.

We have had this debate earlier on today in Scrutiny and John Procter, as always, manages to say one chilling thing and it was not that we would have endless call ins now that they are out of power but he said “We will have lots more in-year cuts.” That really cheered me up, John, but you know better than I do – that is what you said, I am sorry, John. You might not have means to say it but that is what you said, which to me is very worrying.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: You said there is lots more of this to come, that is what you said.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: You are missing the point, John. Anyway, we have the comprehensive spending review coming up. We will be facing far more difficult cuts in coming months. We all know that and I think we have to be honest about that and I think what Robert was saying...

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: And open.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: I would agree that perhaps we have not covered ourselves in glory in terms of quite how this process has gone but I do not think there was any attempts to hide anything and actually there were very good reasons – very good reasons – why there was information in the pink.

Contrary again to what John said, there have been consultations with the organisations concerned. They do know what we want to do and on the one hand we have Stuart over there saying “Get on with it, cut, cut, cut, do it now, why are you procrastinating?” which is what he said, and on the other hand you are saying, “You have not told these people what you are cutting.” Yes, we have, we have been having consultations, we have communicated with them in June, we have been talking with them since July.

Another thing that needs pointing out is that this report was about noting discussions that are going on. It was not to endorse cuts; it was to note some negotiation and discussions that are going on with voluntary organisations. It would have been utterly, I think, dangerous, embarrassing for those organisations if we had come out with a set of figures and said right, this is what we are going to negotiate on. Those organisations are all dependent on other funding from elsewhere of a similar nature. What good would it have done them if they suddenly see that Leeds City Council was, they might say, pulling the plug from them? None at all.

I did talk about political responsibility today and what fascinated me is over on this side it is as if these cuts had not come from your Government. The Con Dem Government, that is where they have come from, let us not pretend. We get Ralph with his usual kind of smokescreen about the Iraq war, the bankers. Perhaps if we had had a Tory Government or perhaps if we had had a Con Dem Government when we had the financial crisis that we faced we would have had the kind of Herbert Hoover response that Osborne and his Leader were suggesting we should have and we would have had four years of a depression that it took somebody like Franklin Roosevelt to get us out of. Is that what you really want? I do not know. Perhaps we should have been harder on the bankers. I think we should have done but that does not seem to have changed in terms of this Government, does it?

Ann said the main point, yet what would you have cut, because here we are, we have £25m to cut, what would you have cut if you did not propose to cut this, what would you have chopped? You have to be responsible, you have to have an alternative. When are you going to come up with it?

We have done what we should have done, we have consulted with these organisations. There has been no disproportionate cut on Children’s, which has taken £5m out of the £25 cut. On the legal issue, again we have taken advice on that in terms of service level agreements and what have you and we are happy with that but I will come back, we should have done this perhaps better, I think that we should come back to Exec Board with the final outcome of this whole process but in the meantime I would ask Council to reject this reference back. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Lewis. Can I call for the vote on the amendment, please? All those in favour of the amendment please show.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: What amendment?

THE LORD MAYOR: The reference back is the amendment.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: My Lord Mayor, could I ask for a recorded vote, please.

THE LORD MAYOR: I sat there waiting, I looked around there. What can I do? A recorded vote has now been called for.

(A recorded vote was taken on the reference back)

THE LORD MAYOR: Again, we have got 95 present. The "Yes" vote is 41, abstentions 6 and the "No" vote is 45, so the reference back is LOST.

Can we now go on to the winding up process, please, and can I call on Councillor Wakefield to exercise his right of reply.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can I just say that despite Colin Campbell's contribution I actually did welcome the Area Committees, they have never been able to speak here and I think it is only right and proper that we extend democracy to all members of this Council rather than the usual suspects and I think actually there is a wider debate about whether we cannot change this nature of this very adversarial style of politics rather than what we do and have a mood like we did today.

I wanted to speak, I have actually sacrificed my Minutes, on the Finance paper, but I wanted to talk about the financial health monitoring which I think provides a backcloth to October's spending review and whether this Council is strong enough and robust enough to actually withstand the 25% or 40% cut.

For colleagues who do not know, our current state of finance is that in two portfolios we are £15 over spent. Some of you will know that that is in Children's Services and I think the reasons for that are a mixture of incompetence and actually pressures because of the structure. I do not think there is any doubt about that and I think we have argued consistently that money was wasted in the structure of Children's.

The other one, to be fair to Councillor Peter Harrand, I think it is actually about the transition that people have talked about here from individual budgets (*inaudible*) and also Democracy and Demand and that is also £7.5m overspent, so it does beg the question could we stand any cuts either in-year or in October and next year and provide the service that we have.

The truth is that all our public services are at stretching point and breaking point. There is absolutely no doubt about it. If you listen to the police, if you listen to the army, if you listen to the firemen, if you listen to social services, we cannot sustain the services that we have got now. I think that demands the kind of atmosphere that Councillor Finnigan has raised today. Are we going to shout and yahboo at each other when we have a serious crisis in public services facing us as a Council? I hope not. I sincerely hope not.

It does not help when people like Eric Pickles calls Chief Officers weirdo beanbag sitters. I do not think that helps. I don't think it helps to insult officers who have given their whole life. Tom, you are excused because you were not there around then!

I do not think it helps when George Osborne starts to target benefit people and starts to whip up a witch hunt and a stereotype. Actually I admire the Liberal MP Russell for standing up to him and saying that he thinks it is grossly unfair to target the most vulnerable people in such a media witch hunt.

The truth of the matter is that housing benefits, if you look at housing benefits only one person in eight on housing benefit are unemployed. If we are going to look at the situation, let us do it objectively and fairly and constructively and disagree.

I do not particularly like the comments that Osborne made about lifestyle either. Of course there is some lifestyle but when you look at some people who are on disabled benefits, some people on benefits, they genuinely have to be on benefits because there is no way they can find work in this city.

In contrast to that I had a very interesting meeting with Scrutiny Board and I have to say there were some very constructive exchanges between the parties there and, indeed, myself about how we are going to try to prepare to deal with this cut. I want to try and deal with a couple of myths that were beginning to develop so that we can tackle this straight on about the scale of the cuts.

The first myth is that somehow we could stop discretionary spend and that we could only concentrate on statutory spend. If you did that, if you just stopped discretionary spend, you would be cutting adult social services, the Neighbourhood Networks one, you would be cutting Children's Services and many of the support things they do, you would be cutting all of sports, all of the parks, all of the leisure, all of the youth and so on and so forth. Clearly even that just leads to a disintegration of our society and our city if you did that, so that is not a simple answer of how you tackle the impending cuts now.

The other one that I begin to hear in certain quarters is, why don't we cut the bureaucracy and then we can just concentrate on front line services? Again, it is a popular piece of rhetoric that is used. I will tell you this, because we have worked on it. If you cut HR, IT, Chief Execs, Legal, Communications, Property Management and so on – in other words destroy the whole of the centre that holds it all up together – over four years you would still only get to £90. The fact is, the fact of life is that actually there is no simple answer to the cuts coming ahead. Our services that we offer are going to be badly affected. They are going to be severely cut, they are going to be severely strained and some of them will have to be stopped. They will have to be stopped. Four years – they will start next year, Les. We cannot afford what we have got now. How can we afford a cut again.

I think we have got options. We have got options as members here. We can either do what some members can, what Elaine Costigan down in Sandwell, she resigned as Deputy Leader of the Conservative Party and joined Labour with the Conservative Party's approval. We can actually do what some of the Liberals have done...

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: It would be better if Ann had done, she is a lot nearer to you.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: ...in Newcastle and in Liverpool, where they have all resigned. We could actually do something that the Barnsley Liberal Party did quite recently where they issued a leaflet saying they were ashamed of what their national Government were doing. They said to their members, they said to their constituents...

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: All three of them.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: ...that actually they would do whatever the constituents wanted; they would either resign from the Liberal Party, stick with the Liberal Party or stay as independent. That is the kind of options there.

I know none of you are going to do that. None of you are going to do that but it takes a bit of courage and it takes a bit of independent spirit.

My challenge to you is this. Andrew has already said – Councillor Carter has already said – that what I have done, and I mean it, is that when we get to October in the preparation for it and in fact to be frank Scrutiny Board have already started that debate, we should sit round – we should sit round and decide what we want this Council to run as a priority, as an imperative. What are the services that we most value for our people? That is the best way forward. That is the way that all of us want to go and I can assure you of this, that our party will do its utmost with or without you – I hope with – to protect front line services because there is no doubt the welfare state, like the health service, is under the most pressure that it has ever faced in our history and we will do everything possible to preserve the welfare state and to preserve Local Government and to preserve public services. I move the Minutes. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Wakefield. Can I call for the vote on the motion to receive the Minutes, please. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED. Can we now adjourn for tea? Shall we come back at five minutes past six? Thank you very much.

(Council adjourned for a short time)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor, welcome back after tea. I hope you have had a bit of refreshment. Councillor Javid Akhtar is circulating an envelope collecting for the Pakistan flood appeals. I know many of you will have given generously before but if you have any spare cash it will be welcome and will get to the right places. All the money does to go the Disaster Emergency Committee.

ITEM 9 - WHITE PAPER MOTION – BUDGET DEFICIT

THE LORD MAYOR: Can I invite you, then, to take your seats and invite Councillor Andrew Carter to move White Paper Motion 9, please.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. Notwithstanding Councillor Finnigan's comments in the last debate which, as I said then, I do agree with, having spent years in this place and listened to the party opposite rehashing history, mainly ancient – indeed I was reminded a few moments ago that Margaret Thatcher has been out of office now for 30 years but the party opposite still regularly refer to the Conservative Government of Margaret Thatcher.

COUNCILLOR: Twenty years.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Twenty years – it is still a long time! *(Laughter)*

COUNCILLOR ATHA: Not for me it ain't!

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Maybe not for you, Bernard. I hope you are giving me extra time for this, Lord Mayor. I have no compunction at all in just reminding members of the Council and in particularly the debt deniers on my right of why we are in the position we are in. They can blame who they want, really, as far as I am concerned, for the fact that the country is so far in debt but what they cannot do is blame either of the current Government coalition partners because the debt that the country now faces has entirely happened during 13 years of Labour Government, and that is a simple fact. You can blame the banks, you can blame anybody you want – you can blame a combination of people and that is probably very fair, to

blame a combination of people, but including – absolutely including – the Labour Government and in particular Gordon Brown.

It is not going to happen that we allow the Labour Party to run away from their legacy to this current Government and the people of this country. There can be nowhere to run and nowhere to hide as far as the responsibility goes. The simple fact is this, that if we do not act now then in five years' time the interest payments alone on Britain's debt would be higher than the money we spend currently on schools, climate change and transport put together. That is a fact and it cannot be denied. That is why the new Government has had to do something and the cuts that are coming are, in fact, your cuts in any event.

Let me remind you, at the General Election Alistair Darling made it clear – it is no good shaking your head, Ron – that Labour would be introducing a package of £44b of cuts, so three in every four pounds of the cuts that are going to come over this next twelve months are your cuts. Maybe not in the same place but if they had not made those cuts greater they would have been putting tax up as well so there is nowhere to run and nowhere to hide.

What makes it worse is, after all those years of plenty we are left now with two and a half million people unemployed, a worse deficit than the US and Japan, worse than any other country in Western Europe, including Greece, and one in five young people unemployed. That is also part of the legacy. Not a very good legacy. In fact, the worst legacy any new Government has inherited from any outgoing Government in living memory, so everybody knew the new Government elected at the last General Election, of whatever political persuasion – as it happens of two political persuasions – would have to start taking very difficult measures straightaway. To pretend that people actually like doing that, or politicians like doing that, is absolute nonsense. Politicians rely on popular support and votes to get elected. Why would anybody want to – want to – start cutting unless they absolutely had to? It defies human logic. We are going to face some very difficult times.

I just want to come on now to what I said a little earlier and repeat part of it. Keith, it is on good playing the old soldier as you did at the end of that last debate and appealing to people to do this, that and the other. Some of us remember the squirming in the chairs opposite with Blair's illegal war in Iraq. None of you resigned; none of you resigned, you all sat there and carried on voting for him.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: We did not squirm.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: When we had the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund taken from us, you all moaned about it; none of you resigned. You all sat there and kept on voting for them. When we lost Supertram, the same thing, so do not come the old soldier.

Let me just say this to you. I have made it very clear, and I know that I speak for both – and I am sure Stuart will repeat it – the major opposition parties in this room, that we know some very difficult decisions will have to be taken. There will be no getting away from it, whether we like it or we do not. I firmly believe that there are those areas where we can reach agreement, but why have we not been doing that behind closed doors for the past three and a half, almost four months? Why have we had to put up with reports coming to Executive Board with papers that we referred to before on the pink, delegated decisions by officers, silly, childish political tricks on Area Committee boundaries and having to stand up and correct your own report in the Council just undermines the very basis of working together.

I know that we will only be able to agree a certain amount of things because we will disagree fundamentally on a number of areas that you propose to cut, but there will be areas where we can agree and surely it is better for the people of Leeds. They are not going to thank any of us and if you think it is to your electoral advantage, I think you might have a shock coming to you. I think the people of Leeds, the people of this country, know we are in difficult times and they are expecting the politicians to take rational decisions about where money should be saved. Then we will argue about the residue.

It is all right you standing up now and saying "Ah, we are going to do it, we are going to do it." We should have been doing it. Other Local Authorities, like Stuart said, virtually every other major Authority has moved faster than this Authority has done and certainly in the case of parties working together. It is no good you sitting there and relying on your good friend and colleague, I think you called her, Councillor Ann Blackburn, at the last General Purposes Committee. If that is not coalition I do not know what is. It is no good relying on her unless you are going to get David to explain it to her. *(Laughter)*

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: I know what a friend and colleague is.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: So, my Lord Mayor, the offer is there but if you are going to go on allowing certain of your members to try to be clever and crafty when they are always seen through, it is going to undermine any basis of working together.

The change in mid year of the funding to Area Committees, for piffling amounts of money. You could have done it in a completely different way and stopped a further destruction of the basis of trust. I regret to say – I had better be careful not to say "friends" – the Greens over there will learn very quickly what most of us learned a long time ago and one of the reasons why your party struggles ever to get any agreement from other parties about much at all, that there is always somebody, some smart alec who wants to try and be clever and undermine any basis of working together.

There is the offer. If you are straight, we will have arguments, we will have disagreements, fine, and you will have a go at the Government, we understand that, and we will have a go at you and we will have a go at your previous Government, but there are areas where we can agree and it can only be to the benefit of the people of this city.

I suggest you start again and what I do not like is the fact that I have to say – and the officers are not going to like this at all – I am astonished, and I repeat what I said before, I am astonished that officers of this Council allowed that report that we discussed earlier to go to Committee as it was and I am astonished that they took a delegated decision as regards the funding for community groups that we know they did. It is not on. I do not like the look of it, I hope we are not going back 20 years. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Carter. Can I ask Stuart Golton, please, to second.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Can I ask Councillor Wakefield to move an amendment?

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I felt that that was partly only a partial picture of the debate. In actual fact if you had been straight with the debate you would say this was a bit of a smokescreen to disguise one of the most ideologically driven attacks on public expenditure in the welfare state.

I would also say, because if you look and listen to any economist, be it Clubman, be it Elliott, be it Hutton, be it Shiller – all world renowned economists, I would also say what you missed out is that these cuts at this pace are risking a double dip. It is not the Labour Party saying that, it is serious economists that we should listen to.

I am sorry that your White Paper and your contribution, Andrew, did not cover those kind of issues, because they are extremely relevant to this discussion.

What you also did not mention and what I would say to Councillor Pryke, is that without the Labour Government's intervention in the banks, there would be millions of people without homes now. *(Applause)* I did not hear Councillor Pryke say the alternative and, actually, we would be in a much deeper recession had it not been through Brown and Darling. Who says that? Most of the economists again in the Western world and Governments in the Western world say actually the Labour Government did all right in pulling us through the recession.

COUNCILLOR: The electorate did not agree, though, did they?

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: They do not agree with you either and what you offered. Don't you start telling what you said to the electorate and what you are doing now because you will find yourself a bit of a hypocrite.

What also did you not mention, and I think it is worth bringing this out in the debate, that actually there is no need for this £6b cut now, which is a part of what we have been debating earlier. The reason is because we are actually £12b under spent from the forecast and what most people say is that actually we could have used £6b of that and put the other £6b to reduce the deficit. That underlines the point, I think, that this is ideologically driven. What you did not mention – and maybe Councillor Matthews will stand on his feet and explain this – is that actually the Institution of Fiscal Studies have told everybody and have proven it and demonstrated that actually this is a regressive cut, not a progressive. Do you remember when they came to the TV and told everybody "We are protecting everybody"? Well, the evidence is quite clear that actually the bottom ten per cent of income are being hit by five per cent. The richest of those incomes are being hit by half a per cent; an extremely regressive cut on the most vulnerable people in this society.

It is a great pity that you did not mention that and again, I look forward to the Liberal's contribution on whether it is regressive or whether it is progressive. Again, not the Labour Government's view, the Labour Party here's view – it is actually the Institution of Fiscal Studies who have actually done work, along with others.

I think that is more of a context of the debate of what we are doing. In your White Paper you have been talking about procrastination and not getting on with it. I have already alluded to work with Scrutiny Board, I have already alluded to work with the officers and, frankly, how can we move until we know the scale of cuts? How can you start saying it is 40% or 25% or 30% because we will not know until October and November.

You know, you might accuse us of inventing history but actually it was not us that put this Council into £15m of debt. It was not us that dilly-dallied on key

decisions like Leisure Trust, like school transport, like Royal Park and I could go on and on, including fairer charges, which have cost this Council money. I am sure colleagues on this side will make reference to that.

If you really put aside this debate and the pink paper and all that – important and I think we can put it right – nobody has asked the fundamental question, why did they ever do it when we know they did not have to do it? We know they did not have to put £6b of cuts into the system and that is what makes you think that what you are cleverly trying to do is deflect from a decision that has been an absolute disaster. We know that, we have accepted there will be cuts but what we have said it not as fast and not in the areas that we think particularly with benefits.

You know, quite recently there has been a paper that has talked about the loss of homes for disabled people because their mortgage support has been cut, so 50,000 people who are disabled who bought their homes, who now have the mortgage support cut, now face being homeless. Think of the impact of that on this Council when it starts to hit us in a few months' time. That is why I think it is an extremely unfair cut.

When you look at what Richard said, we are not talking about Neighbourhood Renewal Fund. The difference between you, Ralph, and we on the NRF, we opposed it. We actually stood up and said it was a wrong cut, that we had had an unfair deal. I have not heard you say that. I have not heard you say that this is an unfair cut on the disabled and on the poor and on the families and on single parents. It is time you did. It is time you actually stood up and said something that actually makes me think that you represent the people of this city and not just ideology. We would, we have said it in the past and we have joined in the past and the future. No-one should forget, no-one should forget that actually this project, this cut is taking away above all from one of your legacies, is taking away from young people who are not in employment, not in education and not in training and there are 2,000 of those young people walking the streets of Leeds with all their support taken away.

I think that is something that is a crime and a social injustice to this city, to take away Future Jobs Fund, Connexion money and all that, that was in the Area Grant, I think is an utter crime and should be, like the Barnsley Liberals, ashamed of that.

You make reference to our first hundred days. I will tell you what, I am quite proud of our first hundred days.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: You were on holiday for most of them!

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: I was a week. Don't start that because Debbie Coupar nailed you one day for coming out with false stories and I will nail you on that. I have got evidence of how long I was on holiday.

What I think you should be saying is actually in terms of the support for these young people, should we not just say something together about it? Should we say that is not right? Our hundred days, what have we done? We have actually tackled something that you had left behind in elderly support in Neighbourhood Networks. We have actually listened to people on Woodhouse Moor. We have actually tried to look at the Children's Services and improve them, so yes, I would have liked to have done more with the resources, yes, I would like to make the improvement but I am not ashamed of our hundred days. In actual fact I am really looking forward to the next thousand days of a Labour administration representing the people and doing our best to protect them from these vicious ideological cuts that your Government have started to introduce. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Wakefield. Can I call upon Councillor Taggart to second?

COUNCILLOR TAGGART: I second, my Lord Mayor, and reserve the right to speak.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Taggart. Councillor David Blackburn, please.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: I have got to say, I am very disappointed with Councillor Carter's motion and I have to say I am not too impressed with Labour's amendment either. (*Interruption*) I think it reflects exactly what has been wrong with today's meeting.

The fact of the matter is, we have got a situation that has not happened in most people's lifetime – certainly I do not think anybody's lifetime in this Chamber – that we are going to be faced with serious, serious cuts in our funding and we have got to get serious about it. I am afraid today has all been about petty party stuff. We have no room for petty party stuff, we have got to get down to it.

I have got to say also, and I said this to Keith Wakefield's face, what the administration need to do is they need to talk to the major Opposition parties about where we are going.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: I have.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: I think that is where we have to go because the fact it, whatever we do in this Chamber we are not going to change that situation. We are financially in trouble not of the making of this Chamber. We are financially in trouble and what we have got to do, where we can, we have got to work together and try and resolve it and put some of the differences of the past behind us.

It will not be easy and there will be things that we disagree on but I think that is the only way and to have a series of discussions like we are having, which is just slagging each other off, is not doing them any good and what Robert Finnigan said earlier on, I mean, he hit the nail on the head. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*).

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Harris, please.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Like a fish on the end of the line, wriggling like nobody's business.

COUNCILLOR HARRIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. This coming Saturday sees Yom Kippur, the Jewish Day of Atonement, and there may be many in this Chamber who think I ought to be first through the door because I have got plenty to atone for and I would not detract from that argument. My synagogue has done me the great honour of asking me to give a sermon on the even of Yom Kippur this Friday. I am going to speak about Israel and Palestine and I am not going to say here what I am going to say, but I will simply say that the congregation having asked me to speak are probably going to get an intimation as to what I am going to say and my starting point in this debate is that I am afraid my party are about to get a bit of a shock about what I am going to say.

I do not subscribe to the view that the mess we are in is entirely the making of Gordon Brown. Indeed, I have to say that I think history will judge that however the situation arose, the leadership of Gordon Brown in the face of the melt down of the

international financial world saved the world from a catastrophe that we cannot even begin to imagine. (*hear, hear*)

You know, I can see the moans and groans and terrible faces being pulled. That is what I believe and that side said which Liberal would get up and say something. I only know if I put myself on the back benches and semi-detach myself, this is what was going to happen. I always was to be something of a loose cannon, even when I was sat where Keith is now, but it does not alter the fact that we are where we are and that just as much as I do not subscribe to the view that Gordon Brown has wrecked everything, what we are faced with is, however you look at it, as Andrew said, the legacy of the previous administration. They may not have created it or we can have that debate as to who Andrew said – maybe the fairest thing to say is it is a combination of things, but we are where we are and actually this situation has been coming for a long time.

I do not believe it is ideologically driven. There may be some ideots in all of this but there are ideots on your side just as much and this is not the time, actually, for an ideological debate. Here I concur with what David Blackburn said. We in the West and in this country have created a structure which is just not sustainable. There is not enough money to pay for it. It does not matter how it has come about, it does not matter who is to blame. Blaming and pointing the finger will now help us. We are in this crisis, we are in this mess and here in Leeds in this Council we are charged with doing the best we can for our city.

It is imperative that actually we ought not to have debates of this nature now; rather we should all find a way for the sake of the city of saying we must do what we must do. As Andrew said, there may be some disagreements but we should sit down now, we should take these ideological party political debates out of this forum not for the sake of secrecy but for the sake of co-operation where perhaps we can put some of our egos and ideologies aside, absolutely, for the sake of doing the best we can in the face of what are inevitable cuts and reductions. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Harris. Councillor Jamie Matthews, please.

COUNCILLOR MATTHEWS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I must say, I am glad Councillor Harris bought me lunch now, after that previous speech, because I am going to disagree and I will not buy him one back now! I am only joking.

I must say, the point that Mark Harris made there was actually that Gordon Brown dealt with the crisis in a way that perhaps he should not have done and that is probably a valid point. The point is the 13 year run up to that crisis and the best description I have heard – and I cannot remember who said it for the life of me and I have looked it up and cannot find it and it may even have been Andrew Carter (might be) – but it was that the Labour Party acted like a drunken sailor with a stolen credit card. I think that is a fair description.

I am deeply concerned, Lord Mayor, by the apparent lack of preparation for capital grant reductions by the Labour Green administration. Let us be clear, no-one wants cuts and certainly no-one wants cuts to vital services and we have had that argument over and over, but let us not forget the economic crisis that the Government led us into.

The Government says out debt will hit £1,043 billion by April 2010 and £1.2 trillion just one year later. We owe £15,000 for ever man, woman and child in the country, so it cannot continue. I think we talk about this sort of debt culture and I think the PFI project – and I am probably at odds with some of my colleagues here

on the PFI schemes but I said this during the General Election campaign, that we were spending beyond our means. We were just running up more and more debt. There is a brand new school, wonderful, but it is debt, let us not forget we built it on debt. It is debt.

COUNCILLOR ATHA: No it is assets. Assets.

COUNCILLOR MATTHEWS: I do not envy the task that colleagues opposite on the Labour benches have to deal with and myself and my colleagues on this side are acting responsibly to help in any way to ensure that front line services are protected and unnecessary spending and wastage is rooted out, as there was a lot of hay made of that in Councillor Wakefield's budget amendment, all the wastage that he was going to come in and cut in the communications budget and everything else. We have yet to see that so we will hold our breath.

I will not really listen to lectures on the divisions between the Liberal Democrats. You have stated the Barnsley example. If anyone knows Barnsley, there are two Labour Parties in Barnsley, so you cannot really talk about the divisions in our party.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: I am talking about the honesty.

COUNCILLOR MATTHEWS: At the first Executive Board meeting in June after the election there were 23 substantive papers and of these nine were relating to deputations or Scrutiny Board reports, nothing there generated by the new Labour leadership. Of the remaining 14 papers only three could have been said to have been brought forward by the new administration as opposed to being business which had already been underway before they took over at the AGM. One was the continuing initiative already established by the Inner North West Area Committee, one was a report on the reduction of spending introduced by the Coalition Government after we had found out what mess Labour had left us with. Interestingly, the last paper promised a more detailed paper in July, one which we all know they could not even get together and they have been so slow in responding, so maybe it is a little unfair to judge them on their first meeting, so let us have a look at the second Executive Board meeting they were in control for, this time in July.

There were 20 substantive papers of which only one concerned a Scrutiny Board report and none were the result of deputations. Of course, you would expect a few more of these to be generated by the Labour administration and some were. Where the previous administration had already started the process, for example Neighbourhood Networks and proposals...

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: We never...

COUNCILLOR MATTHEWS: It is true, Peter.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: They never. You sold them down the river.

COUNCILLOR MATTHEWS: I could go on and on. With Labour showing their usual speed and efficiencies some of the talks, they have not even got off the ground yet so we are still waiting, so it is just dithering after dithering after dithering.

At the August meeting, which is the third in control, I admit that here we can see more sign of your influence. The decisions on cuts for voluntary organisations taken in secret, a plan to try and shift cremations across the city with no real consideration of the traffic implications, but all of the same out of the 14 papers there

were really only two or three where there were actually clear initiatives from the Labour Party.

As you will no doubt realise, the purpose of these comments is just to show the difference between effective reaction to circumstances and decisions which have been inherited by the new Government in Westminster and the procrastination, delay and failure to consult which have been the hallmark of the Labour administration in Leeds for the last 111 days.

I come back to the point, another example of the dithering is, of course, the Streetscene Change programme which, if it had been implemented in June as we said...

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Be very careful what you say.

COUNCILLOR MATTHEWS: ...we would have saved £600,000 by now. Councillor Murray astonishingly said...

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Be very careful.

COUNCILLOR MATTHEWS: ...August was the holiday month. Oh good, that is really nice, isn't it, that Councillor Murray had a holiday. He has not answered the question. I will just finish up, Lord Mayor, but I am sad to see the dithering and the decisions behind closed doors, but it is what we have come to expect from the party opposite. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Matthews. Can I call on Councillor Yeadon now, please.

COUNCILLOR YEADON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Lord Mayor, I would like to speak in support of the amendment in the name of Councillor Wakefield but I would like to ask what are you achieving in this debate at the moment? I think we are all pointing at each other and at the moment this country is in a major crisis and we are having to deal with it for the people of the city that we represent and I would ask you, while we are pointing at each other trying to pass on blame, what does that say to the people that we are representing?

I did have a speech which was slightly pointing fingers and passing on blame and I just do not think it is appropriate at this very moment in time, so I am not going to do it.

What I will say is, Adult Social Care is currently projecting an £8m overspend. That is massive. Last year Adult Social Care had an £8m overspend. I am not about to point fingers about why that was. We have got an aging population that is growing but we do not have a growing budget and that is a major problem, but it is being compounded now by the cuts that we are facing. There is no point in pretending that is not going to happen and we are going to have serious, difficult decisions that we are going to have to make.

I do not think we are doing that in this debate at the moment because what we are doing is trying to pass blame. We are not trying to have discussion about how we can make this better for people as painlessly as possible. We are just going over old ground.

What we have to do is look at the cuts that need to be made in a thoughtful and responsible way. We have to go out to proper consultation, we have to speak to the people that we are providing services to and say, "This is the situation, how are

we going to deal with it together?" and we can say, "You did not do that over the last hundred days." We do not know what we are going to be facing until October. We know a little bit of what we are facing but until October comes around we are going to be batting around in the dark and that is not an effective way to make decisions which are going to affect people's lives.

We have already made moves in Adult Social Care and I am only too aware of the magnitude of these decisions and the potential impact they have on vulnerable people and our staff and I have to tell you it is not a prospect that I am looking forward to but let me reassure Council that we will do all we can to protect vulnerable people when these decisions are made and we will ensure that the impact is minimalised.

I would just like to end by saying, we all came into politics for the same reason. No matter what side of the Chamber we are sitting on, we all came into politics because we wanted to make things better – we have just got a different idea about how we are going to achieve that. In my opinion, slashing services in a rash, unconsidered way without regard for the most vulnerable people will not achieve that, but we have to work together to do it in the best way possible. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Yeadon. Could I call upon Councillor Lamb, please, now.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I hope you will forgive me for one second, I wanted to speak on the Minutes and I wanted to take an opportunity just to pay tribute to the Acting Director of Children's Service. I am not sure if she is still here – she is – but I think it is going to be her last meeting today and I think in the six months that she has been here she has made a fantastic contribution to the city (*hear, hear*) and I think she showed a dedication to Leeds and children and young people in Leeds and I am sure whoever is lucky enough to have her after this, she will do them great credit as she has for us. (*Applause*)

Turning to the White Paper, I agree with what a lot of people have said. Pointing fingers and shouting blame, which I confess I am going to do a little bit of in a minute, does not get us all that far, but the point I would make is that if we are going to deal with this, the problems we face, properly and in a sensible way, we have to understand and accept how we got to be in this position in the first place.

I have to take issue with a couple of things that Keith said. The idea that overspending by £160b instead of £172b means that you have got £12b more...

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: I did not say that.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: That is exactly what you said. You said we under spent (*sic*) by less so we had more money to spend. It is just ridiculous. It is nonsense economics. The reason we are in the position we are, we faced three crisis in the last few years. We faced a financial crisis all around the world which has thrown us into a recession. That happened all across the world. Why was Britain so badly prepared? Why were we worse affected than so many of the other countries? It is because of the third crisis, and it is the one that we are talking about today. It is because of the debt crisis which has built up and the deficit crisis.

The other thing which no-one on the Labour side has mentioned is that one of the grossest acts of irresponsibility by any Government in the face of these crises was the fact that we should not have been waiting until this November to find out the results of the Comprehensive Spending Review. It should have been last November.

It should have been last November before the election. That is when it was due. Your Government put it off. They put it off for a whole year so they told us in their budget how much money they were going to cut but they refuse to tell anybody before the election where they were going to make the cuts. It is a crucial point to remember that the majority of the cuts that we are talking about were already in your Government's budget. They would have happened regardless of who won the election.

Councillor Yeadon mentioned proper consultation. I will come on to one decision that has not been made yet that could have been, which is the community use of schools policy, which Councillor Carter referred to earlier. It should have always gone to Executive Board. It was quite rightly the view of the Acting Director of Children's Services and the Executive Board member in July that that decision should have been taken at Executive Board and it was in the programme to go in July. It should have been taken in that way; it was not. They decided to pull it and take it to a delegated decision. For some reason Councillor Gruen intervened and he decided he would pull it again for further consultation. I am still trying to find out exactly what consultation took place before the decision came back in again.

I wrote to Councillor Wakefield and Councillor Blake to urge them to take this decision at Executive Board so that proper consultation could take place. They denied that opportunity and turned down my request, so we find ourselves having to go to a Scrutiny inquiry. They have tried to blame us for wasting money by delaying the decision but I would simply remind them, that could have been taken in July, it could have been done in a proper way. That was the original intention and they failed to do that, so when we are talking about having proper, meaningful consultation about how these decisions are going to affect groups, you need to learn the lessons of those decisions and to look carefully at what the Scrutiny inquiry said. I know while all the Labour members voted against the inquiry there were several there that I know would really have liked to vote the same way that we did.

Councillor Wakefield referred to the cuts that were coming as "ideologically driven". It is not the case. The simple fact, as Councillor Carter mentioned before, the longer you leave the cuts the longer the decisions take to be made, the more debt you accumulate and the higher the interest is. In the long term you have to make harsher and deeper cuts. We do need to try and find some consensus between us, we do need to work together but before we can do that you really have to understand and accept why we are in the position we are in today. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Lamb. Can I call upon Councillor John Procter, please.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. At the last Council meeting I invited colleagues to try and guess who I was speaking about. I quite liked that so I am going to have another go. Here we are – who was this question – I am just seeing if the relevant member is here – maybe not, actually:

"My Lord Mayor, back in June when the Liberal Democrats, Conservatives and we in the Green Party"

- sorry, it gives it away –

"formed our historic joint administration based on co-operation not confrontation, we dedicated ourselves to the principle of a clean, green and safe Leeds. To start with we were pilloried by losing Labour candidates and their hangers on."

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: There's one up there.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Indeed:

"They said it could not work and it will all fall apart but they were wrong (*Applause*)"

from the verbatim of Council:

"They then tried to use a tactic which they have been using today and they continue to use today of saying that we are going to make massive cuts. This budget shows that this administration's commitment to a clean, green and safer Leeds also shows the scare tactics of the Labour party are totally unfounded."

Who said, that? Councillor David Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: In the Chamber.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Why do I remind colleagues of that? Because it is OK Councillor Wakefield saying, as he had done in the press and repeatedly in this Council Chamber and to anyone else who will listen to him, "We need to work together on these, these are serious issues, we have got to join together" and then in the next breath, as he did in the first article that he gave to the Evening press when he became Leader of Council, say "Of course, we have got to prepare ourselves for the wicked administration cuts that are coming to our service." You cannot have it both ways. You have got to have it one way or the other.

Because I have taken a fancy to quoting people, who is then, then:

"The central argument over future economic strategy was no closer to being resolved. Gordon was resisting any talk of new cuts in spending to reduce the deficit and debt."

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Bernard Atha. (*Interruption*)

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER:

"But there was also politics involved and the inevitable impression that we were simply in denial about the scale of the financial hole we found ourselves in."

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Another hundred pages, John.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER:

"He [Gordon] created the impression that we would simply keep on spending, borrowing and taking on more debt, a burden that would take an eternity to pay off and create a tax bill for generations to come."

Who was that? Not the first man, not the second man but the third man! The third man, the man who was there in the room, the man who was there on the last day as well and no matter what you think about the man, read his book, it is quite interesting. What he and Ed Balls were trying to do was to persuade Gordon Brown that actually to have any credibility, any shred of credibility left, the cuts had to start

then, in the days of the Labour administration. What Gordon Brown thought, what you think, is let's push it all under the carpet and then when we are not in we will be able to blame it on somebody else.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Which is exactly what they are doing.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: If you think that the British people are that stupid I am amazed. I am genuinely amazed because they are not. They are not. They are a lot smarter than that. They do understand what occurred and I agree with what has been said already by Mark Harris and other. There are two simple ways of approaching this, two simple ways and really it is up to, dare I say, yes, the Leader of the Labour Party to get in order his members and actually say to them "This is the constructive way we are moving forward" and it is also up to the Greens because what we have heard today is that the major Opposition parties have said that they want to sit down with the administration and they want to actually talk about these major issues. Councillor David Blackburn said that is the advice he has given the Labour Group as well. He has told him that that is what should be happening as well.

I say to Councillor Ann Blackburn, if the Leader of the Labour Group still continues to reject that advice and will not sit down with the principal parties in Opposition, what are you doing to do, because it comes down to the Greens, frankly, and we would hope the Greens would actually see the view of all of the other Opposition parties and say yes, we should be working constructively and working together, that is the offer that has been made but you need to lead it, Councillor Wakefield, and you need to lead it constructively. *(Applause)*.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, John. Can I announce before I forget that you have collected £199.13 for the Pakistani Flood Appeal. Well done, thank you very much. *(Applause)*

COUNCILLOR: Who gave the 13 pence?

THE LORD MAYOR: I don't know! I am sure we will make it up to £200 before the end of the night. J L Carter, please.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: Lord Mayor, I have no intention of starting knock-about this time of night. The only point I would make – and I have two points which I think you must take on board, and your party must take on board. Who cause the problem, who did not cause the problem – all those arguments, we can stand here and shout at each other all day long but there is one thing we cannot get away from. We currently only fund for about three-quarters of the services that we provide across this country. The other we borrow. There is no way we can continue as a country to continue borrowing to pay for our day to day things. If we do, we are going to be in serious trouble. There is no point in saying "Oh, it is all his fault, their fault."

I do think – and I think the point was made over there, I have forgotten who made it - towards the end of the Government, not when Brown first went in, there was a hell of a lot of money spent. I know this – I spent a lot of it! I spent a heck of a lot in housing and I know I would always get the money to spend in the city, I spent a fortune, but there was so much money spent in those years, there could not have been anything left.

The only point, I come back to Councillor Yeadon for a second. Councillor Yeadon, you have got a tough job. When we were in power we did some minor things as far as Adult Services were concerned and every one you accused Peter Harrand of being he devil incarnate. He was the most evil person that walked the

face of the earth, even though he is one of the most mild men I know. You are expecting him, you are going to come forward with Adult Services reductions, which you need to make, changes to the way services run, and you are going to say, "Oh, we must all work together, we must all stick together." I think you need to go on your knees and go and ask Peter first, before you start coming across before we give you that kind of support. (*hear, hear*)

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Absolutely.

COUNCILLOR J L PROCTER: You were wrong and you were not right in the way that you did it in the past.

I was interested to see Councillor Atha say that schools were assets. Obviously he is proposing to sell them now. He is obviously into that market, he might be selling schools.

Going back to David – he has left now – there has been, and Bernard knows more than any of us, I was born in the war and I know what it was like after the war. Which war? Don't be cheeky! It might have been the Korean War, actually! (*Laughter*) Or was it Vietnam? I am not certain.

COUNCILLOR: I think Boer War.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: I know what it was like after that war. It was a miserable existence. We had a great time as kids, don't get me wrong, but it was not a good existence and it was not till the late 1950s and early 1960s till things started going, and really started going. After 1957 we thought it was fantastic, the sixties came along and it was great, but we went through a long period when the country had that problem at that time – debt, debt, debt and could not get out of it and it had to go forward.

I say back to Keith – and he has left the Chamber (I don't know where he's gone, I did not mean to upset him!) – all I say back to him is, if he wants people to come forward and work with him, I think people will work with him for the good of the city but it is two ways. It is not hiding documents, it is not having this – I have been cheeky enough and looked at this confidential document now. I pinched it off him. I have looked at it and there is nothing in there – there is nothing in there – that should have gone below the line or there is nothing that members of this Council should not have seen. Nothing in there which members of Council should not have seen.

If we cannot be honest and up front with each other on things as minor as that and as small in sums – they are not minor matters, they are important matters but they are important in sums – then it will not work. You are going to have to come clean, you are going to have to come forward and say "This is where we are, this is what we want to propose" and then you have a chance. Also, as I say, go on your knees and say to Peter "Please will you help us again." You might then find you have got a chance and I think that is where we want to be in this Council but do not think we do not have to do it, do not believe that we can continue to only fund three-quarters of our public expenditure and the other quarter we have to borrow from. The only alternative to that, of course, is taxation – massive taxation – which would put us back even further. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Les. Can I call on Stuart Golton now, please.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I have only got five minutes so I am not going to spend too much time on some of the rhetorical stuff but

there were several direct questions that I was asked to address and one of them was whether or not I thought that it was regressive or progressive in terms of the response of the Coalition Government to the financial situation that we are in.

One thing that I will say, Lord Mayor, is that I do not think that we were given a very progressive environment in which to govern. I can assure you, Lord Mayor, that I do not think it was particularly progressive that such sucking up to the city led us to the highest level of indebtedness this nation has ever seen...

COUNCILLOR ATHA: But what is the answer to the question?

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: ...to the point where any Government in charge is having to make some very, very hard decisions and, of course, on top of that going to war costs quite a lot of money and I am sure that that money could have been a lot better spent in some of our local areas, so I hope that sorts out the regressive or progressive argument.

COUNCILLOR ATHA: No, you have not answered it.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: I would like to concentrate now Lord Mayor, if that is OK, in terms of bringing my debate to Councillor Yeadon. I think Councillor Yeadon has been very progressive herself today in terms of saying what are we here to discuss and I think we can best do that by concentrating on the local agenda. It is not a good idea to talk about is it Gordon Brown, is it this – no, we need to talk about the local agenda and I will try and explain why this particular motion was put forward.

It is not about the blame game. It is about priorities and it is about principles. All public bodies and services – and we are responsible for a very large part of that in the city – they can all work differently to save money. In the same way, private companies have to adapt to survive. Therefore, it is unjust, for instance, to pass on the largest part of the cuts to our partners who might be least able to withstand it and that is one of the reasons why we brought the reference back today.

Also, Lord Mayor, we need to make choices about what we want to continue with and what we can allow others to take on the task of doing. We need to change the way that we shape and spend on services locally in our own neighbourhoods to make sure that they are better value for money for those customers and those communities that they serve. We need to examine our structures to make them fit for the modern agenda and we need to build consensus on emergency short-term measures to see us through the worst times that are ahead in the next few months, Lord Mayor. That is what I want to work on and when I have someone like Councillor Wakefield saying to me “We want to work together”, that is the kind of agenda I want to work together on and if that is the agenda which is offered, I am more than happy to come forward.

What I will not do is to provide a political smokescreen for tackling some difficult areas and then leaving other areas where the party opposite might want to protect some vested interests untouched. That is not what I am about and I do not think it is fair for the people of Leeds to leave those agenda out, so I would be very, very keen to find out what that agenda is.

Lord Mayor, we have been told that we have got ideologically driven attacks on public services by what has come out of our Government. I would suggest that unfortunately locally what we have had is ideologically driven responses. In fact, the Leader of Council has had so many knee jerk reactions he has injured himself.
(Laughter)

If we look again, Councillor Matthews was the one who pointed out how many papers have come to Executive Board and how many of them have actually addressed the dire financial situation that we are in – a dire financial situation which was heralded this time last year, so we have all had plenty of time to actually consider our options. We have had three Council meetings, we have had 57 papers and we had to wait till the third meeting before we got any proposals put forward in terms of how we were supposed to tackle the in-year reduction budget from Central Government. That is in contrast to other Authorities and, I have to say, Sheffield, which is a Lib Dem Authority – they have brought forward quite similar responses to the Area Based Grant in terms of they also took some savings in Children's Services, but what they also proposed was a discussion that would be held with the people of Sheffield – and we don't hold that against them...

COUNCILLOR HANLEY: Only for now.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: ... with public services in the city, with employers within the Council that would cover areas such as a suggested pay freeze, freezing increments, flexible working options, revising redundancy packages and processes, review of all major projects, working towards a zero per cent Council tax increase, review of all payments and subscriptions to other bodies and undertaking a cost and benefit review of ALMOs.

That is quite an ambitious agenda to take forward and I think what we are complaining about here, Lord Mayor, is that we have no vision from the administration opposite – that might have had something to do with the fact that they did not actually have a manifesto to fight on in the elections so they had nothing to offer us, and if we actually have a look to the budget debate and what was proposed there, for instance an £800,000 a year cut in press and media – we have had none of those things suggested in the first hundred days of this administration and due to the delay in the list of decisions where over 40% of them are over three months behind, we are under the suspicion that what this administration prefers to do is to hide behind the Corporate Spending Review coming in October and saying, "It is all to do with the Coalition Government" instead of taking responsibility for locally based decisions. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Golton. Can I call on Councillor Taggart now, please.

COUNCILLOR TAGGART: Thank you very much, Lord Mayor. Of course, I reserved the right to speak. I read the text of Andrew Carter's White Paper and it made me think of the answer, and the answer was the year 1973. Why do I think of 1973? It was the first year of the elections for the newly formed City of Leeds Metropolitan District Council and now here we are 37 years later and we have had a series of elections throughout all that time and only actually for a minute three year period was there ever a Tory overall majority in Leeds Metropolitan District, between 1976 and 1979. For no other period in that 37 year period of history were the Tories in absolute power, control in this Council Chamber. Even when they were, their biggest majority was four.

They don't like it – well, like Corporal Jones, they don't like it up 'em. They are bad losers. They do not like the fact they lost the elections in May...

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: This is working together, is it? (*Laughter*)

COUNCILLOR TAGGART: I am not talking about working together, I am talking about telling the truth here. (*Interruption*) The fact is you were rejected by the electorate and so was the little group of Liberal Democrats over there, they were

rejected by the electorate of Leeds and they took a different decision about who would be running this Council. They do not like that so they pretend, "We want to work with you in partnership". Actually our job is to represent all the people in Leeds and do our best endeavours to make sure that the impact of the cuts is minimised.
(Applause)

When Margaret Thatcher was Prime Minister she always said "There is no alternative". Do you remember that? There is always an alternative, there is always another way and this Government we have at national level has got two main policies – fear and lies. Fear and lies.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: This is working together. Co-operation.

COUNCILLOR TAGGART: One of the biggest lies is about debt, that debt itself is somehow evil.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: What a joke.

COUNCILLOR TAGGART: It should be abhorred, it should be rejected. What a load of rubbish. The whole of our society works on debt, on credit. Hands up anyone here who has got a mortgage or has paid off a mortgage? Most of us, yes? They are all tenants, obviously!

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: I would not vote for anything you say.

COUNCILLOR TAGGART: If we did not borrow money we would not be able to buy houses. The same goes for cars. The two biggest purchases that individuals make in their lives tend to be a house and a motor car and nearly all of us borrow money to buy a house and a motor car – we often borrow money for other things as well – and in fact when the Tories were in power in the 1980s they deliberately pursued a policy to encourage as many of us as possible to have this plastic rubbish because it would assist consumer spending and make it look as though the economy was doing well.

Actually, we need debt, we need credit; that is why the banks exist. The banks exist to lend money. If no-one borrowed their money they would go out of business.

Ordinary people can relate to the fact, though, that in their daily lives they do their best not to have debt and certainly not to have unsustainable debt, and that is what the Tory Government is trying to appeal to, that particular good instinct – good instinct.

Governments over the ages have borrowed money. Companies borrow money. You hear about takeovers. How did the Glazers buy Manchester United? Borrowed money, apparently, so the system works money on debt, debt, debt.

There are some people for whom a great sum of money is a great debt to an accountant but some of us might have a different view of that piece of money. We might use words like "Building Schools for the Future" because that is about the future of our children and our infrastructure and having a properly educated and trained workforce. For some people that is regarded as debt. For some of us it is regarded as investment for the future. We had over a century – you can still go to schools in Leeds and see the date above the door, 1870-something, 1880-something. You look at some of the schools we had in Leeds and the state that they were in. You look at some of the state of the National Health Service hospitals when the Tories were in power. You look at the state of the waiting lists.

I am glad actually that if it took the Government some bold steps in terms of how it funded what it did, it was good because it was good for the people in this country.

I used to work for Wakefield Council Planning Department and my job covered the whole of the Wakefield district and I saw what Tory policies did in the mining villages – South Kirkby, South Elmsall, just to give you – I can remember where all the shops were thriving and where everyone was in work. You go there now, half of them are closed down. There is drugs, there is violence, there is crime, there is alcoholism. There is child abuse.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Because of 13 years of your Government.

COUNCILLOR TAGGART: All of it thanks to Thatcher because the Tories do not care. *(Interruption)* *(Applause)* The Tory's policy is leave it to the market, the market will provide. I am sorry, the market will not provide in places like Barrow in Furness or in Sunderland or in Castleford and the people will be allowed to go to the dogs.

We are a civilised nation, we are not going to put up with it. This administration will do its best to manage with what we have. We do not like what we have but we are here to fight on behalf of the people, not make apologies for your vicious Ministers in London who promote over-cutting. It may well be the Liberal Democrats – who look very uncomfortable this afternoon with all this – are unhappy but some of the Tories are ideologically driven. They are against public spending *per se* and they are there to represent the interests of big business and the bankers and that is why we are here and you are there. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: David, Ann, that is working together, is it?

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Shows how much they listen to you.

COUNCILLOR TAGGART: I can do more if you want!

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Hamilton, I guess you have got to follow that.

COUNCILLOR M HAMILTON: It is going to be difficult, Lord Mayor. I have to say, I have enjoyed the debate this afternoon and hearing from I suppose that great trinity of economists - we have heard Caine, we have heard Freeman, we have heard Taggart. I have to say whereas Freeman and Caine have different opposing economic views, at least they were coherent. *(Laughter)* If we ever end up in a situation where the country takes guidance from Neil Taggart then we really are going to the dogs. I really think that.

I have to say, Neil, it was a great speech, it was very entertaining but what about the Iraq War? What about the billions that were spent on that? Does your party have no responsibility for the money spent on that? *(Interruption)* Forget it, Neil, forget it.

What I wanted to say, Lord Mayor, we do have clearly some difficult decisions to make over the course of the next few years and I am not sure that intervention of Councillor Taggart has particularly helped in making those difficult decisions within this Council Chamber? If that is what co-operation looks like then I hate to see what opposition looks like.

Lord Mayor, we need to, it seems, to me, try and come to some sensible decisions on some very major financial issues in a timely way, absolutely, but that does not mean to say that we should throw out all the information that we need to make sensible decisions. I was one of the members that attended the Scrutiny Board meeting this morning and I have to say, if the way in which a decision about £2m-worth of expenditure, if that is a guide as to how decisions are going to be made about £2m, when we have the really big decisions after the spending review, which will be tens of millions of pounds, potentially, if that is the approach Labour are going to take on this issue, I really am very concerned about how these bigger decisions are going to be dealt with. We have no information to back up these figures on the pink pages, no information whatsoever. As Councillor Procter has said, some cuts are 2%, some cuts are 25% - we do not know what the rationale is.

If the party opposite wants us to co-operate and wants us to provide support in these difficult times, they have to give us the information, they have to tell us why they are making the decisions. Then we can say yes or no. In the absence of that there is a vacuum and I am afraid then we have to say no because we simply cannot make a judgment. I think you must understand that that is the problem here. We are not actually making political points about these pink pages, we are making a very sensible point about process, about information, about what we tell the Council Chamber and what we tell Councillors. The fact that that was absent meant we were not able to support the decision continuing.

Lord Mayor, it seems to me that Councillor Golton may have put his finger on it here, we are very happy, or at least we are prepared to support the administration in making some difficult decisions. What we cannot do is provide political cover for the opposition when those decisions are either wrong or where the information is lacking or where the decisions are basically inappropriate for this city. Yes, we will stand with the Labour Party where we can but I have to say, the signs from today are very, very unpromising, with Councillor Taggart's intervention, with the fiasco this morning over the pink pages. If that is the way things are going it is going to be very difficult for us to co-operate and believe me, we do want to co-operate where we can. The way things are going, I am afraid that looks very unlikely at the moment. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Hamilton. Can I call on Councillor Marjoram now, please.

COUNCILLOR MARJORAM: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Boos already and I have not started! I remember at the last Council meeting Councillor Lamb treated us to a very energetic and tub-thumping speech which Keith Wakefield described as a party piece and I think following on from Neil Taggart we ought to consider ourselves very privileged to have heard them both in the same debate. I would, however, like to return to what Councillor Yeadon said earlier about looking to the future and how we deal with the current situation here in Leeds.

I think the first thing I would like to point out is that however much we want to see the economy return to growth and however necessary in our lives or as a Government over time borrowing may be, we are faced with a structural deficit and that means, as you all know, as do most of the public, despite Gordon's best efforts to confuse the deficit and the debt during the election, even if the economy returns to growth we will not raise enough money to pay for what we are spending. That will mean that for all of us this will be a difficult time over the next few years and it has been said by more than one person, we need to consider how we do that together and it is in the spirit of that co-operation I am going first of all to recommend a new job for Gordon Brown, at whose door I would lay a lion's share of this blame. I am unusual here, my Lord Mayor, because I think Gordon Brown should go off and be a

stockbroker. The reason is that I was once told a stockbroker is a man that invests your money until it is all gone, and that is where it is – it has gone and we have to live collectively with the consequences and you will have to live as an administration in Leeds with decisions taken by a different Government in London, and that will be difficult for all of us.

Let us just look at the facts as we see them so far and the spirit of co-operation that Councillor Yeadon has called for.

My Lord Mayor, I asked three questions at call in earlier today regarding the in-year cuts in grants and I address these particularly to the Morley Borough Independents and the Green Party, with the vote not far away. I ask, is it clear to members from the white or pink papers what the percentage amount of cut is for each organisation? Answer, no. Is it clear to members from the white or pink papers whether any groups will be jeopardised, their very existence jeopardised, by these in-year reductions? Answer, no. Is it clear to members from the white or pink papers whether any grants are actually contracts and cannot be reduced in-year? Answer, no. That is no way to run not even one department but a city and it is about time that the people of the Labour Party opposite paid heed to what some of their members like Councillor Yeadon and others preach in this Chamber – a spirit of co-operation and one where we collectively try and address the very difficult years that will lie ahead.

Do you think with the answers that I have given that you have got off to a particularly good start or that you have got anything in this matter, all the playing field charges to be proud of, and the answer so far is no and no. David, even yourself, you said you are not keen on the Labour amendment. Here is an opportunity to take on board what many of us have said about how we address this problem in the months and years ahead.

COUNCILLOR LYONS: Don't listen to him, David.

COUNCILLOR MARJORAM: Ah well, you see, there is dear old Mick who will be talking about Margaret Thatcher just like Neil Taggart. Let us look at now, today, where we go from here in this city and how we deal with it.

The answer, I would suggest, is to send Labour, just this once, back to the drawing board and say you have got this wrong and you need to think again and you can do that tonight, particular the Greens and the MBIs, by backing our amendment and I would urge you to do so. Thank you, my Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Marjoram. Can I call on Councillor Blake now, please.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I think it would be stating the obvious to say that we are living through unprecedented times and facing great uncertainty. What we do know is that people in this city have already started to lose their jobs and there are young people in this city who have been denied opportunities for their future development.

I think the consensus running round the room is really that we do want to work together as a city and that includes, within this Council, all party involvement. We will commit to bringing a paper to the next Executive Board to lay out the process by which we can do that in anticipation of the spending review coming forward.

However, I do hope you will forgive me for taking this opportunity to set the record straight on some of the things that have been said today, and I do have to say

that the hypocrisy in the wording of your White Paper beggars belief. I think it really does highlight the state of denial that you are with regard to your own performance in office.

I would like to take your points one by one. You highlight lost opportunity, and can I start by endorsing the comments that Alan Lamb has made about Eleanor Brazil. Indeed, I am making these comments in many meetings that I go to. She has made a tremendous contribution in taking Children's Services forward in this city, but I keep telling her that she has still got two and a half weeks to go – Nigel is not coming until the end of September so she still has a job to do.

Let us not forget why we have Eleanor in Leeds and I will tell you what lost opportunity – which is one of the points you make – means to Children's Services in Leeds. It means six years of you failing to give leadership for setting up a new department; complete lack of member involvement; and a catalogue of denial to accept the real structural problems you have allowed to develop.

This all led to the Ofsted report's condemnation of failure. We have inherited a department in intervention with a Government Improvement Board, a department in crisis and on top of this we are facing, at this moment in time, a predicted deficit of £6m, which is probably rising. You had a tremendous opportunity to put Children's Services on a sound footing and you blew it.

Let us move to procrastination, the next point you raise. Lord Mayor, in 2002 the Education Act of the Labour Government changed the rules working through and schools have been provided since then with approximately £8m to fund the changes giving governing bodies responsibilities for the delivery of extended services including community access to schools.

Of course, this should have led to a review of our lettings policy and, let us be clear, this costs us an average of £800,000 a year. As far as I am aware, your Executive Board Member for Children's Services and Education finally got round to discussing it for 2008/09 and then they dropped it. They discussed it again for inclusion in the 2009/10 budget and, you have guessed it, they dropped it again.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Who has told you that, then?

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: They finally included it in the budget for 2010/11 but did not think it was important enough to tell anyone and then, what else would you expect, insisted that the decision be delayed until after the election. Well, what a surprise. This is procrastination on a scale...

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Scandalous. Scandalous.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: ... that has already cost Children's Services in the region of £2m. They are now trying to delay it further by calling in their own budget decision at a risk of further delay that would cost this Council £75,000 a month.

This brings me to consultation. Could one of your members tell me where the consultation was to cut the Area Based Grant overnight, where the consultation was to fast track the academy programme for excellent schools, for introducing free schools, for slashing the BSF programme, for stopping the roll-out of the increased eligibility of free school meals, and where was the consultation that would have shown the massive impact these cuts will have on the most vulnerable people in Leeds, or that 70% of the cuts will impact most on women?

The problem we have got here today is the cuts announced so far have been brutal and unplanned and unprecedented in the form of in-year cuts. That is the problem that we are dealing with now, that they are taking money out of this year's budget. Let us move on but I hope you will pass that message back - I know many of you are very uncomfortable with the decisions that have been taken so far - and then let us work together for the benefit of the people of Leeds. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Blake. Can I call on Councillor Campbell, please.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Thank you, Lord Mayor. It is almost a case of *déjà vu* this afternoon. I was talking to Andrew earlier on and saying that those of us who have been in the Chamber some time will recall 20-odd years ago when this debate was held on a regular basis. The protagonists were slightly different, the members of the Government were slightly different but one thing you could always guarantee was at some point during the debate Councillor Taggart would get up and make a speech which was good on volume and histrionics and low on fact.

It is nice to see him back. I got slightly worried, actually, when I was re-elected to Councillor in 2004, Councillor Taggart had lost his edge and he ended up being Mayor...

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Along with his mind, you mean. *(Laughter)*

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: He had mellowed down a bit and things were not quite the same. I always felt...

COUNCILLOR: We cannot hear you.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: And his hearing. *(Laughter)*

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: I always felt that the world was a better place when you had the guaranteed double Labour Party, one of which comprised Councillor Taggart and one of which comprised of everybody else.

I would just say, Councillor Taggart, in relation to your economic skills, debt in itself, as you said, is not a bad thing. What is a bad thing is if you cannot pay it back. I notice that at the moment we are being asked to pay £800m a day just to service the debt. We are not paying anything back. Every man, woman and child in this country...

COUNCILLOR HANLEY: RBS are, Colin.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: ...are stuck with a bill for £800m a day.

We have to pay that back. We cannot continue borrowing money. Somebody, I have forgotten who it was, basically said the borrowing requirement was down by £12m, wasn't it, so we could actually use that £12m to pay off the debt. That is still a borrowing and we still have to pay it back.

Councillor Wakefield and Councillor Yeadon – I looked at Councillor Yeadon and it is nice to see you doing so well in the Labour Party, I am very pleased for you, particularly as you have got such a difficult portfolio and in some ways you have our sympathy, but I saw that slight look of pain cross your face with Neil set on about, in the good old-fashioned, gung ho, tell it like it is Labour Party. It would seem to me either Keith – and I have to ask you this question – there are either two Labour

Parties or there is one Labour Party. There is the Labour Party that I think you were trying to expound to us which is the inclusive Labour Party, which would come across and say to us, "We are all in a crisis together, we all need to work together and we all need to sort this out" and I think if you listen round the Chamber most people have said, "Yes, OK, we can go with that", or we have got the Neil Taggart Labour Party which, surprisingly enough, raised quite a few cheers at the back, of "To heck with you lot, we are going to do what we used to do in the good old days of Mrs Thatcher and blame the Government for every single thing that we get wrong." You have got that choice. You have got that choice.

I will say two more things. Keith – I am sorry, Keith, I am sorry to interrupt your little chat. I will say two more things. If you are really committed to this principle of bringing everybody in the tent – I think that was Gordon Brown's phrase, wasn't it – then I am challenging you to come up with a date where that meeting will be held before the next Council meeting.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Very good.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Second point, and I think looking round at the Labour members who appear to have lost the will to live after Councillor Blake's speech (*Interruption*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Colin. Can I call on Councillor Grayshon now, please.

COUNCILLOR GRAYSHON: I am sorry, Lord Mayor, I was waiting for Colin to finish then. I must have nodded off as well. (*Laughter*)

So, where are we with this discussion this afternoon? Rather than deciding that there is a fundamental problem which we need to address, which at one point I thought we were going to do, we then had the theatrics of my dear friend Councillor Taggart who is always jolly good fun.

COUNCILLOR: He's right and you are wrong.

COUNCILLOR GRAYSHON: That is a matter of opinion.

COUNCILLOR: It is a matter of fact.

COUNCILLOR GRAYSHON: It is your opinion as well. The question is really, for me, whilst we are discussing this in this Chamber it is all interesting and it is an important thing and it is what we should be doing, we should be moving forward to a consensus of opinion to address the problems which we have at the moment, but I think we should also be asking what are our MPs doing, because I think they are in a much better position than we are to deal with these issues, and I have not seen any of them jumping up and down. Perhaps if they were as animated as Neil in the Palace of Westminster about things then we might be on to a better thing in getting things resolved a bit quicker than they are.

I have noticed on a number of occasions this afternoon people have been saying "the banks". I will declare an interest, I work for the Royal Bank of Scotland.

COUNCILLOR: It is not his fault.

COUNCILLOR GRAYSHON: It is not my fault at all and I do not think it is appropriate that people in this Chamber are saying it is the fault of the banks when there are hundreds if not thousands of people in this city who work for banks who

have been made redundant. If you think it is funny go down to Victoria Place and speak to some of my colleagues down there who are being made redundant. I do not think they will share your levity on the matter.

One thing that Neil did say during his pantomimic performance is possibly a phrase as we are coming up to pantomime season, of course, and I am sure tickets will be available for his performance.

COUNCILLOR TAGGART: Morley Town Hall.

COUNCILLOR GRAYSHON: You are more than welcome to come to Morley Town Hall. I think you were there the other week, someone had a lion, I seem to remember, or a tiger.

You mentioned Morley. It is interesting that neither the Labour Party nor the Liberals nor the Conservatives have any sort of relevance to Morley these days apart from being here and I would just ask you to bear in mind that situation, that we are here, we are willing to discuss any ideas that people have and work with – so long as it is a sensible discussion, so Ted obviously will not be involved (*Laughter*) – we are more than willing to discuss things but in a sensible forum and this is an important issue, we do need to get it right and I think really we need to stop yahboo-ing and “he said, she said” across the room. That is not going to get us anywhere. We are in very difficult times and we need to move forward with it.

At that, Lord Mayor, I will close. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Grayshon. Can I call on Andrew Carter now to sum up.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. Can I begin by apologising to members of Council, particularly the newer members, because I did not think that the debate and motion I brought forward today would make you have to witness Councillor Taggart’s speech before it was absolutely necessary. Those of us who have been here for many years, Councillor Taggart always harks back to the past. In fact, I do not think he ever grew out of short trousers. That speech, I have heard that speech probably once a year for 25 years. He has been a bit quiet recently, Colin, you are quite right and some members may think thank God for that. However, I watched the faces of the more serious Labour members as they seemed to pay - Councillor Blake began to fill in her football pools; Councillor Lewis closed his eyes; Councillor Wakefield got up and walked away; and Councillor Gruen shook his head. Even Councillor Gruen shook his head! My Lord Mayor, they must have been watching co-operation drip down the drain in front of their very eyes, but do not worry, we all know Neil. We all know the speech. Indeed, I even have it written...

COUNCILLOR ATHA: What contribution is this speech making...

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: I even have it written down along with your speech, Bernard. My Lord Mayor, on to more serious issues.

COUNCILLOR ATHA: About time.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Councillor Blake – more serious issues - that does not include you, Councillor Atha. Councillor Blake’s intervention. I thought that first she had been fielded to try and bring some common sense and cross-party working back into the debate. I have to say, it is the worst speech I have ever heard her make. Quite appalling that the Deputy Leader of Council should get up and discuss what she purports to be details of the previous administration’s plans or not-

plans on subsidised use of playing fields. I do not know what she is talking about. I know when we were in power no officer ever told us what the previous administration might have been planning or not unless it was in a public paper. This certainly was not. I do not recall a discussion, so where has it come from? Councillor Blake, it is appalling and it brings me back - you may well laugh but you will be judged by your words. We will go back to some of the other issues that now seem to link up.

So, we have discussions in Cabinet of the previous administration that may or may not have happened – I do not recall them – we have a paper that the Acting Chief Exec of Children's Services supposedly the member wanted to come to Executive Board and somebody stopped it - who, and which officer allowed it to happen? It would not have happened under our regime. Thirdly, we then have a pink paper listing savage reductions in the voluntary sector's money that is kept under wraps. That is political cowardice, my Lord Mayor, pure and simple and it is a very poor way to start your administration in difficult times.

I sincerely hope we are not going back 25 years, 20 years to the days of John Trickett because this has all the hallmarks of it.

COUNCILLOR TAGGART: A fine Leader.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Was that Councillor Taggart? *(Laughter)* Oh yes, well, there we are. There we are. Excellent, it was Councillor Taggart. Enough said.

My Lord Mayor, Councillor Wakefield mentioned and Councillor Yeadon mentioned the situation in Adult Social Care. I just feel I have got to point out to you that when our administration took over six years ago, that was an administration - and Councillor Taggart has never got over it - that he predicted would last six months and it lasted six years. It sounds a bit like what they are saying about the Coalition Government.

COUNCILLOR TAGGART: I put the digit in the wrong place, that's all.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: My Lord Mayor, when we took over they left us reserves at a dangerously low level. We have left behind reserves of £65.5m, a general reserve fund of £16m – double what they left – a housing revenue account of £18m reserves, school reserves of £18m PFI scheme reserves of £6.2m, a capital reserve of £1.7m and other reserves totalling £5.2m. That is millions and millions of pounds more than we inherited from them six years ago and he knows it too.

Additional to that we saved them £2.5m a year on refuse collection. Do not come whinging to us about you have been left a poor legacy. My goodness, the new Government would absolutely cheer from the rooftops to have a legacy with any balances instead of a note from the former Chief Secretary to the Treasury that says, "Sorry, the money has all gone." That is how good you lot are so you ain't going to get away from what your Government have left, the mess you have left this country in.

I will make the offer again though, for the last time. We have all said we are prepared to work constructively on agreed items where we can make reductions even though none of us want to make any of them. What we are not going to have is any more of this political chicanery from you and I sincerely hope we are not going to have senior officers bullied into reports not being brought that should be brought because it is wholly unacceptable in the modern world of Local Government.

My Lord Mayor, on a slightly lighter note, one thing that I picked up from notes about Gordon Brown. Apparently, as you will know, he sold gold at the lowest point in the market. It cost this country £10b. It is referred to by the traders as Brown Bottom. My Lord Mayor, we all know precisely what the results of Brown Bottom is now. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Carter. Can I now call for the vote.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Can I call for a recorded vote, Lord Mayor?

THE LORD MAYOR: Is there a seconder? Yes, there is a seconder. The first one will be the amendment in the name of Councillor Keith Wakefield.

(A recorded vote was taken on the amendment)

THE LORD MAYOR: There are 96 present, 47 “yes”, two abstentions and 47 “no”, which means the vote is tied *(Laughter)* so I shall cast my casting vote in favour of Councillor Wakefield’s amendment. *(Applause)*

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: The end of the Lord Mayoralty. I watched exactly what happened, Lord Mayor. You watched the result of the vote on there, this gentleman came and told you and then you voted and that is what happened and that is, I am afraid, to say, my Lord Mayor, quite appalling.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Lord Mayor...

THE LORD MAYOR: Two on your feet, please. One sit down. Bernard, sit down for a minute.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Lord Mayor, can I seek some clarification from the Monitoring Officer in terms of the Constitution of Council. My understanding is that for a vote not count you have to use it when the vote is taken. You then get a right also for the casting vote. My understanding from what has been said is the vote was taken, the result was known and then the Lord Mayor exercised his vote.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Lord Mayor, I do not think you have to answer that. I think that is entirely unacceptable.

THE LORD MAYOR: I do not have to answer it, it is the Monitoring Officer who knows, but she has said the vote was not concluded.

THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE (Corporate Governance): The vote was not concluded when the Lord Mayor exercised his first vote.

COUNCILLOR: Can we move to next business, Lord Mayor?

THE LORD MAYOR: Is it possible that we can move on to the substantive motion?

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Recorded vote, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: You requested a recorded vote.

(A recorded vote was taken on the substantive motion)

THE LORD MAYOR: There are 96 Councillors voting. The “yes” vote is 47, abstentions two and the “no” vote is 47. I therefore shall use my casting vote in favour of the motion. It is exactly the same as last time. I have used my casting vote in favour of the substantive motion. Thank you.

ITEM 10 – WHITE PAPER MOTION – POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now in the winding up part of the meeting. Can I ask Councillor Lowe, please, to rise and formally move.

COUNCILLOR LOWE: Lord Mayor, may I ask leave of Council to incorporate the wording of Councillor Carter’s amendment into the White Paper in my name.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Carter?

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: I am not sure what I have to do, Lord Mayor, but I agree. *(Laughter)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Can I seek leave of Council to agree? AGREED. Councillor J L Carter, please.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: My Lord Mayor, I believe now I have got to remove mine?

THE LORD MAYOR: Yes.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: Right, I have done it.

THE LORD MAYOR: Can we have leave of Council for that? AGREED. Can we move on to Councillor Lowe again, please, to formally move?

COUNCILLOR LOWE: You all will be happy to know that my very long speech I will not read – I will formally move it.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: Lord Mayor, it was a fine speech but I second.

THE LORD MAYOR: One of your best, Les. Can we move to the vote? *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

ITEM 11 – WHITE PAPER MOTION – WORLD CUP 2018 ‘BACK THE BID’ CAMPAIGN

THE LORD MAYOR: Can we go on to White Paper number 11, Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: Could I formally move the White Paper, Lord Mayor?

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Formally second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Can I call for the vote on that please? *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

That concludes the business, thank you, colleagues, and a safe journey home.

(The meeting closed at 7.54 pm)