

**LEEDS CITY COUNCIL**

**MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

Held on

Wednesday, 28<sup>th</sup> March, 2012

At

THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,  
CIVIC HALL,  
LEEDS

In the Chair:

THE LORD MAYOR  
(COUNCILLOR REV A TAYLOR)

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**VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS**

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VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF LEEDS CITY COUNCIL  
MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 28<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2012

THE LORD MAYOR: I now close that section of the meeting and we move on to the Ordinary Meeting and once again, for the benefit of the people in the public gallery, we are moving to page 2. Can I just repeat my earlier advice about the mobile telephones to make sure that they are all switched off.

I do have two announcements to make. I am conscious that at the end of this meeting there will be certain Councillors who will be retiring. I think it is only appropriate that they are mentioned on this occasion.

In particular, Denise Atkinson; she is one of the city's longest serving Councillors. She was first elected to represent Bramley in 1971 when she was just 22 years old. Later she chaired Leeds Bradford Airport for ten years when it was owned by Yorkshire's five Authorities and she became Lord Mayor of the City in 1992. During her Mayoral year she raised £862,000 to convert the derelict Lineham Farm into a children's holiday and educational centre. She currently chairs the West (Inner) Area Committee and we all know that she is retiring due to ill health and we wish her well. *(Applause)*

Secondly, Ben Chastney, who was elected in 2008 and who has sat on Plans Panel and Adoption Panel as well as chairing Inner North West Area Committee, which has been the highest profile of young people in the city.

Ben has worked hard during his time on the Council and he is leaving to further his career in immigration law, and we wish you well on that, Ben. Thank you. *(Applause)*

Geoff Driver joined the Council in 1978 when he was elected to represent Hunslet and, over the past 30 years, he has tirelessly devoted himself to campaigning for the people he represented, involving himself in such groups as Belle Isle Elderly Winter Aid, and showing a particular passion for education. He has held a number of roles during his time on the Council, including Chair of the Education Committee, and he currently chairs the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee and represents Middleton Park. All the very best, Geoff, on your retirement. *(Applause)*

Penny Ewens was elected to Council in 2004 and, as a former teacher, was proud to serve as a school governor at City of Leeds. I think I am correct in saying this, as the oldest serving Councillor she has not been known for keeping silent about her campaigns and, in fact, is still actively campaigning for an improved Careers Advice Service in the city. Well done, Penny, and long may that continue. *(Applause)*

Ronnie Feldman was elected to Council on 13 May 1971 and he will finish on 3<sup>rd</sup> May, having served for 40 years. During his time on the Council he has been Chair, Shadow Chair and as a member of most committees on the City Council. He enjoyed being a Director of Leeds United when the club won the First Division in 1972, the year before the Premier League was established – and there were some of us who would wish he was back there right now! *(laughter)* He was Deputy Lord Mayor in 1983 and 84 and Lord Mayor in 1991 and 1992 – a worthy contribution to the life of our city, so thank you, Ronnie. *(Applause)*

The list goes on! Graham Kirkland was first elected to Otley Urban District Council in the 1960s and he has served 34 years on the Council while juggling the role of the local general practitioner.

Graham was the first Liberal Democrat Lord Mayor since the war and, as Lord Mayor, raised over £100,000 for the Royal National Institute for the Blind and John Westmoreland Trust.

He received an honorary award in recognition of over 20 years' service on the West Yorkshire Fire Authority and he campaigned to have water sprinklers in all Leeds schools and that is a worthy record, so thank you, Graham. (*Applause*)

Matthew Lobley – from blond to mousey! (*laughter*) Elected to Council in 2003 and has been passionate about over-development and building in gardens, and he has been highly critical of all that has gone on there. At the same time, he has been supporting investment in road surfacing. Matthew was Area Committee Chair for a number of years and was Chair of Renew, first as a Councillor, and he is still on that Committee. I suppose one of his claims to fame is that while standing as a Parliamentary candidate twice he was not ashamed to drive around for a year in a car with a green tree and his name emblazoned across it! All the very best, Matthew, and thank you for all you have done. (*Applause*)

Last but not least, Keith Parker. Keith is a retired miner, having first gone down the Ledston Luck pit in 1952 as a pony driver. He was 16 at the time. He was first elected for Barwick and Kippax ward in 1986 and he has represented Kippax and Methley since 2004.

Keith was Lord Mayor in 1999 to 2000 and he is currently Chair of Outer East Area Committee. He has been a Councillor for 36 years and he is passionate about sporting activities, in particular for young people, so thank you, Keith, for all that you have done. (*Applause*)

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Lord Mayor, can I please interject? That was not the last.

THE LORD MAYOR: On what grounds?

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Keith Parker was one of the Titans of the Council Chamber but he certainly was not last and least on your list, Lord Mayor, because we are all aware that you, too, will be standing down as a Councillor this year and I know that at the Mayoral AGM there will be opportunities to talk about your Mayoral year, but I thought it would be appropriate, since you have just given us a run-down of people's records politically ...

THE LORD MAYOR: Perhaps I ought to ask leave of Council if you can continue! (*laughter*)

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: ...that you are reminded of your own trajectory.

Lord Mayor, Councillor Alan Taylor was elected in 1999 and I remember the *frisson* as you came in the Chamber because there was quite a bit of hostility to a man with a dog collar sitting on the benches in this Chamber. I have to say part of it was from me because I could not stand your preachy speeches (*laughter*) but, thankfully, you have picked up speed since then!

You made a point of talking about how, in the city, churchmen have been part of the progressive movement to get better conditions for all people in the city and, of course, you followed in the proud tradition of Councillor Jenkinson, known as the Red Priest in the 1930s and 1940s, and during your time I know that you have made a big difference in terms of making sure that the church is actively vocal in city politics, but also to ensure that all the faiths in the city come together and find common ground to move forward on and, of course, through your work at St Aidan's we also know that you have a particular commitment to making sure that refugees find a welcome in this city and it was under your Lord Mayoralty that we actually managed to get City of Sanctuary, which is something to be a legacy.

I was passed a photograph that is in this evening's Yorkshire Post. I am not sure if everyone has seen it. At first I thought, oh God, he has been caught canvassing with one of our activists but apparently no, it is just another example of his commitment to hairy subjects, Councillor Lobley.

I know that you are a particularly keen birdwatcher and you are a protector of the urban environment and you will be sadly missed, as will all the big names that were mentioned this afternoon. It will be a new generation May 2<sup>nd</sup>. Thank you.  
*(Applause)*

COUNCILLOR R FELDMAN: On no grounds whatsoever, Lord Mayor *(laughter)* on behalf of all of us who are retiring could I thank you, Lord Mayor, for the very kind comments you and all our proposers made about those of us who are retiring.

For problems Leeds is no stranger. We have had problems for very many years and this Council has always managed to rise above it. I remember, as I said the other night, in the 1970s there were problems, in the 1990s there were problems; these may be worse than the other two all put together but I am quite sure, and I am sure all of us who are retiring are, that we can rely on those of you who are staying here to face those challenges and, what is more, overcome them for the benefit of all the people that we serve as citizens of our great city.

Thank you particularly, Lord Mayor, in this one year for your modesty as well, but I would like to thank all the Council for all the comments and the applause that they have given to all of us. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: It is now with great sadness I report the recent deaths of the six soldiers in Afghanistan, five of whom came from the Yorkshire Regiment. At the time of their deaths I wrote to the Commanding Officer expressing sympathy on behalf of the Council and of the citizens of Leeds. There has been a response to that, saying that he very much appreciated our remarks and for the support that we gave him and the families at the time.

On 20 March the six bodies were repatriated to the United Kingdom and, as a mark of respect, we flew the flag at half mast. You all ought to know that there is to be a homecoming parade for the Yorkshire Regiment on 12<sup>th</sup> July, when I hope as many of you as possible will attend to lend support.

Those who died were Corporal Jake Hartley, at 20 years of age; Private Anthony Frampton, at 20 years of age; Private Christopher Kershaw, a teenager at 19; Private Daniel Wade, 20 years old; Private Daniel Wilford, also of a young age of

21; and from the First Battalion of the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment, Sergeant Nigel Coupe, at 33.

Can I ask members, please, to stand for a minute's silence to remember them.

*(Silent tribute)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you.

#### TIMESCALES FOR THE ORDINARY MEETING

THE LORD MAYOR: In view of all that has taken place, we are now moving on to the next item on page 2, and I am calling upon Councillor James Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I move in terms of the Notice.

COUNCILLOR LOBLEY: I second, my Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: All those in favour? *(A vote was taken)* CARRIED.

#### ITEM 1 – MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 22<sup>nd</sup> FEBRUARY 2012

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 1, Councillor James Lewis, please

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Move in terms of the Notice.

COUNCILLOR LOBLEY: I second, my Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: *(A vote was taken)* CARRIED. Thank you.

#### ITEM 2 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now moving on to Declarations of Interests and the list has been on display in the anteroom. Are there any individual declarations or corrections?

COUNCILLOR CLEASBY: I apologise, Lord Mayor. Having seen the Order Paper I believe it is necessary that I should declare a personal interest in the Deputation Four. I have a daughter who is an allotment holder and both her and myself know the leader of the Deputation.

COUNCILLOR VARLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I need to declare an interest that I am a Scrutiny Member of the Adult Health and Wellbeing Social Care Scrutiny and also I am a Panel Member of Morley Elderly Action.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Ewens.

COUNCILLOR EWENS: I do not know whether I need to declare it or not, Lord Mayor, but I did want to put down that I have just started as a volunteer at City of Leeds, so you are quite right about my interest in education. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: With that in mind are people happy that all that has been said is acceptable and they can agree that they have read the list and we can carry on with the meeting? All in favour? (*Show of hands*) Thank you.

### ITEM 3 - COMMUNICATIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: Item number three.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: No communications, Lord Mayor.

### ITEM 4 – DEPUTATIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: Item number 4.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: To report that there are five Deputations: Leeds Act Group, in conjunction with the Stop the Traffik Organisation, regarding the role of communities and Local Authorities in stopping human trafficking; the Leeds University Union, regarding the Council's report on the impact of tuition fees in Leeds; Leeds Link, regarding the Health and Wellbeing Bill and its impact in Leeds; Leeds and District Gardeners' Federation, regarding allotment provision in Leeds; and, finally, young people regarding a 20 mile per hour speed limit on Haven Chase, Cookridge.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor James Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I move in terms of the Notice, Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR LOBLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor, I second.

THE LORD MAYOR: (*A vote was taken*) CARRIED. Thank you.

### DEPUTATION ONE LEEDS ACT GROUP

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 would you begin by introducing yourself and the person in your Deputation.

MS D HAWLEY: My Lord Mayor and fellow Councillors, I am Dalia Hawley and I co-lead the active communities against trafficking group, along with Fran Mcfarlane. I am here today to talk with you about human trafficking.

Firstly some case studies I'd like to share with you.

Many staff of a restaurant in Harrogate previously working in prestigious restaurants in the Middle East, India and Pakistan had accepted offers to come and work legitimately at the Rajput. They signed formal work contracts and obtained work visas. However, on arrival to the UK legally, they promptly had their passports taken from them by one of the restaurant owners and then put them to work at the

Rajput for up to 14 hours a day, seven days a week. They received constant verbal and physical threats and were subjected to conditions of neglect, abuse, deprivation and economic exploitation.

From the book 'Trafficked' by Sophie Hayes, a young woman trafficked for sexual exploitation from the North of England to Italy:

“Just a few years ago everything changed. I was trafficked. I was fooled. I was deceived by a man who said that he loved me. The tragedy is that I believed him. Now I know that love is not shown by forcing me to work on the streets, beating me up, force-feeding me and turning me into someone with no mind of my own. For people like him my life meant nothing. I was a product and vehicle to make money.”

So let us get specific about what trafficking actually is. It is to be deceived or taken against your will, bought, sold and transported into slavery for sexual exploitation, sweatshops, child brides, circuses, sacrificial worship, forced begging, sale of human organs, farm labour and domestic servitude.

Trafficking is also growing. Two to four million men, women and children are trafficked across borders and within their own country every year. More than one person is trafficked across borders every minute, which is equivalent to ten jumbo jets every day, a trade that earns twice as much worldwide revenue as Coca Cola.

Stop the Traffik is a growing global movement of individuals, communities and organisations fighting to prevent the sale of people, protect the trafficked and prosecute the traffickers.

From Stop the Traffik comes ACT – Active Communities against Trafficking. That is us. It is a global campaign working through individuals, organisations and communities to stop and help prevent people trafficking. We believe that trafficking can be stopped through community awareness and action and we exist to provide people with resources and tools so anyone and everyone can get involved. In the space of just a few months we have set up community, student and faith wings of our group.

We held a successful roadshow in Leeds with Stop the Traffik in January. We had a fantastic turnout and featured panel speakers from Leeds Anti Sex trafficking Network, UK Border Agency, Leeds Women's Aid, local MP Fabian Hamilton and the Lord Mayor. We want to carry on having successful awareness raising sessions like this across the city.

What do we want to see in Leeds? There are lots of ways in which you at the Council can help us to help others. We ask you for your help – you are our secret weapon. We ask for your support in instigating awareness-raising sessions for transport and leisure. We know that local Leeds hotels, Leeds Bradford airport and the train and bus stations are used as channels for trafficking, so we are keen to educate staff on what to be on the look for.

We are working on a poster campaign at airports and train stations and we are going to start looking into a sticker campaign for taxi cabs driving on our streets. We are really excited about potentially bringing Anya71, a powerful opera supported by the UN, to Leeds. It has had rave reviews in The Guardian and other media sources. We are working on a big film awareness project with a group called Unchosen, an anti-trafficking charity promoting human trafficking film campaigns nationwide through film, documentaries, interviews and Q & As around October 2012

or tying it in with Leeds Film Festival. We would like to have an event in our city to show a variety of films and have a panel of high profile speakers address an audience of lay people and professionals. We want to get a real dialogue going amongst the people of Leeds and generate some really good energy. We would like you to consider granting us permission to use the Town Hall or another high profile venue to host this event and we would like you all to be there with us.

Please support us in the following. Permission to launch poster and flyer campaigns in train stations; help fund us, raise funds, or point us to people who can. Do you know of anyone who would be an asset to our campaigns or be keen to have us do an awareness raising session? If so, please help us network. Support our quest to raise awareness of trafficking through different mediums in order to raise awareness over broad demographics. Helping us with the Unchosen even through venues and publicity.

Trafficking is the third biggest black market activity in the world today. Please understand that slavery is happening right now, in our city, and we as active citizens are voluntarily doing something about it. Our group was set up just this January, but already we are swelling in numbers and being contacted by interested parties from all over the county; we have passion, we have energy and we have a clear vision but we need you on board to really take this to the next level.

When people act, things change. Please help us. Thank you for your time.  
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor James Lewis, please.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor, I move that the matter be referred to Executive Board for further consideration.

COUNCILLOR LOBLEY: I second, my Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: All those in favour? (A vote was taken) CARRIED.

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

#### DEPUTATION TWO LEEDS UNIVERSITY UNION

THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon and welcome to today's Council meeting. Could you make your speech to Council, please? It should not be longer than five minutes and can you please begin by introducing yourself and your colleague.

MR M SEWARDS: My Lord Mayor, fellow Councillor. My name is Mark Swards and I am currently the elected leader of Leeds University Union. This is my associate, Lydia Blundell, who is also a member of Leeds University Union. I am also speaking to you as a long term resident of Leeds, having lived in Morley for most of my life, so it is a privilege to speak to my Councillors today.



University is and will continue to be the biggest vehicle for social mobility in this country today. It is not the only one but so far it is by far the most effective and time has shown that.

With the introduction of £9,000 tuition fees there is little doubt that individuals and students from Leeds-based schools will be put off education by the price tag, regardless of how progressive the current Government claims it is. People will base their decision on whether or not they go to Universities on their ability to pay rather than their academic ability.

Now, under the last Government, plans were drawn up both at a national level and at a local level to make sure that the negative effect of introducing £3,000 a year fees was battled quite nicely by Widening Participation methods in schools and in universities who went out to make sure that students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds could still go to university. It was not always effective but as a widening participation student myself, as someone who could only go to Leeds University because of Widening Participation, it was effective in some areas. However, students were still put off when it was at £3,000. I can say that some of it has worked. Now these activities are being stripped back.

In Leeds schools, and in other schools from around the country, the situation has been made worse with the abolition of "Aim-Higher", which focused on making sure that students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds could go to university and could carve out their own career paths. Now that has gone, the task of making sure these students can still go to university, can still get where they want in life, falls to us and it falls to everybody who is in the Government at the moment.

Firstly, I think we should start at the local schools, and this is why I am speaking to you today. I think it will be down to local schools to make sure that teachers and tutors are well equipped to make sure that their students know the benefits of going into higher education no matter what the burden of debt is that they have to take on.

I also think that it will be down to parents as well, and guardians. Somebody who is capable of going to university will still be put off if their parents are telling them, "No, it is just not worth it." My own mother told me that if it had been £9,000 when I was 18 she would have been telling me to stay at home, no matter how progressive the Government claims the system is. We have got to make sure that teachers and parents across Leeds and across all cities - but Leeds specifically - make sure that they are well equipped to make sure that their kids know that they can still go to university, they can still get a degree regardless of how much they have to pay per year, regardless of the negative consequences that the system is having.

Widening Participation, which is what this is, does not just stop at 18-21 level either. It affects everyone. There are lots of older people - and by "older" I mean any age, any age above 21 - who do not go to university who are still academically capable, and that is wrong. With £9,000 per year fees, they are going to be put off again purely because they have other commitments, such as family commitments, employment commitments, travel commitments. I think it should be down to Leeds City Council and other bodies to investigate ways in which we can make sure that these people are not put off from going to higher education just because they have got these commitments that they did not have when they were 18 years old. I think it is right that they should be equipped to make sure that they know that if they

are academically capable they can go to university just like anyone else, and we can tell them the benefits and the negatives of the current system and explain how it would not affect them and how they would be better off if they did still go to university.

Now I do not want to run out of time but I think it is worth remembering that the activities I am asking you to consider here are all about mitigating and tackling the effect of £9,000 per year fees.

The reality is we should still oppose this system and we should still advocate a new system that does not ask students to pay up front. I know there are differing views on what that system could be, whether it is a graduate tax without the price tag whatsoever or even free education, should we be able to afford it, but whatever we choose we must argue and continue to oppose this system and I ask all Leeds City Councillors, whatever party you are from, whether you are Independent, Labour, Tory or Lib Dem, please oppose this system and continue to campaign with us to make sure that we oppose the damaging effects that tuition fees will have on us and our city. Thanks so much. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor James Lewis, please.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor, I move that the matter be referred to Executive Board for consideration.

COUNCILLOR LOBLEY: I second, my Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: All those in favour? *(A vote was taken)* CARRIED.

Mark, thank you for attending and for what you have had to say and speaking so eloquently. You will be kept informed of the considerations which your comments will receive. Good afternoon. *(Applause)*

### DEPUTATION THREE LEEDS LINK

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 yourself and also the people of your delegation.

MR A GILES: Thank you, my Lord Mayor and Councillors. My name is Arthur Giles and along with Joy Fisher, who is at my side, we are co-Chairs of Leeds LINKs, which is the Local Involvement Network. On my left is Jim, Kerr, a member of LINKs Steering Group, and Heather Jackson, who is Joy's PA.

Lord Mayor, we want to talk to you today on the Health and Social Care Act. Lord Mayor, as part of LINKs normal involvement with the people of Leeds we regularly hold events around the city where we discuss issues relating to their health and social care. Throughout its progress through Parliament the Act (as it now is) has been on the agenda of all of our meetings. Now that the Act has completed its process through Parliament we thought it would be helpful if you were aware how Leeds LINK and members of the public felt about some of the changes brought about by the Health and Social Care Act..

There are three particular issues that I would like to raise with you. The first of these is centres around change.

Changes are often needed and can be very useful but they can also be very difficult to accept and in this case the speed at which the changes are to be brought in and the complexity of these changes, coupled with very significant savings that have to be made by the National Health Service, make it almost inevitable that there will be destabilisation of the National Health Service. In addition to this, the changing role of GPs will affect the relationship between patients and GPs.

Lord Mayor, if I could talk a little bit with you about complexity of the Act. This issue has been worrying people in Leeds particularly concerning the complexity and the lack of understanding of how they will fit in to the new system. Will they have the same doctor? Will they have access to the local clinics and hospitals? For many people the answer is, of course, yes, but not everyone understands this and none of us can foresee the implications of the Act when it is implemented.

Few of these changes affecting NHS and social care have been evaluated or trialled and yet we are putting ill and vulnerable people through a system that is untried or untested.

In Leeds we will have three commissioning groups which we believe will fragmentise the NHS with a consequent loss of co-ordination. With these smaller commissioning groups, just a few expensive patients could blow a large hole in their budget. With their added load of commissioning, GPs may be forced to use locums more frequently than they would wish with the inevitable consequences that this will have on patients.

The doctor/patient relationship work best when they know each other well.

Another issue that is raised by the people of Leeds, Lord Mayor, is privatisation. Many people that we have talked to have said they are worried about increased privatisation of the National Health Service. It is clear that many services will be opened to privatisation and this includes National Health Service hospital beds that could be made available to private companies.

Health and social care services will be offered by a wide range of organisations with both private and voluntary sectors vying for business. This may well lead to co-ordination and communications suffering, in particular when patients receive treatment from more than one provider. People are worried about this and also they are worried that they may have to pay, at least in part, for some of their treatment and services.

Lord Mayor, now that the Bill has become an Act it would be easy to assume that little can be done to alleviate some of these concerns. We believe that many people will need support, particularly the ill and vulnerable, to find their way round these changes, and information that will explain and simplify some of the more complex issues.

THE LORD MAYOR: Arthur, you have now come to the final point that you really ought to be making, so could I respectfully ask that you give us your summary?

MR A GILES: Thank you, Lord Mayor. These changes are significant and there is little doubt about the anxieties that some people are already feeling is very real. These are just the headlines, Lord Mayor, and the short time that we have had

prevents a more detailed analysis. We would hope, however, that you will have time to consider our concerns. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor James Lewis, please.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor, I move that the matter be referred to Executive Board for further consideration.

COUNCILLOR LOBLEY: I second, my Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: All those in favour? *(A vote was taken)* CARRIED.

Arthur, thank you and your delegation for attending and for what you have said to us. You will be kept informed of the consideration which your comments will receive. Thank you very much and good afternoon. (Applause)

#### DEPUTATION FOUR LEEDS AND DISTRICT GARDENERS' FEDERATION

THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon and welcome to today's Council meeting. Could you please make your speech to Council, which should not be longer than five minutes, and could you please begin by introducing yourself and also your colleague. Thank you.

MR I WOOD: Thank you, my dear Lord Mayor and fellow Councillors. I am Ian Wood, I am the Chairman of the Leeds and District Gardeners' Federation. The gentleman to my left is Phil Gomersall, he is the Publicity Officer of the Leeds and District Gardeners' Federation. Thank you very much for giving us this opportunity to talk about allotments in Leeds.

I would like to make a couple of points to begin with. Allotments are good for gardeners and good for communities. We believe that allotments are good for gardeners because they encourage fresh air and exercise, provide fresh and healthy food for the gardeners, create a sense of belonging amongst gardeners and provide opportunities – important opportunities - to socialise.

We believe they are good for communities because they are a valued resource in their communities, like schools and health centres and so on; they provide a community focus bringing together a wide variety of ages, ethnic communities, both genders together to work productively; they provide a family focus increasingly as well. The age profile of gardeners is coming down in allotment terms. On my own site where I have my plot, over 50% of the gardeners are under 60 and come with their children, so this stereotype of gardeners all being over 60 with flat caps and keeping ferrets is not right.

Leeds City Council's Parks and Countryside section and our organisation, the Leeds and District Gardeners Federation are striving to promote, protect and preserve this city's wonderful allotment heritage (and it is a wonderful allotment heritage and it is a historical allotment heritage we have got in this city). We have been doing since 1988 when our Federation was instrumental in bringing self-management to Leeds allotments and as a result 65% of the allotments in Leeds are self-managed – not run directly by the Council but self-managed by local committees – and that saves the Council literally thousands of pounds and thousands of pounds in staff time.

Recently we have worked together with Parks and Countryside to run a training course to encourage the remaining city-controlled sites to become self-managed and to improve the management skills of the existing management committees.

We believe self-management of allotments is good and it is worth bearing in mind that Leeds is a leading Authority nationally in this sense. We believe self-management is good because it reduces Council's costs (properly managed sites are cost neutral to the council); it empowers local people; the management of a site is more efficient if it is self-managed; and the local pride that self-management engenders results in a more productive and a better looking allotment site. Self-management also enables the allotment sites to bid for funds which the Council could not bid for in its own right if the Council does not run the site.

If you compare that to a situation such as in Sheffield where all the sites in Sheffield are run by the City Council, the city Council there is facing having to imposed 100%-plus rent increases on allotmenters because they are bearing the cost of the allotment provision entirely by the Council. That is not the situation in Leeds. As I said before, 65% of provision in Leeds is self-managed.

There is presently a huge for allotments in Leeds. There are around 1,500 on waiting lists and this situation, we feel, would not have arisen if planning in the city for new development had specifically included allotment sites in the planning proposals. I cannot remember – and I challenge anybody else to remember – when was the last time a new allotment site was created in the city?

Present trends seem to favour so-called community gardens. The argument is that multiple-user projects like community gardens involve outside charitable organisations that can attract outside funding. As quick fix that might work in the medium to short term, but in the long term it is very expensive for the Council and it can generally be financially non-sustainable. The vast majority of people do not want to work in a community garden, they want their own plot to grow their own food.

Self managed allotment sites can also attract outside funding and unlike community gardens, after initial set up costs have been taken into account, self-managed sites are more or less self sufficient and cost neutral to the Council.

Plot holders' wider family and friends usually benefit from the fresh produce, reduced food miles, green spaces that break up housing projects and an increase in wildlife and improving the bio-diversity.

Allotment gardening, we believe, is the only activity offering recreation to the people of all genders, all ethnic communities and all abilities working together and supporting each other. I do not think there is very much other provision in the city that does that.

Relaxation of the planning laws, as you will be aware, has opened the door even wider for developers intent on making money and this has put allotments in Leeds under a real threat. Rothwell is currently a prime example of this. Two sites have been sold, over a hundred years of allotment heritage is going down the drain as we speak, and there is a possible loss to the community of a fantastic community asset. At Rothwell's recently sold Reservoir and Victoria Pit sites...

THE LORD MAYOR: Ian, you have come technically to the end of your time, so could you just summarise very briefly your final point?

MR I WOOD: Thank you; two quick points. At Rothwell's Reservoir and Victoria Pit sites you have got families with over fifty years of continuous history working the same plot and that has been taken away from them.

We would like to argue very strongly that the Council takes allotment sites and puts them on the Register of Community Assets. Thank you very much indeed.  
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor James Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor, I move that the matter be referred to Executive Board for further consideration.

COUNCILLOR LOBLEY: I second, my Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: All those in favour? (A vote was taken) CARRIED.

Ian, thank you for attending and for what you have said. You will be kept informed of the consideration which your comments will receive. Thank you very much and good afternoon. (Applause)

#### DEPUTATION FIVE YOUNG PEOPLE FROM HAVEN CHASE, COOKRIDGE

THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon and welcome to today's Council meeting. Can you try to make that your speech is no longer than five minutes and could you first of all start by telling us who you are and also the people who are with you. Thank you.

MISS E CRAGGS: Good afternoon Lord Mayor and fellow Councillors. My name is Ella Craggs and I am eleven years of age. Today I have brought along my brother Archie, who is nine, also my little sister Jodie, who is six, and Shay Prior our school mate who lives on the same street as us. We all like to play out a lot with our friends on our street, Haven Chase, Cookridge.

On our street there are a lot of children who we also love to play out with, but at the moment we are not feeling safe when we play out. That happens because of the lack of respect that most of the drivers have coming down our road and do not think about innocent children that play outside to have some fun or even people walking their dogs.

The careless drivers are speeding at 30 to 40 miles per hour – that is way too fast on a narrow street like ours.

I am a junior road safety officer at Holy Name School and last year we enforced a 20 mile per hour speed zone on the road around the school. This gave me the idea to try and improve the safety of my friends, neighbours and myself when out on the street. My friends and I asked neighbours if they would like to sign our petition; most of them agreed that cars came down our street too fast and would like to decrease the number of speeding cars.

Recently Councillor Bentley has been visiting residents on Haven Chase asking for any concerns they have. Speeding was brought up and when she contacted my parents we told her about the petition I had done. Councillor Bentley has told me the Council have agreed to put tracking on the street to record the amount of traffic and the speed of cars. I have given her my petition in support of making everyone aware they should be slowing down when driving up or down Haven Chase.

If something does not change one day soon, our road will change into a racing track. Who would want to see their son or daughter suffering from an injury that a careless driver has done to them?

23% of all accidents happen less than one mile away from home because drivers know the streets and start thinking about what needs to be done when they get home.

We have our responsibilities to stay safe as pedestrians; so do the drivers, to drive safely on the roads. The drivers need to slow down. We love to play out but at the moment we need to do that safely. Our mums and dads are always telling us "You will see the cars before they see you – be careful"

Also we are not sure why the drivers come down so fast because there are parked cars down our street. All we are asking for is safety. We do our best to stay safe but at the moment we are not feeling it.

It is simple what we are asking for, to have 20 miles per hour signs up to remind drivers to slow down. All we are asking for is small, but worth it. You can change it – it is what is best. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor James Lewis, please.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor, I move that the matter be referred to Executive Board for consideration, which is a really boring way of saying we are going to have a look at it.

COUNCILLOR LOBLEY: I second, my Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: All those in favour? (*A vote was taken*) CARRIED.

Ella, thank you for coming along and telling us all about your concerns. You will be informed of the consideration which your comments will receive and someone, therefore, will get in contact with you. Thank you very much again for coming and good afternoon. Back to school! (*Applause*)

#### ITEM 5 - QUESTIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: Before we move on to the next item of Questions, can I just politely remind Members when it comes to supplementary questions that it ought to be just a question. There has been a tendency, I think, over the years that this has been an opportunity to make speeches of some nature or another, so if perhaps we could be brief and bear that in mind, that the supplementary questions ought to be of that nature.

Councillor Carter.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. I will endeavour to abide by your strictures. Can I ask the Executive Board Member for Children's Services to tell me what steps are taken by the Local Education Authority to ensure that schools that receive poor Ofsted inspection results are able to achieve a rigorous recovery in teaching and learning standards and what measures are taken to strengthen school leadership teams?

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can I start by saying that we have a strong track record in this area and it should be noted that a year ago, at the end of the contract with Education Leeds, Leeds had nine schools in Ofsted categories and I am pleased to tell you that that has reduced and there are now only three school in Ofsted categories in a year. This does go against national trends and regional trends, where they have seen the number of school in categories increase.

I have to say, we have done this on a backdrop where education in Leeds has actually lost over £4m-worth of funding that did previously go into helping us in this area.

Just briefly, we have set up the Education Leeds challenge, particularly at the heart of this raising standards is absolutely key in everything we do across the board, but the most important aspect of what we are doing is actually helping schools to learn from each other, to support each other and that is the reason that we have put headteachers right at the centre of the department. We have seconded a primary head for two days a week and a secondary head for two days a week and have enlisted the support of many others. They are very well placed to go into our schools to give the support that some of our schools need and we are introducing a new improvement strategy, enhancing the role of School Improvement Advisers and we have recently recruited four experienced new advisers to the teams.

In each case what we are trying to achieve is that we are more proactive in this area, that we work with our schools to anticipate problems that are coming down the line and that we get involved at an early stage so that when Ofsted do come in there are no surprises and we can move forward to successfully support out schools delivering the best education we possibly can for our children and young people. *(Applause)* I think there is more to come!

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Carter.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. I am obliged for the restatement of Councillor Blake's commitments to improving standards in schools. She did not particularly and specifically address governing boards in her comment and she might like, as part of her answer to this supplementary, to do so. I would like some reassurance. I will give you an example. A school was inspected in June 2010 and a further inspection was carried out, I believe, in December of 2011, and this is an extract of what was said:

"Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion at this time that the school has made inadequate progress in making improvements and inadequate progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement. Pupils' attainment is now lower than it was in 2010."

Additionally, at the end it says:



“There is evidence that the governing body is challenging and evaluating the impact of actions taken. However, the governing body’s influence in affecting change is not wholly evident”

which is, I think, Ofsted-speak. I would like an assurance---

THE LORD MAYOR: The question, please?

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: I would like an assurance, Lord Mayor, that without fear and favour the LEA, no matter how high and mighty the Chair of Governors may be – even whether it is an Executive Board Member of this City Council – that the LEA ensure that a rigorous programme is put in place including, if necessary, examining the role of the school governors.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Yes, thank you, Lord Mayor. I think we are getting on to dangerous ground if we start talking about individual schools here. I think there are all sorts of reasons why schools might go through difficult periods and I want to emphasise that we, as I said, treat each school with its individual situation and move into work effectively with the leadership through the headteacher or other senior staff and with governing bodies.

With regard to elected Members, I would like to pay tribute to all of the elected Members who serve as governors in our schools. I think it is a huge commitment, a really important commitment and I really do value the contribution that they make.

I would ask all Members of Council if they are on a governing body and they do anticipate that things are going in a particular direction that they are not happy with, that they involve myself, Councillor Dowson, our officers, so that we can help to make sure all the support that needs to go in actually goes in to support the school. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Pryke.

COUNCILLOR PRYKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. There will be devastatingly short questions and supplementaries. Would the Leader of Council explain what he meant when he told Council last month “whatever the national negotiations are, we should be determined to make sure that our low paid staff actually get the reward they deserve and not back away from it”?

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Perhaps I can just remind Councillor Pryke that when the Coalition Government came into power, which includes the Liberal Democrats, they asked the employers, the Local Authority employers, made up of all parties, if they could address low pay. At that time the employers said no.

I am pleased to say this year northern Authorities in particular and all parties – that is Conservative, Lib Dems – went back to negotiations this year and were much more determined to make sure that low paid workers got a special payment in order for them to be recognised for doing the work that they are.

That was exactly at the stage where I said in the Budget we should do everything possible to make sure our low paid workers got recognition. *(Applause)*

That should be done within the flexibility of national negotiations. There is nothing wrong with rewarding our cleaners, our sweepers, our dinner ladies in times like that with a little bit of extra financial recognition, and that is still the position of this administration. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Pryke.

COUNCILLOR PRYKE: Thank you for that, Keith. I should tell Council that Councillor Wakefield has not replied to an email I sent him after the last Council meeting asking what he meant by “low pay” but the Low Pay Commission has defined low pay, so will he now explain to Council why his administration has kept the 20,200 (or thereabouts) employees defined as low paid by the Low Pay Commission in that position since May 2010?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Wakefield.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: As I said, this year the employers have refused to budge on low pay, but we are still negotiating heavily and lobbying heavily and we are still looking at making sure we can give some recognition.

Let me be absolutely clear about the definition. What this administration will not support is regional bargaining, because that will reduce low pay wages by 17% in this region and in this Authority. I have no reason why we should punish those people who teach, who are social workers, who empty our bins with a 17% pay cut because of the recent announcement in the Budget that they will go regional. I think with the other side of it that we ought to oppose.

If you lower a region’s wages you lock them into poverty. You lock their economy into a low wage economy, doubling and reinforcing the struggles that many northern cities are having.

As far as we are concerned as a Labour administration, we would be against regional bargaining because of those reasons. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lowe.

COUNCILLOR LOWE: Would the Leader of Council like to comment on the wording of the question that will appear on the mayoral referendum paper in May?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Wakefield.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I think all of us as Leaders have said something about the referendum and I would put that this is the most skewed question ever put before the British electorate. I find that really disappointing, given this is the Electoral Commission’s question and, having exchanged letters and correspondence with her last year, she could not see the reason why some of us would object to the question being put.

Let me remind Council, the question in the referendum is simple – well, it is not simple, that is the problem:

“How would you like Leeds City Council to be run?

By a Leader who is an elected councillor chosen by other elected councillors

This is how the Council is run now.

Or

By a Mayor who is elected by voters.

This would be a change from how the Council is run now.”

Leaving aside how Mayors are politically sponsored by parties in most cases, it is deliberately obscure and, in one trial in this country, over a third of people voted the opposite way to what they intended because of the nature of the question.

If you wanted to simplify it and put an honest, straight question to the people in this city, you would just simply as, “Do you want an elected Mayor, yes or no?” You do not have to do any more.

I do find it extremely disappointing that she did not recognise that. On top of this we now see £150,000 wasted, of public money, by trying to inform the people of Leeds.

I can only say this, fortunately it does not read very well and I am sure most people have forgotten it within seconds of reading it, but the key part about this is it does not include the cost or the power of the Mayor which surely should be a key part of people’s decision making. If you are going to reward a Mayor with £150,000 a year, like some parts of this city, you ought to tell the people of this city what it costs.

I find the latest kind of efforts to start talking about Mayoral Cabinets with No. 10 just a sign of deliberately trying to distort the democratic process that people in Leeds will face and, frankly, I think it is totally unacceptable. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lowe, supplementary? No. Councillor David Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Will the Executive Member for Environmental Services update Council on Leeds City Council’s Free Insulation Scheme, Wrap Up Leeds?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dobson, please.

COUNCILLOR DOBSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I think it is fair to say it has been a solid start, David and Members of Council, but there is clearly still more to do. The idea, as you are all aware, is to offer free cavity wall insulation or loft insulation to private dwelling houses in Leeds or, indeed, private tenanted houses where we can either do the cavity wall and the loft or either/or.

It has got off to a solid start. In the first two months we have had 5,000 enquiries which have led to 4,000 properties being surveyed and two-and-a-half thousand of the two methods being undertaken or approved. Of course it is doing fantastic work in terms of our ambitious CO<sub>2</sub> targets and also it is addressing fuel poverty in some of our more deprived areas.

What concerns me is that we need to hit 15,000 by October of this year to qualify for the CERT funding that we are all of before the Green Deal comes in, so really there is a big job of work still to be done.

In terms of how we have advertised it as a city, we have done lots of work in terms of targeting properties where we think there is the need and the potential. It has been in About Leeds, it has been in Council Tax mailings. David and I jointly - and I have to thank the Greens, actually, for the work they have done on this and the support they have given the administration in progressing this team - and I have to thank the guy in Morley North in particular, the very first house we went to, who, with a huge leap of faith, allowed David and I loose on his house with an industrial size drill, so thanks to him.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: It was not working though!

COUNCILLOR DOBSON: It has also been on the radio, advertised on buses and in GPs' surgeries. What I am saying is the clock is very much ticking on this one. It is a great scheme, no catches, it is free and I think when David and I did some research on this, what we found is that a lot of people are saying, "Come on, where is the catch?" - actually, there is not one. A final plea to Members of Council, really, do take this back into your communities. It is a great scheme, it would be a sin and a shame if we did not get 15,000 properties that could benefit from this, so please use the material that we are providing, use the literature that has been made available to you to really push the scheme and make it the success it can and should indeed be. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lyons, please.

COUNCILLOR LYONS: Thank you very much, Lord Mayor. Please could the Executive Member for Leisure update Council on the fantastic events taking place in Leeds as part of the 2012 Olympic Games?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am happy to do so. No doubt 2012 should be a great summer of events and activities taking place around the Olympic and Paralympic Games here in Leeds. Leeds is the only city outside of London to host the Olympic Torch on three separate occasions. We will see torch bearers for 17 miles on 19<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> June, including our official torch bearers, Steven Tomlinson and Aidan Dixon. We are encouraging local communities and schools to host their own celebration events around when the flame actually passes through their streets. Any group that wants to get involved with that, if they want to get in touch with John Price here at the Council and he will be able to help.

There is a wide range of activity planned in Leeds for local people and tourists alike. Arts-related activity includes the big Arts Council funded event in the city centre called Canvas around the Dark Arches on 18 May; Big Dance on Millennium Square on 14<sup>th</sup> July; and a range of events supported by the new Leeds Inspired grant scheme. We are also hosting the Leeds Loves Sport three week city-wide festival of sport, starting on 18<sup>th</sup> June. This aims to inspire the whole city to take part in some form of sport or physical activity. Details will be announced over the coming weeks but watch out for sport-themed street entertainments and Council facility open days for all the family.

All information on these activities will be on the new Leeds Inspired website, which is an online event calendar for the city - that is [Leedsinspired.co.uk](http://Leedsinspired.co.uk) - and I would recommend everyone to have a look at that.

Finally, I think we would all like to wish the Leeds-based athletes who are likely to be competing in the Olympic Games the best of luck. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lyons.

COUNCILLOR LYONS: As a supplementary, please could the Executive Member give the Council the latest news regarding the Coca Cola Olympic Torch Relay celebration events taking place at Temple Newsam in June.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Thank you, Councillor Lyons, for the supplementary. It is hoped around 50,000 people will enjoy the free event that is going to take place at Temple Newsam on 24<sup>th</sup> June. In addition to some national headlining acts we will have an evening of exciting dance, music, singing and poetry performances to showcase some of the amazing talent that we have here in Leeds. The celebration will feature the arrival of the Olympic Torch on to the stage, which I am sure will be a spectacle. Fifty young dancers from the major dance organisations in Leeds will perform on stage and lead the action. It will be a unique performance highlighting sports and the aim is to try and get the whole audience to join in. The internationally known Leeds Young Authors will then take to the stage with a dynamic performance of slam poetry to keep the audience buzzing and as a rousing and unforgettable finale to the city's contribution to the show, local choirs on stage and in the arena will join together and lead everyone in the biggest sing-song the city has ever seen, and I am sure Councillor Lyons will like that!

COUNCILLOR LYONS: All welcome to Temple Newsam when it is taking place.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Bill Hyde, please.

COUNCILLOR W HYDE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Will the Executive Board Member for Neighbourhoods and Housing please indicate which Traveller sites he is proposing to consult about in Temple Newsam ward?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gruen.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Lord Mayor, Councillor Hyde has been a longstanding Member of this Council and he knows that consultations are only carried out once the Council has some proposals to make.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Hyde, supplementary?

COUNCILLOR W HYDE: In that case, Lord Mayor, perhaps Councillor Gruen might like to tell Council either that he intends to consult with somebody in Temple Newsam or take this opportunity to deny that he intends to locate such a site in Temple Newsam.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gruen.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: I am not aware of any sites at the present time which may be in Temple Newsam or anywhere else because the instructions of the Executive Board to officers have been very clear: to carry out a thorough analysis and examination of all the potential sites and when they have a shortlist, to report that to the Executive Board, and it is the Executive Board, not I, who will decide, if

there is a shortlist or not, or if there are to be consultations or not. It certainly will not be for you, Councillor Hyde. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Matthews.

COUNCILLOR MATTHEWS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I was enjoying that question so much that I just lost my place. Can the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Housing confirm how many calls were made to the out of hours noise nuisance service between October 2011 and February 2012?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gruen.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: That is a specific question I can answer - 2,580. In total the service has handed 6,007 noise nuisance calls between 9<sup>th</sup> May 2011 and 29<sup>th</sup> February 2012.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Matthews.

COUNCILLOR MATTHEWS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. That is very interesting because when I asked the question of officers I was given the response, "Do we keep these figures now? I am aware we did for the first six months to show the service was responding to more calls than the previous service." That was the response from the officer of this Council. "As you are aware due to current workloads we as a section do not have the resources to provide the detailed analysis that we produced previously. However, all of the OOHN reports are emailed directly the next working day for them to be inputted into Seibel."

I am not familiar with Siebel but I would have thought that it would be possible to run various reports, so is this the seriousness that this administration is taking noise nuisance in, that concerned local residents are provided with no response, so my question, my supplementary question (*interruption*) - thank you, I will ask now, if you will let me speak – where did you magic your figures from and do you think this is considered taking the issue seriously by the administration?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gruen.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: I detected at least four questions there and I could choose any one to answer, I do not have to answer all four. It is the best we can do. I have given you a straight answer to the question you have asked, I have given you the statistics that you have asked for. The service is now part of the Antisocial Behaviour work and therefore the service will improve, but you should not belittle all the work that your predecessors in the Lib Dem Coalition earlier on did, because for six years you were in charge of this and for six years you did nothing, and it took our administration to put it right, to get it better and it will improve further, so I thank my colleagues for the work they have done already and I promise we will do better. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Armitage, please.

COUNCILLOR ARMITAGE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Please could the Executive Member for Children's Services update Council on the progress of the foster carer recruitment plan?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Councillor Armitage. Yes, can I just say that recruiting more foster carers is absolutely one of the key strands in our attempts to become a child friendly city and our concentration on the work that we do for our most vulnerable children because we want better outcomes for the children themselves but also, as well, as we have discussed many times in this Chamber, that we need to reduce the cost of the foster caring service that we have got.

Just recognising this I want to tell Council that we have put in place a dedicated recruitment team, our new website for foster care adoption will be launched imminently and we are going through a massive review and updating of the information that we provide to foster carers and are continuously refreshing this, working with our foster carers to help us take this forward.

We have also improved the effectiveness of our response to any interest that is expressed in fostering, providing a rapid and professional service. Some of you will be aware we are preparing for a big recruitment drive to follow up National Foster Carers' Fortnight in May and I am very pleased to tell Council that we have exceeded our target this year and we will be looking to increase our target.

I just want to tell you that to achieve 80 new foster carers in the city we have to have about a thousand expressions of interest, that is the scale of interest that we need to generate and what we know is the best way to get successful recruitment is actually through local knowledge and by word of mouth. As corporate carers we believe that elected Members have an absolutely crucial role to play in this and it is as a result of this through the extra investment that we are putting into this, we are actually going to ring fence a pot of £10,000 for Area Committees to bid into so that they can hold events in their areas to celebrate the achievements of foster carers and to tell them that we do appreciate the work that they do but also to go out and recruit for new foster carers. Thank you for the question (*Applause*).

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Armitage, supplementary or not? No. Councillor Ann Blackburn, then.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Bearing in mind comments made at the time of the announcement of the reduction of Feed In Tariffs, can the Executive Member for Environmental Services tell me what progress has been made in finding an alternative way of funding solar panels for domestic properties?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dobson.

COUNCILLOR DOBSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor and thank you for the question. In terms of our aspirations for solar PV, obviously they were somewhat thwarted in the light of the Government reducing the fixed tariffs. It has left us in a position where we do have a scheme that could easily be implemented but it would not stack up in terms of money. The aggregated scheme costs would have been 16 pence, which would not have even reached a break-even position for the Authority, never mind what we were hoping to do which was achieve some revenue from this that could then be fed back into further green initiatives.

That said, we have had some expressions of interest from solar PV providers who have said, "Look, perhaps there is an opportunity to do some short-term work up to July when the fixed tariffs change again" and because of that work we took a paper to the Executive Board on 7<sup>th</sup> March this year and delegated authority has been passed to the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods to engage with

solar PV providers to establish if they can provide for us a cost neutral or better scheme to the Local Authority. That gives us a window of opportunity to do something between now and July. Time is tight and officers have been working extremely hard this month around procurement and legal arrangements to ensure that in early April we are able to offer this out for bids.

In terms of the Council's position, it was always my intention – and officers were aware of this – that we should be looking to go back to the Department of Energy in terms of what can we do regarding the July fixed rate? Can we somehow ring fence our position because we are so badly affected by the aggregated fixed tariff. There must be some middle ground that can be achieved.

I am concerned, however, that in light of the recent High Court ruling against the Government which is saying that everybody who had solar PV fitted between 10<sup>th</sup> December and 3<sup>rd</sup> March this year they will have to honour the 43 pence rather than 21 pence. I do think that that will leave us in a little bit of a difficult position in trying to get some further agreement around that, but we are doing our best. There will be solar PV panels fitted, hopefully, if we can find the right deal, in the city. We have still got a commitment to it. We realise what an important strand it is in terms of our energy efficiency and addressing fuel poverty and the administration will do all within its power to make it a reality. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blackburn, is there a supplementary?

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: No, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Renshaw.

COUNCILLOR RENSHAW: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Will the Executive Member for Adult Health and Social Care please update Council on developments with the Council's Reablement Service?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Yeadon.

COUNCILLOR YEADON: Thank you. I certainly will. Members will recall that in October 2010 the Executive Board approved the city-wide roll out of our Reablement Service. Since then it has developed steadily and is now fully operational to the point where it has assisted nearly 500 people.

The service offers short, targeted support to people who are unable to take care of themselves following an illness or a stay in hospital. It helps people regain their mobility, confidence and skills to continue living independently in their own homes. We have been monitoring the long-term effects of the service on individuals who have received support through it and the results are encouraging, with 90% of people continuing to live independently six months after receiving the service and 63% still living independently a year after completing the programmes.

The service improves many outcome for people using it, including reduced dependency levels, significant improvements in perceived quality of life, significant improvement in perceived health, with around a third of users reporting that their health had improved, an increase in the percentage of people who felt clean and presentable, an increase in the percentage of people who felt they had got all the food and drink they want when they want it.



It is a cost-effective service that is helping people to continue to live in their own homes and avoiding the need for costly residential placements or other ongoing care support. Over 70% of people who use the service do not require an ongoing care package once the programme has finished.

The Reablement Service is up and running, it is improving outcomes for individuals and it is also saving us some money. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Procter.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Just in the nick of time, Lord Mayor, by the look of it. Will the Executive Board member for City Development and the Economy inform the Council when he intends to make a decision on lowering the rents for traders at Kirkgate Market?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Richard Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: I have never seen John move so fast! As Councillor Procter will be aware from his lengthy Scrutiny inquiry, there are many complex factors affecting traders at Kirkgate Market, not least of which is the current recession. Despite this footfall is still up on the previous year and demand for stalls is still strong. While some traders believe that reducing their rents will help keep their individual businesses viable, others are clear that what really makes a difference is bringing in more customers and encouraging them to spend more.

It is very important to note that the least expensive part of the market, the 76 hall, experiences by far the highest vacancies and so it is not true to say that simply discounting rents will solve the problem, nor that higher rents are a disincentive to businesses choosing to locate in the market. The market service gets many more applications for the 1904 hall than the 1976 hall.

The market service has demonstrated over the past year that extensive and targeted marketing and promotion is much more effective than supporting businesses in the market by driving new and repeat business to them. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. By way of supplementary, having heard that response you would think the market was doing well, which it most certainly is not doing well. Indeed, would he agree with me that it is clearly concerning that there are at present 80 stalls that are currently vacant, and rising, that traders are leaving literally every single month and would he also (*interruption*) I have just said "would he agree with me" – that is a question, if you had not realised. In addition to that, I hope the Executive Member will now give a full explanation as to why on 14<sup>th</sup> April Cabinet deferred the taking of the Scrutiny Board report...

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: We have not got the next one. What do you know that we don't?

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Sorry, the Cabinet agreed to not take the Scrutiny Board report to the 11<sup>th</sup> April Executive Board. Instead they agreed it would go in May. Perhaps you can tell us why.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Subtle. That is very deep and meaningful.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I do not think there was any particular reason for deferring that particular report. *(interruption)* I think we have considered the market on a number of occasions. I think what is most important is that as an administration we are committed to improving the market. I am not sure that continuous raising of concerns about the market does any favours to anybody. We are actually constructively trying to work to have a vision for the market, not to continually refer back to what has happened in the past and why things do not seem to be working.

We see a lot of criticism of individual managers and such like coming out of Scrutiny that I find a bit worrying, but I think what we have to do is to restate our commitment to improving the market. That is what this administration is going to do in the next few months. We are having a feasibility study carried out which I think will come to some real conclusions about where we are going on the market and will lead to prosperity for the market and its traders over the coming years. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

#### ITEM 6 – RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

THE LORD MAYOR: For the benefit of the people in the public gallery we are now moving to page 9 and Item 6, for the recommendations of the General Purposes Committee, but before I do call upon Councillor Wakefield I am aware that originally there was a typing error on that paper that has been corrected, therefore with that in mind I will call upon Councillor Wakefield.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Can I move in terms of the Notice, my Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor James Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: *(A vote was taken)* CARRIED.

#### ITEM 7 - MINUTES

THE LORD MAYOR: We now move on to Item 7. Councillor Wakefield.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor James Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Second, Lord Mayor.

(a) Executive Board

(i) Neighbourhoods, Housing and Regeneration

THE LORD MAYOR: I now invite Councillor Gabriel to comment.

COUNCILLOR GABRIEL: Thank you, Lord Mayor. The comment I will be making is on page 58, Minute 217, the final business case for the Little London Beeston Hill and Holbeck PFI Project.

It is obviously very welcome news that we have at last now received final approval from the Government to move ahead with the PFI project, which will deliver huge improvements for the people of Beeston Hill and Holbeck. It has certainly been a long time coming and there have been times when people have wondered whether we would ever get there – me being one of them.

It was in November 2010 with the project already well advanced, we were informed that the Government were conducting a value for money review, throwing the whole project in doubt. Since then we have been having tough negotiations with the Government to ensure that this project goes ahead. We have had to make savings and lost elements of the project that we have worked hard to keep, but it is tremendous news that we are now reaching the stage where we can finally sign off this with the Government.

We are now completing the last formalisation before signing the contract with SC4L – I can tell you are all very impressed, half the room has left – and are planning to start work on the site in the summer, which is a great moment for us all, Councillors and residents alike. We have been hearing about the project for many, many years and are so desperate to see it happen.

The benefits to the people in the area of the south of Leeds are huge. There will be 270 new houses across the sites of Beeston Hill and Holbeck and 373 existing homes are to be refurbished. All these homes will be brought up to a high standard of sustainability and energy efficiency. This means that not only will these be high quality housing, they will also result in lower energy bills for tenants which, when finances are tight, this is a real bonus for everyone.

There is also the environmental improvements, which will make this project benefit all the people in the area. These benefits have been discussed many, many times at Council but this project is so large and so significant that it deserves to be talked about again and again. Investment of £180m across these sites is a rare opportunity when resources are so scarce, so it has been a huge relief that serious progress is finally being made. Under the original plans we would have been on site by now. Even though we have seen our timetables pushed back we are a year late, within inflation pushing up our costs as a result. There has always been confidence that we would eventually make this regeneration reality. It is great to be able to say that within the next few months we will stop talking and work will actually begin on site. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Harper, please.

COUNCILLOR HARPER: Councillor just said everything I was going to say so I will try not to repeat a lot of it.

The final go-ahead for the scheme has been granted and it has been extremely frustrating, to say the least. The project will rejuvenate and improve the social housing in what is one of the most deprived areas of the city and also will add and create much needed construction jobs for the future.

The benefits, however, and what it will do for Little London are undeniable. We will have 125 new homes built to sustainable homes level and meeting lifetime

home standards. The refurbishment of 890 properties; work will include new kitchens, bathrooms, windows, rewiring and improved thermal efficiency, whilst the multi-storey blocks in the project will benefit from external cladding and, as Angela said, part of the work, a raft of environmental measures will be incorporated to make sure these properties meet the highest standards and will benefit from energy efficiency.

As I alluded to previously in the speech, the importance of this scheme cannot be underestimated (*sic*). Encouraging the build of new social housing and refurbishment of existing properties for tenants should be an essential strand of any Council's policy and I am delighted that this administration has put these both as key priorities.

Lord Mayor, I have just had a word, can I take this opportunity to remind Councillor Members on a slightly different subject about the present situation regarding the death of local resident Sheila Pickles. Sheila was a 79 year old lady who was mown down by a car in October last year and left dying in the road by the coward who was driving the car. Despite a very long and detailed investigation by the police, who I would like to thank for their hard work in this case, the person who was driving is still yet to be identified. I would ask through the media present today that a further appeal for information be put out asking people to think back to that fateful day for Sheila Pickles and her family and try to remember if they saw anything suspicious and report it to the police or to ring Crimestoppers if they do not want to speak to the police. Someone out there knows who was responsible for this terrible act. To drive a car up the pavement, hit an innocent elderly lady waiting for a bus and then drive off, leaving her dying in the road, is a terribly cowardly act. The person or persons responsible must be caught so the family can have some sort of closure and justice for the loss of their family member.

Following the incident myself and ward colleague Councillor Javaid Akhtar have been working with our Highways Chief Engineer to formulate a plan to improve road safety in the area which will no doubt be increased by the opening of the new Leeds Arena. I would just like to reassure the people of Little London that we are doing everything possible to improve the safety of the road in our community. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Taggart.

COUNCILLOR TAGGART: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Page 58, Minute 217, Little London, Beeston Hill, Holbeck. These are marvellous, massive regeneration schemes, all very much needed in those areas and it is a tribute to all the Councillors and officers and third parties involved that those schemes are finally going to come to pass.

Of course, regeneration does not always take place on such a grand scale. There can sometimes be small sites around the city which, although not geographically large, can have a huge negative impact upon the locality and I know that the Council has identified about 40 of these sites so far and we have set aside a rolling budget of about half a million pounds to focus on improving the condition of these sites around the city and also with a view to bringing some of them back into use through redevelopment.

There are some sites where I think there could be some quick wins, and here are two in my own ward of Bramley and Stanningley. For example, there is the former Lord Cardigan pub which is on the junction of Hough Lane and Town Street.

It is a significant site within Bramley. It is not all that old but the pub is closed, it is disused, it is boarded up, there is a lot of rubbish, litter, fly tipping there and unfortunately some people go there to take Class A drugs in the grounds. It is a horrible, nasty site and a blight upon the centre of Bramley.

It is in private ownership – we do not own it, if the Council did own the site I think we would have done something about it a long time ago. The good news is the Council is working with the owner to see if, in the first instance, we can clear it up and then we will be looking at them to identify future potential users. I happen to know as Chair of West Leeds Planning Sub there is at least one developer who has expressed an interest in redeveloping the site, so that will be good news but it could be some time off. In the meantime we are saying from Bramley please can we have this derelict pub site cleared up?

The other site is also in the Bramley part of our ward. It is the former petrol station on Broad Lane which was derelict when I became a Councillor for Bramley and Stanningley in 2004 and it is still as derelict now.

Again, it is private owners; if it was Council owned we would have dealt with it long ago. It is huge eyesore in that part of the ward and lots of local people constantly bombard Ted and myself and Denise about the state of it. The owners have tried marketing it with the idea of having a new use on the site but so far they have not been successful.

It appears that some recent discussions that we have had with the developer to try and move things on may have had some success and there will be some work on the site to improve its condition. Hopefully this can be done in the near future and let us hope we can get a clear up and then get redevelopment in the future, but my understanding is on both sides, I am told by my colleagues in the Labour Group I am pushing on an open door, but I think we can make a big difference.

Let us salute what is going on in these other parts of the city, well done to all concerned but there are smaller sites around the city that can benefit and I am so glad there is half a million pounds been earmarked for this kind of work. Thank you very much, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lowe.

COUNCILLOR LOWE: I am speaking on Minute 218, page 59, and this is in relation to burglary and burglary reduction particularly in the west of Leeds. Efforts to reduce burglaries have been a sustained success since September 2011.

In December 2011 we recorded the lowest burglary count across Leeds for ten years and that meant that there were 741 less victims of burglary compared to the previous year. Slowly and surely Leeds is developing into a safer city and a city where burglary is reducing.

The Council has successfully formed strong working partnerships with the police, the universities and community groups, and these relationships have enabled early intervention at community level with high risk individuals and the management of repeat offenders.

This multi-agency attack on burglary has ensured that long-standing burglary problems in Leeds have gradually started to ease. Even so, it is no time to get complacent. We still have one of the highest burglary rates in the country – I think

we are second nationally, which is obviously a terrible situation to be in – and despite the positive overall result there are still some black spots in the city, particularly in places like Armley and Bramley – Armley being my own ward. Here direct approaches to tackle the root causes of burglary are required and we need to intercept and work with at risk young people before they turn to a life of crime. That work is being effective, I am very happy to say, in places like Armley. We need to do more in Bramley.

The Revisit Project in Armley is working effectively with young people and particularly with young offenders, offering rewards and activities for people as young as eleven years of age, and this prevents them from falling into a life of crime and leading them into, hopefully, better outcomes in terms of their economic wellbeing and their social futures.

More work with communities, especially young people, must be undertaken if we want to continue to decrease the level of burglaries in places like Armley. This preventative work is excellent but again we must continue to break down the cycle of repeat offending which accounts for the majority of burglaries. This is the most stubborn problem and is a crucial issue in overcoming high burglary rates.

We have developed strong relationships with the prison and are hopefully taking a much stronger approach to offender management and this will prevent offenders from returning to a life of crime on their release.

I hope everyone involved in this effort can continue the good work they are doing with the specific focus on the root causes of the problems, such as educational attainment, employment and training, etc, and especially in the priority areas such as Armley and Bramley, as I have already mentioned.

We can tackle the issues that are the toughest nuts to crack if we work in partnership and it cannot just be down to the police and tougher policing and sanctions because they are only short-term solutions, so working together with all the agencies, and particularly with the police, we can and have reduced burglary in this city and I hope that we continue to make the excellent progress that we started with money - I should say additional money – from Safer Leeds which we thank you very much for. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Yeadon.

COUNCILLOR YEADON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would also like to speak on page 59 Minute 218 on the reduction of domestic burglary in Leeds. I am sure every Member in this Chamber has at some point in their lifetime been personally experienced by the trauma of domestic burglary in their own home or knows a family member who has. The impact of burglary is not just the loss of the physical sense of possessions; there is also the aftermath for people of the mental impact that break-ins can sometimes take months or years to recover and for those who are already vulnerable, this can be a life-changing situation.

I am pleased, therefore, that working in partnership with a number of agencies the Council has recognised this as a priority and is working to tackle burglary head on in our city. As a Councillor representing Kirkstall we, like many other areas, have had a significant problem with burglary over many years. The specific targeted work which has been undertaken in priority areas to reduce the problem has therefore been very welcome. It seems that a few organised groups of people are responsible for much of the city's burglary problem, including one based

in the north-west of the city. It is therefore crucial that we disrupt these groups and I am encouraged that this is being addressed.

I am also encouraged by the recent decision to introduce a local letting policy to prevent known criminals from being housed on the Hawksworth Wood estate. The police have identified this as an area where criminals congregate and it is right that we use all the powers we have to break up these networks and prevent such groups from damaging communities.

Of course there is still a long way to go and the positive results that we have achieved do not mean by any stretch of the imagination that the battle against burglary is won. Clearly it is not and if we are to achieve this goal it will take hard work, a dedicated, targeted use of resources, excellent partnership and a well thought-out strategy.

We also must remember that key tools in beating burglary are also training, education and employment and that is where Children's Services priority of reducing the numbers of young people who are NEET and the Council's overall emphasis in promoting employment, training and apprenticeships, is so important.

We have to support particularly young people to develop skills, self-esteem, aspiration and opportunities so that they do care if they get nicked when they are out on the rob and that they do have some hope for the future, and this is no easy task under the current economic climate and with rising unemployment.

This is certainly an issue that has to be tackled by working in partnership and, having read this report, all the boxes seem to be ticked and I look forward to seeing more successes on burglary being achieved in the upcoming weeks, months and years. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Kirkland.

COUNCILLOR KIRKLAND: My Lord Mayor, page 59, Minute 218, which is about burglary. I am sure that everybody in this Council Chamber wishes that the number of burglaries would go down and down and down until there were not any. That is a bit like children wanting chocolate or ice-cream – it is a desirable end.

It is the end, to me, of 45 years as a Member for Otley and the various bits of Leeds that have been tacked on from time to time. One of the greatest honours that was done to me was to make me Lord Mayor – that really was an honour – and one of the highlights of that year was, I got elected as Lord Mayor on the Thursday night; on the Friday morning one of the Lord Mayor's staff came and put this on my desk, which contained *these* – I thought they were pick-locks for burglary but it turns out they are actually chopsticks! They said, "You had better get used to using these over the weekend, you are going to China on Monday!" I think that would have put a lot of people off.

Again, when I visited the police station the desk sergeant introduced me to two people who turned out to be patients of mine and they were being nicked for burglary. The lesson of that, Lord Mayor, is that the best deterrent for burglary is the certainty of getting caught. I think that people would think a lot more if they felt that they were going to be on the inside of Armley Jail rather than on the outside.

One of the big events was going to China and I must admit that the courtesy, enthusiasm and friendly welcome that I received there made this a very memorable

event and highlight of my year. I hope that the Chinese athletes who are currently in Leeds go away with the impression that they are glad they chose Leeds and that they think that Leeds is a place where the Chinese ought to do business, and that they go home and say that.

I wish them every success. Mind you, Lord Mayor, I hope that they can say, to quote one of the adverts, "The athlete in front of me was from Team GB".

Finally just one word – *valet* – if you have forgotten your Latin, Lord Mayor, that means farewell. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Les Carter, please.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. May I start by first of all agreeing with Angela as far as Little London and Beeston is concerned. Being the person who started that originally, that particular PFI scheme – I am not boasting about that – I had so much flack when I started it, especially from the Little London area, not so much from Beeston but from the Little London area – that somebody said to me "Why are you bothering?" and the reason I bothered was because of the very things that you have said will come from this. It is a very poor area of the city and it will be marvellous for them, so I am delighted that you are pleased and I am pleased with that.

Can I just go on to the questions of the police and numbers of burglaries. This is a great success, let us not kid ourselves. Some of the reductions have been fantastic. You look at Otley and Yeadon, a 33% reduction in Otley and Yeadon in burglary; 40% in Rothwell (they are not here, the Rothwell people) and some others. There are some that have gone up as well.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Down to you, Les.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: No, I will come on to it. This, in my view, highlights why Commissioners are not the right thing. It is working together that has created this. First of all the Community Safety Partnership, that has been a driving force and that is made up of all different strategy organisations. The over £1m which Her Majesty's Government put into this on the Community Safety Fund, and that is where we drew this money from, the Community Safety Fund, and the Divisional Commanders who worked like mad to do this.

That is great because all of us are sat in offices when these things are taking place, but the people I would like to really congratulate are the officers on the street who are doing the hard work, who are there at night and there to protect, and they all play a part in it.

When you look at the numbers, the numbers have gone down to 8,172, which is not boast, so do not shout. I had it at one stage a 7,600 in 2005. The reason that was because David Blunkett – Home Secretary – had issued an edict where people were going to be put away for burglary and prolific offenders were taken inside and not allowed out, and that dropped the numbers enormously.

This work to get down to 8,172 has taken an enormous amount of work but if more prolific burglars were taken off the streets it would be better, the figure would be even better.



Having said all that, yes, it is a wonderful success. I am delighted it has happened. I hope we can continue doing it. It is not easy, there have been bigger numbers in the past than we have ever seen here, it is not easy. I hope we can do it and in the meantime may I also just record thanks to the police officers on the beat. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Driver.

COUNCILLOR DRIVER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I rise to speak on Minute 219 of the Exec Board Report dealing with the update report on the new antisocial behaviour teams.

Lord Mayor, antisocial behaviour is an issue that causes problems for many people across Leeds but clearly there are some hotspots where it is much worse than in other areas, and Middleton Park Ward is one area of such problems and where there is quite a high level of new cases of antisocial behaviour in our part of South Leeds in this municipal year.

However, it is by no means the worst area in the city for ASB, with Burmantofts and Richmond Hill having 108 cases, Killingbeck and Seacroft 100 cases, Gipton and Harehills 92 cases in the last few months.

There is a problem that has an enormous effect on people's lives and, indeed, makes many, many innocent people in streets and neighbourhoods around the offending households very unhappy, and it is crucial that we have robust arrangements in place to try to respond effectively to the problem, and I welcome the new antisocial behaviour arrangements which I think could enable the Council to do just that. For the first time – and it is interesting Jamie Matthews is not here now but perhaps if he knew this...

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: He is outside.

COUNCILLOR DRIVER: He might be outside a lot longer later on! For the first time the work of the police, the ALMOs, Victim Support and the Council's own Antisocial Behaviour Team have been brought together to ensure that our response is co-ordinated and comprehensive.

Noise nuisance is also now transferring into the new antisocial behaviour teams which will ensure that a much wider range of powers are available to officers when they are responding to complaints about noise. I am pleased that the relevant Scrutiny Board is going to be asked to monitor the progress which is being made, and I am sure it will be made in future, because already we know, based on the feedback from victims, that the new arrangements are having a positive impact, with much improved customer or victim satisfaction rates. To highlight a few, 83% of customers are satisfied with the investigation, which is up 17.5%; 78% are satisfied with the case outcome, again up about 17 or 18%; 77% were satisfied that they received the appropriate level of support, that is up 30%. Overall satisfaction has increased by 10% from 70% to 80%. Clearly this is encouraging progress. We are not there yet, we need it to be 100% but at least we are seeing great progress and long may the trajectory continue as the ways of working get embedded and the increased co-operation between the police, the Council and other services leads to better intelligence and information sharing, so that we can nip these problems in the bud and perhaps answer the needs of the offending households more effectively as well as part of that package.

It is encouraging to see that cases are being resolved much more quickly and obviously when we can report that previously many antisocial cases were taking, it says here, an average of 241 days to resolve, and that has now dropped to about 70, so that is a massive improvement. Positive outcomes are also being achieved through the new arrangements with 75% of cases being resolved through actions that lead to an improvement in the situation for the victims or enforcement to prevent recurrence.

All of this points, I think, Lord Mayor, to significant benefits for those communities affected and it is hoped these early successes will long continue. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Taylor.

COUNCILLOR E TAYLOR: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Lord Mayor, I would like to speak on Minute 219, page 59, and the Antisocial Behaviour Team in Leeds.

My Lord Mayor, antisocial behaviour in all of its different forms is something that blights communities across the city. Tackling antisocial behaviour is a key priority for this administration, as I am sure it is for all parties. I am pleased that following the extensive review of how it is being confronted by the Council, a number of positive steps have been taken to improve the service we provide.

Reading this report there are certainly some very encouraging statistical numbers across the areas that seem to suggest these changes already have a positive effect and I am looking forward to these continuing in the weeks and months ahead.

Of course, one of the most important parts of tackling antisocial behaviour is preventing it happening in the first place, and one of the best tools, I believe, in doing this, is CCTV. This is why I am so delighted that three new CCTV cameras have been paid for by the Council and are to be installed in my ward of Chapel Allerton in the area of Chapeltown. Chapeltown showed its strengths last year when the rest of the county was engaged in rioting and looting. The people of Chapeltown united and nipped trouble in the bud before the first sign of unrest.

Incidents of antisocial behaviour are somehow still all too common in some areas of Chapeltown where a few individuals can disrupt the lives of many others. These new CCTV cameras will provide reassurance to local residents as they go about their day to day lives, and it will also act as a deterrent to those people who may be involved in unacceptable behaviour. Of course, there are always people who will still choose to participate in antisocial behaviour. However, regardless of measures such as CCTV, the great news is that the technology will be there to record their actions and bring them to justice if they are acting outside the law.

Antisocial behaviour is an issue that needs to be certainly tackled in a proactive way by the Council and its partners and therefore I am pleased to see that, as a Council and as the administration, we are certainly not resting on the laurels in tackling the steps required to make this happen. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gruen, please, to sum up.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Lord Mayor, thank you very much. I do not want to run the risk of the red light so I want to start by thanking some people who are leaving but have worked with me very closely in terms of my responsibilities and, first

and foremost, as Area Chair I think it is Keith Parker, who, as Councillor Wakefield said recently, has the honour of chairing the most difficult Area Committee with a number of characters on it so, Keith, thank you for all your work.

Geoff, of course, who worked on Aire Valley Homes as a director for many years now and also last year helped me with my portfolio so, Geoff, thank you very much for all your work.

I was going to say thank you to Ben, but he is not in the Chamber now, for his work as Area Chair last year.

Moving on to answer some of the comments that have been made, like Angela and Gerry and Neil I am, of course, very pleased that we can finally make a move on financial close for Little London, Beeston Hill and Holbeck. It leaves a sour taste how long it has gone and that we have had to take out some of the key community facilities in Little London, but we have promised to work alongside them to try and put those back, working with the community.

Of course, £180m project, nearly 400 new homes, 1,200 homes refurbished and lots of environmental improvements and enhancements are something to fight hard for and we did. As Angela said, the hard work now will start on site. It is one thing to get all that work done in negotiations with other people and departments but we need to make it work on site.

Neil spoke also about the derelict sites programme and I think at the last Council meeting Councillor Wakefield referred to the Town and District Centre Programme from the previous administration, and it was a good programme. I hope that the derelict sites, the eyesores programme, will capture the imagination similarly. Certainly a lot of people have responded to the fact that we have had for far too many years in very prominent locations buildings which have become eyesores, derelict, no use and vandalised, boarded or bricked up and it is high time that we made some action.

I know from Councillor Taggart and from Councillor Hanley the two particular sites in Bramley. Can I tell you not a day goes by when I am not reminded of those particular sites, so they are very well in my mind and some of the other schemes also which we have asked officers to move on as quickly as possible. Landowners who neglect those prominent sites have been put on a warning now – if you do not tidy up those sites, if you do not work with us, we will take enforcement action and we will bring those sites back into a useful life.

In terms of burglary, I thought that Alison struck just the right tone in terms of yes, we have done well so far but it is early days and we cannot yet say that we have turned the curve totally. A 17% reduction is wonderful progress but it has not been even across all parts of the city and so in some parts we need to do more work. I thought Lucinda's comment tying in the bigger agenda in terms of Children's Services, NEETs, unemployment, burglary and all that is exactly the right thing that we on the Cabinet know we have to work together, to have officers working together across the organisational boundaries to make certain that we continue that success.

Frankly on burglaries it is as much working with the private sector. We have done great things now in terms of the new locks that have been brought into all the ALMO properties, we have made those available at the cost it costs us through CASAC, as well, to the private sector as well and say, "You ought to improve all your locks in some of those difficult areas."

Les's comments, actually the PFI goes back to 2001 or earlier, so there have been - and I have said it before - a lot of people in that chain who have been working extremely hard and who will be pleased to see it through to fruition.

He is absolutely right that the people we have to thank most of all are the PCSOs, the bobbies on the beat but if we had not - and I hope you will agree with me - raised the profile of burglaries and the terrible crimes that they are and how emotive people who have been burgled feel about those crimes, if we had not raised that profile and made it one of our obsessions, then probably we would not have made the progress that we have.

On antisocial behaviour, again it has taken a bit of time to set up the new system - five different organisations from different parts of the public sector, all coming together and working together, but great strides have been made and the results which Geoff reeled off are testament to what you can do when you put your mind to it, when you focus on never mind whether you work for the police, the Youth Service, the ALMO or the housing, whatever - if you come together as an integrated, multidisciplinary team, you can achieve one hell of a lot. Geoff, thank you for those comments.

Finally, if I can respond to Eileen and to the Chapeltown Councillors because they have been very tenacious in fighting the cause for better and more CCTV in prominent positions within Chapeltown. Sometimes we have been criticised during the year by people saying we have got too much CCTV, but we stand by what we do because people do feel, going about their daily business, safer, and that is something, and if their perception of crime is lowered and if the police then can follow up crimes and get statistical and photographic evidence, then that must be money well invested, so we will continue, despite all these large budget cuts, to prioritise community safety for the wellbeing of people in the city and I think across all of those things, whether it is burglary or whether it is antisocial behaviour or some of the other things I have talked about, we are making genuine progress and I thank everyone who has been involved in that. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now moving on to Children's Services.  
Councillor Hanley.

COUNCILLOR HANLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Lord Mayor, I would like to comment on page 63 Minute 223, which as you have said is the Children's Services. As we are all aware, reducing the number of looked-after children is one of the three Children's Services obsessions that we are trying to deal with. These obsessions came into being after the imposition of the Improvement Notice, the Government's Improvement Notice that came in in March 2010 and between November 2009 and November 2010 Leeds experienced a significant increase in the number of looked-after children and it was a major difficulty for us. Indeed, it is these costs that have been one of the main drivers to get this number down.

The other main driver, of course, is that it is far better for children to be looked after at home by their families. We are investing a great deal in early intervention and we see this as the way forward to really reduce the number of looked-after children. We are working hard with all of our partners.

To bring these numbers down is a very complicated and a massive task but it is one that is being undertaken against the backdrop of a total restructure within Children's Services, which is another very significant point.

Over the past two years we have seen a steady improvement in the number of fostering and adoption services that we offer and, of course, we have received very positive Ofsted reports and, as you know, we have had the removal of the Improvement Notice, and I think everybody is to be congratulated on that.

The rate of improvement is commendable but, as always, there is much more to do. We must decrease the numbers of looked-after children and albeit there is progress to date, we are ahead of targets and one thing and another, there is so much more to do and we all recognise that.

Sadly, some neighbouring Authorities have not seen what has happened in Leeds. We have managed to steady the numbers, we have managed to reach a plateau and that, really, if the increase had carried on as it was we would have seen nearly about 100 children being cared for and this would have cost the Authority in the region of £6m, so the progress to date and the work that has been done is not just commendable, it is saving us a great deal of money, it is obviously better for children.

Lord Mayor, I know that Councillor Blake spoke earlier about the need for more foster carers and the additional money that would be made available to Area Committees, and this is a very, very important issue for us and I hope everybody gets involved in that.

We need to ensure that as many children as possible are placed in internal fostering scenarios. It costs us significant sums of money if we are forced to go away from the city and if we are forced to use agencies. The only way we can do this, of course, is to recruit more foster families, more foster carers and, as Judith has said, if we are looking for 80 foster carers we have got to try and find a catchment in a thousand people, and that is a significant task to say the least.

Lord Mayor, our Executive Board Member, Councillor Judith Blake, Councillor Dowson, Josie and Kamila, they should all be congratulated on the progress they have made to date. The Ofsted reports are significantly better and to get rid of the Improvement Notice I think is significant, to say the least.

What I would urge very Councillor, and it is not about which party we are from, every Councillor, you should work as hard as you can in your Area Committees and use the funds that we are going to make available and let us get more Leeds foster carers. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Renshaw.

COUNCILLOR RENSHAW: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to comment on Minute 223, page 63, the Looked-After Children Report. In particular I would like to focus on the outcomes achieved for this group of children. As we know, looked-after children are a particularly vulnerable group and we need to work hard to ensure they are given every opportunity to fulfil their potential and lead happy, health lives; something that is vital if we all are to achieve our ambition of becoming a child friendly city.

It is encouraging to see progress has been made across the outcomes and I am particularly pleased to see the rapid steps that have been taken to help the children lead healthy lives. We are improving rapidly in this area and are ahead of our statistical neighbours when it comes to the percentage of looked-after who have

up to date health assessments, dental checks and immunisations. In fact, the number of children with immunisations which are up to date has increased from 57% in 2007/08 to 90% in 2010/11.

Progress has been made in the number of children's reviews carried out within the required time scales. This is an area we have been criticised for in the past but we have gone from 71% in 2009/10 to 91% presently.

When it comes to academic achievement there is a steady improvement in the performance of looked-after children, with the numbers achieving five A-C GCSEs going from 9% in 2008 to 33% in 2010/11. I think this is a tremendous achievement for all our looked-after children. However, the gap between them and other children continues to remain far too wide and this is something we are working hard to address.

One area where we have seen continued improvement is that of attendance and, in particular, attendance at primary school. For this age group looked-after children have a regular high attendance rate, higher than that of all children, and persistent absence has continued to decline. When we moved to secondary schools, although levels are improving, looked-after children do have a higher absence rate than that of all children. As improving school attendance is one of our three obsessions, we need to continue to focus on this area to ensure sustained progress.

One issue that is highlighted in the report is permanent exclusions and the fact that academies do not have to share this data with us as a Local Authority. I know that people have spoken before in Council about the concerns they have regarding academies, but for me this is one of the biggest. I am usually concerned that there are examples of academies excluding pupils in order to keep their league table positions. The danger we face is that pupils who attract the Pupil Premium – which our, of course, looked-after children do for the majority – are accepted into school, kept on the roll until the money is safely banked and then excluded perhaps by academies who have stopped contributing to the Area Inclusion Partnerships.

We are working extremely hard to improve the outcomes for our looked-after children, which is evidenced by this report. I just hope that the Government's drive to fragment education provision across the city does not undermine the efforts of us all. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lamb, please.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to speak to the same Minute, Minute 223 on page 63 and I wanted to highlight an issue which has come to my attention recently from some casework, and it may surprise some Members opposite to know that we do actually have challenging children and families in the outer areas of the city as well as in the inner parts.

It is an issue of private fostering, which is not something I have come across before. It is not where children have been taken into the care of the Local Authority; it is where a private agreement exists, for whatever reason, between a parent and an individual who is not a family member, that they decide for whatever reason to place their children with for a period of longer than 28 days. It would be a good example to use, the case we have had, but it would not be appropriate to talk about it in Council.

It is an issue that we do not know a great deal about, to be honest. There are a lot of grey areas and it has brought me to start asking a lot of questions and getting

briefings from officers and the more I have asked, the more uncomfortable I have become.

Officially, there are 16 instances in Leeds of children who are cared for as part of private fostering arrangements. The real picture is we have absolutely no idea how many cases exist. Officers tell me it could be four times that, five times – they could not dispute if I said there was 500 or 1,000 instances. The reality is, we have no idea. We do not know how these children are affected. We know the outcomes for looked-after children that are looked after by the Authority but we have no idea what the outcomes are for children that are looked after as part of private fostering arrangements.

To put it into some perspective, probably the most high profile instance of a private fostering arrangement will be one that every Councillor is familiar with and that was the case of Victoria Climbié and that gives you an idea of what can happen when things go terribly wrong.

Some of my concerns about this issue is that these arrangements are not subject to the same rigour as other fostering arrangements. If anyone of us wanted to start fostering a child and registered our interest, it could take probably up to eight-and-a-half months if we were suitable before a child was placed in our care. As a result of a private fostering arrangement, if and only if the Authority is informed that such an arrangement takes place, the child is already there before anybody goes to assess if it suitable for them to be there and that clearly has to be a problem. There is clearly scope for things to go wrong and it is something that we really need to get a grip of, in my view.

What I am asking for today, and I have already raised it with the Scrutiny Board Chair, is I think we need to have a Scrutiny inquiry into this and I would like Councillor Blake, really, to take the issue on board because the disturbing thing is that we just do not know. We do not know how many children are in this position, we do not know the outcomes that they achieve or what impact it has on their lives. There is a clear issue that I think a lot of parents do not even know that where these arrangements are in place they have a duty to inform the Local Authority. I am not convinced that schools are clear about these arrangements and the implications and are playing their part in making sure that the Local Authority knows when there is such an arrangement in place.

It may not be a problem in many cases. It could be for medical reasons somebody cannot care for their child and they have asked a friend to look after them for a short period of time while they recover, and it may be that the outcomes for those children are not affected, but the reality is we do not know and that is what troubles me more than anything; we should know. We should know how many children in our care are subject to these sort of arrangements, we should know the kind of outcomes that they achieve and we should make sure that in every instance parents who, for whatever reason, have decided that they cannot look after their children, and the carers of those children, know what help and support is available to them and we should be making sure they are getting the help and support and that the children are safe and sound and happy in whatever family environment they are in.

I hope it can be looked at by Scrutiny and I hope it is something that Councillor Blake will take forward and seek to look into urgently. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Andrew Carter? No. Councillor Rebecca Charlwood, and this is your maiden speech, if I can remind Members.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to comment on page 65 Minute 225 and the impact of the tuition fee rise for Leeds. We have had an excellent deputation on that today.

I would like to focus on the human impact of this rise. We have already seen a drop in the numbers of applicants for university and this in itself is worrying. The paper highlights that a drop in the number of applicants from poorer backgrounds is a key concern. It would be a key concern for me if I suddenly found myself facing a £9,000 per year bill for my education but, more than that, it is a betrayal; a betrayal by the Liberal Democrats to the people who voted for them.

Let us not forget Nick Clegg's very public pledge not to raise tuition fees if elected. In fact, he pledged to phase them out altogether over the course of six years. This is the same Nick Clegg who stated that raising tuition fees to £7,000 per year would be a disaster. What does he call raising them to £9,000 per year? I can tell you what I call it – a disgrace.

I am afraid it gets worse. As we know, many students get part-time jobs to help fund their education and this is, of course, to be applauded but let me ask you all, what does the Government think of young people who go out and get a job? The answer is, not very much. The announcement came only last week that the Coalition will freeze the national minimum wage for 16-20 year olds. I know that many of you will be thinking typical Tory policy but you would be wrong. It was in fact Vince Cable who came out and said there would be no point raising the minimum rate for young people if it meant it would be harder for them to get a job.

The Trades Union Congress has said there is no evidence that the minimum wage had an adverse effect on jobs but Mr Cable obviously thinks that callously exploiting young people is acceptable and I am afraid we do not.

We will now have a situation where those young people who are still able to go to university will face a massive debt and receive no encouragement whatsoever to start working to pay their way. Those young people who forego university will find they will be paid a pittance because people as out of touch as Vince Cable say there is no point in paying them any more.

What a kick in the teeth for the young people of this country. This Government really is doing its utmost to kill their ambition, kill their dreams, kill their aspirations and leave them with little hope for their future. It is disgraceful and I look forward to the day when these young people make their feelings known through the ballot box. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Khan, and I am aware that this is not your maiden speech.

COUNCILLOR KHAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Lord Mayor, I would like to comment on the Minute 225, page 65, the Council report on the impact of the tuition fees rise for Leeds. The Coalition decision to triple fees will take effect this coming September. This will result in 200,000 young people graduating each year with debts over £45,000. There are growing concerns over the economic impact on Coalition policies. This could be significant for Leeds as a city that relies heavily on the student population to boost and grow the local economy. I have concern of the



reduction in the number of application to universities. There has already been a reduction of 11% in the number of applicants from last year. My fear is that many bright and able students are being put off applying to universities due to the huge cost but, aside from the impact on individual students, I think we need to consider our potential impact on the city as a whole.

Currently, only 32% of students in Leeds live at home, with the other 68% making good use of local accommodation, transport and businesses. More students living at home means less students to rent accommodation, travel on public transport and buy from local supplies. This could start to have a sizeable knock-on effect on our local economy.

Think for a minute about our thriving night-time economy, the restaurants and the bars that could start to suffer as a result of the effect of this policy. Taken to the extreme we could see businesses forced to close with the resulting increase in local unemployment. Cuts in working hours and job losses may occur; the opposite of what the community needs in this financial climate.

One section of the community who may start to feel the pinch if a greater number of students choose to live at home will be the private landlords. Traditional student areas such as Headingley, Hyde Park and Woodhouse could suddenly find that there is an increase in empty properties as landlords struggle to find the students to fill them. As I am sure the Councillors for those areas will agree, an increase in empty houses is something that very few communities would welcome, with the associated community risk.

This policy will have a damaging impact on all those in touch either directly or indirectly. Students and their families lose out as they will have to pay more. Those who cannot afford the cost will risk being put off from applying and so will miss out on the opportunities of a university education. *(Mobile phone interruption)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Either a cheque of £10 or I will take cash! *(laughter)*  
Carry on.

COUNCILLOR KHAN: The Government lack of concern for local... *(mobile phone interruption)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Can we all, please, check our equipment, as it were, and make sure it is working? Don't quote me! Carry on, and ignore the red light.

COUNCILLOR KHAN: The Government's lack of concern for social welfare of students and their lack of commitment to equality is expected. However, you would have thought they may have paid more attention to economic concerns, given their unwavering commitment to place matters of economic concerns above social responsibilities.

This policy is deeply worrying. It is hard to believe it was supported by the Liberal Democrats, who broke their pledge to vote it through. They pledged to vote against any measure of increased tuition fees and indeed said they would abolish them, but they did not deliver. It seems that the Coalition cannot be trusted to provide for the needs of the economy and the needs of its UK citizens. We have yet to see the full impact but I for one remain deeply concerned over what may be far-reaching consequence of hugely controversial decision. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Robinson.

COUNCILLOR ROBINSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Firstly, may I associate myself with your earlier comments towards our retiring Councillors in May. I have always believed that people enter politics with the best intentions to achieve for their constituents, whatever our political differences. I think it was Tony Benn who said, on retiring from Parliament, that it would give him more time to focus on real politics, so I am sure that our retiring Councillors will still retain some involvement in civic life.

Turning to Minute 225 on page 65 of the Executive Board Minutes from 7 March 2012 regarding tuition fees and its impact on the city of Leeds, I just want to deal with a little bit of housekeeping first. Actually, applications have done up this year from 2010 and the trajectory is that they are still rising and I would remind the Labour Party that back in January 2003 they had in their election manifesto that they had no intention to introduce tuition fees and top-up fees and they went and did it, so be very, very careful about throwing around accusations.

I can appreciate, as someone with an existing student debt and who completed a Masters last year at the University of Leeds, the concerns of many young people. I was lucky enough to meet many young people last weekend, along with Councillor Bentley, at the Envision Organised Day. I do not recall seeing a Labour Member there – I am sure if there was one there please correct me now, but that was over in the Rose Bowl. They expressed their concerns then about jobs for the future and access to higher education and I will express some of the comments today as I did to them.

The tuition fees under both the previous Labour Government and the Coalition caused a great deal of concern among many young people and we saw marches and protests on both occasions. At this stage I would like to say that violence, aggression and disorder can never be condoned. The true way, even if passions overflow, is to embrace discussion and dialogue and that should always be the approach in our democracy.

While students are worried about having to pay £9,000 a year in tuition fees, the shift in the threshold for paying should be welcomed, a move from £15,000 to £21,000 means that most will repay £540 a year less than under the previous scheme. Furthermore, if debt is not cleared after 30 years from graduation, it is completely wiped out. With the average salary for graduates between £17,720 and £23,335, most students will not start paying fees immediately upon entering the workplace. The lowest earning graduates will actually pay less than under the previous plans. The National Scholarship Programme has committed £50m this year, rising to £100m and then £150m in subsequent years, again helping the poorest in our society who have the skill and ability to go to university.

Really, when all the political posturing from all the parties is put to one side, the last Government and this Government are both committed to tuition fees. We must ask ourselves, is it right for the general public to pay through higher taxation for further education? Is it right that young people who decide that they do not want to go to university should have to pay for it for those who do want to go to university, and shouldn't those who decide that they do not want to go to university have the chance to save for their own future and for their children's future?

I agree with something that was pointed out by Councillor Ewens where she said that she had campaigned for an improved careers advice service in the city. I agree that the automatic assumption and this general conveyor belt that we now have towards university is not the best option for everybody, the individual concerned

or the wider populous. Investment in and work towards greater apprenticeships should be regarded as extremely beneficial to our society and welcomed by everybody. Extra funding of higher education was called for from the universities and higher education sectors for years and I just want to express some of the concerns that were raised by Sam Gyimah, who is the MP for East Sussex. He highlighted that one per cent of the UK university alumni make gift aid contributions back to their institutions compared to 10% in the United States. Having seen on the other side of the pond both the financial and social aspects that can come around from alumni services, it would seem odd to neglect this avenue of funding in the future.

Universities have to decide do they wish to leave it to the State sector to dictate to them or do they wish to take control of their own future. Any donations should be subject to gift aid and other tax relief and should be encouraged from the individual by the Government.

In the recent Budget some tax loopholes were closed and while I welcome a simpler, flatter and clearer tax system, we should encourage charitable giving through tax relief. Charitable giving is not tax evasion.

Students make a worthwhile contribution to this city as well as to our economy and our communities. I look forward to the further Commission report in twelve months time and I hope that students will recognise, even if they do not agree, that the opportunity to improve their learning through the fees rise and improve the learning of those that follow them into those institutions is something to be welcomed. Thank you very much, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ewens, please.

COUNCILLOR EWENS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I hope I will bring a bit more pleasantness into the way we seem to have deteriorated because I want to look at us as a child friendly city, which I think is something we should be and which I support. I think that we should be looking at things like inclusion and how we have supported inclusion and what we are doing to make it better. I actually went a bit historical on this – not hysterical, it is all right, not like some people – and I realised that the first time I ever got involved with a child with disabilities with education was when I was a governor at Bentley Primary School some 20 years ago and we had a child in the class complete with a Braille machine and a full-time helper who saw her in and out of lessons and helped her with everything she had to do.

The next time I met that young lady was shortly after I was elected when I attended a meeting at Park Lane College, as it still was, because I hate the way we have got rid of all the interesting names (sorry, I was not going to be nasty) and Park Lane had just set up an organisation of some kind which was going to deal specifically for the visually impaired, so we had moved on a bit.

I find that one of the things that I did also, I went on to the North-West SILC Governors because I did not know very much about disability and if you go and work with an organisation that is doing that, then you have a good opportunity to learn things. I went on the first Parent Partnership course there was where people could be trained to accompany parents with a child with disability to go and make sure that the school was respecting it. That has to be a good thing, doesn't it? Isn't this a good thing?

Then we went for the Market Place for Disabled Children. We had over 400 organisations the first time it ran offering some kind of service to families who had

children with disabilities and we were such a big organisation they would not let us do it in the Banquet Suite again because we were too big! I helped with it, I supported it as a Councillor because Councillors, as all of you should know, are jacks of all trades – and sometimes we are masters of none. (*interruption*)

I do apologise – did I interrupt you? Sorry, Gerry, you know so much more about it than I do! The next one I have been chasing for 18 months to get the right adaptations for a family where a child is waiting for a bone marrow transplant which is a real difficulty. I think they are due to get them done but it involved getting officers from ten different places to sit round a table and talk about it. This business of working together that Keith referred to last year is something we have to go on doing more of.

The thing that really makes me choke a bit when I tell about it, City of Leeds School had at one time (and I went to the opening of it) a Sensory Room. We had the children from the North-West SILC who were being integrated into the school, the whole main school. Somehow or other that disappeared. I do not know where it went, I do not know how it went. I have not always been a very good school governor, I know, because there are so many other things to do, but I went to an awards evening and the last award – this is where I choke – a child came in in a wheelchair. She had been in a serious road accident, she had had to go to a special school, she had come in through the special arrangements that were made for her at City and she came in for an award for her attendance, and the school erupted with cheering. The other children learned so much from having a disabled child among them and they learned to respect her.

We should be looking at outcomes. Take you targets away. It is outcomes that matter and what we have is a child friendly city and we should work on where we have got, because to me this child-friendliness has always been there to some extent; now it is better organised and I just think we should all be supporting it and working in a cluster. We are working in a cluster together where we take notice of every child and where the way we have worked together with six schools is followed as an example by other people because we work together as well.

THE LORD MAYOR: Penny, can I just remind you...

COUNCILLOR EWENS: That is three minutes. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: I am sure that this place will really miss your compassion and the way that you speak. (*hear, hear*) Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor, and yes, we will miss Penny's interventions. I know as well as speaking in Council she always speaks at Scrutiny Board and has kept an interest going right the way through, and I am sure you will continue to get your point of view across even if you are not on Council any more.

Just before I move on to summing up the Minutes, it would be very churlish of me not to pay tribute to my Ward colleague, Geoff Driver. I know I speak on behalf of Kim Groves as well that we are going to miss you, Geoff, I think that is the real truth, in so many different ways, and particularly his real commitment to Belle Isle, Hunslet, Middleton and especially the work he has done with young people in the city. (*Applause*) He has left us a real example to follow and I know he will be keeping an eye on us and making sure, but I do want to remind him there are still five weeks to go so do not go home and put your feet up.

Just touching on outcomes, because I think that is what runs through everything that we do in the Children's Agenda, that is everything we are doing is trying to achieve better outcomes for children and the basis of what we are trying to do is around earlier intervention, and that is why the cluster model is so important, that in our own local areas we can spot the problems that the right partnership is in place at a real integrated level and keeping the focus on children and young people. Each child and young person in our communities is as valuable to the other as us and that is where our starting point is and if we stick to that, they will continue to make enormous progress.

I think the point is whilst we have a very good report on our looked-after children, and I think we would all welcome the level of detail and the analysis into how they are progressing, our ultimate objective is to reduce the need for children to be looked after in the first place and that is where we are focusing our efforts, working to support families living within their communities.

I think we have highlighted the key areas very well around health, educational attainment, attendance, safeguarding and around destinations – where they go when they leave care; absolutely crucial. In think in Corporate Carers this year we have made tremendous progress and I want to thank all Members of Council who contribute to the Children's Agenda - obviously my team in particular. I think we have seen a real sea-change. We have not talked about fostering like this ever before and it is really important that we continue in this way.

One of the really key things that we are doing that is at the absolute basis of child friendly city is to increase the voice and influence of young people themselves and I do not think we need to take any lessons from Labour Members not turning up at events. Every event that I go to we have a really strong representation from all Members and I would never single out a party for not attending. I think that was really below the belt. Many of us attended the Youth Parliament elections, for example and it was a real tribute to the people there that so many Members support what they are doing.

We have enormous challenges facing us. We know the number of families who are falling into difficulties is going to increase. The number of families that we are talking to Government around supporting is around 4,000 for the city and I know that that is an under-estimate of those that we need to work with. Where we have got the birth rate going up we know we have some of our most challenging circumstances, although the Basic Need Programme is just as urgent across the whole city. We are going to have a new approach to addressing this, a one-Council approach working closely with Development Services, because we know we are going to have new houses built, we know the pressure that is going to come on and we need to really pull together to deal with the demographic time bomb that is coming up in terms of expanding our schools and, indeed, building new schools.

I do not really know where to start with Councillor Marjoram. The complacency that he displays is absolutely beyond belief. He does not understand...

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Councillor Marjoram did not speak.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: You might like to start again by apologising.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Robinson, I will profoundly... (*interruption*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Carry on, Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: I am sorry, it has been a long afternoon. I do apologise, I am really sorry. I am not going to be deflected because he does not get the point about...

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Who doesn't?

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: ...the young people that are being affected by the policies of this Government, removing EMA...

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Who doesn't?

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: ...increasing tuition fees. It is all about the young people whose aspirations are being dashed and reduced opportunities. The number of places in our higher education is going down for a start and we heard from the students themselves they work very closely with the students...

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: Name names, Judith.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: ... and the aspiring students, they know how they are feeling.

On a week where we have seen tax cuts coming through for millionaires, are we now not seeing opportunities being cut for millions of our young people across the country. We have to address poverty going forward and that is exactly the work that we are looking at through our families. We know that poverty is one of the main issues that is going to increase and therefore is going to have a direct impact on our young people's ability to survive and enter into the higher education system.

I want to support what Councillor Lamb has actually said. I think you have highlighted a really, really good area. We do not know enough about it, we need to work with every single agency that works with young people – so our schools, our health visitors, children's centres. We need to have a campaign to raise awareness.

What we also know is there are a large number of children, as you say, that we do not know the numbers of who are not in the care of any adults at all. They are in the city, staying with friends, staying on sofas and not engaging in education and training as well.

I totally support your proposal to have a Scrutiny inquiry, as Councillor Chapman, I think, has agreed that she will look at it and I am sure all Members in the Council will agree to do that.

Do not under-estimate our ambition. We want to make Leeds the best city for young people and we will continue to do everything we can to put young people at the centre of everything we do. We are not going to abandon them; we are going to make as many opportunities as we can for them going forward. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

(iii) Leisure

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. We are now moving on to Leisure. Councillor Dunn.

COUNCILLOR DUNN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to speak on Minute 209 on page 52 in relation to the Executive Board decision to introduce apprenticeships in Parks and Countryside.

I am delighted that this decision has been made. We are creating 21 apprenticeship places in the Parks and Countryside section. I am delighted for our young people, not least our looked after children. It gives them a great opportunity. This is the first formal apprenticeship within the section since 1984 and I know that there are Members round this Chamber today who would have been involved in 1984 and might wonder what happened to those apprenticeships. Those apprentices are now, some of them, in senior management, and I think that is great.

It would be also great, I think, if we could incorporate those apprenticeships into the new facelift that we are giving to Middleton Park. I think that would be wonderful because the improvements in the park, getting a £2m facelift, have been financed by a team effort from the Heritage Lottery, Wade's Charity and the Sir George Martin Trust.

The park covers over 600 acres and has a huge expanse of woodland that is at least 500 years old. It currently attracts around two million visitors a year, but it is fair to say that the park has fallen into disrepair over a period of years. This is a golden opportunity now to bring it back to its normal state.

We have worked with the ward Councillor, local residents and the Friends of Middleton Park to put this together, an improvement plan for a park to, hopefully, restore its former glory and encourage more people from all over the city to visit. Improvements include new entrances and better signage, a new visitors' centre, a new bandstand, redeveloping the existing rose garden, improving footpaths and seating, new public art and heritage trails. This is creating a park to be proud of but one that will also need good upkeep from the Parks and Countryside service, which brings me back to the opportunities to provide the new apprenticeship scheme that we were talking about.

The scheme provides a real chance for young people to learn and develop skills and knowledge. There are a variety of skills to be developed in the Parks and Countryside Service as a whole, not just Middleton Park. These include catering and retail, soil science, horticultural design, planting and management, landscape construction, customer service, animal care and transport and mechanical engineering.

The programme will hopefully lead to the new apprentices gaining nationally recognised qualifications and, of course, includes the possibility of opportunities. I know we all agree this is vitally important, given the enormous struggles many of our young people currently face. That is why I am glad to commit this Executive decision to you and hope you will support it. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Andrew Carter, please.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. Same Minute, same page. I begin by congratulating the department for this scheme for apprenticeships in our Parks and Countryside Department. It is an excellent initiative and one which I have absolutely no hesitation in supporting whatever.

Interestingly, we heard a presentation given, a deputation earlier today, in connection with allotments. Allotments are actually sometimes where people begin to get their interest in parks and horticulture. The suggestion was made – and I would very much like to think that Councillor Ogilvie and Councillor Wakefield would take it on board because we do have an opportunity to protect allotments by making sure that they are part of the Community Asset Register. We are perfectly able, as an Authority, to put all those sites, whether they are in private or public ownership, on that register. I am sure there will be, as ever, a million reasons that are brought forward why that cannot be done or should not be done, but I frankly think it must be done and it should be part, if you like of the ongoing debate on the Local Development Framework.

At the Exec Board on this actual Minute I introduced what turned out to be a very interesting and, I think, supportive discussion about the creation of new parks. We have an opportunity to expand the number of large parks (I am not talking about the size of Roundhay Park and Temple Newsam; I am talking about the size of the parks in our own localities) by allocating land, as we did in the UDP, for more parks in every ward in the city. I pointed to the fact that most parks in our urban areas which contain kids' playgrounds, playing fields, areas to walk, actually were created before or just after the last Diamond Jubilee which was of Queen Victoria in 1897, and since that time...

COUNCILLOR COULSON: I didn't know you were that old, Andrew!

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Mick, unlike you I have aged very well!  
*(laughter)* This gives us an opportunity to put right, if you like the fact that for most people in this city, whatever ward they live in, there is now less public parkland per head of population than there was in 1900. Most of the parks, if they were not created around the 1890s, were created certainly before the Second World War, so we are still talking about 60, 70, 80 years ago, during which time a massive increase has taken place in the number of people living in the city and the number of houses that have been built.

I do not mean this to be too great a dig at the officers but for once through the Local Development Plan process I would like to see officers really coming together to support Members' aspirations and community aspirations to protect allotments on private or public land through the Community Asset Register which, as far as I am concerned, must be done and I hope when the report comes back Members will support that, but also through the LDF process actually identifying not pocket parks, of which there has been quite a proliferation, but they are not areas where people can take long walks, they are not areas where – people can sit and enjoy them, absolutely, and they have their place but they do not have the same place as a large, urban park such as the ones most of us have in our communities but not enough of. There is a huge opportunity through the LDF process, besides all the big battles there will be over housing, commercial land, industrial land and all the rest of it, there are other opportunities and we must not miss them and officers must support us in that aspiration. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. If I can start with Andrew's comments firstly on allotments, I certainly sympathise with everything and agree with what he said and I am sure we will look in the paper that we bring back sympathetically on the Community Asset Register.



I think a lot of Members here actually share the aspiration around creating good green spaces in this city in addition to what we have already got, so thank you for those comments.

Jack, thank you for your comments. I know how passionately you care for parks in the city and particularly for Middleton Park. I am equally excited by our proposals to create 21 new apprenticeships within the Parks and Countryside service. As Jack said, the service ran apprenticeships up till 1984 and a number of our senior staff joined the service through that way, including Sean Flesher, our current Head of Parks, Paul Ackroyd, the Nursery Manager up at Redhall, and a number of our head and craft gardeners in our community parks across the city.

We have an ambition to get all our community parks to Green Flag level by 2020. If we are going to do that we do need additional skills, particularly given that we have lost some skills in recent years through retirement and early leavers, so the new apprenticeships will help to maintain a skilled workforce and help us to achieve the high level of service that will help us get Green Flag status across the board.

Councillor Wakefield in particular has led the drive in the city for partners and businesses to engage apprenticeships to grow the city's skill base and I think the Council has been an exemplar employer with over 700 new starts to date. The Council is now one of the largest in the country in terms of supporting apprenticeships and that is something I think we are all proud of.

Finally, as Councillor Dunn mentioned, we are particularly keen to work with Children's Services and Councillor Blake to make sure that our looked-after children generally do have a chance to benefit from the apprenticeships scheme that we are running. Thank you very much for the support. *(Applause)*

#### (iv) Adult Health and Social Care

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now moving on to Adult Health and Social Care. Councillor Varley.

COUNCILLOR VARLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. May I preface my comments on the Minutes by saying that actually this is my maiden speech because I have been on the list for so long and not made it, so thank you very much.

THE LORD MAYOR: Will Members please note? Thank you.

COUNCILLOR VARLEY: Thank you very much. I would like to comment on Minute 210 on page 52, and it is the Telecare equipment for the Leeds Telecare Services for 2012/13. It is for, obviously, purchase of new equipment.

I would like to illustrate my comments by two cases in Morley of people who are now receiving this Telecare service.

Audrey is 85 and one lunchtime she fell in the kitchen and banged her head and, of course, suffered concussion. She is not quite sure what time it was but it was early evening before she could drag herself to the phone in order to ring her granddaughter for help. Audrey has now recovered and everything is fine. She did have a long stay in hospital, there were no bones broken but if she had had the Telecare service, the attention that she had she would have received immediately.

The other lady, Clara, she is 96. She fell on her way to the toilet during the night, managed actually to get back into bed but, of course, she could not move any further and it was when her son appeared the following morning and had to break into the house, of course, because she had the chain on, that she was attended to. Clara is now hopping around as you would expect a 96 year old lady to do. She is a very sprightly lady but, nevertheless, she had a long, traumatic stay in hospital with operations, but she would have still had to do that but she would have been attended to earlier.

My point is that, because of this continued investment in this service, this service can now become more proactive and not reactive, so that these people who need this attention may be assessed in order to think that this may be of help before something really bad happens. Thank you very much, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Paulene Grahame, please.

COUNCILLOR P GRAHAME: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking on Minute 210 on page 52 of the Minute Book in relation to the Executive Board decision on Telecare equipment for the Leeds Telecare Service.

Members may know that Telecare is a step forward from the Care Ring Community Alarm Service that we have provided for around 25 years now. The Executive Board report actually describes Care Ring as being the first generation of monitoring equipment whilst Telecare is referred to as being from the second generation. This sees sensors placed around the home that automatically alert the Council's 24 hour Response Centre if the person needs assistance. Often this assistance is just practical advice or reassurance but on occasions the Response Centre arranges personal visits by mobile response, the emergency services or contacting a nearby family member depending on the situation.

Since October 2010 the Telecare team has been using the third generation equipment which uses GPS technology to improve the safety and independence of users outside the home. The Executive Board in March agreed to release a further £1m of the £3.1m identified for capital spend on Telecare in 2010. This latest release of funds will buy Telecare equipment for the service in the next financial year following on from the £1m that was released in May 2010 and was expected to be fully spent by the end of this month.

The increased uptake of Telecare during the period that the first £1m was spent has been impressive. There were 2,069 users of Telecare in April 2010 but this increased to 4,203 by January 2012.

In terms of quality of life and health impact, Telecare can help people to continue living independently in their own homes, in their own communities, with families and friendship groups for longer. In terms of the budgetary impact in terms of increased uptake of Telecare, since May 2010 there has been an estimate £1.6m saving on reduced care packages as a result of using Telecare equipment net of the equipment costs. This is based on an average annual saving of £2,800 per installation being achieved in 70% of cases.

Given the financial pressures faced by the Council, anything that can help with people's quality of life and costs less has to be a sensible thing to do. I am very pleased to be able to say that Executive Board has agreed to continue to provide capital funding for more equipment which will enable more independent living. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ann Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I also would like to speak on Minute 201, page 52.

I welcome the £1m release for the provision of Telecare services. However, what concerns me is that a person who does not have any family or friends that visit is not left alone and lonely just with the screen to look at which prompts them to take the tablets or whatever, so this equipment is very good but obviously we need human contact as well.

We must ensure that people have the chance to get the human contact because I can think of nothing worse than someone that cannot get out, an elderly person that cannot get out just being there day in, day out, prompted to take the tablets and whatever. It is not much of a life, isn't that.

Yes, I know we have got Neighbourhood Action and such voluntary groups as that which people will be told about and I am not putting them down at all, and churches as well that do a very good job, but what I wanted to mention on the back of this is that a lot of people to get out have to use the access bus and I know personally through my mother-in-law, who cannot get out now without assistance, yes, she has family but I know a lot of people do not have and they get the access bus, in her case to a local church, just one half day a week, and she cannot get the access bus there now because it only has one seat that she can reach, which is for somebody that really has difficulties in walking, because she tells me that you have got to go up a step upwards to get to the other seats and she is not physically able to do that so she cannot go to that group any more now.

Just as a rider on the back of what we are talking about, yes, Telecare service is brilliant but people need human contact as well. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Graham Latty, please.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Lord Mayor, it struck me on looking at the Minutes that it would be rather churlish if nobody from this side spoke in favour of this particular Minute, Minute 210, page 52. We have to applaud this but nobody seems to have spelled out just what this does, what Telecare can do. The very fact that you put a pressure pad in the bed so if somebody gets up during the night it is noted, somebody knows about it, and if they do not get back in within five minutes, where have they gone? You can have a pressure pad that says they have left a particular room, you can keep an eye on people being within a certain part of a building, as I say even within a certain room or within a bed. I think that when you think about that, the way that this opens up the sort of care that can be offered to people without somebody necessarily hovering over them all the time, being in the same room, being there, but they can be alerted, I think that when you think about it, I have just touched on a small facet of what Telecare can do but I do think that this must be the first step in a programme which can open up for us what Adult Social Care can do for people who do need this sort of observation, care, whatever you want to call it. I think it is going to be a wonderful step forward in the care of people who need carers. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Yeadon

COUNCILLOR YEADON: Thank you very much, Lord Mayor, and thank you to everybody for their contribution and their support on the paper regarding Telecare.

I think all the comments that were made are excellent and I think Shirley, really – congratulations on your maiden speech – brought a human face to actually what Telecare can do for people, I think it was Audrey and Clara who you spoke about, and hopefully this investment will ensure that more Audreys and Claras will be able to access this technology. Tying into what I was speaking about earlier today about the Reablement Service that we have, it is really about making sure people can live independently in their own homes for longer and those services work really well together.

I completely accept Councillor Blackburn's comments regarding ensuring that people have that human contact and it is important. Like you said, the Neighbourhood Networks do a fantastic job in ensuring that people are able to get out and have access to community based activities, and we need to be ensure that they are supported. Leeds is very unusual having that network of organisations and the fact that we have been able to protect the funding for those organisations during this really difficult time I think illustrates how important they are in doing that proactive, as Shirley described it, but preventative service to make sure that people do not go into residential care and hospital before they actually need to do that. I think it is really valuable.

Paulene and Graham both described really well what Telecare can do for people in their own homes. As Paulene highlighted, the actual savings that Telecare can bring to the Local Authority are extraordinary but that is not the reason why we want to press forward and invest more in it. It is a contributing factor but that is not the main reason. The main reason is that it can be used in such creative ways and can support such a vast number of people, not just older people but also people with disabilities, people with epilepsy and people with learning disability. An example was given to me of a person with a learning disability who had actually been a victim of hate crime and they can actually install Telecare into their home so that they have that peace of mind that if they were ever targeted in their home, there was a way that they could raise an alarm in a very quick and easy manner.

It is a very creative service that can save the Council money but, more importantly, can ensure that people are at home and living independent lives.

As Graham said, it is not just an alarm that you wear around your neck. There are sensors that you can have around your house, there are sensors that you have in your bed, sensors that you have in the door and it is incredible work that they do. If you want to go and see Telecare, down at the William Merritt Centre there is a Telecare room where you can actually go and look at some of the equipment and how it can be used. It is quite an eye-opener.

As Ann says, it is by no means a replacement for human contact and that is why we need to ensure that the different organisations in our communities are supported so that people can have that peace of mind in their own home but at the same time can ensure that they can play a full part in their local communities.

I just want also to use this opportunity to thank my Lead Member, Geoff, who is leaving us. He has only been my Lead Member for the past year but I do feel that his wisdom and experience has certainly been very valuable to me over this past year and although he has been on the Council for a lot longer than I have, he is

always willing to look at creative new things that we should be doing, so I just want to pay my personal tribute to him as well. Thank you for your support. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now moving to page 13 and I invite Councillor Wakefield to wind up this section, please.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I will do my best. I am sorry that Councillor Marjoram is not in the room because I was going to offer our apologies for mistaken identity. Never could a nicer bloke like Councillor Marjoram be wrongly accused of things, so I am sure he will accept those apologies.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Who did you mean? We want to know.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: She meant Councillor Robinson, but he is not here either.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: She lost her memory.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: We are going to get a Chinese deputation coming in in a few minutes and I am sure at the right time we will show our appreciation for their wisdom and judgment and welcome them to Leeds.

What I wanted to do is join in with the appreciation society for all those Councillors who are retiring. I have actually added them up and they have 210 years of public service to the people of Leeds, which is truly remarkable for all those people who have worked in their own unique way for their community and so on.

On this side it is actually 101 years from Keith Parker, Geoff Driver and Denise Atkinson who, as you know, is ill and sadly cannot make it. Of course, Geoff Driver we have spoken about many times and we all know what he has done in the city. My good friend and Ward colleague Councillor Parker, as we know, has been a real champion for sport and I think some of you have worked in the community with him to make sure young people get the sporting facilities in the area.

I only have one regret with Councillor Parker retiring today. I wish he would come back and finish off his last speech two Councils ago when he was talking about the Allotment Association's vegetables on display and he was also talking about the MP Alec Shelbrooke. I clearly remember him drawing likeness to leeks and potatoes and Alec Shelbrooke and we never quite (*laughter*) got to the turnips and potatoes. It is a pity that we did not because I thought that was a wonderful analogy to draw vegetables to our local MP.

I just break off and offer, on behalf of the Council, a very warm welcome to the Chinese delegation.

(*Standing ovation*)

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: That includes the Consul General, Mr Pan and, of course, Mr Yang Shu'an, who is a Deputy Chairman of the Chinese Olympic Committee. We were just expressing our appreciate for your wisdom and judgment in choosing Leeds as a base for your athletes (*applause*) and I am absolutely convinced the people of Leeds will give you a very warm welcome and a generous welcome and we wish you all the best in the Olympics and we hope you come a very close second to GB! (*laughter*) Welcome and enjoy the rest of your stay. Unfortunately the rest of the speech is not as good as that! (*laughter*)

If I can go back to Telecare, I really did appreciate those very sincere comments and case studies which made technology come alive, because that is what we are here about, caring for our vulnerable elderly. I think the stories and the support from all people around the room offered a real human side to that very complex debate, so I appreciate that.

I wanted really to come and start at the PFI, because the PFI in Little London is more than just about new houses and regeneration. There has been a theme throughout this afternoon about children because when we discussed this at the last Council, I referred to the Shelter Report that said only 25% of children living in poor housing get A-Cs. Improving the housing, improving the area is absolutely vital for improving children's performances. I am sure some of those schools that we know in the city, in the inner city, that have 50% turnover of children a year, will very much welcome this investment because it is absolutely vital to give security and a long-term future for children and families in those area. I think there is about, in the area of Little London, 20,000 children.

Indeed, in terms of the looked-after children, it is not just about actually the financial challenge (there is one). It is also about their educational future and their career prospects and, although there have been improvements, I think it is still a shocking statistic to talk about only 11% of looked after children getting five A-Cs, so I think there is a huge challenge ahead of us and that is why I welcomed Councillor Ogilvie's comments about the apprenticeships from Councillor Dunn, because in that report it must be the first report – and if I have missed them then apologies – that talks about specifically encouraging looked-after children to get apprenticeships, and they will be offered and encouraged to get apprenticeships with the Parks and Countryside. I think that is the kind of offer of stability and support children like that really need.

I have been looking round for support and ideas and somebody – Councillor Hanley – got me, I saw Chris here, this Focus from the Horsforth Liberals. No, you are confused because it is using red! That means you are hedging your bets. It has got a red banner; it is usually an orange one. I looked at the paper because often they have some really good ideas.

We saw the usual stuff about £1m wasted on the Council's free newspaper – actually the Council's newspaper is shared, it costs £50,000 – but what really interested me was actually the claim by the Lib Dems "Putting money back in your pocket."

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Only us?

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: No, you are not mentioned. You might be a millionaire, John! I thought, well, that is the kind of thing we all need, that is how you help young people, so I looked at the Budget because some of these things pass me by. I looked at the budget for young people and I saw that the minimum wage was actually frozen for young people, so 18 to 20 (*interruption*) (*Copies of newspaper handed to Councillors*)

Can I refer this, do you know they said? "Last year a lot of Labours voter did not realise that by voting Labour they would end up with a Conservative Councillor." It is as if people who vote Labour do not have their own principles and their own values and they are perfectly entitled in Horsforth to vote Labour because we have

had some very good candidates and we are not always prepared to slip and slide depending on the day. We have got our values and we have got our principles.

Let me come again to what was in the Budget. I will tell you what was in the Budget.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: What is the fourth page like?

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: I will tell you what was in the Budget – 200,000 working families, because they are working 16 hours, will lose £4,000 a year if they do not increase their hours. What else was in the budget was that people like Les and others, four-and-a-half million pensioners, will lose on their pensions. *(laughter)*

COUNCILLOR: You will have to get a smaller Mercedes!

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: What else was in the budget?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Wakefield...

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: What else was in the Budget to help young people who need support?

THE LORD MAYOR: Can I remind you that we are commenting on the Minutes, pleas?

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: I am really getting round to some more.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: You are not in Parliament

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Fourteen thousand millionaires will get £43,000 tax breaks a year instead of young people. *(interruption)* I will tell you what...

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Oh, come on.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Half a dozen of your back benchers are amongst them!

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: What we have seen today is the Liberal Party abstaining and abdicating responsibility.

COUNCILLOR: Shameful.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Let me tell you, that will be a permanent space after May when we point out they are very involved with refusing to help young people, renegeing on their promises on grants and actually doing nothing to help working families get something out of the Budget. I move, Lord Mayor, the Minutes. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: I now call on a vote on the motion to receive the Minutes. *(A vote was taken)* CARRIED.

Can I, just before we break, extend a wider welcome to our friends from China on behalf of all the citizens of Leeds, and not only the Members of this Chamber here. All the citizens of Leeds are very pleased with your visit here, we hope it is going to be an enjoyable one. We do look forward to seeing you later on in

July and we wish you all good wishes with your team, along with our own team as well, of course. Finally, we are very happy if you will join us in a few moments for a cup of tea in the Chamber and you will be guided there by the officers. If we can be back here, please, at five-and-twenty-to six. Thank you. *(Applause)*

*(Council adjourned for a short time)*

ITEM 8 - WHITE PAPER MOTION - GYPSY AND TRAVELLER SITES  
IN LEEDS

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now moving on to Item 8 on the paper and it is on page 13, for those people in the public gallery. I call upon Councillor Les Carter.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: My Lord Mayor, I wish to move the following resolution:

“This Council notes with concern that the ruling administration’s policy of providing more authorised Gypsy and Traveller sites in Leeds is taking place behind closed doors, without affording a chance for the public scrutiny or debate or in respect of its search for sites.

Council is also concerned that the ruling administration is using all its power and influence over Council officers to stop members of the opposition being able to debate site selection openly and in public.

- 1 Council calls on the administration to publicly release the site names to be considered for a Gypsy and Traveller site, which currently amounts to at least 90 (but I have been advised it is still 280)
- 2 Ensure full and meaningful consultation takes place on any plans before all Travellers’ sites are built, and at each stage of the process; and
3. Commits to holding local plebiscites in order to effectively gauge whether local communities near proposed sites are in favour of the proposals.”

Lord Mayor, I have been a member of this Council for a considerable number of years – I still look very young – however, I have always believed that the people of Leeds deserve to know what their elected Councillors are doing in their name.

COUNCILLOR LYONS: Like the incinerator.

THE LORD MAYOR: Let us get this straight right at the very beginning of this debate, that we want to hear what people have to say and I do not want interruptions, please. It is a very important and emotive debate and that has to be borne in mind, so if we can hear what each speaker has to say without them being interrupted, that would be good. Carry on.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. My Lord Mayor, I repeat again, the people of Leeds have a right to know what sites are being considered, where they are and why sites have been rejected, not just the ones that are considered. Unfortunately this Council is not allowing the list of potential sites to



be released to the public and, indeed, encouraged by the Labour Group, the search for sites is taking place behind closed doors without public scrutiny.

Labour should publicly release the list of sites under consideration and allow full and meaningful consultation. This secretive policy lies firmly at the door of one member, and that is Councillor Gruen. His amendment has nothing to do with this White Paper resolution. It is a complete smokescreen – an absolute, complete smokescreen. It has nothing to do with this paper. This is all to do with sites and selection of sites. He has done his best to stop Opposition members from being given information.

Recently I was asked to go on Radio Leeds to talk on travellers with Councillor Gruen. I thought a debate would take place between myself and Councillor Gruen, only to be told that Councillor Gruen had told the radio station that he was not prepared to debate the subject with me. He said he would not go on if it was open and both of us could debate it. My Lord Mayor, what a wimp! (*laughter*) Indeed, I think...

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: When did you work that out?

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: ... it is political cowardice on his part. I sought information originally on the travellers' sites last August. The department did not look at whether I should have the sites or get information; the department immediately sought legal advice on how to stop me having it. Indeed, in seeking legal advice as to how to deal with the FOI request, officers sought reasons to refuse the request before considering my request.

Following that I requested a list of all Council owned land. It took ten weeks for them to reply. When I looked at the list – it is no good laughing, you are Members of this Council, you should be treated as Members of this Council – I found that I could obtain the list that they had taken weeks to provide within a few minutes from the Finance Department. I left our Conservative Office, walked across to the Finance Department, asked if they had got this on their records, they said "Yes", "Print me a copy", they printed a copy and I walked back to the office. That was in just over five minutes and yet they had taken ten weeks to come back with that.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Disgraceful.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: If you think that is funny and think it is good, well, it is not the Council I think. I do not believe officers of this Council would ever have been able to treat Members with such contempt when Paul Rogerson was still Chief Executive. I am absolutely certain that would have been banned and stopped; I thought it was disgraceful.

Councillor Gruen makes play of the last administration's waste of money. If he cares to look at the costs, he has spent a similar amount each year in office than was spent when I was in office. In fact, in one year he spent more than I ever did in one year. I am not criticising him for that, I am just saying do not play about with costings – it is not true.

I am actually convinced, my Lord Mayor, this will end up with a judicial review. Whenever these sites come out it will be a judicial review which somebody has got to justify how the decision-making process took place.

Councillor Gruen and some of his Members have set up a working group. They are leaving it to the officers to tell you but they have set up a working group where they are looking at site selection. That, my Lord Mayor, will come out at an enquiry and people will be able to ask for the Minutes of those, what was said, what did officers tell you, how much information was given to you and how much influence did you have on these sites, because you do not set up a group like that unless you are prepared to influence the site itself, and I cannot understand why that has been done. Councillor Gruen should really look to other Members of Council and he should say, if he wants to set something up like that, invite all Members of Council to be on that particular group so we can all see what is going on, we can all look at it.

My Lord Mayor, I ask all Members of Council to stop this secretive, undemocratic policy and tell the people of Leeds where these sites are going to be placed. I asked Councillor to make a commitment to hold local plebiscites to let local people decide whether they want sites near them. Finally, I would hope they would support a change in the law to make unauthorised camping a criminal offence rather than a civil one.

My Lord Mayor, I move the resolution. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Procter.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor James Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Move in terms of the Notice, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Nash.

COUNCILLOR NASH: I second, my Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I call for a vote. All those in favour of suspension of procedure? He has moved suspension – I will ask the Solicitor to explain.

THE CITY SOLICITOR: The motion being voted upon is to suspend Council Procedure Rule 13.1, motions requiring notice. This was agreed at Whips, which is why it is also on the Order Paper.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Because the amendment was not signed.

THE LORD MAYOR: With that in mind I am calling for the vote. (*A vote was taken*) CARRIED.

Thank you. I now call on Councillor Gruen.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Lord Mayor, thank you very much. I have been called many things in my life, most of them from Andrew, but a wimp is not one of them – yet – so perhaps my speech will disillusion you about that issue.

Councillor Carter, we have heard more from you in the last six minutes than we did in the six years when you had this role. You banned officers from coming into your room and discussing travellers. You never brought a paper in six years about travellers. You were happy to pay blood money of £2m to keep travellers under the

carpet and not to have the issue discussed anywhere – not in your Group, not in my Group, not in Council, not in the public, nowhere. Because travellers have their illegal encampments in areas not in your wards, you were quite happy for them to travel around from one to another to another and to pay £2m of taxpayers' money. You are a disgrace, Councillor Carter. *(Applause)*

Now you come here, after six years of silence, £2m wasted, and tell us we are looking at this in secrecy.

There have been three reports to Executive Board. There has been a Scrutiny Report as soon as I took on this role. The only question the Chair asked me was, "Will you take our deliberations seriously or will you do as the previous administration has done with Councillor Pryke's report?" because it was just trashed.

COUNCILLOR: Where is he?

COUNCILLOR GREEN: I do not know where he is but his report was trashed.

We gave that undertaking. There were twelve recommendations; all of those recommendations are in the public domain, all of those recommendations have been followed up.

Then we have an incremental approach in going to Executive Board and the last one was to ask officers to look into site selection against the criteria that Executive Board agreed and to come back when they had done a thorough piece of work.

I tell you this, colleagues, neither the Council Leader nor I have been briefed since then or have interfered in any of that process that officers have carried out. *(interruption)*

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Be careful.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Oh, come on.

COUNCILLOR GREEN: That is what I am telling you. You may refute it when you speak again but that is what I am telling you. I have not been briefed, Councillor Wakefield has not been briefed. I do not know why you mentioned 90 sites. Well, I do know why you mentioned 90 sites...

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Yes, you do.

COUNCILLOR GREEN: ... and let me come to why you mentioned 90 sites, because two senior officers of this Council came to brief you. They did not brief me, they did not brief Councillor Wakefield; they came to brief you. One male, one female senior officer. One officer brought with her a piece of paper which was confidential which you, Councillor Carter, snatched out of her hand and hid away and locked away in your draw cabinet and you refused to give it back. *(interruption)* You refused to give it back and what is worse, your accusations about the Chief Executive, what is worse, Councillor Carter, when this piece of paper was asked back, you said, "Come outside, you will have to fight me for it." *(interruption)* That is the character you are – that is the character you are; a senior Member of this Council who thieves a piece of paper, who locks it away in a drawer and then says to one of those senior people, an officer, "Come outside and we will have fisticuffs." You

sound like bloody Boris! You sound like Boris Johnson. *(interruption)* Do not take the high moral ground with us.

You have seen those sites, you believe there are 90, as it says in here, and I have not got a clue whether there are 90 or 80 or 100 or whatever, because I am satisfied to wait---

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: You are lying.

COUNCILLOR GREEN: No, I am not lying, I promise you, I am not lying, you can ask the officers, I have not been briefed and I am content to be briefed when they are ready, when they have done the thorough piece of assessment and, as I said earlier on to Councillor Hyde's question, it will not be my selection, it will be the Executive Board's decision how to go forward.

The truth of the matter is that when these matters have come to the Exec Board on three occasions, your Group has been singularly unhappy to make any progress or have any further discussion on those sites. The other political Groups have agreed the process is fair and it is reasonable and it is open and we have promised to come back at the appropriate time.

Should I apologise for having a working group of Labour Councillors? For God's sake, get engaged, man.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: To do what?

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Why are you a Councillor?

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: He cannot get engaged because he is not a Labour Councillor, that is the point, isn't it?

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Perhaps he will see the light next month. So, why don't you have your own working group, because when you raised it with officers, they told you ---

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: No information.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Hang on a second. Lord Mayor, I cannot be interrupted either.

THE LORD MAYOR: I quite agree. I did say earlier on, let people please be heard. You will have an opportunity to speak and if you are not down on that list, then let me know and I will call you in due time. Carry on.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I think we have a number of working groups and we do not apologise for it because Labour Councillors want to be engaged in community politics and on issues to get to know more information and to be able to discuss that information. Your Group, you are like a bunch of Lord Lucans – nobody can ever find any of you! *(laughter)*

We are very happy...

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: That's good, coming from you. You want to be very, very careful.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: You want to be very careful.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: We seek him here...

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: We are very happy to be engaged and you have had the offer, Les, you have had the offer that you can have a working group if there are enough of you and that will be fine. We can all have working groups on any subject we want. The officers told you they will come, they will give you information and then you could discuss it. There is no secrecy.

I know finally, because I do not want to get too hot under the collar with this lot, finally, Lord Mayor, you are pinning all your hopes on the great big Pickles. He was going to come along, was he not, and he was going to say "Oh, this will not be a duty any more for Local Authorities. You can walk away from it, leave all these bad people out there, you have no duty any more. It will be a criminal offence as well." What has the great Pickles done? He has told us that we shall provide, he has encouraged us to provide sites. He has told us to behave reasonably in the long term. That is not what you are telling us. You are telling us even now it should be a criminal offence. You are not saying "provide", are you, or are you finally going to come out of your lager and tell us that actually you are in favour of the approach we have taken that on a sensible and rational basis we should look for some small scale sites in the appropriate places for travellers to go to.

The final thing – I said "final" once before, sorry I misled you, this is the final thing.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: What's new?

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: When we took on this role and this work, the High Court Judge said this Council was acting perversely. They meant Les Carter was acting perversely...

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: No they did not. They did not say that at all.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: ...because you had no policy, you had no vision other than "Let's not talk about it and let them keep going to Cottingley and to Holbeck and to Armley where it is not ours and they will be happy."

Shame on you and I ask you all to vote for the amendment. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Atha, please.

COUNCILLOR ATHA: Can I second and reserve the right to reply later.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Finnigan.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. When I was elected in 2002 to represent the Morley North ward, one of the first challenges we faced was the regular, almost seasonal impact of unauthorised sites in the Morley North ward, particularly the village of Drighlington and in this particular case in Gildersome and that was an unauthorised camp that came on to the playing fields at Gildersome. It is the only time I have been rung up at half-past one in the morning to be told these travellers are doing all sorts of things.

The net result of that is we have toughened up a lot of the sites round Morley and the number of unauthorised sites around Morley has dropped quite substantially over the years as we figured out each and every time what we can do to make sure sites are secure.

The net result of this, I think and I believe, is that this has moved the problem elsewhere. I think our colleagues in Armley are getting some of the impact of the people who used to come to our particular neck of the woods and have to move on as a result of that, and it is good to see that Jim has a more vigorous approach to travellers than he certainly did in 2002 when they were all coming to Drighlington on a regular basis.

You are fundamentally in a position where you have choices on what happens next. Primarily, if you do deal with traveller sites, when you are in a situation where, like Cottingley Springs, you are going to produce an issue that is going to cost substantial money anyway, so if you move from unauthorised to authorised it is going to cost the taxpayer a whole lot of cash either way.

Last time I investigated Cottingley Springs, as I understood it in terms of its impact on Housing benefit and Council Tax benefit, taxpayers were putting something in the region of £400,000 a year in, year in, year out. At a point when you are reflecting on whether it is a good thing, then you need to seriously think you might be saving this in one place but taxpayers ultimately are footing a lot of the bill in one shape, way or other.

In our neck of the woods, certainly in the Morley North area, we have given. We have already provided. Cottingley Springs, although technically in the Greens' ward, has significant impact on us. All the traveller kids come into Morley. They shop in Morley. The community that is nearest to them that has the most significant impact upon it is Gildersome, which is in the Morley North ward. We have sites on an industrial estate in Gildersome that is a traveller site. We have another traveller site off Drighlington bypass. We have another site on Howden Clough Road. We have other sites on Whitehall Road. From our particular point of view, we think we have already contributed to resolving the problems that Leeds has from these travellers' sites.

My colleague Councillor Leadley, who is due to speak after me, has a different view on issues and we have got a free vote on this particular matter, because I suspect his position, which has been consistent over the last decade, is the same as my position which has been consistent over the last decade, and people will be aware there is the Government's own e-website where you can promote particular issues, and I have one down in my name that talks about changing the offence from a civil to a criminal matter. I have had that view for year after year after year, I have been quoted in the newspapers; I have a consistent approach about this.

The other alternative is to adopt what they do in Eire and basically say the police get involved immediately and move those travellers off immediately. The frustration of communities is that you are in a situation where you have to go through the whole civil process that can take anything from seven to ten days. We are fairly expert in Morley North at trying to prod to make that as quick a process as possible, but the fundamental problems are, like our last episode in Gildersome, by the time they have got the travellers off, they have trashed the site, it costs significant amounts to clear it up and it is now secure. That will not recur again.

The bottom line is there are different ways of actually dealing with this. My own personal view is that we do go for the change in legislation. We lobbied for that with the previous Government, we have lobbied for that with this particular Government. At that particular point fundamentally we may see some justice for those communities who have had their lives blighted on too many occasions through unauthorised sites.

Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Leadley.

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: My Lord Mayor, I have an interest in this as probably the only current Member of Council who has significant links with the travelling community, in and around things are rarely quite as they might seem. For the past 17 years I have been Chairman of the Lee Fair Committee which runs fairs which have been held twice a year at West Ardsley for 875 years, and they are the largest Romany horse fairs in Yorkshire and the oldest surviving charter fairs in England.

There was a Member of Council who used to be a well-known friend of gypsies and travellers. He was not a bleeding heart Liberal, nor even a hand-wringing Socialist, but he was actually a Tory who went on to be Lord Mayor. It was not Les Carter, it was actually Paddy Crotty who was a solicitor, often represented travellers when they were resisting eviction or trying to get children admitted to Leeds' schools or fighting for the Council trailer site which eventually emerged as Cottingley Springs.

Although it is only a beginning, it does look as if we may be beginning to move towards easing or ending the current problem of roadside traveller encampments in Leeds. I say "traveller" advisedly. Those who follow My Big Fat Gypsy Wedding will know that what they see almost every time is really My Big Fat Irish Traveller Wedding, and a similar rule applies to unauthorised encampments in Leeds, which usually involve names such as Maloney, Doran, Collins, Hanrahan, Connors and Cherrigan, which are not really Romany gypsy names at all. Actually, we saw some of them on Holbeck Moor as we came down to the Civic Hall this afternoon.

For at least ten years we have had a fairly steady number of people in Leeds, about 150 people at a time, living in about 50 caravans, moving on a merry-go-round from one unauthorised site to another, usually leaving trails of rubbish behind them.

You could solve quite a lot of this problem by having a few small sites which would take them all. It would save a tremendous amount of expense and upset.

In 2010 Morley Town Council successfully supported a planning application for the siting of three traveller caravans in an out of the way place, not in green belt, on the border between Morley North and Morley South wards. There was no protest before, there have been no complaints since though I am sure that if we had been so minded we could have approached the Daily Mail or the Patriot or some similar organ and whipped up a frenzy of opposition and perhaps even called for a plebiscite.

If all the wards in Leeds were paired and each pair of wards found a site for one traveller family with a few caravans, that would bring an end to most of the unauthorised camping. I think Adel and Wharfedale and Alwoodley should make a good pair (*laughter*) and Councillor Cohen in particular should know the need not to

demonise ethnic groups. That must be the way forwards. No doubt Cottingley Springs was built with the best of intentions but it has become a ghetto where enormous rents trap people on benefit and make it almost impossible to live and work in a proper way.

There is no harm in the administration looking at this problem. Since I joined the City Council in 2003 there have been three Scrutiny enquiries which have come up with similar answers, though not much has happened on the ground.

Councillor Gruen's amendment is acceptable as far as it goes, though the phrase "lasting solution" looks a little bit ill-chosen and the amendment misses a trick by seeming to assume that the City Council will have to find and develop all the sites. The Morley site was bought and developed privately, it was not the outcome of any Council initiative.

Thank you, my Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Dowson.

COUNCILLOR DOWSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. As you would expect I am supporting this amendment and I would like to concentrate on the benefits of a permanent pitch for traveller children and, in particular, to their educational attainment.

At the Early Years Foundation stage children from Irish traveller and from gypsy Roma backgrounds continue to have the lowest outcomes of any identified ethnic group. This pattern continues through Key Stage One, Key Stage Two and right the way through to GCSE level. These children remain throughout their school careers the lowest achieving ethnic group. They have the lowest attendance rates, they have the extremely high persistent absence rates. Three-quarters of traveller children attending secondary school miss 15% or more. For gypsy Roma children that figure was actually 57.6%. We know there is a link between poor attendance and low achievement and this is evident with this group of children.

We are taking steps to try and improve the outcomes for children from these groups. For example, we are piloting an ethnic minority achievement hub – very big – at primary level and there are three areas across Leeds that are taking part in this. These are outstanding schools with excellent practice who will share their expertise with other primary schools in the city and build leadership capacity to address the needs of BME pupils. Each of these schools will have a particular area of expertise, one of which will be meeting the specific needs and particular aspects of the culture of gypsy Roma traveller children.

We also have the gypsy Roma traveller team who provide support to individual schools in addition to offering outreach work on sites. We are also piloting a virtual school for gypsy Roma travelling children who are taking exams. This will build on the success of the virtual school for looked-after children.

All of this may be in vain, though, if we cannot get the children to go to school. One of the easiest ways to do this would be by enrolling them in a local school where they could stay without the risk of the family being moved on at any time.

Constantly moving from one area of the city to another it is particularly difficult to get the children into a school and, more importantly, to get them settled. Imagine how hard it must be to engage in education if you are moving from one school to



another. There is no opportunity to catch up on missed work, no opportunity to make friends and no opportunity to really engage with the school community. Children perform best when they are settled, happy and providing the opportunity for a permanent base for travellers would give gypsy Roma traveller children the chance to settle, the chance to become part of the school and the chance to actually enjoy their education.

This amendment shows that as a city we are serious about improving outcomes for every child in Leeds, regardless of their background. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Bill Hyde, please.

COUNCILLOR W HYDE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I just would like to start by putting Councillor Gruen's mind at rest, because I am a bit worried he might not be able to sleep having said that he is not going to consult me on the issue of these site placements. Let me tell him that he will not need to consult me because if his plans result in proposals that affect my property or close to my doorstep, then I will not need for him to invite me to consult. He might possibly, if his memory is good enough, recall that some 20 years ago when a similar situation arose, the party opposite were really quite keen on making a facility available on Manston Lane which, at that time, was part of my ward, part of the Halton ward, and the local residents objected and the local employers objected and the day came when the travellers arrived and the road was blocked about twenty foot deep by people sitting down on it.

The one thing that I suggest that Councillor Gruen has learned from that experience 20 years ago is that he does not make the announcements just before local elections, because that is what happened 20 years ago and I have to tell Council, it is the biggest majority that I have ever had, so if, Councillor Gruen, you are planning on making any such moves, can I suggest that you would need to be particularly careful because, of course, if you do decide to locate that provision in the place where it was supposed to be going 20 years ago, it will now be part of your ward and not part of mine. However, from this side we would welcome that suggestion.

I think, on a serious note, Lord Mayor, I have to say that there is a major flaw in the advice from Central Government in terms of locating this sort of provision close to amenities. It is a question of what those amenities are and I think also consultation needs to take account of local employment opportunities because, again, going back 20 years, I had two employers come to me and say, "If that gypsy encampment goes there, then we move and the jobs move with us. We go somewhere else. We are not prepared to stay here."

These kind of considerations I am not certain are going to be addressed under the present announced consultation. I think we need to sharpen it up. I think we do need a plebiscite which has been suggested by Councillor Carter, because I cannot see any other way that we are going to get a true response from people who are going to be affected by it. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Can I remind members that this is Councillor Dan Cohen's maiden speech. Councillor Cohen.

COUNCILLOR COHEN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Members might remember some time ago the fiasco surrounding a potential partnership between the Leeds

Chamber of Commerce and Leeds City Council. Who had agreed what with whom and when? Nobody seemed to know. Whose idea had the whole project been? Nobody seemed to know. Whose interests were advanced by this project? Nobody seemed to know. Officers were all sworn to secrecy and the whole business left a very nasty taste in the mouth. It was a classic example of how not to do things.

The only thing that everybody was certain about was that the man at the centre of it all was Councillor Peter Gruen, the man with the unanswered question.

Now the current administration has plans to deliver up to twelve permanent sites for gypsies and travellers here in Leeds. Around 300 potential sites were considered initially, we are told that is potentially now down to 90 although it might not be, as Councillor Gruen has told us he does not actually know that, although if you believe that you probably also believe in Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny.

Where were the sites located? Nobody seems to know. When will the potential information be available? Nobody seems to know. Officers have all been sworn to secrecy. Freedom of Information requests have been denied for fairly spurious reasons, in my humble legal opinion. The whole thing feels some what Gruenesque and it is therefore no shock to discover that the man again at the centre of all these plans was the man of mystery, Councillor Peter Gruen.

Everyone of the 99 Councillors elected to sit in this Chamber has been put here by citizens of Leeds to properly represent their interests. Every one of us is or should be committed to the basic principles of democracy, transparency and fairness. In relation to the potential sites for these permanent encampments, with the greatest of respect so far what we have seen is the precise opposite of this.

Today's White Paper is a measured and sensible way forward to ensure that there is some genuine transparency brought to this policy as quickly as possible and that the current sites under consideration are now brought into the public arena which will in turn allow all of us as ward Councillors to properly do our jobs.

Wherever we sit in this Chamber – whether it be over there or over here – this is a matter that really ought to go beyond party politics. This insistence on transparency that we are advocating should be something that all of us require, not just those of us sat on these benches, from whoever runs the city.

A more cynical man than me might suggest that this list of sites is being kept under wraps until after May 3<sup>rd</sup>. I hope that is not the case because residents have an absolute right to know what it is that Councillor Gruen may or may not have planned for their wards however electorally inconvenient that may well be.

We have been told that the procedure that is being followed and the criteria that are being applied have been made public. We have been told that there have already been various reports to the Executive Board and that a further report will be brought in due course, and there will be full public consultation. With respect that is too little, too late.

Why there is a need for all this secrecy I simply do not understand and I know it is beyond many Members of this Chamber who want their local residents to have this information and to have it now and we know that local residents will be quite capable of understanding the process the administration is going through.

At the moment, the policy is unsatisfactory, it is patronising, it is undemocratic and, frankly, flies in the face of open accountable Local Government and I hope you will support, therefore, our paper today so we can see a return to the kind of open and accountable Local Government that I would like us to be able to be proud of in this Chamber. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lobley, please.

COUNCILLOR LOBLEY: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. This will be the last time I will rise to my feet in this Chamber. (*Applause*)

COUNCILLOR: For now. For now.

COUNCILLOR LOBLEY: You never know, if you are not nice to me I will come back! (*laughter*)

COUNCILLOR: Oh no you won't!

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Oh yes he will!

COUNCILLOR LOBLEY: I have some serious concerns here. We have a list, do we not, with 280 potential sites on. Doing some fairly simple mathematics, that means we are probably looking at a potential eight to ten sites per ward for every ward in the city that all of us represent here as elected Members.

I personally, for the ward of Roundhay, cannot think of a single site that I think would be suitable for a permanent traveller encampment and it brings to mind a Scrutiny Board that I think Councillor Gabriel I remember was also on many years ago – I think it was the Development Services Scrutiny Board and we had some presentations from the Gypsy and Traveller Exchange and we did an enquiry into traveller sites, and I remember very clearly at that meeting saying on the record that I thought there was not a single suitable site within Roundhay for a permanent traveller encampment and so, therefore, I would oppose any moves to have one in Roundhay. There was tutting and shaking of heads on the Labour Benches so I turned it around and said, "OK, if you are so appalled with my view on this, perhaps you would like one of these sites in your own ward", at which point everybody went a bit sheepish and red-faced.

I would say to you, all of you who were busy applauding Councillor Gruen and his secretive back-room plans for putting sites – foisting sites, potentially – in sites that you will have, let me tell you, no input into whatsoever – you are applauding him; you may not be applauding him later on in the year when you find out immediately after the local elections what he has planned for you and for your residents and, more importantly, your residents may not be very pleased with you either because they will not see the distinction between Councillor Gruen working silently in the background and all of you not taking your duties seriously as Councillors who are representing people and finding out about what is happening with this.

It is really just a gentle warning to you all that you might find yourselves most unpopular.

I think this is really a matter of trust and I know who in this Council Chamber I trust and I know some people in this Council Chamber that, well, let us just say over the course of the years have given me some reason to doubt that. I am very worried

because when we received assurances from certain people in this Council Chamber that things will be handled in an open and transparent fashion, we all know deep down what will happen is the consultation will take place after the decision has been taken and the consultation will not be a consultation, it will simply be a notification. The Labour Group has always struggled with this concept of consultation.

Earlier on Peter Gruen said that we did not have any experience of traveller sites in I think what he is implying is Conservative wards. Certainly in Roundhay over the years we have had traveller sites and we have had the problems associated with those. We have also had an expensive clear-up on a site on the edge of Roundhay Park that used to be a former caravan and holiday site, and we saw the mess that was left there. If any of the Members on the Labour Benches honestly believe that having a formal organised traveller site will save a load of money and that there will not be any mess or any clean-up or any costs involved, then you are living in cloud cuckoo land.

It also, as well, concerns me the amount of money that we are looking at spending on these expensive traveller pitches when you think of what the Council could do in terms of providing affordable homes across the city for this amount of money.

It was interesting on Councillor Finnigan's point about security and it will never happen again. Let me tell you, in Roundhay in a site that was the site of an illegal traveller encampment, we had a massive earth mound and an enormous tree stump that was moved by a JCB in order to allow caravans on to the site. No site is secure in this city so I would just give you that small warning.

Basically, I would summarise by saying that I am afraid Councillor Gruen has never been one to cloud his mind with facts (*laughter*) and I think every Member in this Council should be most concerned about what he is doing in the background. Not allowing Conservatives and Lib Dems and Morley Boroughs and Greens to be involved in these discussions, these back-room discussions, is appalling. I would also ask, as well, my two ward colleagues to stand with me in saying that there is no suitable site in Roundhay for a permanent traveller encampment.

We need the information now, it needs to be open and, Peter, you really need to act on this.

On a final note, it has been an absolute pleasure working with all of you (*laughter*). Can I say, it really has been a thoroughly enjoyable nine years, particularly getting the opportunity to get to my feet and have all of the looks that you are burning into me now. Thank you very much. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Graham Latty, please.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. You have had the orators – now you have got a Ward Councillor.

COUNCILLOR: Where? (*laughter*)

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I was going to say something about you as well! I have a ward which has suffered more than most from development to the point where people now are up in arms at the thought of more people living in houses in my ward. The thought of people living in caravans in the ward is really going to spook them.

I do not care what you say about that – “Ooh”, you may say – but this is a fact. We have seen what happens on the places, the sites which are now houses where previously they were open to invasion by travellers and the mess and the cost of getting rid of them and clearing up afterwards does not make you feel that you would like to see that thing happening legally within your ward. I have even seen myself somebody with a cooker on the steps of Nunroyd House, a protected building within my ward, cooking their breakfast on the steps of that when the place could go up in smoke. Anyway, that is really just an illustration of what puts people off.

I think that what we are talking about here is – and here I am speaking in support of Les Carter’s White paper, in other words the lack of information, the lack of trust, even, that this betokens. Here we are all on the same side when it comes to elected Mayors and we say that an elected Mayor would be undemocratic and we all think that is absolutely outrageous.

COUNCILLOR: Not all of us.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I beg your pardon, there are two of us who do not think that.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: All bar two.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I was thinking that we all were but no, we have got two! *(laughter)*

If we find that undemocratic, what the heck is this? Where is the democracy in one part of this Council knowing something that could have such an effect on the lives of people in the other half of the Council – in fact, in their own half, come to that, because I do not suppose that Peter has shared this information all round the Group, otherwise it would have been all round the Council now because people cannot keep these things under their hats. To me, this is democracy gone out of the window.

In my ward by and large (I have said this in Council before) generally speaking I get on with Labour Councillors, I am quite friendly with an awful lot of them, and by and large I say to people this administration, generally speaking, are playing by the rules. I do not believe it gets you anywhere knocking other people every day out and about in your ward, and so I do like to think that generally speaking we are all working towards the same end and that by and large you are not trying to trip me up at every step, but I think I am going to have to change my mind, because this is one where – what is so funny, me tripping up or me trusting you? That is probably what you are laughing at.

I do think I am going to have to change my tune. I might have to say to people now, and before the elections, Labour are not playing by the rules. To me the fact that we will not publish this means that there is something to hide. If there is something to hide that means to me if I cannot know about it, it is in my ward, and what frightens people? What they do not know. What you have got as a result of this is a lot of people frightened because they do not know.

Let us face it, probably eight tenths of us are going to be quite happy at the end of this because there is not going to be anything in our ward, but at this moment as far as we are concerned there is one happening in my ward and people will believe that, and I am not going to disabuse them of that until somebody comes clean. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Robinson.

COUNCILLOR ROBINSON: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. I was just going to reassure Judith that this is not the first time that this has happened, because somebody had approached Les and said, "Les, Matthew is standing down at the next election" ahead of a Council meeting and he came over and pulled me outside and said, "What's this that I am hearing about you standing down? I cannot believe this" and I looked at him in horror, assuming the worst, and said, "I am not standing down what you mean, Les?" Matt Loble is – right, OK, that is absolutely fine, and that is why I struggle to recognise the picture painted by Councillor Gruen of Mohammed El Carter dragging people outside and asking them for a fight, because I have always found him to be an absolutely lovely person to operate with and a very, very kind and caring Councillor.

Since I have been on the Council I have always been an enormous advocate of openness and transparency and that is part of the problem that I have with this debate at the moment. We need to make sure that site selections are open, that the people in the communities know about them. This idea of keeping things behind closed doors, cooking them up in secret, only spreads the worst about politics. It only makes people think the worst about people in this Chamber.

Sunshine is always the best disinfectant and I cannot understand why people would not want this to be in the public domain and improve community relations.

If you are so sure of the arguments, if the benefits are so clear, why not take it to a referendum and embarrass the Opposition, if you are so sure that you can win on this agenda? I will say today now, right now, that if there are sites in the Harewood Ward I will continue to push for a plebiscite in this Council with officers on those sites and would like them discussed openly and fairly. We in the Harewood Ward have been engaging in a long debate about housing and where that housing will go and people in these villages are facing down huge – potentially huge – developments and they are drawing up neighbourhood plans at the moment and they are engaging with Council officers all the time. This would seem like the most logical time to bring forward the sites so they can be discussed. These will go to a referendum – why not do it? This is the time that it should be done.

I have been a great advocate and reader of the works of J S Mill, especially *On Liberty*, and I have absolutely no intention of damaging the lifestyles or life choices of other people or destroying the way they want to operate, but as Mill says, people have to be responsible for their own actions and abide by the law, which is also why I support part of the White Paper from Councillor Carter, because if this is a criminal matter it will speed up the process, it will make it a more effective deterrent and it will mean the mess and destruction from communities will be challenged.

I cannot understand why we are not being far more open about this and engaging with the public. It seems like the perfect time to do it. It cannot be fair to keep communities in the dark. Openness and clarity make for better community relations and make for a better operation of this Council. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lamb.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I thought since Councillor Latty brought up the issue of elected Mayors it would be only fair to inform Council that I was invited to a reception at Downing Street this week *(interruption)* – wait –

and it was for those people in favour of Mayoralties. Unfortunately I had to decline the invitation because, let alone I could not afford the £166 train fare, never mind the 250 grand for a cup of tea and sandwich! (*laughter*)

You have to forgive me if I get slightly put off but Councillor Downes's new standard of dress for Council – you should stand up so everyone can see. The only relief is that Councillor Gruen did not come in the same outfit! (*laughter*) As for the accusation that Councillor Les Carter would be involved in fisticuffs in this Council, I find that outrageous. That is an outrageous slur. There is only one politician in this city who engages in fisticuffs like that and that is the heavyweight Honourable Member for Elmet and Rothwell, Alec Shelbrooke. (*laughter*)

There is an old political joke – well, Councillor Gruen is an old political joke – how do you know when Councillor Gruen is not telling the truth? His lips are moving. We know his stock in trade is to deal in back-room deals, his shady dealings – he has got form for this over many, many years and we know the way he operates. We have heard from many Members today people have a right to know what is going to be done to them in their communities and in their wards, and Councillor Gruen is deliberately trying to pervert democracy by going round in these shady deals. How can he possibly justify his actions by setting up a working group of one political party in this Council?

When Councillor Judith Blake is looking at a difficult issue on the Youth Service she has invited all Members of Council, all groups, to come to the table and talk through the issue and try and find a solution. What does Councillor Gruen do? You should bear this in mind as you continue on your long drawn-out Leadership election, the different *modus operandi* of the two leading contenders for Leadership of your Group; Councillor Blake, with her open and transparent way of operating, and Councillor Gruen, with his shady back-room deals and secret societies to try and pervert the course of democracy.

Lord Mayor, there is nothing unreasonable in what Councillor Carter is putting forward in his White Paper. It is perfectly reasonable that when there are so many sites being considered – and it is impossible to believe that there is not a site in every single ward in this city which is being considered – the people in those communities have a right to know and they have a right to have their say on what is going on.

It is time once and for all for Councillor Gruen to come clean and tell us what is really going on. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor David Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I rise as one of three unique Councillors who actually represent people who come from a travellers' site. When we are talking about consulting, I do not know how long the travellers' site has been there but I do not think many people in Morley North or in Beeston or in what was Wortley Ward got consulted about that decision many, many years ago.

The point is it seems to me this motion is not about seriously looking at the problems we have with travellers; it is a "Get Peter Gruen" motion and that is purely and simply what it is.

It is a serious issue. Certainly all the wards neighbouring mine over the years have had lots and lots of problems with incursions. I have got to say the last two or three years – and this is entirely down to one person, our local Inspector, what he

has done is, he has taken serious action under his powers because we were getting football fields invaded, cricket pitches invaded and he has used his powers. I think the recent ones with Armley, I think it was the same families that used to come to Morley North and to Wortley.

I have got to support robust action when it comes to dealing with things like this because it is not right but, on the same level, there are people who are travellers, who are proper travellers, who have not got the places to go and we have got to look, the rest of you, the other 32 wards, you have got to look and see what you can do. We are doing our bit in Farnley and Wortley. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: I have got seven other people who have indicated that they would like to speak and therefore I am taking them in alphabetical order. Councillor Anderson.

COUNCILLOR ANDERSON: Lord Mayor, I genuinely was not intending contributing to this debate, but because of the amendment by Councillor Gruen and the fact that he mentioned my Scrutiny Board, I felt I wanted to put on record some further context of what the Scrutiny Board did or did not mean by some of their comments, and then I also want to add a further personal thought in the process.

One of the things we said in our report was, in consideration by Executive Board, those Ward Members who are affected by proposals on this matter are consulted. They are affected just now, they are part of the problem, it is duty bound on you, because you did accept that recommendation, to carry out that part of it and consult with members now.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: It will happen. It will happen.

COUNCILLOR ANDERSON: What we said, it said it on the tin, that is what we meant to do. Then we further go on to talk about – and I am going to return to this later on – as with all policy decisions the allocation of limited financial resources will need to be considered. The Executive Board will need to balance the demand for social and affordable housing and a growing waiting list. Again, that was one that was accepted and I am going to return to that in a minute and hopefully you will see the reason why.

What this White Paper is about is being honest, transparent and working and, most importantly, trusting elected Members. Even I, as the Scrutiny Chair, have not been given the courtesy or the respect, either by Councillor Gruen or, for that matter, by officers, of being furnished with a copy of the plethora of lists, sub-lists, unofficial lists or whatever, despite me asking for me. I even asked for it in the sub-group so that it was not necessarily going to be released in public. Again I was told – well, what was I told? I was actually being given conflicting information. Some officers have said, “This is in the public domain, if you want it, you can have it.” Others have said, “No it is not, you are not getting it at all.” If some officers are saying this, can we get it right – is it in the public domain and, if it is, give all of us access to it; if it is not in the public domain, why are officers being obstructive when we are asking for this particular information?

I have got a suggestion. Maybe our new City Solicitor who, to the best of my knowledge, has not been involved in making any of this decision as to whether or not this information can or cannot be made public, would it not be an idea for her to look again at the rationale and the reasons that were put forward at the time for not putting it into the public domain. I personally feel, from my uneducated mind, for



want of a better phrase, that I cannot see any reason why Councillors' right to know, why we are not entitled to know about this. I personally think we should, under our right to know, be allowed to gain access to this information. There are a number of others who share this concern as well.

What I do take exception to is that Councillor Gruen holds his fellow Councillors in such low regard and contempt that he cannot trust us.

To return to a point that I made earlier on, we have currently put out for consultation our Local Plan. This plan, if it goes wrong, will destroy a lot of the areas we hold dear in this city. Members are to be given, along with our communities, the opportunity to identify additional housing sites or alternative housing sites. Surely as elected Members we have the right to see Councillor Gruen's list so that we can assess ourselves so that the land that he has identified is best allocated as housing land for building on, employment land, greenfield sites, green belt sites, play space, recreational space or potential travellers' sites. Surely we have the right to contribute to the Local Plan because that is what we are trying to say that we are trying to do in the Local Plan. Or is he saying that he and his officers know best? Is he really saying that he can take on the role of God and decide what is happening?

Peter, you are not good for democracy and open and transparent government. If Labour Members want an example of why this Government has made a priority of the reform of Local Government, Councillor Gruen exhibits all the characteristics that both they and all correct thinking individuals find most unworthy of elected Members.

Some of my colleagues and some of my ex-colleagues in the Conservative Group have, from the moment I got elected, warned me about the attitudes, personality traits and methods of doing business adopted by Councillor Gruen. Even some of his own Labour colleagues have commented to me over the years about his methodologies, plotting and trustworthiness.

Can I say, Lord Mayor, they were all wrong. He is worse than you think.  
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Atha, please.

COUNCILLOR ATHA: I want to say a very few words, basically. First of all I think we have to recognise that Councillor Carter was in the Chair for six years. He totally failed. He spent £2m on clearing up. There is not one thing to show for that £2m except continuing ill will and a lack of any solution.

This is a serious question. We could, of course, make a lot of fun. I could be making fun of Councillor Carter being the kind of Cassius Clay of the Conservative Party, how he attacks women or challenges them to a fight outside (outside where I did not hear). It is all too exciting and stupid because this is a very serious problem.

If we were Hitler we would say there is no problem – we eliminate them. As simple as that. We have got people who are travellers; they have that kind of life. What do we do with them? Do we in fact say, "You cannot have that kind of life, if you try to operate in that way we will put you in prison, we will send you abroad" or whatever? We cannot do that. We are not Stalin, we are not Hitler, we are not Mussolini, we are not Baptista. We are, for God's sake, reasonable, human people. That means we have not got to be soft because, quite frankly, I would like to see us deal with the travellers in a much more strict and regimented and immediate action.

When Councillor Carter took over from us by some mischance of the politics and the day several years ago, I, in fact, sent him a list of actions which he might take against the travellers because I thought my Group was too soft and he might do it. He did not do anything of it, not one bit. All we were told, "We cannot do that, we cannot do the other." I think we have got to have a simple philosophy and that is, we cannot dispose of these people as though they were people in the *untermensch* in the Third Reich. We have got to allow the fact that they are there. We have got to accept that they have got to have some sites on which they can park because if they do not, the present situation will continue *ad infinitum*.

Once we have got those sites, no matter where they may be and adequate enough to accept the burden that is going to be put on them, we should then enforce the law with the utmost rigour and not put up with officers saying, "Ah, well, we can't." The police have already got significant powers to go on if there are more than, was it seven caravans? I am not sure. There is a whole range of things. We could go to Parliament and get that kind of trespass made criminal so it is an immediate effect. We could be suing them and getting injunctions against them. We could be suing them for trespass and getting, even if serving notices on them, that will clear the beggars off because they will not come to court, they will be off somewhere else.

Whatever it is, we have got to be strict with them but we cannot do that until we have provided them with alternative and proper sites.

The question of secrecy. If I wanted to create a real stir I could leak tomorrow a list of 200 sites. I could make them up, I have not got a list but I could make it up, be published and that would cause enormous concern right across the areas where they were, it would be right across the city.

The only safe way is to do what, in fact, the working party did, said, "We will set down the criteria, you find the sites that might fulfil those criteria and then we will look at those which we shall choose to reveal and consult on."

That is fair, straight and common sense and you cannot deny that that approach is both reasonable, it is honest and fair. If we published a list of, you have over there mentioned, I think, 200-odd sites, had we published a list of 200-odd sites, there are 200-odd areas of Leeds which would suddenly be activated and annoyed, worried, concerned and so on, when not possibly one out of 20, 30 or 40 of those will ever be a site. You have got to be fair and if we are playing politics like that, then you are not playing clean politics, you are playing dirty politics.

I think on the whole you may have been today rather unkind to my friend Peter. I do feel at times you have been motivated almost by envy at his capacity to annoy you. I just think, we ought to say quite simply there is a problem, for God's sake let us settle it between ourselves sensibly, logically and fairly and that is all I would ask.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: That is what we are saying.

COUNCILLOR ATHA: That is not what you are saying. You want a list out to 200 places so you can say, "Look what these rotten Labour people are doing, save our sites" and we are not doing that because those sites have not been selected. That is the truth and if you say it is not the truth, all I can say is you do not know.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Profound disappointment. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Cleasby.

COUNCILLOR CLEASBY: Lord Mayor, firstly could I just say that I had made a declaration about this issue. I have since discovered that I am not a traveller – I am in fact a caravanner. Although I tow a caravan around the country that looks like a travellers' caravan and I travel with it, I am not a traveller, I am a caravanner.

Seriously, Council, I have two documents in my hand that were published by the Government yesterday. One is the National Planning Policy Framework and the other one I am going to quote from is the Planning Policy in relation to travellers' sites. Peter, Leader, Chief Executive, I would like you to give some understanding within the next week or fortnight for a timetable to be given to this Council, and I will give you the reasons why now.

At paragraph 25:

“Subject to the implementation arrangements at paragraph 28”

(I will read that in a moment)

“if a local planning authority cannot demonstrate an up-to-date five year supply of deliverable sites, this should be a significant material consideration in any subsequent planning decision when considering applications for the grant of temporary planning permissions.”

That, to me, is serious. 28, I think, makes it more serious:

“28. The policy set out in paragraph 25 only applies to applications for temporary planning permission for traveller sites made 12 months after this policy comes into force.”

This policy came into force yesterday, Chief Executive. We now have twelve months to have this sorted out. This list has been bandied around, been talked about. It is now serious, there is now a timescale and something needs to be done for the good of our Authority, the good of the Council and, as we have heard, from others, the wellbeing of our travelling community of which, thankfully, I am not one. Thank you, Council.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Andrew Carter, please.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: That was rather sooner than I thought, Lord Mayor.

It just seems to me we are getting way, way off the point here. This is not about the provision of sites for travellers; it is about the process by which we arrive at decisions. Bernard, it is not envy and it is not the ability of Councillor Gruen to annoy. It is actually, in my personal case, profound disappointment that after all these years Councillor Gruen still always seems to want to do everything in a way that most of us would not regard as being the most straightforward, democratic and transparent way. We had it with PCSOs at the beginning of the Labour current tenure of office and his Leader had to give reassurances about the deployment of those; we had it with East Leeds, which has been mentioned where actually significant damage has been done to what could have been a really comprehensive, thorough going plan for

regeneration in a part of the city that really needs it, where one of his own colleagues did not even know he had just lost responsibility for a particular area of the city and had to get it back. We were then treated to a whole string of excuses as to what had gone on and we still never got exactly to the bottom of how the report got pulled, but I can tell you that it was pulled because the Leader of Council instructed that it had to be, quite rightly.

When Councillor Gruen talks about transparency and talks about people not being told, he has not been briefed and his Leaders has not been briefed, well, I believe one thing – I believe that Councillor Wakefield has not been briefed because it seems to me on a whole string of issues over the past 18 months Councillor Wakefield has had to find out a bit late in the day what has been going on.

It is more serious, it is not a laughing matter, it is quite serious, because there are always going to be issues on which parties have to discuss on a sensible basis and they have to go together and they have to work out the best way forward. The basis of trust in that is essential and in this case, as in so many others, the basis of trust has completely broken down. You are the controlling Group and you have to decide how you handle that, but let me tell you, it will occur over and over again. There are issues which I think have always made this Council stronger and have stood us out, if you like, from other Local Authorities in the big cities where, on certain issues, we can work together and we can speak as one or, in the case of elected Mayors, almost one. I think that adds to what we can achieve as a city.

When complete confidence breaks down and transparency clearly goes out of the window yet again, and when everybody in this Council ought to be thinking what is this debate all about, why are we not all part of this debate – and let me tell you, I have seen the list and that is the list of 90. Actually it was handed over to me. I asked for it and I was given it and on that list there are some ridiculous suggestions that everyone knows just want crossing out. Why haven't they been? Why is it still hanging there as a list of sites where we could possibly put a traveller site?

Whilst there is a one-party working group, whilst this secrecy pervades the atmosphere, you deserve all you get and you have got to put your house in order and you have got to do it PDQ, otherwise this sort of debate is going to take place over and over again.

As I say, I am actually profoundly disappointed. It seems to me – and this is not meant to be too light-hearted – you should read *The Wind in the Willows*. Councillor Gruen is a bit like Mr Toad – he jumps up and down full of enthusiasm about something stuff but you are never quite sure what he is up to and he generally finishes up getting himself and everybody else in a cartload of trouble. This is another prime example of that. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lyons.

COUNCILLOR LYONS: Thank you very much, Lord Mayor. I think it is pretty plain that it is the last Council meeting before the election for some of the things that have been said. I weep for some of you that have talked about consultation and the right of the citizen to know what is going to happen because it is not very long ago I was asking at every Council meeting the right of the people of Leeds to know where their incinerator was going to be. *(Applause)*

You all thought it was funny. Councillor Pryke thought it was funny. They all thought it was funny. They even replied, did the Coalition, that as far as I was

concerned, we will build it in Rothwell Park. That is what Smithy said to me and what can't read can't lie and it will be down in verbatim of what has been said.

If we are talking about the consultation, it amazes me but having read the Bible, Saul on the way to Damascus, the scales came off his eyes and he could see and that just reminds me, in was right in the Bible, something like this must have happened there because the scales have just come off your eyes and you can see that we have got people of Leeds that want consulting.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: They have not come off yours.

COUNCILLOR LYONS: They only want consulting in Tory patches – not in our patches to find out where things were. Consultation means consultation and it does not mean on different subjects, it means on every subject and what you should be doing is not – I know Pickles has you dropped in it, I know Cameron has dropped you in it, I have not dropped you in it, so don't be blaming me!

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Just like Blair dropped you lot in it.

COUNCILLOR LYONS: All I am is a victim of the granny tax. *(Applause)* If it affects you and some of the people that live in, let us say, where Councillor Latty lives, do you know they dare not cook their dinner outside – I hope it was not raining else you might have invited them in. *(laughter)*

Seriously speaking, consultation does not mean tongue in cheek and do not speak with forked tongue. What we are talking about now, I do not care what party you come from, if consultation should be there it should not be preached for just one sermon, it should be preached all the time and practised as well. It should be practised. *(hear, hear)* It was not, it was funny when they were going to build an incinerator 200 yards from somebody's house. What about those people? We have not made our mind up yet.

COUNCILLOR: Demolition.

COUNCILLOR LYONS: They are knocking houses down as well, somebody has reminded me. As far as I can see, what did you all say and what did you all do? You said, "We will consult when we have had proper talks with whoever is going to build it and when---

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: *(inaudible)* sites.

COUNCILLOR LYONS: I got into trouble for interrupting you, Les. I hope the Lord Mayor tells you to let me speak and you to shut up. *(Applause)*

I am quite an old hand at being at Council and I have seen crocodile tears come before. What is really frightening you is you will not be able to get it in your leaflets fast enough to tell them which wards you actually illegally obtained a fictional list.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: I did not. Handed over to me. Handed over.

COUNCILLOR LYONS: News for you, you might have to eat your words if you do things like that because I am not only about consultation, let us get on about the whole subject of the gypsies and the gypsies in Leeds. As far as we are

concerned, Pickles – do you mind, can you give us a few minutes, they are talking between themselves.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: It is more interesting!

COUNCILLOR LYONS: The gypsies have not helped themselves at all. It is a very serious question and I think it is right that it has come from over there and come from the Greens. What we should be doing, and nobody wants illegal sites, nobody wants illegal sites. The Conservative Government, or the Coalition as you call them, has recognised this. Your gaffers have recognised it and give us money to go and have a look for some sites. What we should be doing is looking for, and Andrew said it, there might be some ridiculous things on there, let us cross all these out and then go out for consultation in a proper method, not go scaremongering. Les, if you have got to do that to get elected I shouldn't bother!

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: I am not standing.

COUNCILLOR LYONS: You will have all on holding the line. I know the red light has come on. Thank you very much, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jim McKenna, please.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I actually get someone to say "Oh, bloody hell!" from my side! That is a great start, isn't it! *(laughter)*. I don't even know whether I would do the same myself.

Can I start by saying exactly what Mick Lyons said, nobody wants illegal sites – nobody wants illegal sites. If you had them in Armley, like Janet and Alison and I had for the last four years, they would start off at the gyratory, they would move up to Wortley Towers – now Wortley Towers is actually the garden – it is in our ward now, Ann, it is not in yours.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: They moved off from there.

COUNCILLOR McKENNA: It is actually the front garden of a block of flats and then when they were moved off that they moved on to St Bart's and they knew exactly when the three months run up and they started the process all over again, so they were going 50 yards up the road. The people obviously were going mad and I was as aggressive as anybody – anybody, you would be – because at the end of the day they were causing enormous problems.

Even then we have had the super injunction, which is great, it will stop that, but it will only stop the Leeds based travellers and, by the way, everybody seems to be fond of calling them Irish travellers – they were born here. Every one of them, they are travellers of Irish origin, the same as half of this Chamber, OK? Can we get that very straight? *(Applause)*

When this happened, we had a new group of travellers, we had never seen them before, and they moved up in Bramley. We actually go all the way up to Bramley, Elder Road. There was about twelve caravans. Ted informed us about it. Everybody thought that bit was actually in Bramley but it is in Armley and it took us about a week to get going and the people had never had it before and it really was a problem, but we were sympathetic because there were two young woman on the site, in Biblical terms, who were heavy with child and, of course, the officers, Peter's officers, deal with this very sensitively, as is required by the Government. The

reason why they had come to Leeds was – and actually, my chest did swell a bit with pride – they had heard that Leeds had the best maternity hospital in the country, so they come to Leeds to have their babies born.

You lot have not faced that but you will, you will, I promise you, you will. You will be talking about the burghers there, there will not be 400 people sitting blocking a road, there will be 4,000 in Shadwell and Harewood and places like that. I look forward to it – I look forward to it, to seeing your discomfort.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: It will be Councillor Gruen in Shadwell.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: There is a lovely site by a bungalow in Shadwell.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Absolutely, they want to put the cemetery there.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: The best contribution was from Jane, and I am sorry that it was so early in the debate because, (a), you were not listening to her and (b) you have forgotten all about her because you are talking about process rather than dealing with it. Every one of you have seen the figures of educational attainment because it goes to your Area Committee. I have read them and I have raised it. How many of you have raised it? Funnily enough I was actually told that Armley were the only ones who raised it, myself, Alison and Janet. That is a problem you should be concerning yourselves with, not only the educational attainment and by the way, Armley has always operated an open-door policy. St Bartholomew's Primary School welcomes them in. We have had a headteacher there, I will not mention her name, she is a fabulous headteacher, she has been there all the time I was a Councillor, even beforehand and they come in there but, you know, by the time they go to the High School up the road, by the time they are 13 they have dropped out of education totally.

If you have not learned any skills, their attendance, obviously, is very poor, as you would expect, because we keep moving them somewhere else, don't we? The Education people do not know where they are half of the time. That is just one statistic.

If you go into Cottingley Cemetery and look at the headstones, there is an area there, there is a gazebo and there is usually two travellers stay there and they are practically on guard duty. I actually saw this when they sent me for Cems and Crems (I chaired that for a while) to improve cemeteries and if you look at the headstones you will see the infant mortality rate. It is full of kids who have died two and four – two and four. If you look at the average life expectancy, it is 47. These are third world statistics and you lot go around here pontificating about process when you should be doing something about a real problem. That is what you should be doing. (*Applause*) that is what you should be doing. They are Third World statistics.

It seems to me that you are just messing about with it. When I was Chair of Planning ten years ago officers identified a site between Poole – Andrew will remember – and Otley and planning office had to tell them, "You are wasting your time there, the land floods, we could not put one here." I have been on the Council over 24 years; we have had all this debate and it goes nowhere. I will bet in ten years' time we will be here still talking about sites. Les, you did nothing.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor McKenna, we have a red light.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Hopefully, Peter, you will do something. Thank you very much, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor John Procter, please.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am a bit disappointed, actually, that some other Labour Members have not spoken before me but you have taken it in alphabetical order, I respect that, Lord Mayor, but I could not help but think when I saw Councillor Gruen performing earlier it reminded me of that TV programme Big Fat Gypsy Wedding. I know he is clearly a fan but I have to say it was one of the worst performances I have heard him giving here, because he knows the background to all of this. Unfortunately, he has not shared that with the rest of you and that is the real tragedy here. He has not shared it with the rest of you.

What you do not know – oh, “disgrace, disgrace” – you really want to actually ask your Executive Member and cross-examine him on what he is actually doing here because the story we have heard today is not the story you will get from officers. It is different. You talk about the Council providing sites, the number of pitches that is talked about, twelve pitches, the Council to run a site for twelve pitches. What officers tell us is that actually the twelve pitches, the majority of the people who we are looking to accommodate in Leeds they would never have in a Council site – they would not have them in a Council run site because they have been evicted from Cottingley Springs in the first place.

What is the lunacy that Councillor Gruen is trying to do here? The officers are saying very clearly to Councillor Les Carter and I that the very people he is looking to house on Council run sites and Councillor run pitches they will never have as officers. How many of you knew that? Not many, clearly.

Councillor Gruen used to be a civil servant. He was not in the secret intelligence service division, though, clearly. That said, we have been trying for months now to find out who is on this secret Labour working group. We know Councillor Hardy is because he has told us. You would expect that, though, would you not? None of the other Labour Members have come forward and said, “Oh, I am on it, I am on this secret working group, the secret working group which has considered most of this material” but the rest of you are not. Did you know that Councillor Hardy and Co were on this secret grouping?

COUNCILLOR TAGGART: We are saying nothing. *(laughter)*

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: The officers know all about it because the officers go to it and the officers service it, and we are looking forward to the results of our Freedom of Information Request to see all of the Minutes and all of the notes and all of the information that has been going backwards and forwards between the secret grouping on this Council.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: You will not get anywhere.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: I turn to the officers and I turn in particular to the Chief Executive and our new City Solicitor, and the officer corps here as well. An elected Member who has been on this Council and is in his fortieth year, Councillor J L Carter, is denied access to a document of this Council on some spurious trumped-up legal rubbish that is trying to deny him that. It is a shame. It is an absolute disgraceful shame and I very rarely do this but the officer corps collectively should think very seriously about that type of action because it serves no purpose



whatsoever and, if it keeps recurring, you cannot be surprised if politicians in this Chamber and outside as well start focusing their attention away from the controlling Group on this Council.

The list – I have seen the list. I have seen what is on that list. Frankly, a huge amount of it is ridiculous, an absolute nonsense, and yet these ridiculous sites are still on the list not having been ruled out. They clearly should have been, Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR LYONS: Struggling on that.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: He says I am struggling – I am just trying to find the first ward – I am not going to reveal where the sites are but I am going to tell you some wards. Holton Moor, Councillor Lyons, that is one of them. In fact, the Temple Newsam ward is the most populated ward throughout all of that site list. It gets more mentions than anything else; more mentions than all of the other wards, almost, put together.

Councillor McKenna, Armley – yes, Jim, it is coming to a place near you – Roundhay, Rothwell, Pudsey, Bramley, Calverley and Farsley, Yeadon and Otley, Guiseley and all of the rest of them. Councillor Gruen would have you believe it is coming to Wetherby, it is coming to Harwood. Oh not it is not, it is not on the list and that is your problem because he is keeping the list secret with his little working group and the rest of you are in the dark. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Taggart.

COUNCILLOR TAGGART: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. I am going to start by talking about prejudice, a prejudice which is deep and historically long and has sometimes been extremely vicious because when Adolf Hitler was in power he did his best to eliminate all the Jews he could get his hands on and we know that millions of them died at his hand, many of them in labour camps, death camps. The history books show that when it came to the gypsies, many of them he did not bother even putting in camps, they just rounded them up in forests and shot them dead. That is the ultimate of prejudice on gypsies – kill them all, they are worthless, they are all criminals.

I beg to differ. They have a culture and a history which is valuable and it informs many cultures in many parts of the world.

To give you some examples, Django Reinhardt, was he a criminal? No, actually, he was probably the world's greatest jazz guitarist there has ever been.

COUNCILLOR LYONS: He was the best.

COUNCILLOR TAGGART: he as the best. David Essex, of gypsy stock, a well-known actor and singer. Was he a criminal? I do not think so. Michael Caine, also with gypsy parentage.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Charlie Chaplin.

COUNCILLOR TAGGART: Charlie Chaplin – for years historians could not find Mr Chaplin's birth certificate. All the books said he was born in London but they could never find the birth certificate. Two years ago Wolverhampton City Council

found his birth certificate. He was born in a gypsy caravan on the outskirts of Wolverhampton and they are now claiming him as one of their own.

Councillor Les Carter – he is not a gypsy or a traveller but I do suggest to this Council he is a thief because he had a confidential briefing with an officer who did not hand over to him a document. If the witnesses are to be believed – and I believe what I have been told – it was snatched out and locked away.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: They were not witnesses; they were not there.

COUNCILLOR TAGGART: I know what happened.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: You were not there either.

COUNCILLOR TAGGART: That is unbecoming behaviour, particularly for someone who pretends he is Deputy Chairman of West Yorkshire Police Authority. *(interruption)* We expect a higher standard of those kind of people so, quite frankly, I can be in Councillor Carter's company and not be quite sure what of mine he might nick. *(laughter)* I would rather go down Cottingley Springs. Lord Mayor, I spent a half day there, enjoyed myself, talked to everybody. I feel more comfortable with those honest folk than I ever would with Les Carter if that is the way he is going to carry on. I suggest he hands it back, I suggest he apologises to Councillor Gruen and to the officers and gives an undertaking he will never do that again. *(Applause)*

In 2010 I was given many responsibilities by the Labour Group. One of them was to look at the Local Development Framework and the first question I asked the planning officers is, "What about traveller sites?" There was almost an embarrassed silence. Let me put it like this, the work done was very, very thin indeed and I said we have a statutory responsibility, it is even in the guidance when we should do your plans that you need to make that provision.

We are serious about making provision. We do not believe in wasting £2m clearing up a mess that people have made and have always made, people who then feel that the whole of society is against them, they are antagonistic. What about their children? What about their babies? Have you seen the mortality rates of gypsy children in this country? It is an absolute disgrace.

We are serious about people because we care and as for you, Councillor Hyde, I take you back to what you said and you need to look at it again in the verbatim, because you would never have dared to say that about Jewish people or about people from the Caribbean or about people from Kashmir. You would not dare. You think that prejudice is still on – well, it is not on.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: That is disgraceful. That is disgraceful.

COUNCILLOR TAGGART: In this city we care about all people and all cultures.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: It is disgraceful.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Disgraceful.

COUNCILLOR TAGGART: Notwithstanding the fact that the mortality rate for gypsies and travellers...

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: You are a disgrace.

COUNCILLOR TAGGART: ...is the worst in Leeds compared to any other group whatsoever. If you go to Cottingley Springs the figures are better. You have a better life because you have got services, you have got access to school, you have got access to doctors and dentists and all the rest of it. We want all travelling people in Leeds to have decent circumstances where they can live at peace, where they can pay their rents, where their children can go to school and where they can have a good life. You had six years and for six years you did nothing. Thank you.  
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: I call upon Councillor Les Carter to sum up, please.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: My Lord Mayor, may I just start with Councillor Taggart. That was the most disgraceful speech I have ever heard. My father was away for four years fighting the Germans, fighting Nazis and don't you ever accuse me of having anything near to do with them at all. I will say that once again, be careful what you say; you now what you are saying and you know why you are saying it.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: You are a disgrace.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: The second point is, you accused me of theft. I will tell you exactly what the story was and there is Neil Taggart (*sic*) at the back there can answer this as well, he was there. Neil Evans.

COUNCILLOR TAGGART: I am Neil Taggart.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: Yes, I know you are. Shut up. Neil Evans is the one who can tell you. The lady passed it to me but what she got the shock was I put it straight into my briefcase and locked it. Then I said to Neil, Neil said, "Oh", didn't know what to do, I said, "What are you going to do?"

Finally, let me just tell you this. There is no way – I am 70; he looks like Bruce Willis with his bald head! (*laughter*) I am going to offer to take him outside? Don't talk stupid. As far as theft is concerned I did not retain that piece of paper. I made certain that piece of paper, which I could have been accused of stealing, was given back to the department.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: After you photocopied it.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: Oh yes, it was not copyright. I made sure that the paper went back to them.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: And passed it on to your colleagues.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: Shut up now for a second, let other people come in.

What everybody on the Labour Group has missed totally today, we have not in any way said there should be no travellers' sites. You have not read my amendment (*sic*). You have not, Bernard, and neither has anybody else read the amendment. What we said is that where you are proposing sites, those sites should be out and public so that public know what is going off. I have never said, and I was

very careful on that White Paper not to imply there will be no sites in this city. Gruen has tried to con you once again, he is always trying to con you.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: And you fall for it every time.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: Councillor Dowson talked about children. We looked after those children the same way as you did. You inherited a service so do not tell me that is something new as though you have inherited and never dealt with it.

When we talk about finance, Councillor Gruen talks about he has made up with his mate Dobson £2m. Surely it came out of mid air. Where has this £2m come from? I will tell you where it comes from. First of all we inherited some massive legal costs – massive legal costs – where you were taken to the European Court and the payment came into ours. That is the first thing. The second thing is, if you look at the amount that has been spent each year...

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Lies again.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: You have spent, Mr Gruen, £350,000 on unauthorised travellers. I never spent that in all the time I was there.

Let me say this to you, what did you want me to do? When Councillor Dunn came to me and said, “We have got this problem”, when other Councillors came, “We have got this problem”, can we just walk away and ignore it? Never forget this, I asked every Member of this Council who was elected at that time – I know some of them were not elected – I said is there anyone in this Council who would like to come forward and volunteer a site in their ward. Not one of you, you included Councillor Taggart, not one of you came forward with a site. (*interruption*) You did not, Neil Taggart, you did not; you did not, Bernard Atha, and you did not.

THE LORD MAYOR: Can I just say can you please just cool it and let Councillor Carter finish? Thank you.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: My Lord Mayor, I thought I was being cool but I will try not to raise the temperature.

The situation is, none of you have read it. You are trying to hide what the public of Leeds should have. Councillor Atha knows this. If he had had that when he was in Opposition he would have published it by now. I have not published it and I will tell you why – shut up, Bernard, for a minute – because it says “Confidential” on the document, but I am not so sure...

COUNCILLOR LYONS: You have got it.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: I have got it but I have not published it.

COUNCILLOR LYONS: No but you have put it around.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: Be quiet. The point I am making is this, it is confidential, is the document, I have not published it but I will tell you this now, we are having it legally examined to find if it makes sense, that confidentiality. We do not believe it does and if it does there will be no talking to you – the whole lot will be published and the people of Leeds will know what you are doing in their name. Thank you, my Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR : I am now, because we have come to the end of our business, calling for a vote on the amendment in the name of Councillor Gruen.

COUNCILLOR LOBLEY: Lord Mayor, can I ask for a recorded vote, please? All those in favour?

COUNCILLOR: Too late.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: No it's not; you don't even know the rules.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: You don't even know the rules.

THE LORD MAYOR: It has been seconded. I am quite happy for it to go through.

*(A recorded vote was taken on the amendment  
in the name of Councillor Gruen)*

THE LORD MAYOR: There are 82 Members present. Those voting "Yes" are 56; those voting "No" 23; and two are abstaining, therefore the amendment is CARRIED.

We now move on to...

COUNCILLOR LOBLEY: My Lord Mayor, may I request a recorded vote please?

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now moving to the substantive motion and a recorded vote has been requested. Has it been seconded? Yes.

*(A recorded vote was taken on the substantive motion)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Present are 80 Members; 56 have voted "Yes"; 23 "No" and one has abstained, therefore the substantive motion is CARRIED.

#### ITEM 9 - WHITE PAPER MOTION - ECONOMIC GROWTH

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now moving on to the White Papers.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Lord Mayor, under Council Procedure Rule 14.11 I ask that this White paper is withdrawn from the Council meeting.

COUNCILLOR NASH: I second, my Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Those in favour of that being withdrawn? *(A vote was taken)*

CARRIED. Thank you.

#### ITEM 10 - WHITE PAPER MOTION - LATE NIGHT NOISE NUISANCE

THE LORD MAYOR: Can we then move on to White Paper 10 in the name of Councillor Matthews.

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

COUNCILLOR BENTLEY: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lewis, under Procedure Rules, similar to those that were outlined at the beginning of the last debate.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor, I move in terms of the Notice.

COUNCILLOR NASH: I second, my Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: All those in favour of the suspension of Council procedures, please? *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

I now move on to Councillor Dobson to move an amendment to that first motion.

COUNCILLOR DOBSON: I move the amendment, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: And to Councillor Gruen to second.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Formally second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: All those in favour of the amendment in the name of Councillor Dobson, please? *(A vote was taken on the amendment)* That amendment has been CARRIED and so we move, then, to the substantive motion.

*(A vote was taken on the substantive motion)* That is CARRIED.

ITEM 11 - WHITE PAPER MOTION - CITIES FIT FOR CYCLING (Procedure Rule 3.1(d))

THE LORD MAYOR: We now move on to White Paper 11 in the name of Councillor Downes.

COUNCILLOR MARJORAM: Excuse me, Lord Mayor, it is remiss of me, I should have declared an interest earlier. I am a member of British Cycling and holder of a racing licence for the current season. Excuse me.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Downes.

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

COUNCILLOR ILLINGWORTH: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: All those in favour? *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

ITEM 12 - WHITE PAPER MOTION - GAY QUARTER (Procedure Rule 3.1(d))

THE LORD MAYOR: We are moving on to White Paper 12. Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: I move, Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR MATTHEWS: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Wakefield to move an amendment.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor James Lewis to second, please.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lamb to move a second amendment.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lobley to second.

COUNCILLOR LOBLEY: I second, my Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I am now calling for a vote on the first amendment in the name of Councillor Wakefield.

*(A vote was taken on the amendment in the name of Councillor Wakefield)*

That amendment seems to be CARRIED but I have to go through to the second amendment in the name of Councillor Lamb.

*(A vote was taken on the amendment in the name of Councillor Lamb)*

That is LOST.

The substantive motion, therefore, in the name of Councillor Wakefield.

*(A vote was taken on the substantive motion)*

That is CARRIED.

Thank you very much indeed for all that has gone on today and a safe journey home.

*(The meeting closed at 7.30 pm)*